



“Cultivating the art of fly fishing through a spirit of fellowship and resource enhancement”

washingtontyflyfishers.com

Issue 294

January 2026

Meeting Location
Westbrook Club House
14255 SW 6th Street (one block east of SW Murray)

Meeting date: Wed. January 7

2026 Dues

Your 2026 dues are due in January. You can pay by check or cash at the January meeting, or send a check to John Gillingham made out to WCFF.

Thanks for supporting your club!

Agenda for the January 7 meeting

7:00-7:15	Opening remarks, Club business
7:15-8:15	Guest Presenter: Garrett Lesko, Jetty Fishing on the Oregon Coast
8:15-8:30	Raffle and Adjourn

January President's Message

Another year has come and gone. It seems they pass by faster every year. Your club had a lot of great activities this past year. We had two great food events – the Christmas dinner which was really fun and our annual picnic in August that had good food and lots of raffle items thanks to the efforts of Joel Smith. Everyone who attended both events seemed to have fun and enjoyed chatting with other members. We had a number of outings including a couple of new lakes. We also did some fly-tying classes and casting classes. They must have gone well as we have been asked to do more. We had several breakfast meetings which are always popular, the last one having over 20 members present. We had yet another year of great speakers covering places to fish and techniques for success.



I would like to thank your board for all of their work and support for your club. They work hard and make your club better. We do have one open spot on the Board so if you would like to serve, let me know.

For January, our speaker Garrett Lesko will introduce us to jetty fishing on the coast. I am particularly interested in this presentation as I love to eat bottom fish. Garrett is a good presenter so I hope to see you on January 7th.

We are planning for breakfast meetings to occur every month (except maybe in the summer) on the 3rd Saturday of the month so watch your emails for notices and details. The first one will be January 17 at the Peppermill Pub, 9 am.

Also, note we have elections coming up in February for Vice President and Secretary so if you would like to serve your club, or twist and arm or two to do so, let me know. Also note that dues are due in January, so you can bring \$30 cash or

check to the January meeting or send a check to John Gillingham made out to WCFF.

I am dreaming of Winter Steelhead fishing which starts for me in January and goes through March and sometimes into April. There is also lots of fly tying to do to fill my boxes for both winter and spring. I love fly fishing and this club really contributes to great times and great fellowship. Thanks for being members. Ask your friends to join to help build your club.

Tight Lines,

Rick Pay, President



Washington County Fly Fishers

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Club Calendar

- January
 - 7th – Club Meeting – speaker Garrett Lesko – Jetty Fishing for bottom fish
 - ? – outing - coastal lake fishing
- February
 - 4 – Club Meeting – speaker ODFW – Kevin Stertz – new regulations for 2026
 - ? – coastal lake outing
- March
 - 4 – Club Meeting – speaker Dave Eisenhauer and Galen Flynn – Fishing British Columbia
 - ?? – Outing Vernonia Pond
 - 13,14 – ORCFFI Fly Tying and Fly-Fishing Expo – Albany
- April
 - 1 – Club Meeting – Marc Williamson – Still Water

- ?? – Outing – Lost Lake Coast
- May
 - 6 – Club Meeting – Speaker - Chris Wilson – John Day River
- June
 - 3 – Club Meeting – speaker Josh Linn – Equipment and flies for summer vs winter steelhead
- July
 - 1 – Club Meeting – speaker TBD
- August
 - 8 – Club Picnic
- September
 - 2 – Club Meeting – speaker TBD
- October
 - 7 - Club Meeting – speaker TBD
- November
 - 4 – Club Meeting – speaker TBD
- December
 - 2 – Christmas Dinner

Does Fly Pattern Matter?

We believe that our choice of fly is responsible for the fish that we catch, and that if we can merely find the right fly, our success will know no bounds...

FLYLAB

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READ IN APP 



By John Juracek

There are certain beliefs inherent in the sport of fly fishing, and one of the most closely held says that fly pattern matters. Matters in terms of success. We believe that our choice of fly is responsible for the fish that we catch, and that if we can merely find the right fly, our success will know no bounds.

But does it really work that way? Is our choice of fly that critical? Good question.

In order for fly pattern to matter, to be the sole factor behind our success, it must first be made the *limiting* factor. By that I mean all other variables are accounted for. For instance, imagine that we're fishing to a feeding trout on the Madison River. For our fly to matter, several things have to happen. Our approach to the fish must go unnoticed. Our cast has to be accurate and timely. The fly must be generally free of drag (unless intentional). In short, we have to fish flawlessly. Only then can we attribute success or failure directly to the fly pattern.

If any of these variables (or numerous others) are not accounted for, we simply can't say definitively that our fly is making the difference. (Well, we can say it, but we'd be wrong.) And herein lies the rub.

Very, very few anglers possess the skills and ability to make the fly the limiting factor. If on a regular basis you *are* doing this, congratulations. You are operating in rarefied air—air reserved for the masters of this sport. Most of us haven't attained that level, which means that some other aspect of our fishing—casting, usually—is compromising our success.

Am I suggesting then that we simply fish whatever fly we want, whenever we want? Of course not. There's more to it than that. While we may not own the skills to make the fly the limiting factor *all* the time, the flies of average anglers will still act as the limiting factor *some* of the time.

Here's how. If we accept the premise that casting skill is the primary limiting factor for most amateurs (a premise virtually all professionals accept), it will be no surprise that during a day's fishing most of the casts an amateur makes will in some respect be flawed. But not every cast. Even the most inexperienced anglers make a few good presentations during a day onstream. When this occurs at the right place and time, it's possible that their fly pattern could make a difference.

Given this, I think an appropriate strategy is to use a fly that fits the situation you find yourself in and then not worry about it. If there's a *Baetis* hatch taking place, fish a *Baetis* imitation. If fish are eating hoppers, use a hopper. But don't get carried away thinking that a specific *Baetis* or hopper pattern is needed. There are dozens of examples of both that will work, and the fish don't care on which one they get caught.

This doesn't mean that there aren't differences among flies. There are plenty of reasons to choose one pattern over another, but only from a fisherman's point of view. As an example, I favor a Sparkle Dun for *Baetis* fishing. I like it because it floats well, is readily visible and very durable. But I harbor no illusions that it's the only pattern that will catch trout when they're feeding on *Baetis* mayflies.

In the end, it's safe to say that fly pattern *can* matter, but not nearly as often as we think (or as we're told). Find fly patterns that suit your fishing and fish them with the utmost care. Make your presentation count.

That's something that really does matter.

John Juracek is a fly fisherman, writer and photographer from West Yellowstone, Montana. For twenty-some years he was a partner at Blue Ribbon Flies, a local fly shop, and is currently the head casting instructor at the School of Trout and Anglers Academy. His writing credits include *Yellowstone: Photographs of an Angling Landscape*, *Fly Patterns of Yellowstone*, *Fishing Yellowstone Hatches* and *Fly Patterns of Yellowstone, Volume Two*.

He is considered one of the sport's expert fly casters and instructors and offers casting lessons for \$100/hour at jjuracek@gmail.com or (406) 640-2828.

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Fellow member **Kurt Roth** is moving out of state and wants to sell some of his fly fishing stuff. He will have some at the next club meeting. If anyone is interested, please bring cash.
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Pheasant Tail Soft Hackle

By John Kreft – RiverKeeper Flies

Here is the fly pattern sheet for the Pheasant Tail Soft Hackle.



Materials

Hook:

Daiichi 1560, #12 – 14 or Alec Jackson North Country, #11 – 13

Thread:

Brown

Tail:

5 – 8 pheasant tail fibers

Rib:

Copper wire – brassie size

Body:

Pheasant tail fibers

Thorax:

Peacock herl

Wing:

Hungarian Partridge

Directions

1. Begin thread on hook behind hook eye and wind thread back to point above barb.
2. Select 5 – 8 pheasant tail fibers and tie in directly above hook barb. Length should be about body length. Do not trim butt ends.
3. Tie in copper rib at same point. Move thread forward to two eye lengths behind hook eye, binding copper wire tag end.
4. Wind pheasant tail fibers forward to two eye lengths behind hook eye, tie off, and trim fibers.
5. Counter-wrap rib forward with 5 wraps and tie off. Trim wire.
6. Tie in 1 to 3 peacock herl fibers and take 3 or 4 wraps forward, leaving 2 eye lengths for wing.
7. Select Hungarian Partridge feather and strip off fluffy material. Hold tip and carefully pull fibers backwards to expose a small tie-in point. Attach to hook with a few thread wraps and wrap forward with a couple of wraps. Tie off and trim hackle.
8. Whip finish and trim thread.

Washington County Flyfishers

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503-626-7225

Vice President
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503-649-3804

Secretary
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971-330-9393

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