



SANTIAM FLYCASTERS

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December 2021

December SFC Meeting (In Person or by "Zoom") Infinite Seasons—The Road to Being Successful Year-Round

By Nick Wheeler



It is every angler's dream to fish as much as possible throughout the year, so let us discuss the ways you might be able to do so successfully. We will examine all the best opportunities we have locally to accomplish this feat. Some of the waterways might already be known to you, while others you may have only heard about through rumors. While some say the difference between a good and a great angler is skill or luck, I believe it is timing. Being in the right place at the right time is key to having that epic day, and, that is why knowledge of each location and its unique prime fishing season matters. So let us go into detail on how to make a plan to hit all the highlights in our local waters and increase your likelihood for success. This presentation will help you catch fish continuously throughout the year and will aid in your pursuit of an endless season. I will also share my rotation of fishing spots and how I spend my year on the water.



I have been working in the fishing industry for 20 years helping anglers become better educated. From on the water classes and guiding to helping pick out the right size wader, I have been a reliable friendly face you will recognize from our local fly-fishing shops.



I started my fly-fishing career in the hills of Northern California, but for over the last 10 years the Pacific Northwest has become my home. While some know me as the "shad master," my knowledge and interest also extend to chasing steelhead, salmon, trout, and bass, leaving no stone unturned in my fishing pursuits. In this presentation I will share the knowledge I have acquired over the years and help you stay on water year-around.



Board Meeting By Zoom

December 6
6:30 pm

General Meeting December 9

In Person
Pringle Hall Community Center
Or by "Zoom"
7:00 pm

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NOTE: The December meeting will not include a holiday dinner as in years past.

Santiam Flycasters
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Scott Vaslev - President

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Dennis Burnett - Secretary

Tim Johnson - Treasurer/
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George Hingston

Beth Jappay

Ken Karnosh

Ricky Love

Kent Toomb

Donnie Weninger

President's Corner
By Scott Vaslev

Gave myself an early Christmas present this year, I joined the Oregon Fishing Club. I have been contemplating joining for a while and thought to myself "you aren't getting any younger" so pulled the trigger a month or so ago.



My youngest son loves to fly fish, been twice, both at Hosmer. Who wouldn't love to fly fish when you can sit in a lounge chair, have all of your equipment handed to you, all of your flies furnished, and, if you bugger up some tippet or lose a fly, just hand it off and get a replacement!!!!

Well, I tell myself that's how we grow the sport. But seriously I like doing it. As an aside, last September on our last day up there I told Derek in the morning to go ahead and get to fishing while I break down camp. I joined him a couple of hours later, fished for a bit, and then we headed home. As we were driving back we talking about our exploits and who caught what and when, he said, "I caught ten fish this morning, how many did you catch?" Cheeky so-and-so. But like a lot of men and women who have families and jobs it is tough to find time to take more than a day off to fly fish. So with OFC's properties so close we can probably find the time to drown a few flies.

I have multiple golf buddies who have expressed an interest in our sport. The beauty of OFC properties is most of the venues do not require a fishing license. Blue Den or Turner, you can plop them in a pontoon boat and have at it. No casting needed, just let out some line and start kicking. Their chance of catching a fish (or at least hooking one) is pretty good.

Another reason for joining is to have a place to fish in the winter and early spring. The North Santiam is closed (for trout) until late April so options are limited. Now I have an option close to home so I can scratch my itch an hour or two from home.

Finally, we have quite a few members of SFC who have joined OFC. Now I don't have to keep dropping hints like, "Say! Weather looks decent tomorrow, know of any place close to home that is stocked regularly with large fish." Another advantage is there are spots on our local rivers where we can drive down and fish or use as take outs on floats. One that comes to mind is the South Santiam float starting at Sweet Home. Instead of floating to Waterloo we can use the take out at Bates Bridge saving an hour of frog water.

Of course being retired and having extra time on my hands makes it even better. I'm not being paid for this promo but thought it might be of interest to our membership who like me are O.F.G.'s. Old Retirement Guy (Gal).

Detroit Lake Outing Report ***By Ken Karnosh***



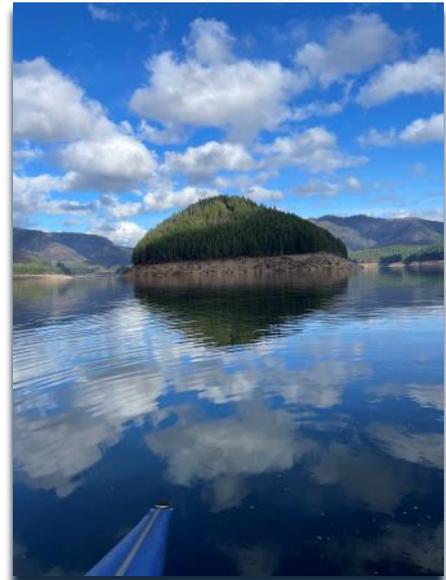
After she threatened to blow us off the water on November 6 causing us to cancel that trip to Detroit, Mother Nature graced us with fabulous weather on November 13.

Broken overcast with mild temperatures made for a splendid day on the water. The water level had risen about 17 feet in the past couple of days, but the water was still very clear.

If only the trout would have been as nice as Mother Nature! Tim and Jeff landed about a half dozen each, Ken landed 3, and Steve didn't have to wet his net unfortunately, but Larry took the prize with 13 landed. Some of the fish were in the 13-15" range. Another fisherman dragging gear behind his kayak said that he had hooked a number of small Chinook.

The boaters apparently had the same idea as us, because there were about 20 on the water. Most were on the water as long as us, so they must have been having similar luck.

Anyway, Detroit is still a fun place to fish in the fall and early winter. And, apparently ODFW has stocked some nice fish there this fall as well.



How to join the December meeting. We have rented Pringle Hall (606 Church St SE, Salem). The doors will open around 6:30 pm. To comply with Oregon Health Authority guidelines, face masks or face shields will be required inside the hall.

As an alternative, the program presentation can also be viewed via Zoom. Watch your email for the Zoom Link or [CLICK HERE](#) to view the presentation. The link will activate around 6:45 pm on the night of the program. Preregistration is not required. Please let me know if you have any related questions. Tim Johnson, tim.the.fisherman@gmail.com, 503-507-8552

Help Select our Outings for 2022

At its December 6 meeting, our Board will compile the list of club outings for 2022. They would much appreciate your input on that task.

So, you can help us decide our 2022 outings in a couple of ways:

Contact, or send it to, President Scott or any other Board member, or e-mail it to santiam-flycasters@yahoo.com.

Participate in the Board meeting that will start at 6:30 p.m. on December 6. To do that, e-mail Tim at santiam-flycasters@yahoo.com to allow you to join the Zoom meeting.

We scheduled 22 fun outings in 2021 and probably will compile a similar list for 2022. Help us include other fun locations on that list.



2022 Officers and Board

At our November 11 club meeting, our members confirmed these club officers for 2022:

President-Scott Vaslev

Vice President-Shandy Hart Danford

Secretary-Dennis Burnett

Treasurer-Tim Johnson

The club also confirmed the Board members that are listed here in the newsletter. Don Meyer retired from the Board. We thank him for his contributions and his wealth of knowledge from a lifetime of fly fishing. Also, thanks to Kevin for joining the Board.

Thanks to the officers and Board members for their service and dedication. As you know, we welcome others to join the Board as well.



It's Time to Renew Your Membership

If you haven't done so already, this is an excellent time to renew your membership for 2022. Dues are \$30 for individuals or \$35 for families. Lifetime memberships are available for \$300. Use the form at the back of the newsletter to renew your membership or download the form from the Santiam Flycasters website www.santiamflycasters.com. Mail to: Santiam Flycasters, PO Box 691, Salem, OR 97308.

Thanks for your support of the club.

Slack is Evil — Line Handling Skills

By Beth Jappay

This truism was cited in each of the past 2 weeks of my casting classes. Not only is slack a problem with fly casting, it is also a big problem in fly fishing, or more specifically in “catching” fish.

A few years ago my buddy Carmen and I were fishing the salmonfly hatch on the Rogue with our guide and friend Pete Peterson.



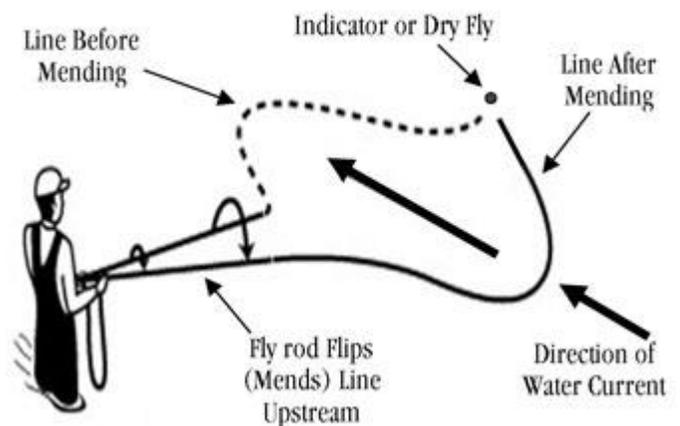
Carmen is a decent caster, we were using the same fly, and Pete was positioning the boat so well that she could reach the best-looking water almost as well as I could. Yet I noticed that I was hooking up about three times the fish that she was. Paying close attention I noticed that I was much more actively managing my line than she was. Though we were drifting in the river, the flies were not traveling the same speed as the boat. I was constantly adjust-

ing the line --mending, stripping line in, letting line out, so that I avoided “drag” on the fly, kept slack out of the line and maintained a good connection to the fly. I noticed that Carmen was...not. What often differentiates the advanced from the intermediate fly fisherman is line-handling skills.

There is a good reason that “tight lines” is a common salutation between fly fishermen. Bait fishermen don’t need to worry about keeping in contact with the hook: the fish swallow it and hook themselves. Gear fishermen don’t have any slack when they are retrieving their lures. In contrast the fly fisherman is trying to fool the fish into thinking the fly is a source of calories; the fish will quickly figure out that what it took into its mouth is not food and will spit out the fly. Hence the need to “set the hook”, which will not occur until the lifting of the rod has straightened the line, removing any slack. Maintaining contact with the fly is one of the more important skills to be successful when fly fishing.

One of the reasons Euro Nymphing is such a successful method of fishing is that, if done correctly, there is inherently no slack in the set up. Lake fishing with a full-sinking line is another situation where there shouldn't be any slack.

When fishing with a current or strong wind dry flies, indicators, and floating fly line will develop a belly in the line from a sideways wind or current. This needs to be corrected with a mend:



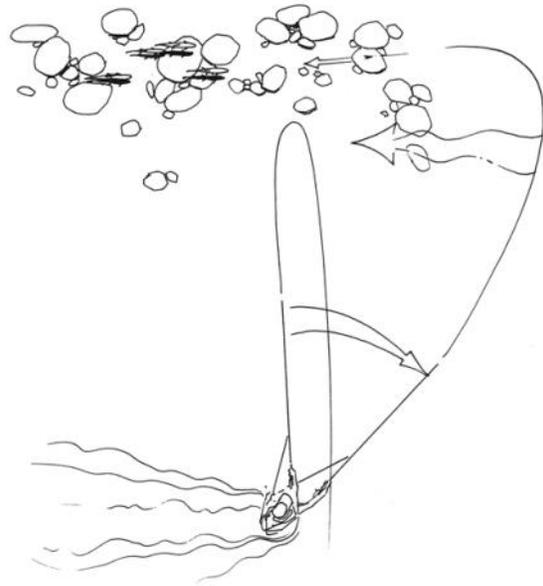
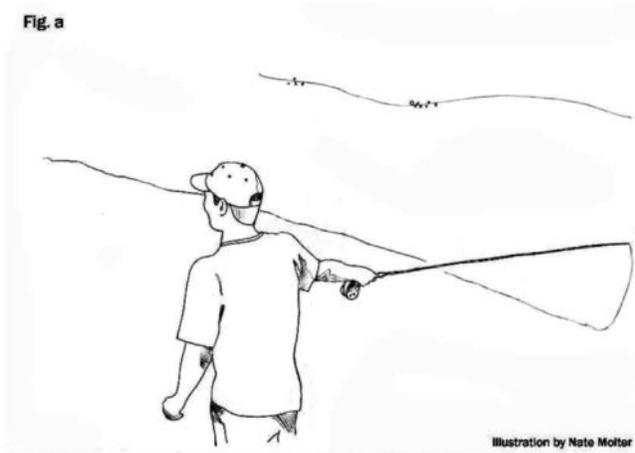
When indicator fishing it is even more important to avoid the development of a belly in the line. There is already a “hinge”, which is the perpendicular angle made between the floating line and the leader dropping into the water. A

hook set is only going to be successful after the lift of the rod has straightened the line, removing the hinge. If you add in a line belly or slack caused by wind or current, the chances of a successful hookup drop considerably. If a belly develops in a line on the water, a mend should be done to straighten the line again, and the experienced fly fisherman is constantly mending his or her line. It takes skill to mend the line without moving the fly or indicator. I remember a couple of years ago when I was fishing on the McKenzie with a guide and he had me fish a back eddy while he rowed to keep the boat in place. I moved the dry fly back up the eddy by mending every couple of seconds, and picked up 3 nice cutthroat in that spot.

With indicator fishing however, often the indicator is deliberately moved upstream during the mend in order to keep the faster-moving indicator from dragging the slower-moving and deeper fly forward and up.

Success is more likely if the cast is adjusted to **prevent** the development of slack. For example, if the current is flowing or the wind is blowing right to left, the cast should be completed with a reach mend to the right.

Fig. a



There are even more advanced casts that can be used for certain situations, such as using a hump cast when casting to the other side of a seam.

Fig. c



Casting to fish directly upstream or directly downstream requires different adjustments. When casting upstream, either the rod needs to be lifted or the line needs to be stripped back in as the fly moves closer, so that the slack is removed. As the fly moves back downstream, line needs to be let out or the rod tip needs to be lowered to maintain contact with the fly as it moves away. Here is a [link](#) to a great YouTube video by Mary Ann Dozer that demonstrates these line handling skills.

In addition to keeping a tight line, line handling skills also involve planning ahead to avoid developing knots in the line. Since a hung-up line can result in losing a fish that makes a run, a good habit to get in is to con-

stantly check loose line after casting or while stripping for knots. With enough practice this can become automatic. In addition keep in mind that knots happen more often with a line that has a lot of “memory”, meaning that it tends to curl up when it is taken off of the reel. It is well worth the time to stretch out this type of line when you are first taking it off of the reel, prior to fishing.

Shooting line while casting has its own sets of problems, since if there are any knots in the line it will hang up in the guides. When casting from a deck, stripping basket, or stripping apron it is important to first cast the full line out onto the water, and then strip it back onto the deck, so that the first line to head out the guide is on the top of the pile and the last line to go through the guides is on the bottom of the pile.

Shooting line when standing in water with a current requires a different solution. Loose fly line on the water will be dragged away, creating too much resistance to shoot line effectively. In that situation it is best to gather loops of line into the non-dominant hand, to be released when shooting the line.



There are a few different ways of doing this, and this is my favorite [video](#) describing some of those techniques.

Ready to take your fly fishing to the next level? Consider whether working on line-handling skills should be your next priority.

The November SFC Newsletter contained a “Fly Tying Challenge” to create a Thanksgiving Turkey Fly. Below is Beth Jappay’s submission which looks better than the original.



How about trying this one for Christmas?



<https://news.orvis.com/fly-fishing/tie-perfect-santa-claus-fly>

Quotable

There will be days when the fishing is better than one’s most optimistic forecast, others when it is far worse. Either is a gain over just staying home.

Roderick Haig-Brown

December Fly of the Month

Lights Out Fly Pattern

(2 Variations)

by John Barratt



This is one of my favorite patterns for the Crooked River. I tie this in two variations, either using a fluorescent orange tungsten bead or a gold bead with a hot spot. I believe the addition of the fluorescent bead or hot spot is important for the success of this fly. Also, I generally fish both versions in a size 18. Figure 1 shows the materials needed for both variations.

Variation #1 Materials

- Hook:** Daiichi 1120 – Size 18
- Bead:** 2mm tungsten fluorescent orange
- Thread:** Black Veevus 12/0
- Dubbing:** Ice Dub UV Black
- Ribbing:** Gold wire x-small
- Tail:** Lemon Wood Duck



Figure 1

Tying Step 1.

Crimp the barb and slip the fluorescent orange bead onto the hook. The smaller opening in the bead should be touching the hook eye. Lay down a base of thread along the hook shank and tie in a dozen duck fibers. The duck fibers should extend about the length of the hook shank. Tie in a three-inch section of gold wire (Figure 2).

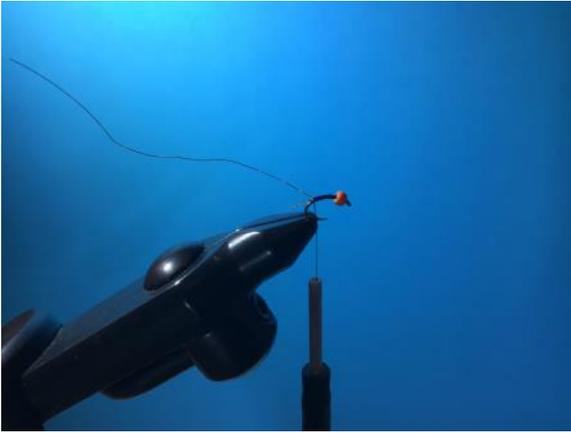


Figure 2

Tying Step 2.

Cut off a lower corner of the Ice Dub packet (facilitates access to the Ice Dub strands). Rub some dubbing wax on the black thread and on your thumb and index finger (having dubbing wax on these two fingers makes it easier to twist the Ice Dub). Pull a small amount of Ice Dub from the packet and twist the strands around the thread using your waxed thumb and index finger (Figure 3).

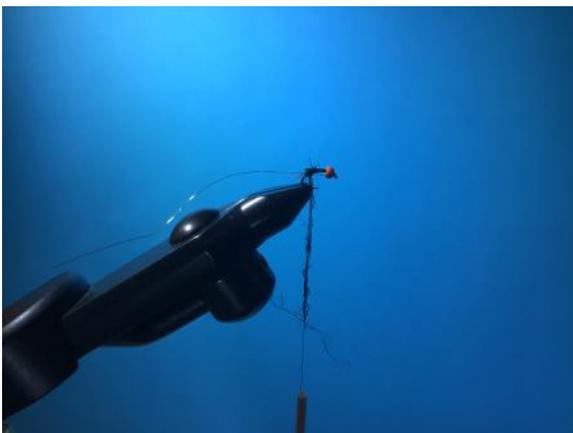


Figure 3

Begin dubbing by wrapping the thread forward on the hook, adding more dubbing wax and more Ice Dub strands until you have a dubbed body that is about the same diameter as the 2 mm bead. Stop dubbing just behind the bead and then counter wrap the gold wire all the way to the bead. Make several thread wraps over the gold wire and then helicopter the gold wire until it breaks (Figure 4) and then cut the thread. Generally, I don't use head cement on this fly.



Figure 4

Use a toothbrush or dubbing tool to tease out some of the trapped Ice Dub fibers.

Variation #2 Materials

Hook: Daiichi 1120 – Size 18

Bead: 2mm gold

Thread: Black Veevus 12/0

Hot Spot: Fluorescent Fire Orange Ultra Thread 140 or similar

Dubbing: Ice Dub UV black

Ribbing: Gold wire x-small

Tail: Lemon Wood Duck

Tying Step 1.

Crimp the barb and slip the gold bead onto the hook. The smaller opening in the bead should be touching the hook eye. Lay down a base of thread

along the hook shank and tie in the duck fibers and the gold wire as described above (Figure 5).



Figure 5

Tying Step 2.

Dub the body as described above, counter wrap the gold thread forward to the bead, make several thread wraps over the gold wire and then helicopter the gold wire until it breaks. Whip finish the black thread. Be sure to leave enough room behind the bead to tie in the fluorescent fire orange ultra thread (Figure 6).



Figure 6

Tying Step 3.

Cut the black thread and tie in the fluorescent fire orange ultra thread behind the gold bead. Add a few wraps to secure the ultra thread and then whip finish the ultra thread several times (ultra thread

comes loose more readily than tying thread). Cut the ultra thread (Figure 7). Generally, I don't use head cement on this fly.

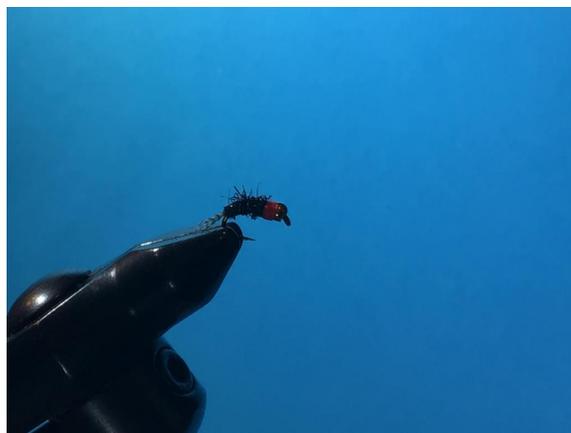


Figure 7

Use a toothbrush or dubbing tool to tease out some of the trapped Ice Dub fibers.

Fishing Tips for These flies:

Using a double surgeon knot, I add 24 inches of 6X fluorocarbon to the end of a 5X monofilament leader. When I tie the double surgeon knot, I leave a tag of 6X fluorocarbon approximately 8 inches long. This tag extends out from the double surgeon knot. I tie my upper fly onto this tag. Sometimes, I tie a second fly at the other end of the 6X fluorocarbon, but I've found that the fish almost always take the upper fly. Plus, if I'm using two flies, landing fish often ends in a tangled mess of flies and tippet. So, my preferred method is to use a single upper fly (tied off the double surgeon tag). Then I tie an overhand knot at the long end of the 6X tippet and add split shot just above this lower knot. I start with a strike indicator 3 feet above the upper fly. If the fly is not hitting the bottom, I'll move the indicator further up the leader. If that does not result in hookups, I'll begin adding split shot. Unless you are fishing very slow-moving water, you will likely need to add split shot to present the fly at the proper speed.

