

The Cutthroat Chronicles

Official Newsletter of the Snake River Cutthroats

3rd Quarter, 2023

A Message from the President

As I sit here at my vise, I am thinking about how the hopper season is just about over. I am very much a neophyte tyer but am trying to learn and this year I worked a lot on hopper patterns. As we shift the season to fall fishing I start to think of streamers.

I am sure, just like all of you, you have a favorite streamer.... My favorite set up for the South Fork is a sparkle minnow. But I also follow it with a nymph or wet fly. Seems I get about just as many on the streamer as I do on the trailer. Hope everyone is having a great fall.

All that said, we have had a great summer of work on Rainey Creek. We have a new screen going in this fall, watch the SRC web site for dates of the event. We will also have some other boots on the ground opportunities for people to help with the Rainey Creek resortation.

IDF&G has just reported that Quagga Mussel larvae have been reported in the Snake River near Twin Falls. Quagga Mussels are an invasive species which spread rapidly. We are closely monitoring the actions of IDF&G on this. However, it is a good reminder to clean and dry all gear, waders, boots and boats as we are moving from place to place.

Lastly, because of USPS administrative changes in their Edoc submissions/adoptions plan, we will not be mailing hard copies of the SRC's newsletter, The Cutthroat Chronicles, after January 1st. Therefore, if you have not given your email address to our membership chairperson, Carol Staples, carolastaples@gmail.com, please do so before the first of the new year. You will be able to download and print the electronic versions of the newsletter, and it will also be available on the SRC web site.

Tight lines and I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our general meetings on the second Wednesday of each month.

-Dan



Crappies, Anyone?
by
Mike Miller



For those who have never fished for crappie, they are a small feisty game fish that inhabit still or slowly moving fresh water. People fish for them with fly rods, spinning gear and bait.

I believe they would be a great addition to our local fish population if limited to certain waters. They have varied diets including zooplankton, insects, and crustaceans, all of which can make for interesting fly tying. By day, crappie tend to be less active in open water and to concentrate around weed beds or submerged objects, such as logs and boulders. They feed especially at dawn and dusk, moving then into open water or approaching shorelines. Crappies are popular with ice fishermen as they are active during winter. They are among the most numerous panfish in North American waters, are highly regarded as a game fish, and are often considered to be among the best-tasting freshwater fish. Crappie and trout can live in the same body of water since they prefer different habitats.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game will consider trying to establish crappie in Gem State Reservoir if they receive enough interest from people in the area. If you would like to see this happen, please contact Brett High at (208)525-7290 or email at idfg.idaho.gov/region/upper-snake.

And please, get your fishing friends to do the same!

Hunter Bidwell on Euro-Nymphing: Our October Meeting Guest



Hunter lives in Rigby and attends classes at BYU-Idaho. He worked part time at Jimmy's and did an excellent Saturday tying demo there back in January. He now works part time at Fly Fish Food Jimmy's. When not working or studying, he fly fishes and tie flies. The Henry's Fork is his favorite water. Hunter has much experience using euro nymphing techniques. Being a generous guy he will not only tie flies for this technique, but offer how, where and when to present them during our October membership meeting.

Electronic Newsletters Available

For those still receiving hard copies of the newsletter via standard mail, please switch to receive it via email, and send your email address to Carol Staples, our membership chair, at carolastaples@gmail.com

Fewer mailings mean more dollars for conservation projects. The fish will appreciate your cost-saving efforts.



**Twin Lakes Outing
By
Rob Knox**



A Great Winter Snowfall Meant High, Temperate Water Good for Active Fish

The springtime outing to Twin Lakes has been a Snake River Cutthroats tradition for many years. Owned by the Twin Lakes Canal Company, the lakes host a warm water fishery managed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. The lakes are off U.S. Highway 91 between Swan Lake and Preston Idaho.

Early June is a great time to fish here, and this year's outing on June 9th and 10th was no exception. The 2 day outing allowed a few of the attendees the opportunity to overnight at the lake's campground and hit the water bright and early.

Dave Pace, Curtis St Michel, Andy Bosworth, George Klomp and Rob Knox made the trip this year. The weather cooperated with seasonal temperatures, sunlit skies and no gale-force winds. The fish cooperated too, with Largemouth Bass, Bluegill and Crappie being caught. Early mornings and late evenings were great for nailing bass on top water poppers through a consistent bite.

The Snake River Cutthroats provided a lakeside lunch on Friday, and during partaking of which fishing tales believable and not so believable flowed. Plan on joining us next year. Bring your five or six weight system and flies ranging from popping bugs and dry damsels to wet patterns for scuds, shrimp, leeches and such.

Smallmouth Bassin’ in Ririe Reservoir
John Heckel,
Regional Fisheries Biologist, IDF&G

When some anglers think of Ririe Reservoir they may picture limits of silvery kokanee or Yellow Perch fish fries, but there’s another fishy critter that can provide hours of entertainment at the end of your line, Smallmouth Bass *Micropterus dolomieu*. Not only are Smallmouth Bass abundant and fun to catch in Ririe Reservoir they are also excellent table fare. Smallmouth Bass are members of a family of fishes known as Centrarchids, which also includes Bluegill and other freshwater sunfish, none of which are native to Idaho. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) introduced Smallmouth Bass into Ririe Reservoir in 1984-1986 to diversify fishing opportunities in the Upper Snake Region. However, due to the short growing season in Ririe they don’t achieve trophy size like Smallmouth Bass in more productive areas. Limited bass growth potential at Ririe Reservoir is identified as a limiting factor in the IDFG Fishery Management Plan which directs the department to continue to manage for a satisfactory Smallmouth Bass fishery.

During mid-July this summer, we conducted night electrofishing at twenty-four sites along the Ririe Reservoir shoreline. Prior to 2008, we sampled a fewer number of sites along the shoreline. We have been monitoring Smallmouth Bass at these sites about once every five years since 2008 and we estimate the relative abundance of bass by the metric of catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE), or the number of bass caught per hour of electrofishing.

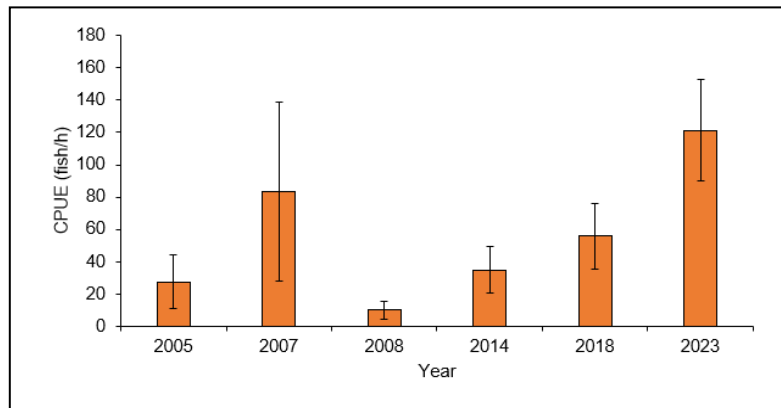


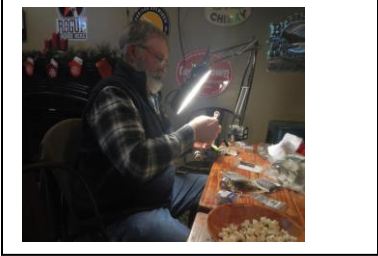
Figure 1

We saw an increase in the abundance of Smallmouth Bass in our survey this year compared to other years (See Figure 1), and we also recorded an increase in fish length from 5 inches in 2018 to 6 inches in 2023 with Smallmouth Bass up to 11 inches being sampled. Despite sampling bass on the smaller side with our electrofishing gear, anglers that fish Ririe often catch bass in the 14–16-inch range.

Ririe Reservoir isn’t the only fishery where anglers can target Smallmouth Bass, they are also found in the summer months migrating into Willow Creek upstream of the reservoir. A recent survey conducted in Willow Creek found average catch rates of Smallmouth Bass by anglers at 11 fish per hour with an average length of 7 inches. With the close proximity of both Ririe Reservoir and Willow Creek to Idaho Falls, local anglers have a nearby opportunity to catch an aggressive and tasteful fish that will keep the fishing hot.



Let's Not Forget Him



Recipe for the Quarter



Easy Pickled Whitefish Recipe

We tend to look down our fly fishing noses at Rocky Mountain whitefish when it comes to fighting and beauty qualities. And harvesting these salmonids is not a “go to” activity with most fly fishers. It’s like we have “angst” in perceptions on targeting whitefish for any purpose. But these salmonids have a lot of culinary aspects to offer. They can be baked, they can be cut into filets then breaded and fried, they can be smoked, they can be chunked and become the main ingredient in a chowder. They can be pickled, and below is an easy way to do so.

Clean fish, place in a crock, cover with plain salt (not iodized), alternating layers of fish and salt, ending with salt. This will make a brine and should cover the fish. Let stand for 10 to 14 days to cure the fish.

Remove the brine, place fish in cold water, change water often. This will draw most of salt from the fish. Let stand in cold water 1 to 2 days. Skin and cut in chunks. Slice several onions, and garlic. Consider adding such as finely slices of green or red bell peppers and mustard seed.

Make pickling solution in ratio of:

- 1 part vinegar
- 1 part brown sugar (white may be used)
- 1-2 parts water
- 1 lg. pkg. pickling spice

Boil these components together a few minutes, let cool. Using glass quart jars or crock (not metal),

Make alternate layers of onion, garlic and any other items, then fish and pickling solution, ending with onions, etc. and make sure enough pickling solution is added to cover all.

Fly of the Month

Soft Hackled Streamer

Evolution of this pattern began decades ago with Jack Gartside. His pattern was simple: White blood marabou feather spiraled at the front of the hook with a folded marabou flank feather as facing. As with any effective pattern, variations rolled in over the years. See the photo below for mine.

Hook: Daiichi 2220, size 2-8

Thread: Black, 3/0

Wing: Single or multiple blood marabou plumes wrapped just behind head

Facing: A few turns of hackle of choice behind Hook eye

Body & Tail: None



2023 Calendar

Date	Activity
Board Meeting, Wed. October 4 th	Papa Tom's Pizza & Zoom 6:30 PM
Membership Meeting, Wed., October 11 th	Fairbridge Inn & Suites 6:30 PM Guest: Hunter Bidwell
IDF&G South Fork Electroshocking Study October 10 th -12 th (Tue.–Thurs.)	Assist IDF&G field personnel in jet boating in the Conant area. Contact Colt Webb, IDF&G 208-535-8003
Rainey Creek, Diversion Screen Replacement Friday, October 13 th	Hanson Guest Reach on Rainey Creek Rd. Contact Andy Bosworth 207-713-3457 andybosworth2@gmail.com
Tie One On, Tuesday, October 17 th	Tap and Fill, 6:30 PM Guest: Matt McHargue
Rainey Creek Tree Planting Project, Saturday, October 21 st , 9 AM	Meet in lot next to Sundaes Eats & Treats, Swan Valley Contact Andy Bosworth, 207-713-3457 andybosworth2@gmail.com
Board Meeting, Wed. November 1 st	Papa Tom's Pizza & Zoom 6:30 PM
Membership Meeting, Wed., November 8 th	Fairbridge Inn & Suites 6:30 PM Guest Shaun Jeszenka
Board Meeting, Wed. December 6 th	Papa Tom's Pizza & Zoom 6:30 PM
Christmas Party Wed., December 13 th	Senior Citizen Center, 6 PM

Board meetings, open to all members, are held at Papa Tom's Pizza with a ZOOM hook-up. Visit www.snakerivercutthroats.org or the Cutthroats Facebook page for a link to access membership meetings at Fairbridge Inn, outings, and other activities.



Snake River Cutthroats
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Snake River Cutthroats

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Ex. Vice President: TBA
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Secretary: Jeff Armstrong (208-351-1333)

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Historian/Newsletter: Bruce Staples (208-522-9242) (new email bstaples9740@gmail.com)
Education: Jeff Armstrong (208-522-7005)
Expo: Scott Long (208-520-3750), Rory Cullen (208-419-8477)
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Publicity: Rob Knox (760-419-1682)
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Youth: Paul Stembridge (208-569-2890)
IT/Web Site: Myles Pawlaczyk (949-701-1767)



