



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of

Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

P.O. Box 2222

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www.MVFF.org

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2017



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Tale Waters Edited by Jim Hulsey — newsletter@mvff.org

President's Corner

David Carmichael



Early to mid-summer is a good time to visit many parts of New Mexico's high country. Especially for those of us who live in the lower elevation desert areas, the mountains provide a welcome respite from the heat. I have family members in Santa Fe who complain that 80 degrees is too hot, but it sure beats the 105+ degrees we've been experiencing

in El Paso. But, a trip to the Sangre de Cristo Mountains is more than an escape from the desert heat. It is also an exploration into a world of shaded green stream courses enfolded in undulating ridges blanketed in evergreens and punctuated by towering limestone and granite outcrops. A world where the sunlight is softened as it filters through the trees, and where the scents of spruce, fir and juniper are carried on the breeze to mingle with the odor of moist earth and streamside flowers. In those places I am often struck by the juxtaposition of the enormity of the mountains with the intimacy of the glimpses of animals, flowers, moss and rocks encountered along the stream edges.

Admittedly, there are often a lot of other people trying to relax in the cool mountains, and it is therefore prudent to walk at least a short distance in order to thin the crowds. With a little more effort, it is possible to avoid other anglers altogether. Such is the case with our recent visit to the hidden waters of the Rio Mora at the edge of the Pecos Wilderness.

Welcome New Members

Jeffrey & Kellie Glaze Tularosa, NM

Membership Meeting

There will be no MVFF general membership meeting in August. Many members will be fishing and the rest of them should be. The next meeting will be in September. See you then.

Executive Board Meeting

Monday, 21 August

The MVFF Executive Board will meet on Monday 21 August at 7:00pm in the New Mexico Game and Fish conference room. All members are welcome to attend.

Liars and Tyers

Liars and Tyers will not meet in August. The next meeting will be in September. See you then.

Hidden Waters Notebook: Rio Mora

In mid-June, Miriam and I had the opportunity to fish the Rio Mora with our longtime friends and new MVFF club members Lisa Meyer and Rick Wessel. The Mora is the largest tributary of the Pecos River. It drains the areas of Hamilton Mesa, Pyramid Peak and Spring Mountain in the eastern portion of the Pecos Wilderness. The Rio Mora joins the Pecos River about 15 miles north of the town of Pecos, NM and 2 ½ miles



Shooting star flowers (Dodecatheon) blooming along the Rio Mora

north of the village of Terrero. To access the lower Mora box, follow NM Hwy 63 north from Pecos; the confluence with the Mora isn't especially obvious, as it is obscured by a highway bridge, but the heavily used Mora campground is very obvious. Enter the campground, park at the east end of the lot, and you are at the trail head. Follow the trail east and then north along the Rio Mora. As is often the case on heavily used public lands, the further you hike, the better the fishing becomes. About half a mile upstream you'll see a couple of brown corrugated metal structures related to gauging operations. There is a nice, productive pool at the far side of the river bend at that point, but the fishing is better if you continue on. A little further upstream you will encounter a limestone outcrop that forms a small cliff adjacent to the stream. There is one narrow spot that seems to deter the ma-

jority of anglers working their way up from the campground. The accompanying photo shows Miriam traversing this part of the trail; it's one of only two



Rocky Mountain Iris

tricky parts.



Miriam negotiating the part of trail that filters out most bait fishers based at the campground downstream

All the anglers we saw downstream from this point were casting either bait or spinners; we encountered only one angler above the cliff, and he was carrying a fly rod. Just as there is a difference in the distribution of types of anglers, the fish species change as well. The Rio Mora is heavily stocked with rainbow trout just above the campground, but upstream from the cliff, we caught only wild browns, in the 8-12" range. The action was better after 11am, probably because the water temperature warmed from a chilly 46 degrees at 9am, to 58 degrees by mid-afternoon. There was a sparse mayfly hatch coming off at noon, but all the fish we caught took a #16 Prince nymph, hare's ear or a red San Juan worm. The streamflow was moderately

high at 69 cfs, and the stream is probably fishing better now, at a more normal flow of 18 cfs. The Mora has nice populations of little yellow stoneflies, brown stones, and caddis flies, and dry flies should do well throughout much of the summer.

Although the high water level presented some challenges in terms of fly presentation, it also meant that the river banks were well-watered and full of wildflowers. We were treated to blooming Apache plume, wild rose, shooting star, Rocky Mountain iris, blue flax, and Franciscan blue bells. Wild gooseberries, wild grapes and strawberries were setting fruit, and several species of butterflies were encountered clustered in moist patches in the streamside trail, including Tiger Swallowtails, Western Pygmy Blues and Painted Ladies.

We also had to scramble through and cast around many thickets of mountain alder (*Alnus tenuifolia*). I know a few of the club members who speak about having a "complicated relationship" with the Conejos River...; some even say a love/hate relationship. Well,



Tippet-eating cones of the mountain alder

it seems I have a complicated relationship with the mountain alder. Alders are an important part of the streamside vegetation in the mountains of New Mexico, and I appreciate them as part of the ecology.



Wet wading the Rio Mora to avoid my nemesis, the mountain alder (in foreground)

However, they have cute little cones, something like those of a birch tree, but stiffer. When they open, release their seeds and dry out, the cones transform into tenacious, tippet-eating appendages to what is otherwise a delightful tree. They are especially adept at attracting and snarling my tippets when I'm trying

to cast in a breeze, cast under an overhanging branch, or set the hook from shore. It is really quite amazing how a missed hook set can result in a 6x tippet getting wrapped around an alder cone fourteen times, with a couple of overhand knots thrown in for good measure.

And, the tips of the branches are nice and supple, so when you release a fly or tippet from one cone or leaf, the branch springs back and grabs on with a different cone. I've spent quite a bit of time getting to know the alder up close and personal while extracting flies and tippets from its greedy clutches. On the Rio Mora, there is a fairly simple solution: wade down the middle of the stream when necessary, to avoid the majority of the alder branches that are waiting in ambush. I hope everyone is getting out on the water, keeping your flies and tippets out of the trees, enjoying the outdoors and maybe catching a few fish. ▲



Ron Bellerose
PHW Coordinator



Project Healing Waters is on vacation for the months of July and August due to lack of participation, volunteers and heat. We will have a couple of evening fly tying classes this summer and we will

start up strongly in September.

 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. ▲

Willow Creek Gila Trout Project Sampling & Stream Habitat Monitoring August 17-19

Volunteers are needed to help with electrofishing conducted and led by NM Dept of Game and Fish, USFS and USFWS biologists on August 18 -19 (Friday/Saturday) on Willow Creek and also on Gilita Creek between Snow Creek and Willow Creek confluence. The two days for Willow Creek sampling will cover the reach of stream between the fish barrier and private property. The Gilita Creek sampling will be accessed from Snow Lake and include some hiking and sampling sites upstream of Snow Creek and Middle Fork Gila confluence for the more adventurous. In addition, we will sample two reaches of Willow Creek to continue stream habitat assessment to document post wildfire changes. When we sample will be based upon the number of volunteers. There will be ample opportunities to work with agency biologists and also plenty of time for fishing. We are very fortunate again this year to have Dave Propst and Nick Smith cook and take care of the menu, guaranteed to be an outstanding repeat performance! **This year all meals will be provided to participants and there will be no request for food costs.** All those helping out will be responsible for their own camping gear and beverages. Plenty of hot coffee will be available in the morning along with breakfast. As in 2016 we'll use the NMDGF cabin as the base for all activities.

We prefer that volunteers arrive afternoon evening of Thursday August 17th prepared to work full days Friday/Saturday (August 18-19). Sunday will be a travel/fishing day.

For more information and to RSVP for volunteers please contact Jim Brooks by email: arroyodejaime@gmail.com. ▲

2017 Conejos Camping Trip

Bob Silver

Dave Brown, Chuck Mueller, Ron Bellrose, Luis Vargas and Bob Silver plus two of Bob's friends from Albuquerque camped at the Mogote Campground and enjoyed the cool Colorado climate to fish the Conejos River and nearby streams. This year the water level in all of the streams was higher with runoff lasting longer because of near double the normal snowpack in the mountains. It was fantastic to see plentiful hatches of yellow stoneflies and the large salmon flies in the flywater of the Conejos. Only the fish didn't seem as interested in these insects as the fishermen did. So, we relied on nymphing even though we would have liked to be able to catch fish on dries. Dave Brown hired a guide and they went to the Los Pinos. Dave caught several nice browns like this one below. We also did very well on the small streams where they entered Platoro Reservoir.



On Friday night the group ate steak, fresh vegetables, potato salad, and apple pie all cooked at the campground. The weather was sunny and the temperature around 60 during the day. Quite a nice break from the summer in Las Cruces. Late June and early July is when the insects on the Conejos really begin to hatch. We saw a few Green and Gray Drake mayfly hatches and the fish would key on them entirely. But there were not that many hatches taking place. I think the water from the snow melt was still too cold to have reliable hatches when we were there. I have been back twice since the Club trip and the fish were much more interested in taking dry flies plus we saw two moose. Save early July in your calendar for next year's trip. This area has so many places to fish

that you can usually find fish to catch plus the scenery is beautiful. ▲

MVFF San Juan Trip

Chuck Mueller

Fall 2017 MVFF San Juan Trip 3 nights November 5th to 8th

Octagon Inn: The Octagon Inn is limited to the first 9 members at a cost of \$140.00 per night.

Riverside House: The Riverside House is limited to 4 couples: King Suite 1 or 2 at \$310, Queen Suite at \$300 and Double bedroom or 2 twin bed room with shared bath at \$290.

All breakfast's & dinner's are included in the above prices. Dinner's on the 5th and 7th at the Octagon Inn and dinner on the 6th at the Riverside House. You will have your own beverage. For those members who would prefer to arrange their own accommodations, you can join the group for dinner each night at a cost of \$25.00 paid in advance.

Guide trip by Sandstone Anglers: Full day guided Float with lunch (2 anglers) \$187.00/angler plus tip. Full day guided wade with lunch (3 anglers)

\$133.00/angler plus tip. All pricing includes taxes. Full payment is due no later than October 1, 2017.

If you wish to join us, please contact Chuck Mueller to book this trip at 575-647-4045 or email at mueller@mvff.org. ▲

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:

- October 1-5—Lady Anglers trip to the Gunnison area of Colorado.
- November 5-8—Club trip to the San Juan.
- Autumn—Club trip to Kodiak, AK. ▲

MVFF Board Meeting Minutes

The Executive Board did not meet in July and therefore there are no minutes to report. The next meeting will be on 21 August. ▲

More Rio Mora



Pocket water running at 69 cfs in the lower portion of the Rio Mora box

Quick Look Contact Information

2017 Officers of the Club	
Officers	
• President:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• V-Pres.:	Tom Johnson (417) 684-7075
• Secretary:	Jeff Arterburn (612) 720-3456
• Treasurer:	Gary Mann (575) 521-7793
Board Members	
• Position 1:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• Position 2:	Tom Johnson (417) 684-7075
• Position 3:	Jeff Arterburn (575) 524-0773
• Position 4:	Evan Claassen (402) 239-1289
• Position 5:	Will Lubenau (575) 442-1912
• 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) 649-2946
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
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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.

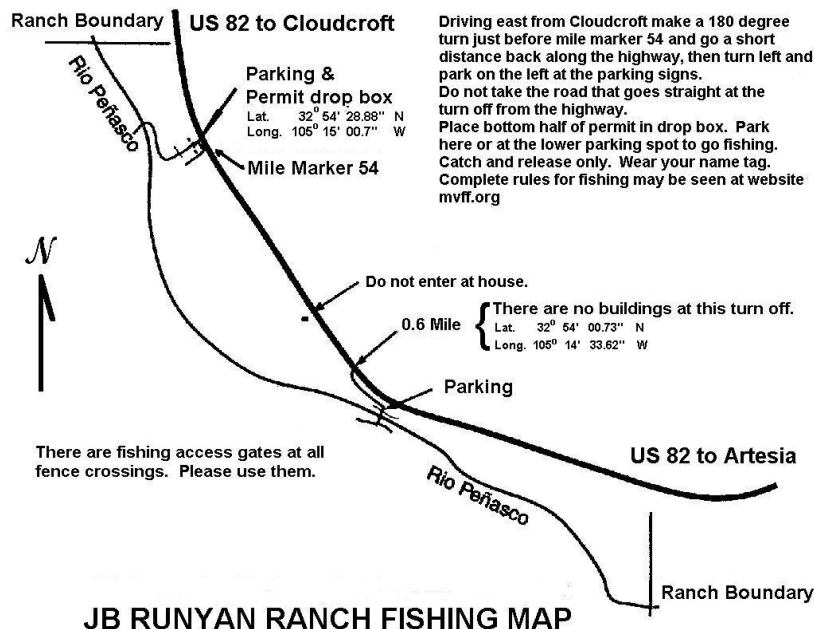
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

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.