NEWSLETTER

wmflyfishingclub.com

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PRESIDENTS COLUMN – OCTOBER 2026

Greetings from the President's chair, well, we are off into October with several members getting ready for the transition to lower levels for the upcoming Winter.

We have had several inches of rain this monsoon season with the forecast of more to come. Bring it on, as we are in need of the moisture for our fishing sites. The weather people keep saying we are going to have a snowy winter this year, we can only hope.

Andy and I are going up on the San Juan this October for 4 days and hope to have a good report and presentation for you upon our return. We both have been tying recommended flies for this trip.

We had a successful Silver Creek Project turnout with TU, Payson Fly Casters, WMFFC and the AZGFD employees. 15 folks showed up for the project which included 2 who heard about the project and drove from great distances to participate.

Your BOD continues to meet in preparation for a Spring 2027 "Fly Fishing Expo" which takes a lot of planning and input for a successful venture. We will have sign-up sheets for volunteer opportunities to make it a memorable and hopefully repeated event with lots of participation.

REMINDER: Our October meeting had to be rescheduled due to the WMNC closing its doors for some remodeling. Our meeting will be on Thursday, October 29th at the same time as usual.

Hope you have had the opportunity to get some fishing in and looking forward to seeing you all and hearing your stories.

Tight Lines,

Mike Whitney, Your President

Meeting—October 29th

Held at White Mountain Nature Center

425 S. Woodland Rd. Lakeside 5:30 raffle and chatting

SPEAKER: Jim Goughnour, AZGF, Wildlife for Tomorrow

Still doing card raffles on a rod and reel and

X Diamond Ranch Fishing

Jim Goughnour, AZGF,

"Wildlife for Tomorrow"

James Goughnour is the Chairman of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. He was appointed to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission in 2019 by Governor Ducey and was reappointed to a second five-year term in 2023 by Governor Hobbs. Prior to his time on the Commission, Mr. Goughnour served as an Arizona business owner, aerospace professional, and wildlife conservation advocate. He holds a BS degree in Business Administration and owns Rim Country Custom Rods, a business specializing in designing and building custom fishing rods. Goughnour spent 26 years with General Dynamics Aerospace Systems Group, formerly Motorola Space Systems Group, ultimately serving as a project manager overseeing all aspects of the Aerospace Operations Program. His commission responsibilities include supporting wildlife conservation, promoting responsible hunting and fishing, and helping guide legislative and public policies that protect Arizona's wildlife resources and outdoor recreational opportunities.





Montana • Oils R. McKeon





Gerry and Kitty on San Juan



Silver Creek

By
Jim Strogen

As a kid in Pennsylvania, I looked forward to the opening day of trout season in April. It was a 5am start. I was ready weeks ahead of time, and had scouted out where I wanted to be when the time ticked down. That same sense of anticipation, mellowed a bit, is still there for me each fall as the opening of the Catch and Release season at Silver Creek approaches. Since parking is limited, I generally avoid opening day, but I usually make it to the creek sometime during that first week.

This spring-fed creek, just outside of Show Low, maintains good water temperatures for trout all year. It is stocked with very large rainbow trout during the Catch and Release season from October 1 until March 31. No trout may be kept, and they must be released immediately, unharmed. Anglers must use single-point barbless flies or lures; no treble hooks are permitted. Bait of any kind is prohibited. During the rest of the year, Silver Creek returns to the normal state regulations and bag limit.

If you have not been to Silver Creek, it is quite different than other Arizona streams. The creek generally flows at a slow pace and is quite deep in most places. It is fished entirely from the bank, and often those banks are rather steep, so a long-handled net is a required piece of equipment to be able to safely release trout unharmed. Often the creek is a bit discolored, but there are other times that it is quite clear. During those clear times, it is not uncommon to see a dozen very large trout within easy casting distance. Just know that if the water is turbid, that those fish are still there. It is instructive to watch the trout during clear times to know where they typically lie, and which trout are actively feeding.

Silver Creek has produced frustrating as well as phenomenal trips for me over the years. There have been days that I probably changed flies twenty times, while on other days I didn't have to change my fly once and caught several very large trout. On those good days, everyone else on the creek seemed to be catching fish with whatever fly they offered them as well.

Even if I go alone, one of my favorite reasons for fishing Silver Creek is that there is a sense of camaraderie among the fly fishers trying to catch these large trout. Anglers are extremely forthcoming about which flies are working for them on the creek. I recall a twenty fly day, when a dad and his ten year old son were catching fish after fish slightly upstream and across the creek from me. They could see that I was struggling and suggested that I try a white San Juan worm. That was the ticket. I started catching them regularly after that tip. It is not uncommon for a fly fisher to give you a fly that is working if you don't happen to have one in your fly box. Most people fish a two fly rig under an indicator. A white San Juan worm and a small zebra midge about two feet below the top fly would be a good combination to start with. Remember that the barbs must be pinched down on your flies. The preferred technique is to cast upstream and watch the indicator as it drifts for any sign of a take of your flies from a trout. You will want one or both flies to be near the bottom during the drift. It is a fun creek to experiment with different fly patterns. I have had days where wooly buggers stripped quickly through a pool, or dry flies have worked very well, but most often the indicator rig is the most productive method for me.

Since you are required to return the fish quickly and unharmed to the water, it is a good idea to scope out your surroundings before you cast. Do you have easy access to the water to net and return a fish? Are there reeds or other obstructions that a big fish could tangle on, break your line, and cause the fish to hang up? There are places on Silver Creek where I will see big fish, but never cast to them because I know that I can't safely get them in to release them unharmed.

Several White Mountains Fly Fishing Club and Payson Flycasters Club members have helped the Silver Creek Hatchery staff of the Arizona Game and Fish Department over the past several years to clear away a lot of the reed growth along the bank and rebuild the rock dams to assure deeper pools for the trout. The removal of the reeds has opened up a great deal more fishing opportunities along the creek, but there are still obstructions that you need to plan for and avoid to assure safe release of the trout.

Many anglers walk quite a ways upstream to fish with good success, but there is great fishing within one hundred yards of the parking lot, which is where I usually fish. Be sure to check out the informational signage at the end of the parking area as you approach the creek. There is a picnic table under a tree near that sign that is a great place to take a break, have lunch, and talk over strategy with your fishing buddy for the next part of the day.





Silver Creek September Cleanup



The First Cast Advantage: How to Catch More Trout Before You Make Your Second Cast. FROM HOOKED ON FLY FISHING

The First-Cast Rule

Here's the rule I want you to remember:

Never make a cast you aren't prepared to have the trout eat

That sounds obvious. But think about how often anglers make casts simply to determine whether they can reach the target. Or they make a short cast because they're still getting organized. Or they throw a long cast just to see where the line lands. Those casts can be expensive.

Instead, take the extra few seconds before casting to get everything ready. Check your line. Check your leader. Check your fly. Estimate your distance. Identify the drift. Then make the cast that matters.

The trout hasn't seen your fly. You haven't disturbed the water. Your line hasn't crossed the fish. Your feet haven't sent vibrations through the river. And you haven't given the trout a reason to become suspicious.

Yet many anglers waste this advantage. They walk up to a promising run and make a few "practice casts." They check their distance. They adjust their fly. They straighten their line. They make a cast that lands a little too hard. Then they finally make the cast they actually wanted.

Unfortunately, the trout doesn't know that first cast was practice. To the trout it was an event. And once you've disturbed a piece of water, you may never get the exact opportunity back.

That's why learning to make your **first presentation count** can dramatically improve your results without changing your fly box, rod, or technique.

It may not immediately bolt, but its level of awareness has changed. That's why your first presentation should be treated as an opportunity rather than experiment.

Why the First Cast is Different

Think about what the river looks like before you arrive. The trout has been sitting there for minutes-or perhaps hours. Food has been drifting past. Current has been moving around it. The environment has been predictable. Then suddenly: A shadow appears. A boot enters the water. A fly line lands. A leader moves across the surface. A fly appears where nothing has appeared before. The trout notices. It may not immediately bolt. But its level of awareness has changed. That's why your first presentation should be treated as an opportunity rather than experiment.

You want your first cast to look as though it belongs there.



Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Senator Katie Boyd Britt (R-AL) have introduced the Responsible Cormorant Management and Control Act of 2026, legislation aimed at giving states more effective tools to address localized impacts from double-crested cormorants.

This legislation would direct the Department of the Interior to establish regional management frameworks that account for the effects of cormorants on fisheries and other natural resources while maintaining sustainable breeding populations.

A House companion introduced by Rep. Tim Walberg (R-MI) recently advanced out of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries.

Check out the blog from the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation to learn more. https://congressionalsportsmen.org/.../cormorant.../

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

SEMI FAMOUS IN MY OWN MIND . . . by Vince Deadmond

"You're that old guy that writes fishing stories in the Rocky Point Times? The same guy that dumped his kayak in front of the Pitaya Bar?" Yes, it's true, I hung my head. In a small town like Puerto Penasco you are likely to get recognized and recognize others in your community. "You are the nice lady that has coffee ready with donuts at Reggies," I asked. She said, "Yes." and asked, "Did you lose anything?" I was lucky and recovered everything. When we put in the seas were calm and it was no problem to launch. While we were out fly fishing from Mirador Beach to the Malecon the seas got choppy. The wind, the usual culprit, was not a factor this time. We just got some big swells from further south in the Baja. Usually when the wind tips me off I get off the water soon enough not to dump. Now that I think about it, a better plan would have been to land at the marina, where it is more protected and I would have been less likely to roll the Kayak.

A Little Help From My Friends. When I dumped the kayak there were several friends from the Desert Fly Caster Fly Club fly fishing with me. When I rolled my kayak in the surf at high tide, my pedal drive flipped out and sank. I couldn't find it until the tide went out again. Luckily I found my drive, but the fine sand and salt didn't do the precision gears any favors. I gave the mechanism a garden hose cleaning and that flushed some of the sand out. Some of the guys in the club have engineering backgrounds, and love to fix mechanical problems. After much more water, WD40, and tweaking the drive was working as good as new. We had fourteen fly fishers on the water for that trip and we caught a nice variety of fish and even some larger ones. We caught Cabrilla, Trigger, Parrot Fish, Bone Fish, Flounder, Pompano, Grouper, Grunt, and one of our favorite fish to catch the Orange Mouth Corvina. I caught enough Orange Mouth Corvina to run a batch through the smoker, and make some smoked fish dip. Don't knock it until you try it. The smoked fish dip is one of the first things to disappear from the appetizer table. My long time fly fishing buddy Dave Weaver caught a personal best 30 inch Orange Mouth Corvina on this trip. Vince Deadmond The Fly Fishing Hardware Guy can be reached at vincehasgonefishing@outlook.com and 480 818 1796

• Arizona Veterans Fly Fishing •October 2026 AVFF Veterans and Volunteers celebrate fall with Fly Fishing Outings

August was a fairly quiet month for our program as many members of the group got out of town and headed for cooler places. We still had our fly-typing and education classes with attendance a little lower than normal. Chris Rich from AZ Fly Shop was our guest speaker for our education program in July. Chris gave a great presentation about fishing opportunities in and around the Phoenix metro areas. He answered lots of questions from our vets with really helpful information and anecdotes.

We just completed a great outing to Lakeside and Sugar camp, one of our favorite trips each yea. The high water temperature and algae problems in virtually all the White Mountain lakes narrowed our fishing opportunities during the trip. We started the trip with some casting practice in Show Low creek where the water was barely a trickle and not a single fish in sight. We spent a day on the East black River where the ai was cool, the skies mostly cloudy and the fish hiding. The water temperature was about 66F with good clarity and levels up to the weed line. A number of trout were hooked on dry flies, but none made it to the net. We got a sprinkle of rain, but monsoon t-storms dumped on nearby areas. Not a single person complained about the fishing because we were on the beautiful Black River, and with our comrades. We ate well thanks to donations of salmon filets and steaks from the Flo Jones Foundation. The monsoon rains have "greened" the White Mountains and the wildflowers are in full bloom! We'll be busy again in September with trips to Ashurst Lake, Silver Creek and the San Juan with DFC!

We are always looking for disabled veterans to join our program and with our busy schedule we are actively looking for volunteers to support the program. We can use your help, so please contact me if you would like more information. Always visit AVFF website at:www.azveterans.org

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Arizona Veteran's Fly Fishing—
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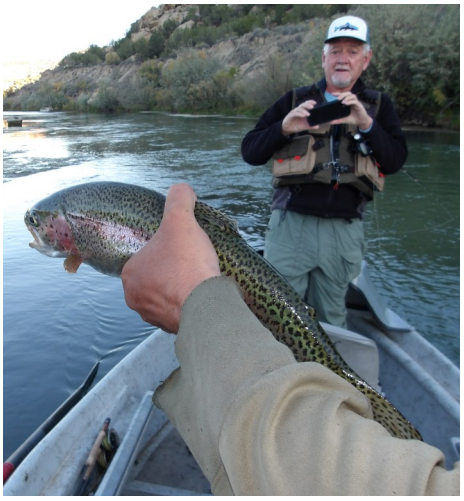


WMFFC MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission Statement of the White Mountain Fly Fishing Club is: "To assist in the development and maintenance of fly fishing opportunities and to promote and participate in fly fishing in its many forms."







White Mountain Fly Fishing Club Board—2025-2026

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Vice President:	Gary Hall	(480) 510-6362
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