



The Newsletter of
the Texas Chapter of
the American
Fisheries Society



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March 1998

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John Prentice

Did you know that January 25, 1998 was Superbowl Sunday? In our efforts to find a meeting date which is more inclusive of all facets of our membership, that date caught me by surprise. Throughout life we all have events we will always remember and events we will never forget. I will always remember the Athens meeting of our chapter and never forget when Superbowl plays. In spite of Superbowl Sunday I feel we had a successful meeting and I want to thank the large number of Texas Chapter members, the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, the Athens Visitor Initiative Program, the Athens Chamber of Commerce and the many businesses and individuals who donated items for our auction, raffles and coffee breaks for helping in that success. I also want to thank each of you who filled out the membership surveys to aid in future efforts. By the way, a strong majority of survey respondents felt the winter meeting time was better for their attendance. Please continue to help Paul Hammerschmidt, our new President-Elect, by forwarding to him your suggestions in planning and offering help for next year's meeting.

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1998 CHAPTER BUSINESS MEETING

1998 TCAFS Business Meeting Minutes - The 1998 Annual Meeting held at the Cain Center, Athens, Texas. Reported by Secretary/Treasurer Dave Terre.

President Kathy Ramos opened the meeting, introduced current officers and recognized past presidents. Kathy also recognized visiting AFS Executive Director Paul Brouha and allowed him to address the meeting.

Mr. Brouha touched on several issues for Chapter information and began by asking for member input and feedback on how the parent society is doing throughout any area of AFS concern. AFS is undergoing a self-imposed audit to maintain good policies and fiscal management. There is some concern over vote representation for various issues. Geographically a vote is not now evenly represented. A task force established by AFS President Taylor has been established to resolve any vote problem and information will be coming. AFS book sales and library subscriptions are down and AFS is heading toward a marketing driven program for books. AFS may take advantage of technology for literature distribution by use of "electronic

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The Texas Chapter has always been a strong and pro-active group in fisheries concerns because of the quality and diversity of aquatic resource professionals that make up our membership and our ability and willingness to share ideas with each other. Our Chapter continues to grow in people and in spirit. I want to take this opportunity to encourage each of you to step up and get involved in any Chapter area or activity that interests you. Remember the Chapter meeting as a place to present results of your work. There is always room for another at any committee or work group, and you benefit as you help the Chapter effort. In fact, as was touched on in the Athens meeting, part of the American Fisheries Society Professional Certification Program (see Fisheries 1997, Vol. 22, No. 8, pages 10-15) involves activity within our Chapter and parent society. Attending meetings and continuing education classes, along with active participation in society committees, helps keep you knowledgeable and stronger as a fisheries professional.

To close I would like to say it is a great honor to be counted among you. As president I am here to serve you and I will welcome comments and suggestions during the year to that end. One of the third-graders that fished at the youth fishing event we sponsored this year at the TFFC fishing pond caught the first fish of her life and was asked what she thought of fishing. She said, "Fishing is fun. I like it and I want to do it some more!" Folks, let's go do it some more!

Business Meeting Minutes continued from page 1

Journals" by e-mail. There is a new Scientist certification program being established which will have some emphasis on remaining active and current. Certified Scientists may need to take continuing education classes and remain involved in AFS and Chapter activity to keep certification. Brouha reviewed several policy initiatives. Wallop

Breaux revisions are taking place and hopefully will get funding. "Teaming with Wildlife" needs to get introduced to congress very soon and with as many sponsors as possible (TCAFS is a sponsor) to have a chance to be approved. Reauthorization of the Clean Water Act will hopefully make it watershed based with formation of watershed councils. Reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act will probably be one of the first items to go through congress.

Kathy Ramos called for approval of minutes from the previous year's (1996) business meeting as printed in the newsletter. A motion was made, seconded and passed by the membership to accept minutes as published.

Treasurer's Report: David Terre reported that total assets of the chapter were \$35,400.69 as of 1-1-98 and that the balance in our checking account was \$6,779.69 as of this same day. Major sources of income since our last business meeting (9-17-96 in Pottsboro, TX) included: capital gains and interest on our investments (\$4,457.36); membership dues (\$2,032.00); revenue from the 1996 Annual Meeting/auction in Pottsboro (\$518.80); revenue from the 1997 Southern Division Meeting in San Antonio (\$1,752.06); T-shirt and hat sales (\$561.50); and donations (\$300.00). Major expenses were newsletters and postage (\$2,576.03); awards and scholarships (\$1,203.50); publications (\$704.51); advertisement (\$284.35) and fees (\$99.05).

Newsletter Editor's Report: Charles Munger reported that 5 issues of the newsletter were published during the 18 months from the last annual meeting due to our change in meeting time. Currently 106 copies to members and 60 complimentary of each newsletter are mailed in hard copy, while 133 copies to members and 21 complimentary are sent via e-mail. Savings of about \$125 per issue are gained by use of e-mail. There have been a few problems with e-mail and recommendation to "zip" messages was made to reduce problems. During 1998 we will take advantage of a 10% discount on Kinko's copying of issues.

Nominating Committee: John Moczygamba recognized committee members Brian Bohnsack, Nick Carter, and Don Wilhelm. Candidates for President-elect were Paul Hammerschmidt, Malcolm Johnson and Nick Parker and information on each candidate was published in the previous newsletter. Other nominations were called for from the floor, but no other nominations were made. Vote by the membership elected Paul Hammerschmidt as President-elect.

Issues Committee: Mike Reed reported drafting letters from TCAFS to legislators to support passage of the Teaming with Wildlife Initiative.

Editorial Committee: Gordon Linam reported successful editing and printing of proceedings of the 1996 annual meeting which were distributed at this meeting. Also, the Pond Management Guide revisions manuscript has been received by the committee for review.

Continuing Education: Bruce Hysmith reported good attendance at the Genetics, Aquatic Plant Identification and Fisheries Management Computer Software presentations this year and asked for feedback on education needs. He also did not understand why the opportunity for study in Computer Basics was not attended. Bruce thanked those who prepared and presented the continuing education workshops this year. The mission for future workshops is to provide more opportunities and to maintain them acceptable for AFS certification credit.

Membership: Debbie Wade reported that membership continued to grow and looked promising as of meeting time with 74 regular and 17 student members registered. Counts at the end of 1997 were 227 regular and 15 student members.

Pond Management: Malcolm Johnson reported the Pond Management Guide revision was progressing and that illustrations had taken unexpectedly long to secure. The revision is now in the hands of the Editorial Committee. A list of TCAFS private management biologists in Texas is being compiled by Gary Valentine and announcement was made that those persons listed

need to be members of TCAFS.

Publicity/Exhibits: Steve Poarch thanked the many businesses and chapter members that contributed in various ways to TCAFS and this meeting. A press release was sent out to area and regional news agencies about the meeting and Steve will send a report to AFS and for inclusion in the TCAFS newsletter. The boat raffle seemed to be successful and Steve will report the final outcome on that effort at the end of this meeting.

Student Outreach: Fran Gelwick reported a successful effort to have professionals meet with students one on one at the Southern Division AFS meeting in Oklahoma City. Information on TCAFS scholarships was sent to 60 campuses to enlist nominations.

Endowments: Allen Forshage recognized WHAT (Wetland Habitat Alliance of Texas) for contributing to the scholarship fund as in the past. Allen also recognized Gary Valentine's efforts years ago in starting the relationship between WHAT and TCAFS. Allen introduced Mike Brice (a past award recipient) to make this year's awards. Students receiving awards in 1998 were: Tony Baker (undergraduate, TAMU), Allison Anderson (graduate, TAMU), Patrick Rice (graduate, A&M Galveston) and Laurie Dries (graduate, UT).

Awards: Tim Bonner reported for this committee and recognized other committee members: Gene Wilde (Chair), Joe Kraai, Charles Munger, Robin Riechers and Rocky Ward. Aaron Barkoh, Earl Chilton, Joe Kraai, John Prentice and Stewart Jacks served as judges for presentations at the 1996 annual meeting. The Outstanding Student Presentation Award was given to Craig Paukert, Oklahoma State University, for his paper entitled Distribution, abundance and reproductive activity of paddlefish in the Keystone Reservoir system, Oklahoma: First-year results. The Outstanding Professional Presentation Award was given to Gene Gilliland, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, for his paper entitled Delayed mortality of tournament-caught largemouth bass. Outstanding Fisheries Worker Awards were given to Robert Ditton (Education) and Tom Dorzab (Fish

Culture). Special Recognition in Fisheries Work Awards were given to Fred Janssen, Chris Cummings, Dan Lewis, Dan Strickland, Gary Graham and Jim Davis. Recognition Awards for Rivers Initiative Work were given to Mike Ryan, Victor DiCenzo, Paul Seidensticker, Rafe Brock, Jimmy Dean, Clell Guest, Mark Howell, Spencer Dumont, Steve Poarch and Bobby Farquhar.

Exotic Species: Stewart Jacks reported continuing concern over spread of Zebra Mussels and plans of watch groups to try to combat the species.

Fisheries Worker Directory: Lance Robinson reported having 120 names and information in a data base for printing a directory. Plans are to complete and print information to date after 1998 meeting to have a product for members to use.

Internet Home Page: Fred Janssen reported TCAFS has a web site up and running. During the first 14 months in operation the site has received 5,500 visits from places all over the world. Almost any information about TCAFS is available on the home page including past and present newsletters. After similar work setting up a web site for the Southern Division AFS there is a possibility of TCAFS going to a commercial provider for a site to gain better access and capabilities. Cost for this service is estimated to be about \$2.00/month.

Stocks at Risk: Gary Garrett reported that species of concern have been published in the most recent volume of the TCAFS proceedings. Concerns and observations will continue with Bob Edwards taking chair of that committee.

Old Business

Dick Luebke reported that the 1997 AFS Midyear meeting in San Antonio was well attended, encompassed much involvement of Texas and Oklahoma chapters, saw good information exchange and resulted in a profit for TCAFS.

Installation of New President: Kathy Ramos thanked the chapter for the opportunity to be President and thanked chapter, ExCom and committee members for their work during the past 18 months. Kathy then passed the Presidency to

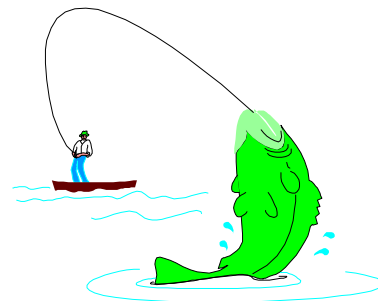
John Prentice. John presented Kathy with her past President's Plaque and thanked her for her efforts toward the chapter.

John thanked the City of Athens, Darlene Forshage and the Athens Visitor Initiative Program, the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, the Cain Center and the many members who helped put the 1998 meeting together. He asked that everyone complete the TCAFS member survey forms found in registration packets to aid future plans and ways to serve the membership.

New Business

John pointed out that chapter funds had grown and membership needs were expanding (such as expansion of continuing education to meet recent AFS Certified Scientist requirements). He therefore opened discussion on providing latitude to TCAFS ExCom to utilize chapter funds for membership needs in addition to granting student scholarships. Student aid in the form of scholarships would remain the primary target of chapter proceeds, but various continuing education programs which meet AFS certification requirements could also be provided. Discussion included the need for TCAFS to meet the AFS certification and recertification program needs for our membership. Pat Hutson made the motion to give TCAFS ExCom more latitude to use chapter income beyond the funds needed for scholarships for other needs of the membership. This motion was seconded and passed by the membership.

John asked for any additional new business. No new business was brought forward so call for a motion to adjourn was made, given and seconded. The 1998 TCAFS business meeting was adjourned.



Publicity/Exhibits Report

WOW! What a meeting! If you were not at this year's TCAFS meeting in Athens, you missed one of the best meetings in a long time. From the continuing education courses to the social events, everything went exceptionally well.

There are several people, Kirk and I need to thank for helping us with the trade show, break set-ups, and the raffle/auction. We appreciate the efforts of Mike Horton of Aquanaut Diving, Inc., Randy Rushin of C.C. Lynch & Associates, and David Mohr of Hydrolab, to make our trade show very interesting. Special thanks also goes to the crew of TPWD Inland Fisheries Dist. 1-D (Bob Zerr, John Wray, & Ward Ling) for doing an excellent job of preparing for and cleaning up after the technical session breaks. As always, Bruce Hysmith was a great emcee and auctioneer. I wonder if he has recuperated yet. Kevin Fagg (TPWD IF Dist. 3-C), Danny Lewis and Dave Terre (TPWD IF Region 3 office) were also instrumental in conducting the raffle and auction. We also have to thank our other crew members, Paul Balkenbush and Gary Pickett, for all of their help during this process.

Thanks to the members of the TCAFS, this year's fundraising event was one of the most successful in TCAFS history. Your generosity resulted in the collection of \$2,423.50 from the silent and live auctions. Another \$990.00 was generated through the sale of general raffle tickets, for a total of \$3,413.50 from that one night.

Of course, the highlight of the evening was pulling the raffle ticket for the fully rigged 2-man Buster Boat. The suspense was thick as Joedy Gray reached into the hopper and withdrew the winning ticket. It got even heavier when it was determined and announced that the "winner-to-be" was in the room. Congratulations! to Janet Prentice of Kerrville, the proud new owner of her very own Buster Boat. On top of bringing some new excitement to this year's raffle/auction, the sale of raffle tickets for the boat brought in an additional \$1,238.00 for our scholarship fund. That brings the fundraising total for this year's meeting to \$4,651.50.

Once again, thanks to all those who were involved, for making this such a successful meeting. By the way, I found the one more set of TCAFS custom lures, so what is my first bid?

Steve Poarch/Kirk Pratas



Membership Committee Report

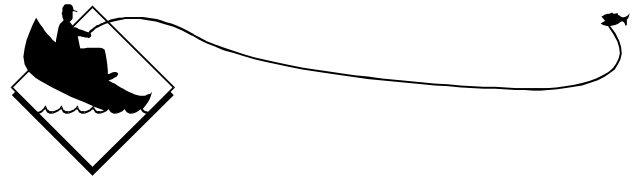
I want to thank all of you who pre-registered for the annual meeting. It made registration much smoother as well as allowing me to update the membership list in a more organized fashion. A total of 128 people attended the meeting and 91 pre-registered. I have not received the updated membership list from AFS for those individuals who renewed their Chapter membership with their annual dues, but we have 90 professional and 8 student members currently on the membership list for 1998.

Everyone who was a member in 1996 should have received a copy of the Proceedings from the last meeting by now. If you haven't, please contact me and I will get one out to you.

I want to thank the student volunteers who helped with registration. You were all an invaluable aid to me, and I actually was able to see some of the papers presented this year.

Please renew your membership for 1998 if you have not already done so and encourage your co-workers and friends to do the same.

Debbie Wade



COMMITTEE HELP IS ALWAYS NEEDED

Committee work drives much of the activities in our Chapter and there is a place where you can help with any committee. We need your participation to keep the Chapter effective and in touch. Committees are listed below and are forming as this newsletter is being printed. Please contact John Prentice at 830-866-3356 or e-mail jprentic@ktc.com to volunteer for any of these committees. Committees include:

Nominating	Endowments
Membership	Student Outreach
Continuing Education	Editorial
Issues	Awards
Publicity/Exhibits	Pond Management
Web Site	Exotic Species
Fisheries Workers Directory	Stocks at Risk

CALL FOR AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Nomination Deadline for all awards is now April 15, 1998 (exceptions: Distinguished Service Award and J. Frances Allen Scholarship)

Nominations and applications are needed for the following 1998 AFS awards. Please provide nominator's **and** candidate's names, addresses, and phone, FAX, and e-mail addresses as well as the candidate's biographical information and history of service to the Society. Contact chairs for additional information.

AFS Award of Excellence

Given to recognize outstanding scientists in the fields of fisheries and aquatic biology. Nominees need not be AFS members. Contact: F. Rabeni, Chair, Award of Excellence Committee, Missouri Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, 112 Stephens Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211

Carl R. Sullivan Fishery Conservation Award

Given annually to an individual or organization, professional or nonprofessional, for outstanding contributions to the conservation of fishery resources. Accomplishments are not restricted and can include political, legal, educational, scientific, and managerial successes. Contact: Robert F. Carline, Chair, Sullivan Award Committee, Merkle Laboratory, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802, 814/865-4511, FAX 814/863-4710.

Excellence in Fisheries Education Award

Awarded annually to an individual to recognize excellence in organized teaching and advising in a field of fisheries. Nominees may be involved in extensive or continuing education as well as traditional college and university instruction. Nominees must be AFS members, have been actively engaged in fisheries education within the past 5 years, and have had a least 10 years of professional employment experience in fisheries education. Two or more people may act as nominators, but at least one nominator must be an AFS member. Contact: Martha Mather, Chair, Excellence in Fisheries Education Committee, Massachusetts Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Amherst, MA 01003, 413/545-4895, mather@forwild.ums.edu

Fish Culture Hall of Fame

Inductees into the National Fish Culture Hall of Fame have made significant contributions to the advancement of fish culture in the US. Nominees may be currently practicing their profession, pioneering fish culturists of the past, or offering other significant contributions. A panel of past presidents and elected members of the AFS Fish Culture

Section reviews the nominations. Final selection requires Section membership approval. Contact: Steve Brimm, Fish Culture Hall of Fame, D.C. Booth Historic Fish Hatchery, 423 Hatchery Circle, Spearfish, SD 57783, 605/642-7730

Meritorious Service Award

Given annually to an individual for loyalty, dedication, and meritorious service to the Society throughout the years; and for exceptional commitment to AFS's programs, objectives, and goals. Contact: Fred Harris, Chair, Meritorious Service Award Committee, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, 512 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27604, 919/733-3633, Harrisfa@mail.wildlife.state.nc.us

President's Fishery Conservation Award

Presented annually, one or more awards if warranted, in one of two categories: (1) an AFS individual or unit or (2) a non-AFS individual or entity, for a singular accomplishment or activity that advances aquatic resource conservation at the regional or Society level. Contact: Charles C. Coutant, Chair, Past-presidents' Advisory Council, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Bldg. 1505, PO Box 2008, Mail Stop 6036, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-6036, 423/576-6830, ccc@ornl.gov

Honorary Membership

Awarded to individuals who have achieved outstanding professional or other attainments or have given outstanding service to the Society. Contact: Charles C. Coutant, Chair, Past-presidents' Advisory Council, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Bldg. 1505, PO Box 2008, Mail Stop 6036, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-6036, 423/576-6830, ccc@ornl.gov

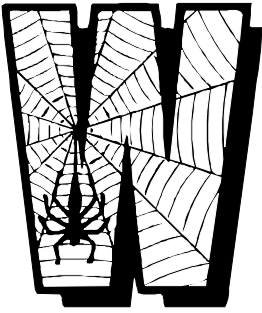
William E. Ricker Resource Conservation Award

Presented as often as warranted (but not more frequently than annually) to any entity (individual, group, agency, or company) for a singular accomplishment or activity in resource conservation that is significant at the US, continental, or international level. Contact: Charles C. Coutant, Chair, Past-presidents' Advisory Council, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Bldg. 1505, PO Box 2008, Mail Stop 6036, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-6036, 423/576-6830, ccc@ornl.gov

All fishermen have the big-fish complex - we want one bigger than we have caught before, something just a little bigger than it's reasonable to hope for...

Roderick Haig-Brown





EBSTER'S WORDS

WEB SITE REVIEWS

I received this from a listserve and thought it said it better than I could.

USGS LAUNCHES NEW ELECTRONIC CLEARINGHOUSE FOR BIOLOGICAL DATA

Dr. Dennis B. Fenn, Chief Biologist, today announced that the U. S. Geological Survey's Biological Resources Division has initiated a new Internet-based clearinghouse that can be used to search for and locate existing sources of biological data and information from a variety of sources.

This clearinghouse is part of the National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII), which is a cooperative effort led by the USGS to increase access to biological data and information maintained by a variety of Federal and State government agencies, universities, museums, libraries, and private organizations.

Through the NBII Clearinghouse www.nbio.gov/clearinghouse.html, Internet users can search through an assortment of standardized descriptions of different biological databases or information products to identify those that meet their particular requirements. These descriptions (metadata) concisely convey such things as subject matter; how, when, where, and by whom the data were collected; whom to contact for more information; and how to access the database or information product.

The NBII Clearinghouse includes metadata descriptions of biological databases and information products developed and maintained by USGS scientists, as well as data and information developed and maintained by other NBII participants, including Federal and State government agencies, universities, and private organizations. The NBII Clearinghouse also functions as a part of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) Clearinghouse www.fgdc.gov/clearinghouse/index.html, as many of the biological databases described in the NBII Clearinghouse employ geospatial references.

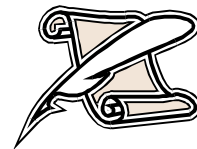
"We are very pleased to be offering this new service to the public, resource managers and scientists, and anyone else interested in locating existing sources of biological data and information," said Fenn. "This is a great opportunity not only for us to help get the results of USGS biological science out to those who can use the data and information, but also

for us to provide a tool that our partners and cooperators in NBII can use to help share their own data and information."

Users can search through the NBII Clearinghouse (much as they would use a card catalog in a library) using a variety of criteria, such as the name of the investigator or author who collected the data or produced the information, subject-matter keywords, and spatial coordinates for the location of the study/project. Special biological search criteria, including the ability to search for data or information relating to a particular species or other taxonomic group, are also provided.

Metadata descriptions in the NBII Clearinghouse are developed according to the NBII's biological metadata standard www.nbio.gov/current.status.html, which also serves as a biological "enhancement" or "profile" of the Federal Geographic Data Committee's Geospatial Metadata Content Standard.

The mission of the USGS/BRD is to work with others to provide the scientific understanding and technologies needed to support the sound management and conservation of the Nation's biological resources.



AFS Holds First Student Writing Contest

The American Fisheries Society is holding its first writing contest to recognize students who do an excellent job of communicating the value of fisheries science research to the general public. Undergraduate and graduate students are asked to submit a 500-700 word article explaining their own research or a research project in their lab or school. The article must be written in language understandable to the general public (i.e., journalistic style).

Students may write about research that has been completed, is in progress, or is in the planning stages. Most important is that students write their articles in a manner that the general public can understand so people can appreciate why the research is important and how it could help society and the fisheries resources.

The top three winners will be invited to the annual meeting (at winner's expense), where their articles will be prominently displayed at the poster session; they also will be given a plaque recognizing their achievements. The winning articles will be published in FISHERIES.

Articles are due no later than 15 January 1999. Please mail five copies of the articles to Marilyn Brown, AFS; 5410 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 110, Bethesda, MD 20814. If you have any questions, contact Brown at 301/897-8616, ext. 201.

7 Strategies for Getting Kids Hooked on Fishing

by Steve Woolbert

Maybe you feel a duty to continue the fishing heritage. Maybe you want to shepherd your progeny in the direction of worthwhile activities and away from the crass distractions of modern life. Maybe you want to grow your own handy fishing partner. Or perhaps you just think it would be neat. What you want is for your son or daughter to become an angler. I would like my two boys to become regular partners on my fishing trips, getting away from the TV and the video games, learning about the grandeur of nature and the thrill of a tight line. And yes, I think it would be neat.

1. Instant Gratification -YOU HAVE TO CATCH SOME FISH !

- Little Mary and Johnny will gain an appreciation of nature as time goes by, and they may learn to love some of the intricacies of the sport like tying a good knot and matching the bait, after awhile, but in the beginning they're going to want to catch fish. At the outset they may not even want to bait the hook or unhook the catch, but they do want to hook one. So with that in mind, put your vast fishing knowledge to work and take them where they can experience some early success. You know all about structure and water temperature and baitfish. Go where and when the percentages are in your favor. Yes, I know you can catch trophy size speckled trout while wading the cold Gulf Coast bays in February. However, your eight year old probably won't get the same enjoyment spending six hours seeking one big fish. Why not hit the white bass spawning run upriver? Or go wet your line where the panfish are thick as fleas and hungry as horses? While your doing it you can explain why the fish are where they are, why that particular lure is working today, and that in a few months they won't be in this spot. They'll learn. And if they have success in the beginning don't worry about them becoming spoiled by it. Think about it this way - once they experience the thrill of it all, they may be willing to spend more time pursuing their prey in the future. Why do we grown-ups spend so much time making that "one more cast" after hours of getting shut out? We want that jolt we get when our underwater adversary strikes.

2. It's the Kid's Time, Stupid

- On the water, with fish biting all around you, it might be tough to forego concentrating on catching your own limit. Remember, at least for awhile, your role is that of teacher and your concentration should be on helping your young apprentice. Don't wander off toward that deep pool today, stay in the shallows with your shorter partner. It might be

frustrating not to be catching many fish yourself, but the sooner you raise your student to an acceptable level of competence the sooner you'll both be able to optimize your fishing time together.

3. Know the Child's Limits

- Except for the comatose state attained during the viewing of his or her favorite Disney video or Saturday morning cartoon, how long can something hold your child's attention? If your would be angler is very young we might be talking about 15 minutes, tops. Fishing isn't going to be very different. It's not likely that little Lefty is going to be able to stay on the water from sun up to sundown like you do. As the child's parent you hopefully have some insight into the amount of time your offspring will enjoy themselves on a fishing outing. Don't push your luck. I doubt seriously if you're going to encourage an interest that will endure if you force the youngster to persist beyond his or her level of comfort. Don't make yourself miserable. If your eight year old is miserable, you'll soon be miserable, too. There are other things to enjoy on an outing that will add to the experience. Look for bugs. Take the time to explain how important an understanding of the other parts of the environment is to fishing. Bring a picnic lunch. Walk through the woods or go beachcombing.

4. Comfort and Safety

Safety is primary. Safety and comfort can and should coexist. Don't ruin your child's chances of becoming a lifetime angler by allowing bad experiences to taint the youngster's outlook.

Remember that while the water draws us to it with opportunities for enjoyment, it can be dangerous. I don't need to scare you with statistics. You know. In an activity that involves boating, wading, and even standing by the water's edge, the ability to swim should be a prerequisite. If your child doesn't yet know how to swim, this is a good reason for him or her to learn. Even if your son or daughter already knows how to swim, a life jacket should still be worn while wading, and it is mandatory while on a boat. Furthermore, a child who can swim and is wearing the appropriate flotation devices should still not be left unsupervised while wading or boating. Another concern for young waders is the actual wading garments themselves. When you can, wade wet. If waders are called for it's important they fit properly and a tight wading belt be worn to prevent the waders from filling with water in the event of a fall.

You probably wear a hat and sunglasses and even sunscreen while fishing under the sun. The reasons you wear those items apply to fledgling fishermen as well. Don't start bad habits. It won't hurt to explain the reasons for all these items either. Another item that is likely to be appropriate more often than not is long pants. The sting of a jellyfish or the

bite of a tick is a sure fire way to turn off a young angler.

Next to the potential dangers inherent in the water itself is the danger of the hook. Many of you have probably at least been pricked with the business end of the hook. The chances of a novice getting good and stuck are certainly higher.

Flattening the barbs on your child's hooks will alleviate this problem and make it easier for him or her to release their catch to boot.

5. Buy Them Their Own Stuff

- A sense of ownership can go a long way toward getting your young charge hooked on the pastime you love so much. If the child's interest doesn't become permanent, having some fishing tackle around the house that goes underutilized is no worse than some of the other things you've bought for them that gather dust. Is every gift Santa ever put under the Christmas tree worn out from overuse? I wouldn't recommend going overboard, however.

Good quality, uncomplicated equipment can be found. A lightweight rod and reel combo is required. One thing you may want to consider though is a rod that's a little longer than you've probably thought of. Ultralight materials will still make a long rod accessible to a child and the long rod will make the possibility of your little angler hooking him or herself a little less likely. The rod and reel will determine the types of line and tackle your wee caster will require.

All you fly fishermen out there don't need to shy away from introducing your children to that avocation. If it's what you enjoy why not share its pleasures? We've already discussed the longer rod idea. And children learn things quickly. They're wired that way. If you're really interested in fly fishing with your kids check out "Fly Fishing with Children", by Philip Brunquell, published by Countryman Press.

(For information on how to fill a tackle box from the bottom up, see Lori Schunka's "Tackling Tackle: Building the Contents of Your Tackle Box".)

6. A Fishing Life

- Not all the satisfaction of a fishing life comes on the water. Most of us enjoy the preparation, the study, and the practicing of our sport. These can be valuable enterprises for youngsters. Casting a practice plug in the backyard, the schoolyard, or a vacant lot can be both practical and fun. An accuracy competition can liven things up.

Preparing for tomorrow's outing, together with your son or daughter or even the whole family, can be fun. Fly tying is not beyond the grasp of children of a certain age. The same goes for putting together their own lures. Imagine the proud,

beaming smile when your apprentice plucks his finny foe from the water hooked by a fly or lure of his own creation. Sharing your old magazines or purchasing them their own subscription may be appropriate. Joining a fishing club or organization is another way to assimilate them into the fishing culture.

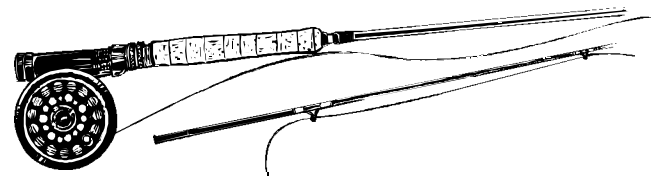
Let's not forget that this publication is an internet publication and there are opportunities for fun and learning within its web. (World Wide, that is.) The fact that your reading this means you're web savvy and hopefully your children are as savvy if not more so. You can fish the net as well as surf it.

7. The Most Important Tip of All

- Listen to your child. Maybe, for whatever reason, your child has absolutely no interest whatsoever, and as heartbreaking as that is there's nothing you can do to change that fact. Or maybe they are interested and you just have to listen to figure out how to fan the fire of their interest. My eight year old wasn't much interested in fishing at first. That was probably my fault. My preconception of children's fishing, put a worm on a hook under a bobber and wait, was not at all interesting to him. On a camping trip one weekend though, he observed me, clothed in waders and boots, fishing outside the edge of the shoreline weeds. He asked if he could try it. The water was warm enough, and the old pair of sneakers he had on wouldn't be missed if ruined, so I allowed him to wade out knee deep and cast a spoon to his heart's content. He didn't catch a thing, and he didn't care. He thought it was fun. Now he has his own waders and lifejacket and still doesn't mind too much if he catches anything. He thinks wading and casting are neat. More power to him. When he starts catching fish on a regular basis, I think the hook will be set. If not, that's fine too. He's still a great kid. And so is your child.

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Steve Woolbert, Publisher sjwool@thefishernet.com*



There he stands, draped in more equipment than a telephone lineman, trying to outwit an organism with a brain no bigger than a breadcrumb, and getting licked in the process.

Paul O'Neil

NATURAL SELECTION STUDY SHOWS ANIMALS CAN ADAPT DRAMATICALLY FAST

In a unique, real-world test of the theory of evolution, a National Science Foundation (NSF)-supported research team has demonstrated that animals can adapt to sudden changes in their environment with surprising speed. It's a finding that challenges current methods of evaluating evolutionary changes through the fossil record.

The study of wild guppies on the West Indies island of Trinidad, reported in the newest (March 28) issue of the journal *Science*, found that the fish could evolve between 10,000 and 10 million times faster than the rate of evolution inferred from the fossil record. It suggests that characterizing evolution from the palaeontological record alone may yield a misleading picture.

"We feel that our work is part of a growing body of studies that clearly demonstrates that it is possible to evaluate evolution with experiments in natural populations," David Reznick, professor of biology at the University of California at Riverside and lead author of the study said.

The team's findings add fodder to a current scientific debate. "The perennial problem in evolution is relating things that we can observe in real time to long-term patterns that are unobservable in our lifetime, but are traced out in the fossil record," said Reznick. "The question is whether or not we can explain larger-scale events of evolution in terms of what we can see and study."

In the study of wild guppies in Trinidad, Reznick, along with researchers Frank Shaw and Ruth Shaw of the University of Minnesota, St. Paul, and F. Helen Rodd of the University of California, Davis found that fish that were moved from a predator-infested pool to a pool with just one predator grew larger, lived longer and produced fewer but larger offspring. In the span of seven to 18 generations -- between four and 11 years - they

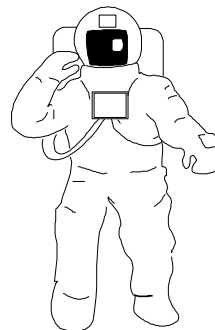
became more like the native guppies in the relatively predator-free environment.

The NSF-funded study took place in a unique river system in Trinidad where populations of fish are, for the most part, separated from one another by a series of waterfalls. Downstream guppies coexist with at least three predators, including two species of cichlids, the wild version of the common aquarium fish. Guppies in that downstream pool have a generally high mortality rate, become mature at an earlier age, are relatively small at maturity and produce litters more frequently. Upstream guppies, which share a pool with the omnivorous killifish which only sometimes preys on guppies, have a lower mortality, grow larger and have fewer but larger offspring.

The study, he said, shows it is possible to use short-term experiments of natural selection to gain a greater understanding of evolutionary changes that occur over millions of years. "Such studies are important because people tend to think of evolution as a historical process that is not subject to experiments. It is the scarcity of experiments that is the source of some of the criticism of the theory."

Reznick stressed that formation of new species is not addressed by the study, but noted that body size -- one of the principal traits used in palaeontology to distinguish evolutionary changes from formation of new species -- was the prominent characteristic adapted in the guppies studied.

"While the amount of change that we have witnessed seems small, if this rate of change persisted for even 1,000 years, it would result in a radically different animal," Reznick observed.



"The aerospace industry requires less technical jargon than the average bass fisherman."

Patrick F. McManus

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