



# The Lower Columbia Flyfisher

January 2020

Issue 258

**Meeting: Tuesday, January 7, 2020**

**Time: 7:00 PM**

**Place: Lv Country Club Dining Room**

**Next board meeting** - Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 PM at Longview Country Club

## **PROGRAM: LCFF Annual Auction and Welcome to our 50th!**

**Don Harris** continues to bless us donating his auctioneer skill to our annual LCFF fundraiser. In addition to a skilled caller, auctions depend on suitable merchandise and willing buyers. Even better if those attending are moved to contribute a wee bit of both.

Preferably the items you donate are in some way, even obscurely, related to the club's purpose (though no item of value would be turned away). Now if one were to analyze the Wretched Gift Exchange you might assume said purpose is alcoholic pursuits of one form or another. So certainly those qualify. But truly prized is that fly fishing or tying equipment you have languishing in your closet or garage, something useful at flyfishing camp, or adornments of one kind or another celebrating our preferred recreation.

Our annual auction is the primary source of funds to support club activities so please consider how you will contribute. Club outings and donations to our panel of conservation and volunteer organizations benefit from healthy bank balance. You know Don will make it a fun night, look forward to seeing you there.

This month begins our year of celebrating **50th anniversary of our founding** and will be handing out a **50th anniversary calendar** to kick off the festivities. Jeff Sowders and Ron Pihl teamed up to create a calendar that we hope you will find a worthy representation of the club and our history. Thanks to all who provided photos and regrets we were not able to get them all in. We had so many great ones to choose from for such a limited canvas. If you don't get a calendar check with Glenn to make sure you are current with dues and we'll make sure you are made whole.

**Upcoming program** schedule is WDFW's Dan Ayers giving us an update on **Washington clams** and clamming prospects at our February meeting. You might remember Dan gave us a program on this a few years ago during which Buchman revealed he may be the first to have caught a clam on the fly. April will bring another revisit of a former program with Lost Creek Fly Shop's Mike Sturza speaking on **Lake Mayfield's Tiger Muskies**. April remains open with President Terry having inquiry out to WDFW on the salmon migration above Mayfield and Mossyrock Dams.

A great time was had by all at last month's Wretched Gift for the 19 members who attended. Gift offerings were heavily weighted to adult beverages. No surprise the most popular gift went to one of them. A bottle of Speyburn Scotch won Vance the prize, beating out a bottle of Basil Hayden bourbon by almost 2 to 1. A whisky sample assortment came in third by a scant single vote proving were all a bunch of drunks. Larry Peterson took home Most Creative with his Christmas ornaments. But the coveted Most Wretched award was earned by Buchman who put together a horrid plastic tackle box full of an assortment of complete crap fishing gear.

**Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy has opened enrollment for 2020 camp**, scheduled for week of June 22. Interested youth ages 12-16 can go to NWYCFFA website at [www.nwycffa.com](http://www.nwycffa.com) for information on the camp. Applications need to be submitted to the club in order to be considered for LCFF sponsorship with an April 15 deadline.

**LCFF board made decision to dispose of the club library** and its contents. It was a tough call but the library hasn't been used, and without request or complaint, since our move the Country Club. With the prevalence of all things available online and without a no-cost storage location other than charity of Terry Frost it is time to let it go.

Which brings us to **other club property**; vests, club banner and sign-boards, awnings, etc. are not only **dependent on a willing private party to store**, but are scattered among different locations. We could use a centralized storage location that allows anytime access but are bereft of ideas how other than bear expense of a storage unit. Clearly this isn't an imminent crisis so we have time for further discussion before having to make a decision.

I took the time to browse the FFI E-newsletter and encourage everyone to do the same if you get a chance now that we have re-joined FFI as an associate club. Very interesting news found there. I learned FFI offers a casting skills program awarding bronze, silver, and gold status based on achieving progressively more difficult casting challenges. Sounds like a great off-season activity that would pay dividends once the prime season arrives. I must say browsing the list of achievements or each medal, even earning the bronze would be challenge enough for me.

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Perhaps it was the busy Holiday season but **no-one managed to identify the Westslope Cutthroat and Montana's Rock Creek** as the December mystery cutthroat and classic water where you'd find them. I really thought the picture of Rock Creek Mercantile's window would be enough of a clue for anyone having been there.

Nicknames including Black Spotted and common cutthroat, *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi* is Montana's state fish. Perhaps encompassing the largest area of distribution among all the inland cutthroat sub-species, Westslope's historical range is basically all of the northern Rocky Mountain region including eastern Washington, NE corner of Oregon, all of Idaho, a wee bit of NW Wyoming, the Western half of Montana other than Yellowstone River drainage, and extending north to most of Canada's BC and Alberta Rocky mountain range.

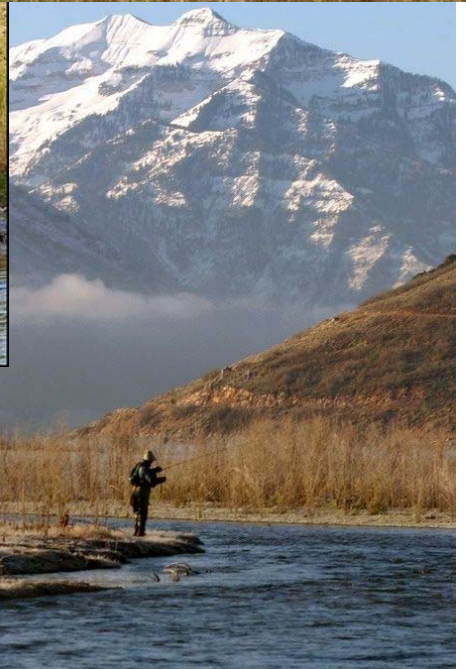
Despite its broad range and what we think of as accessible populations, Westslope cuts are considered a species of concern in Montana and BC, and classified as threatened in Alberta. As in most threatened species, loss of habitat and introduction of non-native species has decimated populations in many areas. Those of us who fish Rock Creek during the fall Montana outings can attest the efforts to resurrect healthy populations are having success. Encouraging a catch and keep philosophy for non-native trout has transformed Rock Creek from predominantly a brown trout fishery to majority cutthroat in the net.

Often cross-breeding with non-native rainbows, genetically pure strain cutthroat may exist in only about 3% of its native range though recognizable populations exist in about 60% of historical area.

Coloration is often greenish or silvery along the head and back with an orange-hued skin on cheeks, sides, and belly that becomes quite bright during spring spawning season. Average sized black spotting a scattered along the back to become quite prominent and clustered around the tail beginning just behind the vent. The "cut-throat" stripe can vary widely from orange to red, even pink depending on its specific local. A modest sized fish, anything above 16" is considered a trophy.

Primarily a fluvial resident, cutthroat can be adfluvial; residing in lakes but returning to streams to spawn. Sort of a freshwater anadromous character. Primarily having an insect diet, Westslope's rise readily enough to the fly as to be considered an "easy" fish to catch, for which I am grateful.

We're going to travel a wee bit further to get to this cutthroat subspecies. I'm going to give credit for the location if you can name any of the waters or region these fish are found. You know the drill - what and where?



## Greased lines

.....Thanks to all of you that have submitted articles.....I really appreciate them and...If you have not seen your submitted article .....I will be using them in future issues.....Thanks again and keep them coming.

.....If any of the rest of you have an article, editorial or fishing story for the newsletter, submit it to the Editor at least 10 days before the first of each month:

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