



NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENTS COLUMN – JANUARY 2026

Welcome 2026, Wishing you all a “Happy New Year”

We ended 2025 with a Christmas Dinner at the Show Low Café with 26 attending. We had a good get together, meal and White Elephant gift exchange.

Your club officers are in the planning stages for several events in 2026. We will announce the fly-tying schedule, the rod building schedule, the Fly-Fishing Expo date, the Annual Banquet date and monthly outings.

This is the time of the year when I go through my fly-fishing gear for a clean-up and fly tying for up coming 2026 trips. I will be attending the Denver Fly Fishing Show in February (weather permitting) to work at the FFI booth along with friends from the High Plains Drifters Fly Fishing Club in Denver.

Our speaker’s chairman (Andy) has developed a 2026 schedule of Club Meeting Speakers and Outings so that you know about upcoming topics and speakers as well as upcoming club outings.

Kitty has been working on a clean-up and updating of our club website, which will include a club calendar with schedule of events and speakers.

Hopefully we will get enough rain and snow to bring our local water levels up for a good year of fishing. Lets all keep our collective fingers crossed!!

We are all looking forward to our seasonal members returning in the Spring.

“Tight Lines”

Mike Whitney – Your President

Meeting—January 21st

Held at White Mountain Nature Center

425 S. Woodland Rd. Lakeside

5:30 raffle and chatting

Program: John Rohmer, Fishing Arizona

New Fundraising Raffle—Rod and Reel

Arizona Game and Fish Department
New Zealand Mud snail Decontamination Options
Decontamination Options

The following protocols shall be taken for any equipment that has been in or on waters or locations listed in Director's Order 2.

- Anglers should inspect and clean equipment including, but not limited to waders, boots, nets and tackle.**
- Remove any visible plants, algae, animals, and mud, and disinfect the equipment using one or more of the following decontamination methods:
- Boot brushes should be used when done recreating in an affected waterbody and should be done regardless of disinfection method selected.
- Examples of equipment to be disinfected: waders, boots, tackle, shoes, pets, and anything else that comes in contact with shoreline or water.

Option 1:

Submerge waders and gear in a large tub filled with a quaternary ammonia-based institutional cleaner. If using consumer-grade 409*, the solution does not need to be diluted. If using a product such as Super HDQ Neutral, mix 6 ounces per gallon of water. Equipment must be soaked for at least 20 minutes, scrubbing and inspecting all items before rinsing. The rinse water must be from a source free of AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) (to avoid re-exposure), and the chemical bath must be properly disposed of away from the body of water.

Option 2:

Place waders and boots in a freezer overnight between uses.

Option 3:

Dry waders and equipment completely for seven consecutive days (May through October) or 18 consecutive days (November through April).

Option 4:

Spray or soak waders and gear with 140 degree Fahrenheit water for at least 10 minutes. * AZGFD does not endorse any particular product. Mention of any brand is for example only. * Unknowingly moving a species between water bodies can cause irreversible ecological damage. Angling Recommendations to help control the spread of NZ mud snails.

Angling Recommendations to help control the spread of NZ mud snails cont.

Consider these options to help minimize the spread of these aquatic invasive species. While these recommendations are important for anglers to consider on all waters, it is critical where hatcheries are located in the headwaters of streams (Oak Creek, Canyon Creek and Tonto Creek). The intent is to avoid movement of AIS upstream which may severely impact hatchery operations, trout production, and stocking schedules

- Start your fishing trip at the most upstream point, then move downstream to avoid introducing aquatic invasive species into unoccupied areas.
- When fishing in multiple waters on the same trip, a second pair of wading equipment (waders and wading boots) is recommended until gear can be properly cleaned and decontaminated
- If fishing Upper and Lower Canyon Creek, fish Upper Canyon Creek first. If you fish Lower Canyon Creek and then plan to fish Upper Canyon Creek, use a second pair of wading equipment to assure that there is no transfer of New Zealand mud snails upstream nearer the hatchery.
- Avoid felt-bottom boots and waders to prevent the spread of pathogens and aquatic invasive species. NZ mud snails on rocks - Photo Courtesy of AZGFD NZ mud snails are also on watercress and filamentous algae - NZ mud snail with dime for scale



NZ mud snails on rocks
- Photo Courtesy of AZGFD



NZ mud snail with dime for scale
Photo by Jim Strogen



NZ mud snails are also on watercress and filamentous algae -
Photo by Jim Strogen

• Photos by Jim Strogen

I reacted to Mom's dilemma as a boatman with the strong thought forming in my young mind, "It's better to be the fisherman than the rower."

Joan Wulff Fly Casting Techniques (1987)





Ending the Year with Better Drifts

As the year winds down and the rivers thin out—both in pressure and patience—it's a good time to simplify things. If there's one technique worth carrying into January, it's this: Fix depth before changing flies.

It sounds almost too simple, but it's the root of most winter frustrations. When trout feel glued to the riverbed and takes seem nonexistent, the problem usually isn't your pattern. It's where your fly is riding.

Winter Trout Live Low (Lower Than You Think) Cold water changes everything. Trout slow down, conserve energy, and slide into predictable lanes where food comes to them with minimal effort. Those lanes are almost always near the bottom. If your fly is even a few inches too high, you're not "almost there"—you're missing fish entirely. That's why depth matters more than color, size, or profile this time of year. **Before You Switch Flies, Do This Instead:** When a run looks perfect but isn't producing, resist the urge to dig through your fly box. Try these adjustments first:

1. **Add a Small Amount of Weight:** One extra split shot. A heavier bead. A subtle change. Often, you don't need much—just enough to tick bottom occasionally. That light, inconsistent contact is feedback that you're finally in the zone.
2. **Adjust Your Indicator Depth:** Most anglers fish too shallow in winter. A good rule of thumb: Set your indicator 1.5–2x the depth of the water you're fishing. If the run is four feet deep, start at six to eight feet. Yes, it feels excessive. No, the trout won't mind.
3. **Shorten the Drift:** Instead of trying to cover the entire run, focus on the highest-probability water. The soft seam, The tail out, The slow inside bend. Short, controlled drifts with good depth beat long, sloppy ones every time.
4. **Re-Focus Your Presentation:** Slow down. Mend earlier. Watch the indicator like it owes you money. In winter, takes are subtle. Depth gives you a chance to see—and feel—their. Depth Is the Difference

There's a big difference between: Fishing through water, Fishing to fish. Depth is the line between the two. You can fish the "right" fly all day and never touch a trout if it's riding too high. But a mediocre fly at the correct depth will out-fish perfection every time in cold water. **Carry This Into the New Year** As calendars flip and temperatures stay stubbornly low, make depth your first adjustment—not your last resort.

Before you change flies..., Before you doubt the river..., Before you call it a slow day..., Fix your depth.

That one habit will quietly improve your drifts—and your catch rate—well into January and beyond.

WMFFC MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission Statement of the White Mountain Fly Fishing Club is: "To assist in the development and maintenance of fly fishing opportunities and to promote and participate in fly fishing in its many forms."

We support the practice of "Catch and Release." We support the use of barbless hooks and harmless netting-and-release practices. Fish should never be held out of water for longer than you can hold your breath.

**Jon Wallace made this net inlaid turquoise buttons at the 16", 18", 20", 22" & 24" marks on the handle for fish measuring
Also my name and year on the side of the handle
Pretty Cool!!**



White Mountain Fly Fishing Club Board—2025-2026

President:	Mike Whitney	(541) 390-5389
Past President:	Barry Curseaden	(623) 398-5242
Vice President:	Gary Hall	(480) 510-6362
Secretary:	Kitty Wiemelt	(480) 329-6996
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Board Member at Large:	Gary Miller	(602) 478-0883
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