FLYCASTER

October 2025 Edition

UPCOMING MEETINGS: No general meetings until November - the streams and lakes will probably still have open water until then so make the most of it! The executive will be meeting on Oct. 7th to discuss future plans for the club, its activities and budget. If there's anything you'd like to ask or suggest please let us know - communications@edmontontrout.ca

SPRING LAKE: Aerators to be installed on Sept 29 and the fencing and signage will be put up when the ice is thick enough to walk on! Water level is down, and muddier than usual, the province has stocked another 5000 rainbows (they're about 20cm / 8"), on the understanding that the lake would be aerated this winter, and unfortunately the carp are reproducing happily.

Randy Collins (thanks for the photo, Randy) and Ken Bodden manned a booth at the Spring Lake Village Fair on Sep 13th and provided information on the club, aeration, the fish, and fishing! Gaetan reports that 'fishing at Spring was slower this year, don't seem to be as many big fish'. Please let us know your reports on Spring and elsewhere - communications@edmontontrout.ca

PRUSSIAN CARP – Yes, they're here to stay in Spring lake, (along with at least 6 other locations in the greater Edmonton region). So what do we do? We've talked to provincial fisheries biologists, the Director of Fish Culture, the Aquatic Invasive Species specialist, some ACA staff, and the consensus is that there's really nothing we can do to make a significant difference in the carp population. Poisoning the lake with rotenone to kill all fish and restart with trout stocking was considered but is apparently not feasible. The cost is prohibitive (probably close to $1million), there are some perceived health issues with the insecticide, and the province would not likely issue a permit. Netting the carp has proven elsewhere extremely labour intensive and unsuccessful – they reproduce so frequently and extensively! Kill and dispose in a garbage container (or keep to eat) all carp we catch is recommended but that's about all we can do to manage their population. Even an attempt at population control with three-pass electrofishing in tributaries of the Red Deer River was

not successful; *My Wild Alberta* reported that carp abundances were even significantly higher post-removal.

There are, however, two things that we can and must do:

1. All we can to ensure that the carp do not spread to other local fisheries that you may visit – Star, Muir, Salters Pond etc. (there are reports that they've already been found in Hasse Lake). The Clean, Dry, Drain your Boat and gear campaign is important for us to implement and advise others to do. Carp eggs can so easily survive when stuck in fishing flies, nets, on boats etc.
2. Find ways to still enjoy and encourage others to participate in fishing – at Spring and elsewhere! Trout are still in the lake although growth may be slowed by lack of food. And carp can present a few angling challenges – in Europe, for example, where they're often referred to as "rubberlips", carp are the most popular of all sportfish. Although Prussian Carp do not grow as large as many other carp species they can grow to 6lbs fairly quickly and are strong; their sensitive lips help them spit out a hook quickly – they will challenge your reaction time!

So here's a few carp fishing tips that come from 'Outdoor Life' and Field and Stream:

- carp are highly sensitive to their environment and spook very easily
- carp are mostly bottom feeders but although they have a downturned mouth for bottom feeding, carp are adept at eating off the surface and in the middle of the water column
- set drag lightly so carp feel little resistance when moving away with your bait/lure; carp can be very sensitive to your line or leader, so don't be afraid to scale down to lighter line even when targeting bigger fish.

CARP LURES: This from internet research, especially Outdoor Life:

Corn - one of the most, if not the most, popular baits, at least in the United States - has a sugary aroma and its bright yellow color also helps it stand out on darker mud bottoms. It's cheap and readily available.

Worms – garden variety or bloodworms

Fly Patterns:

San Juan Worm - when carp have their heads down and are rooting in the mud, they are most likely eating worms. Works well for trout too!

Mop Fly - depending on the color of the mop fly, it can imitate a wide array of different aquatic insects.

Carpinator - tied with dumbbell weighted eyes on a wide shank hook. The weighted eyes help the fly stand upright when it is resting on the bottom of the lake. The fly stands vertical on the bottom. This creates an outstanding contrast and fly profile that makes the fly easy to see.

Clouser Swimming Nymph - designed by Bob Clouser who invented the Clouser minnow, one of the most popular streamer patterns ever created. In contrast to other carp fly patterns, which are usually tied heavy and fished in drop, drag and wait method, the Clouser nymph can be fished in an active manner. It represents both crayfish patterns and dragon fly nymphs, both well liked carp forage. It also catches trout.

Woolly Bugger - probably the most well-known fly pattern for trout, it's also a great carp fly. Choose drab natural colors in olive, black, brown and maroon. Different sizes and colors imitate a wide range of insects and forage species.

THE RAINBOWS OF SPRING LAKE: You may not have noticed this, but the rainbow trout stocked by the Cold Lake Fish Hatchery in Spring are different from those that they stock in other local lakes – Hasse, Star, Muir, Salters. Spring Lake receives Campbell Lake strain rainbows which are 2N (i.e. diploid - they have two complete sets of chromosomes, one from each parent) whereas the other lakes are stocked with Riverence strain rainbows which are AF3N (triploid, all female and thus unable to reproduce). Craig Copeland, Director of Alberta fish culture, tells us that one of his staff was 'at a fish aquaculture conference a few years back, learnt that the strain was resistant to elevated water temperatures so we thought we would give them a try at Spring'. As lake temperatures rise that's fortunate for us, especially as a B.C. Freshwater Fisheries Society trial found out that triploid fish had higher catch-and-release mortality than normally reproductive fish.

And speaking of CATCH-AND-RELEASE – What's New:

KEEP FISH WET

Keep Fish Wet has an update on the organization's work to promote awareness of the best practices for Catch and Release fishing. "Science shows that even small changes in how an angler catches, handles, and releases a fish can have positive outcomes once that fish swims away. Not only does using best practices increase survival rates of fish, but it also helps fish return to their normal behavior as quickly as possible after release. Using best practices for catch-and-release is a quick and effective way to put conservation into practice."

It has developed a 'Mini-Lesson' on those best practices for use in helping us inform others. Please share it with anyone you think might be interested – friends, other fishing clubs, your kids' Outdoor Ed teacher etc.

Keep Fish Wet Mini-Lesson best practices for Catch and Release

B and B TIME: Peak activity time for fishing backswimmers and boatmen is drawing to a close but this year seems to have been especially productive. Club VP Ron Storrier put together the following information on these semi-related trout food favourites:

The larger of the two, **backswimmers** are predators that have a nasty bite. They have a 1-year life cycle and grow from 3/8 to over 1/2 inch in length. They reach maturity in either early spring or late fall . They survive the winter by hibernating on the bottom or moving between air pockets below the ice.

They have long hind legs to propel them and smaller front legs to catch their prey; they're ambush predators that usually attack their prey from above. As their name implies, backswimmers swim upside down. They have white to tan backs with olive ventral surfaces and red eyes.

In late summer and during the fall, backswimmers start their mating and migration flights. Looking like white beetles they hit the water hard to get through the water surface. Backswimmers trap air bubbles around their body to survive underwater.

Water boatmen are smaller and often the prey of their larger cousins. They are herbivores, range up to 3/8 of an inch, and swim right side up. They don't bite like their larger cousins and colours are the opposite of backswimmers; they have a dark back and light underbody.

Both insects can be imitated by both surface and subsurface flies. Short strip and pause retrieves are used when fishing flies subsurface. Fly patterns are readily available including on Phil Rowley's website

Photos Yahoo

DISTANCE CASTING:

Fly Fusion recently released a short video on adding distance to your casts: 'The Distance Cast'

Contributions to and suggestions for the next newsletter gratefully accepted!

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