



Fishing The Salt

with Capt. Vaughn Podmore

Our speaker for March is well known to some of us but may be unknown to others who tend to focus their efforts only on trout and freshwater species. That will all change for the better in a few weeks when Captain Vaughn Podmore, or “Captain Vaughn” as he is known locally and throughout the fly fishing industry, guides us through the myriad of fly fishing opportunities right at our doorstep. Based in Huntington Beach where he owns and operates **SaltyFly Guide Service**, Captain Vaughn is perhaps the leading saltwater fly fishing guide from San Diego to Ventura and points beyond, although he would be quick to deny it.



Capt. Vaughn Podmore

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MARCH 2021 MONTHLY MEETING

Date: Tuesday, March 16th
 Wet Flies: 6:00 PM / Dinner: 7:00 PM / Buy-In: 8:00 PM
 Place: St. Augustine By the Sea Episcopal Church
 1227 14th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401
 Cost: \$50 per person including a \$10 per person program only
 Parking: City parking structure across the street, most convenient.
 Seated rates, first 90 min. \$2 each add. 1/2 hour, \$1.00
 \$2 each add. 1/2 hour, daily max. Expect to pay \$7.
 1227 14th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401
 TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, RESERVE ONLINE
 OR CALL THE HOT LINE 310-326-4459

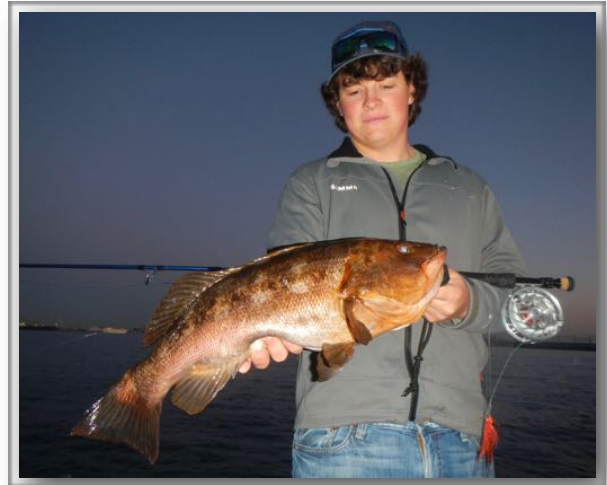
In person meeting canceled due to Covid-19. Will be moved to a Zoom meeting, look for an email link from the club or check out the website.

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Fishing The Salt

Growing up in South Africa, Vaughn was introduced to fly fishing at an early age, although it is more likely that he made that introduction on his own. His first fly line needed to be improvised in what was then a true third world environment – it was a home-made, wax impregnated length of twine that served his purposes well for local fresh and saltwater species. Fast forward quite a few years and many thousand miles and you will find Capt. Vaughn at the helm of his 26-foot Century twin engine outboard guiding clients over 200 days per year anywhere from Catalina Island (or Santa Barbara Island if that is where the fish are running) in search of yellowtail, bonito, white seabass and other exotics; to the Long Beach and Los Angeles Harbor Breakwall for resident calicos, sand bass, mackerel and bonito; to in-shore fishing in Alamitos Bay and Huntington Harbor for spotted bay bass and halibut, and all points in between. In addition, time permitting Capt. Vaughn guides in the local surf as well as fishing the local bays and harbors from shore or personal watercraft.



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Fishing The Salt

This will be a great opportunity to learn from a local expert that you don't need to travel thousands and thousands of miles at great expense (and currently perhaps at significant personal risk) to find true world class fly fishing opportunities. Instead, just drive down to Long Beach or Alamitos Bay, hop aboard Capt. Vaughn's well outfitted and sea worthy boat, and get ready to catch fish. Everything is provided unless you want to bring your own gear (but you do need to get your own California fishing license before the trip). This is sure to be an exciting program from someone who knows the fishy spots like the back of his hand and most of the fish on a first name basis. Capt. Vaughn was featured recently as one of the speaker/presenters for the Southwest Council/FFI *Saltwater Saturdays Series*, and served as program speaker for the Long Beach Casting Club in June, 2020. If you'd like a preview of the coming presentation, check out a few of Capt. Vaughn's YouTube videos which can be found via Bob Marriott's website under the "Videos" link at the very bottom of the home page. Additionally, see "Fishing with Captain Vaughn," *Mending the Line*, Jan. 2021, pp. 9-11; or check out his website for more information,

www.saltyflyfishing.com. And remember to join us on March 16, 2021 – 7:30 p.m. – on Zoom, *Free of Charge*. Meeting I.D. and Password will be Provided.



Board of Directors

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| President | Board |
| Vice President | OPEN |
| Secretary | Celia Carroll |
| Treasurer | Tom Rasmussen |
| Treasurer | Art Antolick |
| Speaker Programs | Scott Clark |
| Membership | Greg Dahlem |
| Dinner Reservations | Ken Trabert |
| Inventory | Clay Dodder |
| Database Manager | OPEN |
| Conservation | OPEN |
| Outings | Peter Haight |
| | Larry Carroll |
| Webpage | Larry Carroll |
| Newsletter | Rich Peters |
| | Michie Hirooka |
| | Clay Dodder |

Club Activities & Committees

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| New Member Committee | Reece Lewis |
| | Leslie Riley |
| Spring Super Raffle | OPEN |
| Conservation Super Raffle | OPEN |
| Hotline | John Dalton |
| Casting Classes | OPEN |
| Fly Tying Classes | Peter Haight |
| Trout in the Classroom | Celia Carroll |
| SW Council - FFI Rep. | Celia Carroll |

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Wildernessflyfishers@gmail.com

To join WFF, visit our website

www.wildernessflyfishers.org

Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

The monthly Board Meeting, held the Tuesday, one week before the monthly club meeting, is held via Zoom. Please contact Celia Carroll for an invite at ccarr10186@aol.com. Meetings start promptly at 7:30 P.M. All members are welcome. New members are especially encouraged to attend. Come and see how your club runs and you might pick up some fishing tips, too.

Minutes of Board Meetings are available to members on the website's [Document Library](#)

COMING EVENTS

For more information go to the WFF website [CALENDAR](#)

WFF Kelsey Lake Outing

April

WFF Fly Tying

The classes are from 9 am to about 12 noon on the 4th Saturday of the month at St. Augustine Church, 1211 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Park across the street in the city parking structure. See page 1 for parking rates and address.

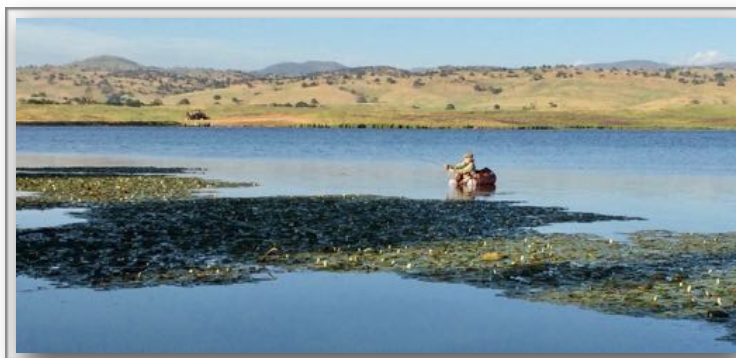
Fly Tying Classes will be suspended until in person meetings can resume due to Covid-19. Keep an eye on the website for further updates.



2021 Outings Update

We are off to a good start planning for club outings in 2021. Subject to all of the usual disclaimers about wind, weather, water conditions, travel restrictions and Covid, here is what the schedule looks like so far:

- Kelsey Lake – scheduled for the last weekend in April, which is rapidly approaching. A few spots for fishing and camping are still available. Contact trip leader Larry Carroll (Wildernessflyfishers@gmail.com).
- Hot Creek Ranch – scheduled for end of October/first weekend in November. There is still availability but this trip typically fills up quickly. Contact trip leader Larry Carroll (Wildernessflyfishers@gmail.com).
- Lower Sacramento River – dates in the spring or fall to be determined based on preferences of those interested in joining. Lots of availability for this trip as we can simply increase the number of guides and boats to fit our needs. Our accommodations will be based in Redding. Contact trip leader Richard Luczyski (626-798-2030, or rluczyski@gmail.com).
- Big Horn River – being planned for September at Leaning Tree Lodge. Five anglers have signed up to date. Due to the need to have an even number of anglers for guide/boat sharing there are either one or possibly three spots still available. Contact trip leader Peter Haight (PHaight@aol.com).
- Smith River, MT; Sun River, MT: – This outing has two components and, subject to availability, can be taken either singly or in combination. The Smith River float trip is scheduled for June 21-25 and is currently full. The Sun River excursion led by former member Gus Velarde is scheduled for June 23 – July 1. There are a few openings available for the Sun River trip. Contact trip leader Art Antolick (Arthur@antolickcpa.com).
- Alagnak Lodge, AK: – This trip is still tentative and in the planning stages. If the trip takes place it will be scheduled for the last week of August during the peak of silver salmon (coho) season. Contact trip leader Peter Haight (PHaight@aol.com).



Hot Creek Ranch During Covid

By Art Antolick



It was Friday, October 30, 2020 and time for another annual Hot Creek Ranch outing. During the week, seven of us including Richard and Derek Luczynski, Peter Haight, Marcelo Reynoso, Celia and Larry Carroll, and me were on our way for a new adventure. Unfortunately our eighth person Steve Weisberg was not able to join us due to back surgery and his recovery just prior to the outing. The seven of us had COVID-19 tests during the week and all tested negative prior to the trip.

Driving Highway 395 was beautiful, but there was not one patch of snow on any of the mountains. In the Mammoth area there were only a few patches of snow left over from last year. There had been thick smoke in Mammoth as reported from other club members from previous trips in September and October, but we were lucky to see no smoke from the fires at the beginning of our trip. I was remembering my first trip with the club to Hot Creek Ranch. After being skunked Gus Velarde had helped me catch my first two fish at the ranch on the last day of the trip.



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Hot Creek Ranch During Covid

On the way up I did a quick stop at Schat's Bakery in Bishop to order bread to pick up on the way home, and purchased a sandwich to go. I also made a quick stop at Sierra Trout Magnet Fly Shop to pick up some 5X and 6X leaders, and get tips on the fishing on the Upper Owens River. Masks and social distancing were easy this early in the day at my stops. I had the flies needed for the Owens River as suggested by Trace Bright, but unfortunately the fly shop was all out of leaders. Next stop was an hour of fishing on the upper Owens River above Crowley Lake. There was absolutely no trout activity at all in the water, and I did not see or catch any fish.

Then onward to meet our group at 4 o'clock at the gate of Hot Creek Ranch. The order of the day was to use small flies according to Kevin Peterson, with the smaller the better. Friday evening even though we could see trout sipping, none of us had much luck with the fishing. I started down at the dead tree below the middle bridge. Marcelo fishing just below me did not get any bites. I tried using a 7X leader with 7X tippet. I did get several nice yanks on the line. But each time I lost both flies with the elk hair caddis fly combined with the Hot Creek caddis fly remaining with the trout. So much for using ancient leader and tippet. We each ate in our cabins on Friday night and did not do our usual stop at Slocum's in Mammoth.

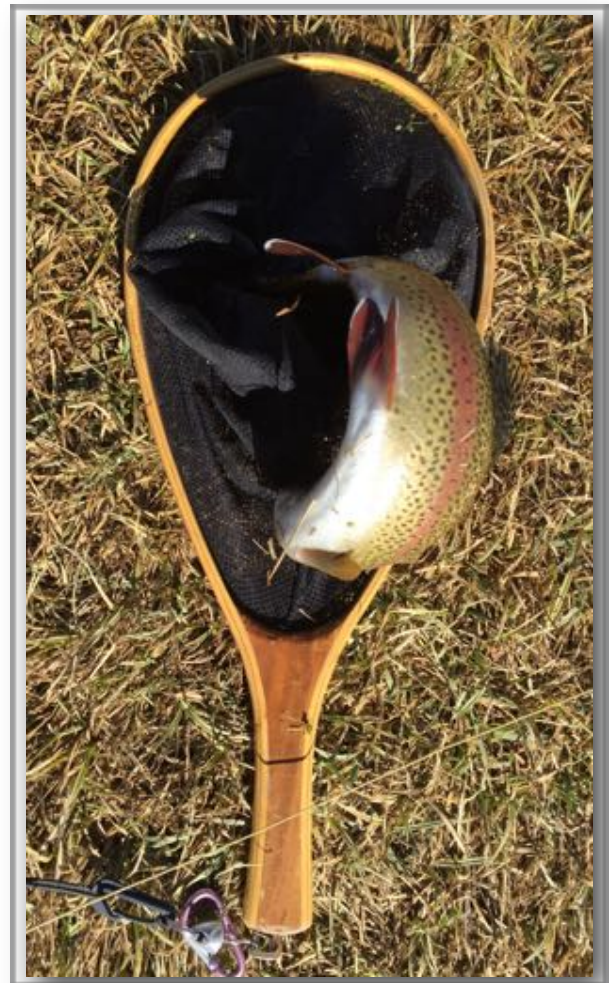
Saturday we had beautiful clear blue skies and wonderful weather as the picture shows. I decided to use 6X leader and tippet for the day to be able to tie on the small flies. I started on the water above the bridge at the first stream inlet, since a number of people were on the water upstream. I tried a hot creek caddis and trico fly combination. I also switched the trico to a blue winged olive. As I fished downstream I caught a few fish in the 8" to 10" range at the dead tree and at the run above the lower bridge. I then caught several nice 14" fish in the pond above the bridge and in the pool just below the bridge. I saw Peter with a nice fish on, but couldn't get to him in time to help with the netting. Peter at the second hole below the bridge was starting to catch more fish after switching to a small black fly. I tried a few



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Hot Creek Ranch During Covid

small black flies in my collection and did catch a few smaller fish. Onward down the creek toward the fence I caught a few fish. At the fence I caught a nice 11" brown casting onto a patch of green weeds with the tippet fly dangling part way across the narrow pool close to the cliff. Then I meandered back up stream and I saw Marcelo. He had switched to a small white caddis and was catching fish. I tried the same and caught another 14" fish in the pool Peter had been fishing earlier. During my travels up and down the creek I had an audience. Two blue herons watched me from either side of the creek. The herons would switch back and forth on opposite sides of the creek waiting for that meal. I stopped to fish in the large pool above the lower bridge, but I was not getting any takes. Then a 20 plus inch rainbow with beautiful colors jumped a foot completely out of the water, and flew parallel for two feet until it did a complete back flip back into the water. The score board showed a ten for the effort. Needless to say with this exhibit of acrobatics my flies were in line with the fish, but 20 feet further into the pool with no fish interested. By the end of the day Peter had eight fish and I had 12 fish. I had occasional big tugs on the line during the day, but I was not able to bring in any fish larger than 14". Saturday we had an enjoyable masked pot luck with chips, dip, crackers and cheeses with wine to start. No this was not a holdup, but it was a nice dinner with Marcelo and Peter cooking some steaks for us and the rest of us pitching in with additional food, wine, scotch and dessert. In spite of our precautions we had a great time and conversations together. Sunday you could see some smoke coming back over Mammoth Mountain from the fires, so it was a little hazier during the day. I searched Kevin's supply of flies and found three size 22 and size 24 black baetis flies to try for the day. I walked up from the bridge, but there were a number



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Hot Creek Ranch During Covid

of anglers toward the upper bridge and the fence. So I started again above the bridge by the cabins at the first stream inlet with a hot creek caddis fly and a black baetis fly on the tippet. My fishing experience went wild in this pool with 12 fish in a half hour. I also caught three fish going downstream toward the bridge. I had never caught any fish in that stretch of water in 25 years of fishing here. In the weeds below the bridge almost at the dead tree I lost my first baetis fly to a large trout between two grass patches. The trout flipped over in the hole like the one in my net here. By the dead tree and the creek just beyond going down stream I caught another 11 fish on my second baetis fly. Again I had never caught any fish in this stretch of water. I lost my second baetis fly in a pool on one of the bends above the large pool above the lower bridge to another large trout rolling over the fly. I lost my third baetis fly in the second pool down from the lower bridge at about noon. I used many different flies after this and caught one or two trout each with many of the flies. In the afternoon the Hot Creek caddis along with a trico were the best flies along with an elk hair caddis. By the end of the day I had caught approximately 40 trout all in the 6" to 12" range. We had a short quiet evening in front of Peter's cabin and then on to separate cabins for dinner.

I stayed at Hot Creek for all day Monday. There were only a few people on the water. I caught up with Richard and Derek Luczynski by the upper bridge. I watched Derek catch a fish with a tenkara rod in the pool above the upper bridge. He had trouble with the landing, like other club members I had seen at Hot Creek in past years. About 11:00 the wind picked up and really started blowing. It was a long rest of the day fighting the wind and trying to place the flies in good position to catch fish. I had a couple more baetis flies, but they did not have the magic they had on Sunday. I ended up with nine fish by the end of the day with another 14" fish caught in the large pool above the lower bridge. The deer were out in force in the late afternoon in the lower section of the creek. Instead of a dozen or two, there were several hundred. The deer were lined up on the ridges socially distancing in line to drop down over the fence into the meadow. The way they yanked out



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Hot Creek Ranch During Covid

big clumps of grass and chopped away, you would think there would be no grass left in the creek. With lower water, yes, we had grass to work around all weekend. As dusk settled there were a lot of new fishermen in the upper reaches of the creek staying overnight for a program with



Kevin. At the end of the day I looked at my pad and found 30 different flies used and discarded during the weekend with wishful thinking for the next fly to work better.

I stayed in bishop for another couple of days and fished the Lower Owens. Tuesday I tried below the dam for several hours, but I did not see any fish or rises. I only saw several flies come off the water. I moved down stream to the first tree and caught six fish for the rest of the day. Wednesday I stopped and talked to Trace at the fly shop and he said none of the guides had caught fish at the dam during the weekend and they were all downstream 2-4 miles. I went back to the first tree and fished for half a day. A green worm from Trace was the best fly for the day and in the end I caught nine trout. None of them were more than 9" for both days. It was the same story talking to other fly fishers for the whole weekend. What are the trout eating, and what will be the most effective fly to use? If only we knew. At least Kevin Peterson had a good idea of the flies that would work on Hot Creek Ranch. Then it was off to Schat's for a couple dozen loaves of bread, and the wonderful smells for the ride home.



Notices

Casting News For March

From Jody Martin Southwest Council Casting Lead

I've been contacting all the clubs in the SWC to find out about current (and planned) casting events and activities, and it's clear that we have a lot going on, with even more planned for whenever we are out from under the COVID restrictions. Keep your eyes open for the following casting opportunities in March:

- **Santa Barbara:** Regular "Second Salt Saturdays" every second Saturday of the month, teaching basic fly fishing techniques to beginners at the beach. For more information contact: Joe Narkevitz, at: joseph.narkevitz@gmail.com
- **Sierra Pacific:** Regular casting clinics on the first and third Saturday of each month at Lake Balboa, Anthony Beilensen Park, Encino, 9:00 – 11:00 am. For more information contact: Marshall Bissett, at: programs@spff.org
- **San Diego:** FFI Casting Challenge Kickoff via Zoom, starting soon. Free casting lessons at Lake Murray every Sunday morning (currently on hold). Intermediate casting every 1st and 3rd Sunday at Ski Beach in Mission Bay. For more information contact: John Wylie, at: flycasting@sandiegoflyfishers.com

Participation in all of the above requires masks and social distancing.



Print & Mail Coupon

If you prefer not to use our website, mail in a coupon with your check.



Wilderness Fly Fishers Membership Application

_____ New Member _____ Renewal

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Dues:

- ☐ \$50 Single - Regular
- ☐ \$70 Single - Golden Trout
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- ☐ \$80 Family - Golden Trout

_____ Additional Donation

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P.O. Box 3358

Santa Monica, CA 90408-3358

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Join us online, Visit our website www.wildernessflyfishers.org



March 2021

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--|-------------------------|----------|--------|--|
| 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 WFF Board Meeting Via Zoom | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 Daylight Saving Time Begins | 15 | 16 Via Zoom WFF Monthly Meeting: Capt. Vaughn Podmore : "Fishing The Salt" | 17 St. Patrick's Day | 18 | 19 | 20 Spring Begins WFF Deadline for Newsletter Articles |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 WFF Fly Tying Suspended until in person meetings can resume. Passover begins at sundown |
| 28 Palm Sunday | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

