

# TIGHTLINES



## Sometimes it all comes together beautifully

by Dick Simmons

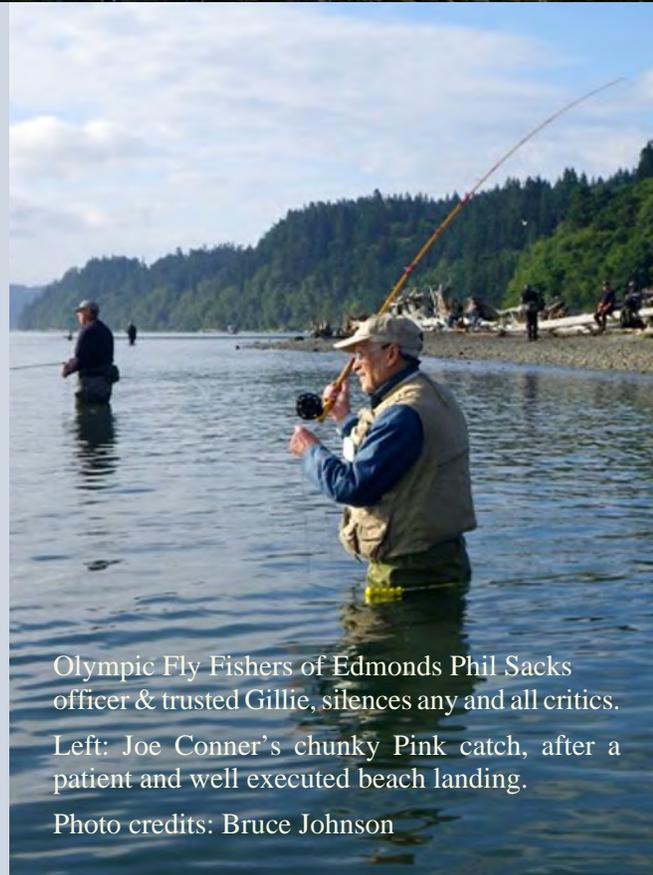
First of all, let's get the fish report out of the way. Pink Salmon, or humpback salmon, (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*) are much underrated by sports fishermen. They may not fight like a silver, or taste like a king, but they do take a long time to land successfully, as many of us discovered on our outing to Ala Spit early this month.

However, give the pinks a little more credit. Because it was Pink Salmon that kept the cannery business up and down the West Coast alive for many years when it was well on the ropes, and the decline of the lowly pink helped spearhead reforms in harvesting that have helped restore the salmon fishing for all species in recent years.



And to prove it, on our best attended outing in the last few years, the lowly pinks did not disappoint. Of course it wasn't as good as it was earlier in the week (which it never is) but enough of our guys caught enough fish to make everyone feel pretty damn good. Steve and Rebecca Murray contributed greatly to the upbeat day by putting together a great lunch of subs and salads. There was enough beer to make everyone happy. And after a long summer, you couldn't ask for more than to hang out with 25 like minded fly fishermen and catch up on everything from fishing to family adventures and the current state of each others health (knock on wood).

Did we mention that it was a beautiful day? You couldn't ask for anything better. Great temperature, no wind, sun and a beautiful view of a piece of Puget Sound that most Deception Pass destinationers don't even know exists. A pristine spit of land that hasn't really been altered, except by the elements, for many decades.



Olympic Fly Fishers of Edmonds Phil Sacks officer & trusted Gillie, silences any and all critics.

Left: Joe Conner's chunky Pink catch, after a patient and well executed beach landing.

Photo credits: Bruce Johnson

# OLYMPIC FLY FISHERS OF EDMONDS SUMMER PICNIC 2011

The Club picnic at the Murray's was a first class event. No hot dogs and hamburgers at this picnic. It was grilled shish kebab with peanut sauce and Asian noodles with vegetables and fresh fruit bowl. This was cuisine not ball park food, all prepared by the Murrays with some help from the Bunneys' who drove in a day early to help out.



Then there was the setting, looking out on the Cascade foothills and Mt. Baker from a lush country estate. It was timed perfectly to take advantage of the warmest summer day, so warm that some folks moved up onto the spacious porch to cool down.



Everyone had a fishing story or two to tell from the summer's outings, from the 8-pound silver caught at Eglon, to the annual spring B.C. luncheon, to Montana and Central Oregon.



And then to cap everything off, we were served fresh apple and berry pies, take your choice. With ice cream no less, plus a well deserved smoke for the gracious and talented hosts.



I feel sorry for the members who missed it. Keith Stamm

The Club picnic was very cool. Steve and Rebecca Murray were very gracious hosts as always, and the day was very beautiful. I was happy to see all the people who attended, including Captain Larry and Jeanne Roxby.

Ken Martin sold me a new fly rod. I can't wait to get it. I had never thrown WF line before and Ken gave me a tip on casting it, plus he has some very nice equipment, complete with Tibor reels.

I thought about all these people with different backgrounds sharing fun time together, I can't help but think I would have never made an effort to learn about some of these people had it not been for fly fishing. I realize what a great loss that would have been in my life. Sometimes it takes a common interest to bring people with different characteristics together. **Bill Scott**



Media savvy members may have taken note of the video clip format of this years picnic images. You can thank the multi-talented hostess and videographer Rebecca Murray, aka RPM Studios for her commemoration of the OFF Picnic and the OFF Ala Spit outing - Now on YouTube !

Picnic Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ujg7Bs7VVec&feature=youtu.be>

Ala Spit Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNXI7oTvCvw>



Crane Prairie Reservoir in Central Oregon is one of those places I've long wanted to fish due to the legendary size of its rainbow trout, you know, the kind of thing you read in the fishing magazines that can get you over-excited. When I started looking seriously into it I was told the trout fishery was a thing of the past, the lake having been taken over by spiny rays. I was too late. Again.

Or so I was told until I contacted Fly & Field Outfitters in Bend, Oregon. They had a different story. It's not a numbers lake, but the big rainbows are there, if you know the lake and how to fish it. That was all I needed to hear.

Scott's strategy involved first finding a channel using the depth sounder and marking it with a buoy. Then he anchored the boat out of the channel within easy casting distance up wind. Up wind because the easiest way to cast an 18-foot leader bearing two large bead-head chironomids and a strike indicator is a downwind roll cast.

The major trout forage in late summer is the prolific population of chironomids that frequent the silty lake floor. The chironomid population is so dense Crane Prairie rainbows can pack on two pounds a

# CRANE PRAIRIE

KEITH STAMM



Wednesday Aug. 10 found me out on the lake with F&F guide Scott Lewis, who explained how the lake is fished most effectively. "The key, he said, is the series of old river channels at the bottom of the lake." Crane Prairie is a shallow lake, no more than 10 or 12 feet deep, except in the river channels.

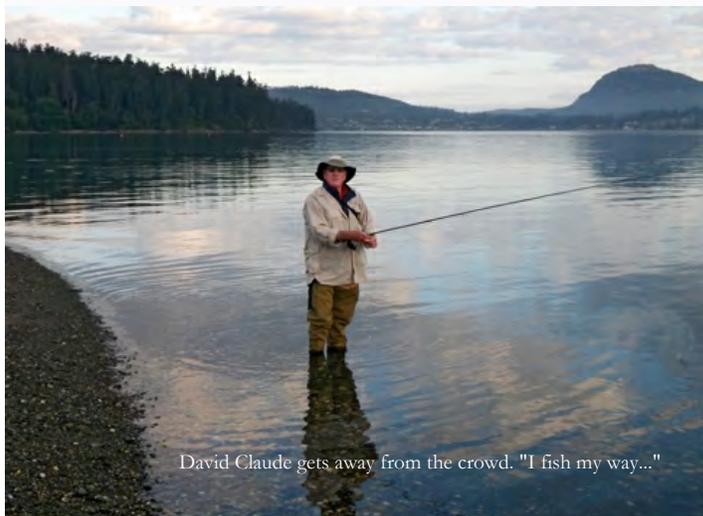
When the lake warms up in summer the trout bunch up in these channels which are 16-18 feet deep and hold the coolest water. In fact you could say this is a special case of stratification which results in all the coldest water lying in the channels, a fortunate circumstance if you are able to find the channels, and if you know how to fish them once you find them.

year. As I found out, they grow to football proportions. A 20-inch fish may weigh six pounds, a 22-inch fish eight pounds.

It took us a couple hours to find a productive channel and catch our first bow, a six-pounder, well worth the wait. All day we kept moving from one channel to another, searching for a channel that would produce more than one fish. We caught a number of 15-inchers, then a four-pounder. The really big fish were eluding us. There was nothing to do but stick to Scott's game plan, which finally paid off around 4 p.m. The indicator plunged out of

sight. The fish charged the boat, turned and ran off line like a 30-pound Chinook. A back and forth battle ensued in which it was 20 minutes before we even saw the fish.

"That's the one," Scott said, and started pulling up all the anchors, at which point the fish headed for the marker buoy. Scott pulled that up as well. About 4:30 Scott slipped the net under him, a 23-inch, eight-pound native rainbow. "Shall we go back in there for another one," Scott inquired. "No, I said, this is a time to be grateful, not a time to get greedy."



David Claude gets away from the crowd. "I fish my way..."

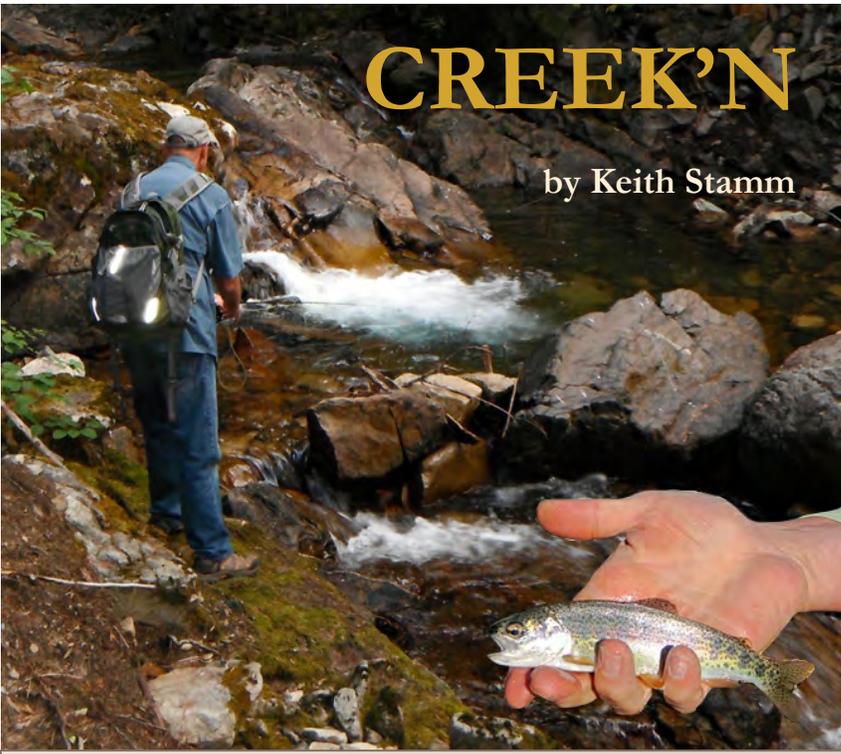


There's something about "The Spit" that brings out the best in folks. For every OFF fly fisherman on the beach there were probably three or more spin fishermen. We were all using pink. For us, marabou, mostly,

and for them buzz bombs for the most part. Even in "combat" fishing conditions, everyone got along great and we all had a wonderful day. As expected, the spin casters also caught three times as many fish as we did (something about that extra 75 to 85 feet a good spinning rod can deliver) but no one seemed to care. It was a day with Fall in the air, rumors of a few silvers showing up here and there, CFS flows about to lower in the Yakima and thoughts about those huge ice cream cones at that produce place you go by if you take the back way to the freeway through Conway. Hal treated. Please let Bill Scott, Steve and Rebecca, Dan, Norm and Ken, know how much they helped this outing to be so successful. Dick Smmons

# CREEK'N

by Keith Stamm



## EVENT SCHEDULE

**OCTOBER OUTING: October 24, 2011**

Okanagan lakes - Blue Lake & others

**November: In the works, Methow River steelhead**

With Jeff Brazada Info: [www.brazdasflyfishing.com](http://www.brazdasflyfishing.com)

**GENERAL MEETING: September 14, 2011**

**Invited Guest Speaker: Chris Grieve**

Guide - Northwest Flyfishing Adventures

Topic: *Fly fishing the Stilly and Sauk rivers*

Information: [www.northwestflyfishingadventures.com](http://www.northwestflyfishingadventures.com)

**GENERAL MEETING: October 12, 2011**

**Invited Guest Speaker: Mike Bembow**

Blog Writer Everett Herald - Fly-Fishing with Mike

Topic: *Fly fishing the Methow and Grande Ronde rivers*

Information: [www.heraldnet.com](http://www.heraldnet.com) (search Mike Benbow)

**GENERAL MEETING: November 9, 2011**

**Invited Guest Speaker: John Kendall**

Guide & owner Black Heron Fly Fishing Shop

Topic: *Fly fishing the Conlitz River and Merrill Lake*

Information: <http://blackheronflyfishing.com>

“So, Ryan (Smith) says you guys want to go Creek’n,” said the big dude who met us at the Coffee Shop in Roslyn on the last day of August. “Yes, we do,” said Dick Simmons, innocently enough in his rosy view of what that meant. So we loaded our gear in Guy Drew’s commando jeep and off we went, somewhere north of Ronald on rough forest service roads to a place I think he called Thorp Creek, although there was no sign at the bridge so it’s anybody’s guess what creek we launched ourselves up.

There was kind of a trail going up the creek to begin with, although it soon disappeared. Guy said, “Sometimes these are bear trails and if you follow them far enough you end up crawling on your hands and knees.” This was our first indication that we actually had no clue what “creek’n” actually meant. Not that we even noticed. Our eyes were fixed on the pretty little creek that gently cascaded off the mountain slope, forming a series of bathtub-sized pools below each waterfall. Then Guy said what we were waiting to hear: “Usually there’s one or two nice brookies laying in each of those pools, so we’ll just work our way up.”

And so we did, creeping along on slippery rocks, clambering over the occasional log jam, laying low and casting our red-bellied woolly buggers into the frothy water at the head of each little pool. We were distracted fishermen, spending more time peering up the cozy little canyon, lost in the quiet intimacy of the place. We were in a quiet, reverent mood as we picked our way upstream, looking, listening, taking it all in. I thought that I’d like to morph into a trout just to swim around in one of those pools for a day. It didn’t really matter that much if we caught a brookie or not, and we didn’t. A local camper had apparently vacuumed every little pool, but he couldn’t take away what we had mainly come for.

To get back out we decided to go up, which meant climbing up the steep creek bank, climbing over deadfalls, busting brush, side hill dodging, following game trails when we could find them. It felt more like a Special Forces reconnaissance mission than a fishing trip. We began to think of Guy, our guide, as the “commanding officer.”

Our creek’n expedition was rounded out with a hike up the Teanaway, casting in a strong wind into crystal clear pools to spooky trout. Dick got a couple small rainbows. That put him two up on me. Then we decided to hit the John Wayne trail and hike back into a rather inaccessible stretch of the Yakima. It was a beautiful stretch of river. Also it was pretty deep, a significant fact given that we crossed it several times and I had decided to wade wet, which meant that freezing cold water reached regions of my anatomy I had not anticipated. We caught some more small trout by wading, sometimes half swimming, a good ways down river. When it came time to return, it was off into the brush again. Guy peered into the woods and said, “This does not look like fun, guys.” We agreed, it didn’t and it wasn’t, but this was all part of creek’n and this was no place to quit. We plunged in, and after a half hour of brush busting and several river crossings, we made it out. Guy summed up the day: “You guys were sure good sports to follow me around all day.” “Oh, this was nothing compared to what we do at the gym,” we lied.

Would we go creek’n again? Most likely. We need just a few days to recover. Guy’s got a high lake spotted where we can ride up on horses and catch trout 16 inches and up. All we need is cowboy boots and big hats.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

The General meeting is held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the South County Senior Center, 220 Railroad Ave. Edmonds, WA. Social hour: 6:00pm Business meetings are 6:00pm on the 4th Wednesday each month at Alf’s 4820 196th SW, Lynnwood, WA.

### Officers:

Bruce Johnson, V.P., 425-742-2252  
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