



The Flypaper

Sept/Oct 2018

Grande Ronde Outing

A persistent low pressure system sat over the headwaters of the Willowa and Grande Ronde rivers for the week in mid-June just prior to our trip: a 39 mile trout fishing adventure and expedition down the combination of the two rivers in Northeastern Oregon. The weather cleared for our excursion. The rains that came with the low had increased the water flow – a little big and a bit pushy. Last year's trip the rivers were very low and gnarly. The gradient on the stretch we float is 22 feet per mile, with continuous stream flow. By comparison, the John Day is 11, the Main Salmon 12, both pool and drop rivers.

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Ed Ianson camping on the Grande Ronde

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Banner photo: Dave Campbell

Cedar Rover Outing

On June 30, the weather was sporadic rain showers during the day and temperature in the low 60's. There was one shower left in our day for the 4 members who came out. Kelli and Russ Armstrong, Matt Moore and Tom Beaulaurier explored sections of the river and spots where access is easy compared to the more typical sporty access to the river up at Landsburg. We found wide open choices since the weather discouraged many other people from using this area. Ease of access was our preference and we found the fishing was good for small trout using dry flies, especially during the shower and later as dusk progressed. The Cedar River at Landsburg offers a very different river experience from the lower, close-in sections where private property and high use influences are more typical. The larger trout are lower if you want them though.

Written by : Tom Beaulaurier

Photos by: Tom Beaulaurier



Kelli and Russ Armstrong, Tom Beaulaurier, and Matt Moore

Upcoming Trips

South Sound Salt Water Day Outing

September 8

Joemma Beach State Park

Clark Fork Outing

September 14-16

Superior, MT

Salt Water Day Outing

September 29

TBD

Local Lake Outing

October 6

TBD

Klickitat River Steelhead Outing

October 12-14

Stinson Flats



Grand Ronde Outing (continued from pg. 1)

We all arrived Saturday the 23rd of July camping at the superb Minam campground right on the Wallowa. Bill Kelly drove over from the Driggs, Idaho area. Peter Maunsell drove down in his van loaded with community gear and food. Jim Hopper came with Brett Schormann. Carolyn Sells drove down from Spokane. Russ Shropshire arrived with Jim Watson in Jim's pick-up. Ed Ianson joined Sasha and me for the trip. We also carried a fair amount of community gear.

The next morning we drove the two miles to the put-in at the confluence of the Minam and Wallowa rivers. We arranged shuttles, distributed gear and rigged boats for the river and launched. The first day we all successfully navigated House Rock Rapid. Some of us caught trout. Downstream, I chose one of the first campgrounds and we camped on the Wallowa for the night, enjoying the incomparable beauty of the Ponderosa Pine forested basalt canyon.

The next day we broke camp, loaded up the boats and took off towards our first obstacle of the day. Blind (or Vincent) Falls only requires a fairly straightforward maneuver to the left. In our gear raft, Sasha and I went through unscathed. Since I was lead boat, I watched upriver to see how the following boaters were doing. That momentary inattention proved consequential. There was a massive boulder coming up very quickly, sucking in water from above and from both sides of the river in order to fill in the vacuum of the hole or eddy below. I attempted to correct the course of the raft, fought the weight of the heavily laden raft, made a wrong move and we were up and pinned on the rock. Holy crap! I yelled to Sasha to go up on the high side so as to mitigate against a flip. She was already there. Here we were at a 35 or 40 degree angle in the middle of very strong current with a quarter of the boat submerged. What to do? Sasha and I remained very calm, Sasha due to her experience and maturity and me, perhaps to a Beta Blocker. Sasha even commented that maybe we should just make a cup of tea! We both got on the upper front tube and tried to bounce the raft off the rock, dislodging it a foot or more but it would not budge, and maybe only stuck more fast. It was difficult for both of us to be in the front of the raft at the same time without inviting a flip. I told Sasha to stash our fly rods but it was not on her priority list. I risked the loss of an oar trying to pry the raft off the rock. Meanwhile a few members of our party had gathered from downstream about one hundred feet across the river from where we were. I tied the end of the raft's sixty feet of bow line to the end of the seventy-five feet of line in a throw bag and tossed the two lines in the river to get the kinks out. No one could hear over the roar of the river. I spent time trying



Grand Ronde Outing (continued from pg. 3)

to signal to Russ Shropshire on shore that I was going to coil the rope and throw it upstream and that they should station someone downstream to gather it after it floated by. But my signals were not understood. Then out of nowhere came two rescuing fishermen rafters in a Maravia raft with a large, stabilizing lean bar in the bow. They had seen our distress and decided to try to snatch us off the rock. The oarsman was massive with shoulders three feet wide. The very athletic young bowman, holding on to a large, stabilizing lean bar with one hand, seized the stuck raft bow handle with the other and yanked as the rower rowed. To no avail. Their raft was soon surfing below the rock and offered no momentum with which to pull. With no other apparent options and with authority the big rower ordered Sasha and me into their raft, "first you...now you." We did not argue. The oarsman said they could not extricate the raft but we were safe and that they were going to release. But I pleaded for them to wait a moment and pointed out the one hundred thirty-five feet of line trailing in the river off the bow d-ring, suggesting that maybe somehow, some way, we could get a line ashore. No way could I have thrown it that far! While the athlete stuffed the throw bag I coiled the bow line on my forearm so it might play out efficiently. Then the bowman made a phenomenal heave across the river that could not have been thrown with any greater force or accuracy, right over Russ's upstream shoulder high up onto the bank beyond. The rope settled gracefully on the nape of his neck! Astonished, I exclaimed, "what a rocket shot". The oarsman commented "yes, Jeff is an athlete, he is a great athlete, that's for sure." Jeff let go of our raft and we saw my long handled net floating by. I said "let it go". The oarsman said no, they would retrieve it and commented to Jeff that they should get one like that.

Miraculously, four men on shore yanked hard on the line from the bow of the raft several times and popped the raft right off the rock, upright. Our trip was saved! The raft contained at least a third of our food, half the kitchen, two tables, the club's two stoves, two propane gas tanks, the toilet, a CPAP machine and twenty-five gallons of water, not to mention all of the camping gear for Sasha and me. And we still had 32 river miles and a lot of trout fishing to go. Getting back into my raft, I knew that we needed to get to a campsite. It was agreed that Sasha and I should scout out front.

Sasha and I only lost two water bottles and we broke two rods. The club retained all its gear.

We got to a modest campsite just above the next big rapid and secured it. With help we unloaded and found some soaked gear and a kitchen box full of water in my raft. The box was drained and the contents got a chorine water rinse and we set up a long clothesline for drying out sodden clothes. Several of our members continued to fish and caught some good-sized trout, particularly Peter and Bill. We made a good camp that evening and enjoyed a nourishing meal. A calm ending to a tough day on the river.

The next, third morning on river, we scouted Sheep Creek rapid just below camp and floated through it and all the other rapids below without incident. For the week, just about everyone caught fish, some very big, with the better fisherman catching more. Jim Hopper was particularly proficient. Most of the fish were caught on nymphs but dries were also effective. Bill Kelly caught the largest fish of the trip at 23". Alas, it was a Northern Pike Minnow! Sasha would only fish with a hopper. One day Sasha and I crossed the eddy line below a rock wall and anchored up by the bank in the eddy below to fish the eddy seam. Sasha caught two big Rainbow trout, the nineteen-incher jumping continuously on the retrieve, more out of the water than in.



Web Bug

Grand Ronde Outing (continued from pg. 4)

Over the week, the river dropped and slowed to a more manageable flow. I got back to my old rowing ways, weaving in and through rock gardens with ease. We had delicious meals and everyone pitched in and helped with camp duties. We picked one another up when tired or exhausted, switching cooking duties to the hardy. The third to last of our seven days Sasha and I scouted and found the very best riverside campground in which I have ever stayed - a small island with plenty of shade, gorgeous three hundred and sixty-degree views and wade fishing on both sides. Fishers were able to ford the narrower channel on the island side and from there it was possible to fish quite away up river. We spent a 'layover' day there and had a very pleasant sojourn. Ed Ianson showed us his Euro-nymphing skills catching numerous small fish.

After the usual chaos at the Powatka Bridge takeout five of us drove down the Ronde and up out of the canyon on Rattlesnake Grade and then down the Snake to Clarkston to spend the night at a motel and enjoy a restaurant meal. On the way back from there, Ed, Sasha and I stopped and gaped at the magnificent Palouse Falls. Arriving the Sunday before the 4th of July, Sasha told me that all she wanted for her sixteenth birthday that Tuesday was a trip to the Sage factory on Bainbridge. We needed to get our broken rods fixed anyway. We ferried over and the superb folks at Sage without hesitation gave us two brand new Redington rods for free. And for no charge they even fixed two 20 year-old Sage SP rods, broken earlier, that I had purchased used. Upon learning that it was her birthday they gave us a personal one and one-half hour factory tour even though they were short-handed for the holiday week.

The two rescuing fishermen at the rock would not even tell me their name or address, only communicating that they were from Boise. Acknowledging our thanks, they had rushed down river to catch up to their parents in another raft. They expressed concern for parents who had flipped and lost camping gear the day before at House Rock. I did know that one was named Jeff. They had left a beer cuzzy on one of our rafts with a last name magic markered on. Upon arriving back home I did an internet search and found Jeff! In gratitude, I sent him a long wooden handled ghost net with a magnetic release line. Also, for good measure, a couple of humorous replacement cuzzies.

When I think back on the trip I realize that, yes, there are saints in this world – the two rafting fishermen. The good people at Sage! Now, even after more than a thousand wilderness river miles in a raft, never having gotten stuck on an obstruction, complacency did do me in, even on this my fourth trip down the Ronde. In my defense, I got "right back on that horse that threw me" and rowed the remaining thirty-two miles downriver.

Much thanks to Peter Maunsell for planning, buying and packing meals, hauling the food with community gear down to and on the river and cleaning up everything afterwards - all this with his indefatigable sense of duty and selflessness. Do I even need to mention that Peter also caught many, big fish? Thank yous to Carolyn Sells for her help on kitchen duties and her cheerful spirit, to Russ Shrophshire, for all his help and untiring effort, to Bill Kelly for his good nature, to Ed Ianson for his affability and S.C.A.T. cleaning machine work, to Sasha for heading her own kitchen crew, Jim Watson for running down gear and chaplain Jim Hopper for his serenity. Our fly club can be very proud that all worked hard to make this a great adventure.

- Written by Mark Conner
- Photos by Jim Hopper



Middle Fork Snoqualmie Outing

We had good weather, the river was in great shape and the smoke was hardly noticeable. We are sure you will agree after getting acquainted with the river valley that it is a real jewel.... and only an hour from town.

The river today was flowing about 150 cfs. Perfect.

- Written by Dave Campbell
- Photo by Dave Campbell



Front row: (left to right)- Dave Campbell, Jim Watson, Erik Nelson

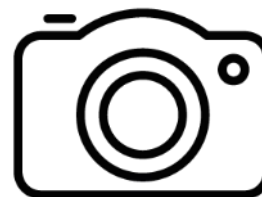
Middle row (left to right)- Claudia Campbell, Kathy Watson, Susanne Staats, Carol Johnson, K.D. Hallman, Laura Zimmerman, Kelli Armstrong, Russ Armstrong, Mahmoud Abdou

Back row (left to right)-Dustin Robinson, Jake Watrous, Brett Schormann, Michael Richards, Kent Westbrook, Sid Garige

Snoqualmie whitefish



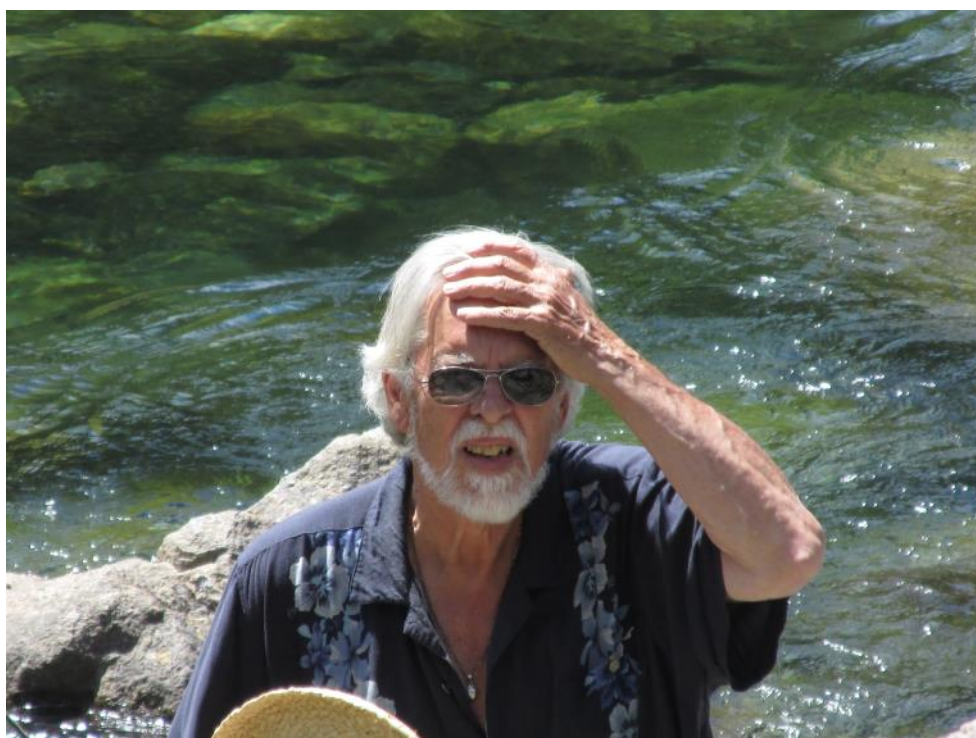
FISHOTS



Submit your fishots to Brian at
stauroo@gmail.com. Include your name,
fish caught, and location.



Carol X and Susanne Staats



Ed Caldwell. Portrait of an unhappy flyfisher.....moments after
breaking his favorite fly rod. Middle Fork Snoqualmie July 2018



Susanne Staats and Brett Schormann

Quote of the Month

"Be patient and calm - for no one can catch fish in anger."

~Herbert Hoover

Northwest Fly Anglers
PO Box 75212
Seattle, WA 98175

northwestflyanglers.org



NFA is pleased to partner with other fly fishing clubs throughout the state. Check out the excellent outings from the [Spokane Fly Fishing Club](#). Check their [website](#) for registration details.



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