

# DRIFTERS DRIFT

NEWSLETTER OF THE HIGH PLAINS DRIFTERS

Feb 2014



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## Inside

- President's Address
- HPD Kids' Day dates
- Arkansas/Salida Trip Preview
- Rainbow Trout and Silver Salmon Around Bristol Bay

## Announcements

- Kids' Days Date's Announced
- HPD Trip to Pueblo, CO - Feb 22
- Pancake Breakfast - March 22

## Upcoming

### Trips

- Pueblo, CO - Feb 22
- South Platte River (Pancake Breakfast) - March 22
- Arkansas River (Salida) - April 3-6

### Meetings

- Feb 19 - Landon Mayer
- March 19 - Pat Dorsey
- May 21

### Classes

- Beg. Tying - Feb 8
- Open Session - Feb 8
- Beg. Tying - March 8
- Open Session - March 8

### Events

- HPD Kids' Day - May 31 & June 28
- HPD Summer Picnic - July 19

## Active HPD Products

- 2014 HPD Calendars - \$15
- Mugs (Four Fish Options) - \$20
- Long Sleeve (Four Fish Options) - \$25
- Short Sleeve (Four Fish Options) - \$20

*See last page for availability information*

# MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM

## February Speaker: Landon Mayer

With nearly two decades of experience, Landon Mayer's success in catching trout is fueled by an addiction to pursuing large trout with small flies and lightweight fly-fishing equipment. Mayer enthusiastically teaches and demonstrates his techniques and on-river knowledge to fellow anglers and has developed innovative strategies for sighting, hooking, and landing selective trout. He shares these tips and secrets in his books Colorado's Best Fly Fishing, Sight Fishing for Trout, and How to Catch the Biggest Trout of Your Life

## UPCOMING TRIPS

On February 22nd we will be fishing the Arkansas River in Pueblo. This is a great winter fishery since the temperatures are usually warmer than in Denver. We will meet on the river at 9:00 am at the Juniper Road parking lot off of 96. For those who want to car pool we can meet at the south Cabela's location no later than 7:00am. Plan on meeting back at the parking lot for lunch at 1:00 pm. Since I'm unsure who is going as of now plan to bring your own lunch.

On March 22nd we will have our annual Pancake Breakfast at Mike Owen's Cabin on the South Platte. This has been a lot of fun for the last several years. For those who would like to help with the preparation or clean up with breakfast please contact me. Breakfast will be served from 7:30 -9:00am then we will break up into groups to fish. We will try to designate group leaders to focus on different areas of the river or teach basic fishing techniques for those who are new to the sport.

## UPCOMING CLASSES

### On Going

Beginner fly tying class. Second Saturday of the month at Holy Cross Lutheran Church from February thru March. Classes from at 8-10am; open tying 10-2pm.

### Starting Soon

Join us at the Broken Tee golf course for the High Plains Drifters' casting clinic starting April 16<sup>th</sup> preceding the club meeting (4pm). Please bring your own rod and reel and we will meet at the west end of the parking lot, near the river.

# **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

**BY TIM PAPICH**

During this time of year, I am sure everyone is thinking about the upcoming fishing trips and what we do to get prepared. To help everyone get ready we have the some interesting speakers coming up with Landon Mayer and Pat Dorsey. We have also started the open fly tying sessions and fly tying classes on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. The fly tying classes can help you improve your skills whether you are a beginner or experienced tier, and the open sessions are an excellent way to meet other fly tiers, see new techniques and equipment and to begin to replenish your fly boxes. If you have any questions on the classes or the open sessions contact Geoff Bostic our education chair.

Our first trip of the year is coming up, hopefully everyone can make it and the weather is cooperative. This year we are focusing on more one day trips and they will always be on the Saturday after the club meeting. We are trying to get more people on these trips, and everyone is always welcome no matter what their experience level. I have always found the trips the best way to get to know people and to learn from other members. If you are new to the sport, don't hesitate to ask the more experienced members for some help, there is a wealth of knowledge in this club that you can and should take advantage of, whether for fishing spots, the flies to use or equipment questions.

I would like to thank James Baird for his work on the Fly Fishing Show, and to all of the volunteers that helped out. This is the main event for us to sign up new members and to give us exposure to the fly fishing community in Colorado. This year it looks like through everyone's efforts we signed up over 10 new members, and as a dynamic club it is always good to see new blood coming in.

Von Fransen has been spearheading our new member orientation program for the last several years. He put on the latest one before the January meeting. This program helps out new members to understand what HPD is all about, how to get involved and what they need to do to get the most out of their membership. I want to thank Von for his efforts and helping the new members. I want to welcome the new members, we hope to see them at our meetings, trips and events.

## **HPD KIDS' DAY DATES**

The annual High Plains Drifters Kids' Days' dates for 2014 will be Saturday May 31st for the Children's Diabetes Foundation at the Butterfly Pavilion and Saturday June 28th for all member kids and general public kids ages 6 to 16. Both days are from 8:30am to 3pm. For volunteer and program info contact Mike Vella at [KidsDay@HPD-FFF.com](mailto:KidsDay@HPD-FFF.com).

Thanks to all the volunteers in advance, this events yearly success depends on it.

# ARKANSAS (GOLD WATER) RIVER TRIP

APRIL 3rd to 6th

TRIP CAPTAIN - LARRY LESTER - [Trips@HPD-FFF.com](mailto:Trips@HPD-FFF.com)

One hundred and two miles of the Arkansas River have just been designated as a Gold Water fishery. This clearly proves that those of us who love fishing the Arkansas River both above and below the town of Salida know this trip as have past trips will be a good way to get the year started with a bang.

Specific details regarding places to bunk down and where we will meet each day will be listed in next month's newsletter, but my current plan is a departure from Denver on Thursday morning the 3<sup>rd</sup> with a full day of fishing Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I will see if the good folks at Ark Anglers will host another on-stream clinic on Friday. Several years ago this was done and well received. Limit would be six people.

If a four day outing doesn't fit your schedule as long as we know you are coming up (even for a day) we will make sure you hook up with those of us who will be there ahead of you. This river has a great Caddis hatch, but often overlooked are the BWO hatches that happen in the earlier part of April so the action will be good.

Please sign up by going to the club web page [www.hpd-fff.com](http://www.hpd-fff.com) and locating Trips or contact me directly. I will be glad to help you find a ride or a person to share a room with. And if you have never fished the area you are more than welcome to tag along and I will teach you as best I can and I am sure others going will be glad to share their knowledge of the river and the area.

By the way if you should ask "What are **Gold Medal** waters?" These fishing areas have been designated by the Colorado Wildlife Commission as providing great spots to catch those large trout. These waters are defined as being able to produce 60 pounds of trout per acre, and at least twelve 14" or larger trout per acre. Only 322 miles of Colorado's 9000 miles of trout streams, and three lakes, carry the "Gold Medal" signature.

Come join me for a nice few days of fishing.

*Larry Lester*

# HIGH PLAINS DRIFTERS 2014 PHOTO CONTEST RULES

It is time to take out the digital camera or your cell phone and start snapping pictures again. Last year we had over 80 entries and from those we chose nine finalists (three for each category) and three honorable mention pictures which led to the making of the HPD 2014 calendar. At the Christmas Party the attendees voted for the People's Choice Award (right).



Peoples' Choice 2013 - Paul Scherner

## CATEGORIES

### **The Fly Angler or the Fish**

We are looking for pictures of fish in or out of water, but not the typical picture of the fisherman holding the last fish he caught. Or take a picture of someone casting or just wading in the water.

**Natural Insects or Imitation Flies**  
Close up photography of insects and/or their imitation.

### **What You See Around You**

Look around you and show us what you see while you are out fishing for the day. Examples: Animals at the stream's edge or pictures of the river, creek or lake where you are fishing.

## AWARDS

In each category there will be 1st to 3rd awards made. The nine finalists and three honorable mention pictures will be used in the 2015 HPD Calendar. At the Christmas party winners will be announced. Attendees and guests at the Christmas party will select one picture that will be given the People's Choice Award.

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

**Each entry must contain:**

Category Photographer, Phone #, Photo Location and Photo Date

Digital photos may be sent electronically to: [PhotoContest@HPD-FFF.com](mailto:PhotoContest@HPD-FFF.com). Contact the same with any questions.

## RULES

Active High Plains Drifters members only. Photographs from a family members will be accepted if a "Family" membership for 2014 was paid for. Limit of three entries per person per category. Once a picture is submitted it cannot be replaced or updated. Digital shots are preferred as they are easier to work with. Only photos taken after January 1, 2014 and before October 31, 2014 will be accepted. All entries must be received no later than November 3, 2014. Prints will be accepted, but they must be 8x10s. If prints are to be returned please provide a self addressed envelope with sufficient postage. No slides. Pictures can be cropped, but altered photos are not allowed.

# RAINBOW TROUT AND SILVER SALMON AROUND BRISTOL BAY, ALASKA BY LEON GORMAN

Reprinted from *Fifty Places to Fly Fish Before You Die*, by Chris Santella

The Bristol Bay area of Alaska, two hundred miles southwest of Anchorage, offers some of the greatest fresh water fishing diversity available anywhere. During the short Alaska summer, visitors can anticipate tussles with one or more species of Pacific salmon (what you'll catch depends on when you visit), rainbow trout, grayling, arctic char, resident and sea-run Dolly Vardens, pike and lake trout. The fisheries vary from bigger rivers like the Togiak, Nushagak and Wood to lakes like the Nuyukuk and Tikchik to countless unnamed creeks. Three mountain ranges – the Kilbuck Mountains, Taylor Mountains and the Aleutian Range – and abundant wildlife (including brown bear, moose, and caribou) provide the classic Alaska backdrop that visitors anticipate.

Leon Gorman timed his Bristol Bay adventure to coincide with the region's prolific runs of silver salmon run. He came away more impressed with the big rainbows he encountered on a small tundra stream.

"One day, we flew out to this little stream – in places it wasn't more than 12 feet wide. The stream was a long series of oxbows, about a mile in length. The strategy was simple: we'd kneel down to keep a low profile and cast downstream to where the Oxbow looped. We were using huge muddlers to simulate a dead mouse. The current second later, the water would explode,

and you'd have a big rainbow on.

There was quite a ruckus in that little stream when the fish came on. The fish would be all over the place. In a couple of hours, I got three rainbows that exceeded ten pounds, each. There was a lot of anticipation as the fly drifted around the corner. I had to remind myself to look over my shoulder now and again to keep a look out for bears!"

Trophy rainbows are certainly a major attraction of the Bristol Bay region, and the Auglapak, Agulawok and Alagnak are prime venues. In the early season, fish focus on salmon smolt, augmenting their diet with the occasional mouse or vole, and sporadic insect hatches (attractor patterns will generally suffice). When salmon begin returning and spawning ensues, the 'bows become more single-minded, gorging on eggs. After spawning is completed, they will dine on drifting salmon flesh, making flesh flies the preferred pattern. Not quite as elegant as dapping dainty duns, but a small compromise for some very big fish!

Variety is the spice of life during a stay at one of Bristol Bay's many lodges, and the fishing program is set up to accommodate a spectrum of experiences. Most fishing days begin with a brief jaunt in a float plane, and perhaps a jetboat ride. Want to battle some very big fish? Visit in June, pop over to the Togiak or would take the fly around the oxbow

*Continued from Rainbow Trout and Silver Trout Around Bristol Bay, Alaska...*

and out of sight. A Rainbow River, and rig up your 10-weight with a high density sink tip for Chinook salmon that can reach 50 pounds. (Sometimes, floating line and an indicator will do the trick.) Want to switch gears completely? Grab a 4 or 5-weight and a handful of dry flies, and head over to the Agulawok or Upper Nushagak for grayling, which are tremendous light-tackle sport. Feel like a break from salmonids? How about pike on Lake Beverly or Tikchik Lake? The northerns will eagerly take popping bugs and other flies stripped along the surface, and go to 15 pounds.

Thanks to the abundance of arctic char that gather at lake mouths to intercept salmon smolt making their way to the Pacific, one can catch their lunch and continue fishing until the char has been prepared to your liking.

While Bristol Bay's aggressive rainbows proved a greater challenge for Leon's group, the fast and furious silver fishing they experienced provided some memorable moments. "At one point, four of us were strung out along a sandbar, casting over a school of incoming silvers. I was furthest downstream. As I followed my fly on its swing, I saw a fly line drifting by; a fish had separated the fly line from my friend's backing, and was heading downstream. I grabbed the line with the fish still attached, and walked it back up the bar to my friend. Together, we managed to get the line attached back to the backing. Eventually, he landed the

fish."

No Bristol Bay angling adventure is quite complete without a bear story, and Leon's trip did not disappoint. "We were flying out to fish one day, and came upon a grizzly. The pilot flew down for a closer look. The bear got up on his hind legs shook his paws at us, as if he were ready for a fight. It was wonderful to see such a great animal. Though I have to say that I was glad we encountered him from the plane, rather than on that little tundra stream where we got the big rainbows."

*Leon Gorman, grandson of L.L. Bean, currently serves as Chairman of the Board of L.L. Bean, Inc. Leon and his wife Lisa have championed a number of conservation programs in Maine and nationally. Among those are the effort to preserve the St. John River in northern Maine; establishing a marine resource education center at Bowdoin College, his alma mater; and supporting the Appalachian Mountain Club. Under Leon's leadership, L.L. Bean has established itself as an environmentally responsible company whose support has included nearly \$3 million in the last five years to conservation organizations. Leon has fished in Montana, New Brunswick, Labrador, Belize and elsewhere, but Maine remains his favorite.*

## **If You Go...**

**Prime Time:** The drainages of the Bristol Bay area are open from mid-May through the end of September. Fresh water species (rainbows, grayling, char, pike) are available throughout the year, with the largest rainbows taken in June, July and September. Salmon rotate

*Continued from Rainbow Trout and Silver Trout Around Bristol Bay, Alaska...*

through the systems as follows: Chinook (King) and Chum in June, Sockeye (Red) and Pinks (Humpy) in July, and Silvers in August and September.

**Getting There:** You'll need to get to Dillingham, Alaska, where you'll be transferred to either a jetboat or float plane to deliver you to your lodge. Commercial flights to Dillingham are available from Anchorage via Alaska Airlines; visitors will often overnight on Friday in Anchorage and take an early morning flight to Dillingham. Accommodations: Some of Alaska's most storied lodges serve the Bristol Bay region. Two perennial favorites are Bristol Bay Lodge (509-964 2094; [www.bristolbaylodge.com](http://www.bristolbaylodge.com)) and Tikchik Narrows Lodge (907-243-8450; [www.tikchiklodge.com](http://www.tikchiklodge.com)). Bristol Bay Lodge overlooks Aleknagik Lake and can accommodate up to 22 anglers. Tikchik Narrows is situated on a narrow peninsula which separates Tikchik and Nuyukuk Lakes, and can likewise handle 22 anglers. Both lodges offer excellent food, nearby and fly-out fishing, and both carry a price tag of \$7,350 for a week's visit, based on double occupancy. (NOTE: Bristol Bay Lodge guests spend two nights away from the main lodge at riverside outpost camps.)

**Equipment:** Bristol Bay region rainbows can get quite big, and you'll want to prepare for that eventuality. While a 9' 5-weight might do, a 6- or 7-weight is probably better.

Most fishing is done with floating line, but bring a few sink-tips in case of high water. A modest selection of dry fly patterns - Adams, PMD, Elk Hair Caddis, Blue-Winged Olive, Light and Dark Cahill, Quill Gordon, Royal Wulf and Royal Trude - will cover any hatches. An assortment of bead head nymphs, egg patterns, muddler minnows, wooly buggers, egg-sucking leeches, flesh flies and deer hair mice will round out your offerings. Match a salmon rig to the fish that will be present; most anglers prefer a 9- or 10-weight for Kings, an 8-weight for silvers and chum, and a 7-weight for sockeyes and pinks. Bring both floating a sink-tip lines; your guides will have favorite flies for each species.

*Chris Santella is the author of eight books, including the popular "Fifty Places To \_\_\_ Before You Die" series from Stewart, Tabori & Chang, and a regular contributor to the New York Times, Forbes.com and many fly fishing publications.*

Santella, Chris. *Fifty Place to Fly Fish Before You Die*. New York, Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2004. Print.

# HPD GUIDES

High Plains Drifters would like to thank the following outfitters for their support of our organization. We sincerely appreciate their generous support and encourage our membership to support them whenever possible.



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The following members and the late Gary Hort are thanked for their donations to the High Plains Drifters:

The Gary Hort Estate - Brett Edwards - Von Franzen - Doug Geerdes  
Jeff McClung - Jon Nash - Shelley Walchak - Cathy Lester

# HPD PRODUCTS

Questions? Email [info@HPD-FFF.com](mailto:info@HPD-FFF.com).

To order, email [info@HPD-FFF.com](mailto:info@HPD-FFF.com) with your information and order. You will be contacted about payment information/options.

Orders can also be placed at our website, <http://HPD-FFF.com/HPD-Store/>.

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For any questions or concerns, please contact [info@HPD-FFF.com](mailto:info@HPD-FFF.com).