



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of
Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.
P.O. Box 2222
Las Cruces, NM 88004-2222
www.MVFF.org

September

2016



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professional tyer, Tim Mack. Don't miss out. Extra vises and supplies will be available for beginning tyers.

President's Corner

David Carmichael



In last month's newsletter I wrote about the challenges of gaining recreational access to quality fishing waters in Scotland, in comparison to the access we enjoy here in the western U.S. In July, Miriam and I spent some time in

Scotland further researching the fishing opportunities (but not actually fishing much at all), and I'd like to pass along some of what we learned.

Now, don't get me wrong...I really love Scotland; I feel a connection to the landscape, the flora, the history and the archeology. I have always felt welcomed by the Scots with whom I've had personal interactions. During our visit we had a variety of delightful adventures, both large and small, including: driving on the left side of roads that are really only wide enough for a couple of horse-drawn wagons; driving those same roads after spending a couple of hours tasting single malts at the Dalwhinnie distillery; hiking through the heather in the Cairngorm Mountains and eating fresh wild blueberries and currants right off the bushes; examining the reconstructed 1700s village at the outdoor Highland Folk Museum where some of the scenes in "Outlander" were filmed; and making a reverent visit to the Culloden battle field on Drummoissie Moor where so many Highlanders fell in support of the Jacobite cause. I care about Scotland, I have an ongoing relationship with the Chief of Clan Carmichael, and I am interested in how the landscape and natural resources are managed, especially in comparison to our situation here in the USA.

Membership Meeting

Monday, 12 September

The MVFF general membership meeting will meet on Monday 12 September at 7:00pm in the New Mexico Game and Fish conference room. Club member George Sanders will give a presentation on his trip to the North Platte, Madison and Green Rivers this past summer.

Cookies and coffee will be served.

Executive Board Meeting

Monday, 19 September

The MVFF Executive Board will meet on Monday 19 September at 7:00pm in the New Mexico Game and Fish conference room. All members are welcome to attend.

Liars and Tyers

Wednesday, 28 September

Liars and Tyers will meet on Wednesday 28 September at the New Mexico Game and Fish conference room starting at 7:00pm. The fly to be tied is the *Olive Scud Nymph*. The tying session will be led by

Of course, it is often wet in Scotland; the skies are usually gray, often misty, or dripping, or just pouring down rain. This is usually a good thing for watersheds. In the Highlands, there are clear, cold freshwater sources literally at every turn, ranging in size from lochans (small lakes) to caochans (overgrown streamlets) to allts (streams) and massive rivers like our salmon fisheries of the Pacific Northwest. This is, of course, a good thing for anyone who enjoys single malt Scotch whisky, as the waters support about 110 active distilleries. Such waters are good for trout, char, grayling and salmon too. So, one might expect that the opportunities for fishing in the region are boundless. But no; not so much.

Given all the clean water and the long tradition of fly fishing, it is surprising that Scotland is not more of a fishing destination than it is. Sylvester Nemes, in his interesting little book, *Six Months in Scotland: An American View of its Salmon Fishing* (1998) identifies the two most likely reasons: the feudal system of fishing rights, and the effects of commercial overfishing.

From the earliest times, the right of fishing for salmon has been regarded as one of the regalia

minora vested in the Crown, not for the benefit of the people or as trustee for the lieges but for the patrimonial benefit of the Crown. No

members of the public may fish for salmon in rivers or estuaries or in the sea within territorial limits without permission of the Crown or the part vested in Crown rights.

(The Law of Game, Salmon & Freshwater Fishing in

Scotland, Stanley Robinson, 1990)

Like mineral rights in the U.S., the grant of fishing rights from the Crown may be with lands or separately. As a result, it is often the case that people who

own property along a river do not have the right to fish in the river. And, they are required to provide access through their property to those who do hold the fishing rights (i.e., Lairds, Barons, etc., to whom the Crown has transferred the fishing rights). From the vantage point of

an outsider, this system makes it very difficult to determine who owns the fishing rights on a particular stretch of water, whether day use permits might be available from the owner of those rights, and where that owner might be found. There are some places



Waterfall on Allt Fhearnagan, Cairngorm Mountains near Auchlean



River Feshie at Feshiebridge, where we were staying but did not have fishing access

along the River Spey where fly fishing clubs now control the fishing rights (either granted to them, or purchased by them), and those beats are often available to visitors for a fee. However, it seems that many of the areas managed by clubs are in the less productive parts of the river, which is why the previous owners divested themselves of the rights in the first place.

The other factor affecting the fishing in Scottish rivers is the long history of commercial overfishing. According to Nemes, most of the people who held/hold fishing rights to the major rivers have preferred using their rights to profit from commercial netting, rather than making the rivers available to sports anglers. And because there are so many individual private owners on any given river, it has been difficult to



River Spey at Kingussie with Cairngorm Mountains on the east horizon

get owners to agree on management strategies that would benefit the fisheries' long term stability. Thus, in some rivers over 70% of the returning runs of salmon and sea trout were routinely harvested, a level that has not been sustainable. Nemes estimates that the high point of Scottish fish abundance occurred in the 1960s and the numbers have been declining ever since. Until quite recently, even most rod anglers in Scotland did not intend to release any of the fish they caught, and partial catch-and-release rules were only introduced in 1994. Many anglers have given up fishing altogether rather than accepting the catch-and-release directives.

One of the results of decades of overfishing is that many really lovely waters simply don't have that many fish. This fact was brought home to us when we were reading real estate ads for properties with fishing rights in the Highlands. In a number of cases the ads included the fish counts as a measure of fishery quality, and the counts were instructive. "Dream properties" with fishing rights included: 3 ½ miles of the River Coquet with 34 named pools and a 72 salm-

on average *per year*; ¾ mile of the River Tay with an 11 salmon average per year; and 4 miles of the River Glenmore with an average of 6 salmon caught *per year*. These catch rates were considered good enough to be listed as assets in the effort to sell the properties. WOW!

One afternoon we had a pleasant visit with Graham Ellis, Manager of Mortimer's of Speyside in Grantown on Spey, the premier fly fishing shop in the Highlands. Some of the conditions and practices observed by Nemes have changed since the publication of his book. The current conservation policy in effect as of 2015 requires the release of every other salmon and grilse (young salmon returning after only 1 year at sea) caught, and anglers are limited to a single

sea trout per day. The new conservation rules, and indeed the conservation ethic are largely a result of requirements imposed on Scotland as part of being a member of the European Union (EU). According to Andrew Flitcroft, Editor of the British magazine *Trout & Salmon*, many anglers and resource managers fear that Brexit will result in the watering down of conservation policies that have resulted in recent improvement in fisheries management.

Mortimer's controls some beats on the River Spey and makes them available to visitors for 55 GBP (\$75) per day. They have recently begun having fishing guides available who will guide for salmon, trout or both; river guides of the sort we know in the U.S. are a fairly recent development in Scotland, where traditional gillies were essentially fishing for the Laird or the Estate. Additionally, Mortimer's now rents fly fishing gear, including rods, reels and waders so that anglers flying in from overseas don't have to drag along their own gear. Even with these significant changes however, fishing the Spey is tough.

Graham Ellis told us that fishing in Scotland simply isn't like fishing in Alaska, or even Montana. "You don't go fishing and expect to catch a fish. One can go days, weeks, or even an entire season without catching a fish." We had tried fishing the Spey for a



Glen Feshie, with River Feshie in background

day without any success, and were feeling a bit down about it, but Graham said there were several factors working against us as short-term visitors. First, we paid to get access to one of the less expensive stretches of the river. The better beats are further downstream, and the premium beats cost 500–600 GBP (\$660–800) per rod, per day. One has a much better chance of catching a fish on those beats (though it is by no means a sure thing). Also, as the fish are migrating upstream from the sea and not feeding, one must tease them into striking; it is necessary to know the precise holding areas of the fish. That detailed local knowledge is not really published anywhere. Finally, there had been some heavy rains just before our visit; the water in most streams and rivers was very clear but brown colored, like tea. This is due to the runoff coming down from the peaty soils

of the uplands. Even though the water was clear, the peaty runoff is acidic and the increased acidity after heavy rains puts the fish down for days or weeks. So, we don't feel so bad about not catching fish the way we would expect to in the U.S.

By reading several online Scottish fishing forums, I learned that most regular anglers (average folks with modest incomes) don't fish the rivers because they are too expensive. Most fish the larger and medium sized lakes, some of which are natural and many of which are manmade impoundments. The lakes are typically stocked with rainbows or browns, and are fished mainly from boats with spinners or bait. Fly anglers do enjoy hiking into small, back country high altitude lakes in the Cairngorms National Park to pursue small browns and char (like our brookies), but we didn't have time or the proper gear needed to give



Ready for the wedding

that a try. When we go back to Scotland the next time, if we try to do some serious fly fishing, I would proceed in two ways. For Speyside, I'll contact Mor-

timer's and book a guide and some time on some brown trout waters. (www.mortimersofspeyside.co.uk) For salmon, char and grayling, I'll book a trip with Scotia Fishing (<http://scotiafishing.com>), a company that operates like the outfitters we know in the U.S., except that they offer trips on top waters all throughout Scotland, rather than in a single region.

As much as I like Scotland, visiting there has made me appreciate even more the special access to trout waters that we enjoy here in the U.S. Now more than ever we should heed the words of Theodore Roosevelt:

We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation of worthy of its good fortune.

I prefer the U.S. approach to landscape and fisheries management because it makes the great outdoors available to all of us, regardless of our income or social standing. This is a blessing that should be cherished by all. We should be working to be good stewards of our fisheries, and helping to maintain the access to our public lands that we currently enjoy. When someone complains about federal land management, ask them if they would prefer to have all the lands be privately owned, off limits to the public, and managed for profit rather than the health of the fisheries. There are political forces afoot throughout the West, even in New Mexico, that would produce that outcome.



Ron Bellerose
PHW Coordinator

We are going strong. Project Healing Waters has been and will continue to be active for the remainder of the year. We had a San Juan fishing trip on 16-19 August with Sandstone Anglers providing the floats for 4 of our Vets. Fishing was great and all had a great time fishing. We fished the lower section on the second day and our Vets were able to take home 12 Trout. Something about fish taco's.

We will be having a PHW raffle from now until the 12th of November.

We will have a fund raiser at the Sportsman's Warehouse on the 17th of September and on the 12th of November. The drawing for the raffle will be at the 12th of November fund raiser.

Fly tying on the last Wednesday of the month at the Las Cruces VA Clinic. We will also be having a couple of fishing events at Grindstone Lake in September.

Raffle Prizes:

- 10wt 9' 4 pc TFO rod with PHW tube
- 8' 5/6 wt 2pc TFO rod
- Simms Pursuit GTV, shoe size 10

Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5.

Please support our wounded warriors and Vets with disabilities.

For more information about PHWFF see www.projecthealingwaters.org. Contact Ron Bellerose (575-680-5516), flyfishnh@hotmail.com if you wish to volunteer to help out.

Trout Unlimited – Gila/Rio Grande Chapter Update Projects and Activities for 2016

Gila Trout Survey: Willow Creek, June 23-26, 2016

An outstanding team of participants turned out for the electrofishing survey project on Willow Creek this June. Several crews covered the public waters starting from the intersection with Gilita Creek. The contract work on the new concrete fish barrier construction was still in progress at this time. The teams sampled throughout the main channel and headwater tributaries. It was extremely gratifying to observe that Gila Trout were distributed throughout the watershed, including large fish from previous stocking and stream-born, including young of year indicating a successful spawn this year. Streamside vegetation is recovering throughout the extensively burned section and the aquatic invertebrates, including large stoneflies, were plentiful. The participants included MVFF and GRG-TU members as well as other members and leaders from other NM Chapters of Trout Unlimited, NMSU graduate students, and agencies USFS, NMDGF, USFWS. The successful event was organized by Jill

Wick from NMDGF and TU Contractor Jim Brooks, and everyone attending had a truly great time and enjoyed the fabulous camp food menu prepared by Nick Smith, Jim Brooks and Dave Propst. With continuing work Willow Creek has great potential and is one of the most accessible places to catch Gila Trout.

Developing TU/MVFF Partnership with BLM on Rio Bonito Creek

In ongoing discussions with Randy Howard, Wildlife Biologist, Bureau of Land Management, our chapter is planning to help out with a large-scale improvement project on the Rio Bonito near Lincoln. The BLM is interested in ultimately improving the recreational fishing opportunities on this section. Initial stream flow and temperature measurements are promising, and we are looking ahead to helping improve this stretch of river for trout.

If you have any interest in getting more involved in this or other projects, or if you would like to participate in a committee or as a board member or officer in the Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited please let us know, we can do so much more with your help!

Check out our facebook page for current postings and other information:

<https://www.facebook.com/wildnativetrout>

Rio Peñasco Fishing Report

Blaine Goss - 8/20/16

Fished the lease today. First in the mid-section, then drove up to upper part. Water was a little high. Clear, but algae are still there. Caught one trout—12" in upper area. Did not see any stocked fish. Saw a 20" brown in the slough area, but could not coax a strike. I would think that a stocker or two would be biting. Oh well.

Club Outings Planned

The board is now discussing possible future outings and would welcome suggestions from members. Where do you want to go? Let them know. If you have comments or suggestions for additional trips pass them to any of the Board members. Trips now in the planning stages are:

- Sept. —Lady Anglers trip to the Gunnison area.

- Oct. 1–9—trip to Kodiak. Contact Tom Lightfoot (575–521–4546) for info.
- Nov. 3–6—Club trip to San Juan

MVFF San Juan Trip

November 3rd thru 6th

Enchanted Hide Away can accommodate up to 21 Anglers.

Cost for 3 nights lodging is \$130.

Dinner each evening at the Stone House is included in the above prices. There will be cold cereal, milk, and juice for breakfast. You will have to provide Lunch and your own beverages.

Sandstone Anglers

- Full day guided float with lunch (2 anglers) \$175/angler plus tip
- Full day guided wade with lunch (3 anglers) \$120/angler plus tip
- Full day guided wade with lunch (2 anglers) \$155/angler plus tip

All pricing includes taxes.

Contact Chuck Mueller to book this trip at 575–647–4045 or email at mueller@mvff.org

For those members who would prefer to arrange their own accommodation can join the group for dinner each night at a cost of \$25 for all three nights.

Full payment for this trip is due no later than October 10th.

Welcome New Members

Thomas Barth
Ethan & Haley Goode
John Merritt

El Paso, TX
Lubbock, TX
Las Cruces, NM

Gila Trout Survey: Willow Creek, June 23–26, 2016



Collected Gila Trout ready for measuring



Electro fishing for Gila Trout



Large Gila Trout



Young Gila Trout from successful spawning

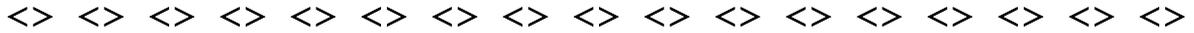


Olive Scud Nymph



- Hook:** Scud Hook, #12 to 22
- Thread:** UNI 8/0, olive or olive dun
- Weight:** 0.010 lead wire
- Eyes:** burnt monofilament, 4X
- Antennae:** fox squirrel tail fibers
- Ribbing:** Monofilament, 4X
- Body:** SLF spikey dubbing, brown-olive
- Back:** soft plastic bag coated with UV clear fly finish (thin)

This fly was tied by Tim Cammisa. Many of you will remember him as the guest speaker at the annual banquet earlier this year. If you wish to watch a video of him tying it go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_38QzmmlgM



MVFF Board Meeting Minutes

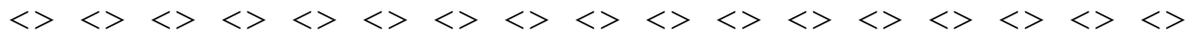
Monday, August 15, 2016

Submitted by John Kennedy, Secretary

The MVFF Board meeting was called to order by President David Carmichael at 7:00pm in the NMDG&F Conference Room. Board members present were David Carmichael, Jim Sorenson, Gary Mann, John Kennedy, Ray Rodriquez, Chuck Mueller, Bob Silver, Jeff Arterburn, and Dennis Lanpher. Non-Board members in attendance were Ron Bellerose, Jim Hulsey, Tom Lightfoot, Tom Wobbe and Mike Frederichs.

- 1. The minutes of the April 18, 2016 Board meeting were approved as published in the May, 2016 issue of the newsletter.
2. The Treasurer reported a balance of \$13,087. The Treasurer's report was accepted and approved.
3. Tom Wobbe reported on the membership. The Club presently has 352 members, 119 for Las Cruces, 56 El Paso, 32 Lubbock, 13 Alamogordo, etc.
4. The Kid's Fishing Clinic for 2017 was discussed. The Club will again participate. The Club spent \$496 on the 2016 Clinic. Tom Wobbe will again purchase Zebco spin casting combos at wholesale for the kids' prize drawings.
5. Ron Bellerose reported on Project Healing Waters. Four vets will fish the San Juan on August 16 and 17. Fly tying will take place 8/31 at the VA Clinic in Las Cruces. \$317 in donations was received from the Moose Lodge. Locally, PHW will receive

- \$500 from PHW Headquarters. Ron and his volunteers are still working with Fort Bliss soldiers. Ron received approximately \$13,000 worth of supplies from Sportsman's Elite. Some of these materials will be sent to Headquarters. Ron will conduct a fundraiser or two at the new Sportsmen's Warehouse. Future activities include fly tying at NMG&F Conference Room on Oct. 26, and the trip to the lease on Nov. 2.
6. Jeff Arterburn reported on behalf of the Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited. There were 2 kids fishing clinics in June at Lake Roberts and Grindstone Lake, both well received. The Willow Creek project June 24-26 showed the stream is recovering with good insect life, and over 350 Gila trout studied. Another restoration project coming up, beginning Oct. 6, is at Bonita Creek. This is below the town of Lincoln.
7. The lease was discussed, and how to improve fishing. There is questionable trespassing on the property. Members need to make observations and keep notes. Possible additional stocking will take place this fall.
8. The Bug Guy will probably be our speaker at the next Annual Banquet & Raffle.
The next Board meeting will be Monday, September 19, 2016 at 7:00pm.
Meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.



Quick Look Contact Information

2016 Officers of the Club	
Officers	
• President:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• V-Pres.:	Jim Sorenson (575) 525-1050
• Secretary:	John Kennedy (612) 720-3456
• Treasurer:	Gary Mann (575) 521-7793
Board Members	
• Position 1:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• Position 2:	Jim Sorenson (575) 525-1050
• Position 3:	Jeff Arterburn (575) 524-0773
• Position 4:	Ray Rodriguez (575) 520-5768
• Position 5:	John Kennedy (612) 720-3456
• Position 6:	Chuck Mueller (575) 647-4045
• Position 7:	Bob Silver (575) 522-6325
• Position 8:	Gary Mann (575) 521-7793
• Position 9:	Dennis Lanpher (575) 642-2946
Newsletter & Web Page Editor	
• Jim Hulsey (575) 524-1880	newsletter@mvff.org
Membership Committee Chairman	
• Tom Wobbe (575) 522-5437	membership@mvff.org

Norm Mabie Scholarship Fund	
Market Value as of 30 June 2014	\$11,487

Norm Mabie Scholarship Fund

The Norm Mabie Memorial Scholarship Fund is an endowed fund at New Mexico State University which is funded by MVFF member donations. Earnings from the fund are used to provide scholarships for students at NMSU majoring in fisheries or related fields.

The recipient of each scholarship is determined each April by the MVFF Board with the award being made for the fall semester.

Even though the fund is endowed additions can be made to it at any time. The larger the fund, the more earnings are available for award. If you are interested in contributing please make checks out to the **NMSU Foundation** and on the "for" line of the check, identify "Norm Mabie Memorial Scholarship Fund for deposit only." All contributions are tax deductible. For any questions please contact one of the Officers or Board members. If you have not made a donation to the fund please give consideration and help honor Norm.

Current Email Addresses Needed

Many of the email addresses in our files are not current as members change to other internet providers. These addresses will not be distributed, but will only be used to relay club information or reminders for club meetings and other club events. Please send your address changes to membership@mvff.org.

Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout Print

Help support the MVFF Habitat Restoration Projects and purchase a limited edition "Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout" print. This beautiful printing of an original watercolor of our native state fish is a limited series of 150 high quality 12 x 18 prints that are numbered and signed by New Mexico artist Michelle Arterburn. The cost of each individual print is \$25.00, with the proceeds dedicated towards habitat restoration projects. If you live out of town and wish the print mailed to you please add \$5 for postage. See the MVFF website for purchase.



******* REMEMBER *******
MVFF MEMBERSHIPS & NM FISHING LI-
CENSES EXPIRE ON 31 MARCH

Membership Information

Membership is open to anyone who supports the activities of the club. Membership fees are shown below. Members are provided with the opportunity to attend informational monthly meetings, purchase fishing access permits to the MVFF leased waters on the Rio Peñasco, and participate in other Club activities such as a summer picnic, annual awards banquet, casting clinics, fly tying classes, and Club sponsored fishing trips.

There are several options for the payment of dues. A family is defined as a club member, their spouse and all children 17 years of age or under.

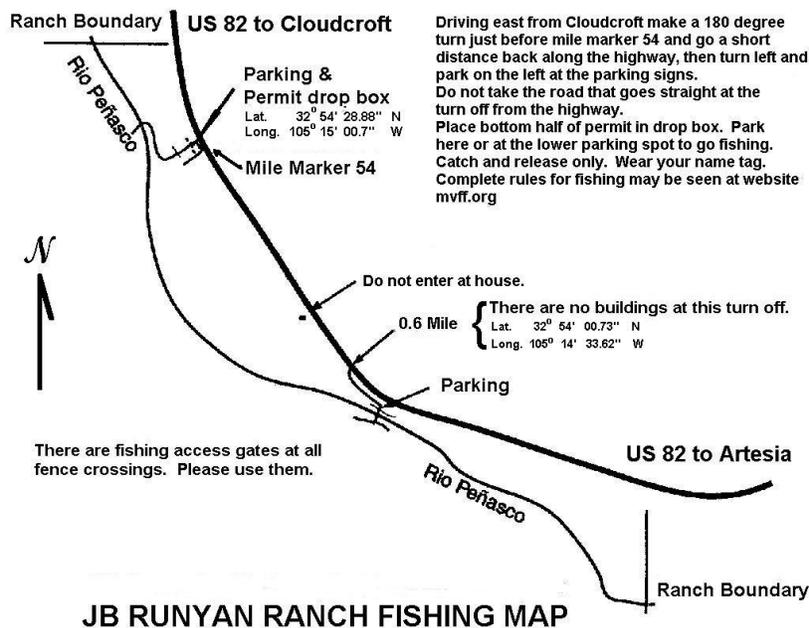
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

Lease Information

Permits to fish the Club leased waters on the Rio Peñasco can be obtained from Jim Hulsey (575-524-1880), Tom Wobbe (575-522-5437) and Donna Mabie (575-522-3810) in Las Cruces. Permits can be obtained from the land owner, but you should phone (575-687-3362) the night before to ensure someone will be there to sell them to you. Permits can be ordered through the club web page (mvff.org) by filling out the form and mailing as directed. Cost is \$25.00 per day. Kids under 18 fish free but must be accompanied by an adult club member with a permit. You must be a current member (current dues have been paid) of MVFF to fish the lease. Please wear your MVFF identification badge while on the property. New or replacement badges can be obtained by contacting Jim Hulsey. In addition, members can purchase a one-day, one-time permit for guests.

Directions to the Lease:

Follow NM 82 east from Cloudcroft, NM or west from Artesia, NM. The turn off to the lease is located on the right side of the road about 100 yards before mile marker 54 coming from Cloudcroft or 100 yards on the left past mile marker 54 coming from Artesia.



MESILLA VALLEY FLYFISHERS, INC.

PO Box 2222

Las Cruces, NM 88004-2222

Membership and/or Permit Application

(Please Print Clearly)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work/Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____ email: _____

Are you a current member? _____ Yes _____ No

Do you need a name badge? _____ Yes _____ No

New Membership _____ or renewal _____?

Membership Categories: Individual Family Circle the one desired.

1 Year \$20 \$25

3 Years \$50 \$60

Life \$400 \$500

For family membership: Name of spouse _____ No. of children _____

Note: All memberships expire on 31 March. New memberships received on or after 1 January will expire on 31 March of the following year.

Membership fee if applicable \$_____
_____ Adult Permits @ \$25 per permit = \$_____

Total =\$_____

Send remittance with this form to the address shown at top of page.