



NEWSLETTER

wmflyfishingclub.com

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PRESIDENTS COLUMN – APRIL 2026



As we welcome April, I am looking out our windows at falling rain!!

Hopefully, it will continue as we need much more of this weather.

I have been busy tying flies and preparing our 5th wheel for our upcoming trip to the Green River on the 24th of this month. I am looking forward to fishing with those of you going on this trip and reuniting with friends out of Colorado and Wyoming.

We all have a lot of work to do preparing for our 2026 Banquet, repairing and preparing the club trailer for 2026 outings, and hosting our speakers for 2026.

Your Club Board will be meeting more often in preparation for our banquet, collecting donations, getting them organized and inventoried. We will keep you all updated on our progress.

It won't be long before we welcome back our members who winter in the Phoenix area. I'm sure they are looking forward to the transition back to cooler weather and less traffic.

Let's all keep positive thoughts and prayers for Kitty as she undergoes extensive treatments.

Tight Lines, Mike Whitney – Your President

Meeting—April 15

Held at White Mountain Nature Center

425 S. Woodland Rd. Lakeside 5:30 raffle and chatting

Speaker: Garrett Fabian, PROJECTS & FISH POPULATIONS

New Fundraising Raffle—Rod and Reel

Remember, dues are from January to December. Due in January to Marcie

How Careful are You When You are Netting the Fish? Here are some simple Techniques.

Gentle Handling Techniques

1. **Wet Your Hands:** Before touching a fish, wet your hands to protect its slime coat, which is essential for its health and helps prevent infections.
2. **Support the Fish's Body:** Always support the fish horizontally, with one hand under its belly and the other cradling the tail. This minimizes stress on its spine and internal organs.
3. **Avoid Sensitive Areas:** Do not touch the fish's eyes or gills. Instead, handle it by the gill covers or the back of the head to avoid injury.
4. **Limit Air Exposure:** Keep the fish in or just above the water while unhooking it. The less time it spends out of water, the better its chances of survival after release.
5. **Quick Release:** Use fishing pliers to remove hooks quickly. If the hook is deeply embedded, consider cutting the line instead of forcing it out, which can cause more trauma.

Hide & Seek: How to Spot Trout in the Light and shadows

Fly Fisherman-2006

Spotting trout is a combination of skill, strategy & having the right polarized lenses & fishing frames to reduce glare & improve control

Some of us go out and use the “shot gun” approach combined with efficient casting does catch a few fish when we’re in muddy waters in a drift boat and pounding the bank with big streamers, your fish-spotting skills don’t make much of a difference. You are searching with your flies.

When the water is clear, however, it's often more productive to search with your eyes. This is especially true on small and medium streams where there is a lot of fishing pressure, and also on tailwaters where the trout are feeding mostly on small food items. When the fish are feeding on tiny stuff, or when there are a lot of fishermen around, the trout aren't likely to charge across the river to take your fly. These fish are conditioned to be skeptical. You have to bring the fly right to them—not within inches, but right down the pipe so all they have to do is open their mouths. On these highly pressured fisheries, sight-fishing skill can make the difference between a successful day, or . . . “it was just nice getting out there.”

Sight fishing is also important on clear wilderness rivers where the fish don't see many people. On these rivers, the silhouette of a fisherman, the splash of a fly line, or any movement that's out of the ordinary can just shut down the fishing. On a pressured river, the trout must continue feeding despite a parade of fishermen—otherwise they will starve. (It's been fun following Wendy and Terry Gun in New Zealand)

Sight-fishing continued...

But on a backcountry stream in New Zealand, a bad cast can shut down a pool for hours, or even the rest of the day. You must find the fish first, and make the first cast the best cast. With each successive attempt your chances of catching the trout drop dramatically because each time you risk spooking the fish.

THEY CAN SEE YOU!

When you start visually stalking trout, you should realize that for you it's a game. You fish for sport, but for the trout, detecting predators is a matter of life and death. The trout that are particularly good at it survive and grow large. My point is that when you are looking for them, they are also looking for you. If they spot you, they may bolt for cover or just stubbornly stop feeding. Because of this two-way street, it's often true that the easiest trout to spot are the hardest to catch. Conversely, trout that are difficult to spot are generally easier to catch. Fish that are easy to see are often in slow, flat water, which makes a stealthy, natural presentation difficult. This is the wheelhouse of selective trout, where they are sensitive to micro-drag and can study your fly carefully. I've learned to simply walk past these obvious fish, down to an area with a steeper gradient and many erratic boulders. The broken pocketwater there offers plenty of places for trout. The rocks provide shelter from the current, and the turbulent water gives the fish a sense of security because they are more difficult to spot in these places. But I've found that these difficult-to-see fish are very catchable if you study the water carefully.

FOCUS ZONES

I've learned to simply walk past these obvious fish, down to an area with a steeper gradient and many erratic boulders. The broken pocketwater there offers plenty of places for trout. The rocks provide shelter from the current, and the turbulent water gives the fish a sense of security because they are more difficult to spot in these places. But I've found that these difficult-to-see fish are very catchable if you study the water carefully. Predict where you think there might be a fish, and then use the trout's blind spots to get as close as you can. If possible, position yourself to take advantage of the angle of the sun. These are all linear obstructions and breaks—types of feeding lanes you could easily indicate on a flat map. However, rivers are three-dimensional environments. Changes in current don't always happen on a plane with a left and right side. There are also vertical current seams where the water is slow near the bottom and fast on top. Gravel bars, drop-offs, eroded holes, and submerged rocks and logs can all create these types of feeding zones for trout.

TROUT CAMOFLAGE

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Trout always face into the current, so the most obvious things to look for are shapes that are oriented upriver. Our eyes immediately discount everything that doesn't obey this law of river hydraulics. But that still leaves a lot of rocks and wood along the river that are fish-shaped and fish-sized, and aligned in the right direction.

Over the decades, I have found that for my brain, looking for fish shapes doesn't often work. Trout camouflage in most cases is just too good, and you won't often see a whole trout shape unless it's silhouetted against a patch of light-colored sand or some other contrasting background. In most cases, their camouflage is perfectly suited to the stream bottom, and it works to break up their outlines.

Sight fishing continued...

If your brain is focused on looking for fish-shaped objects, you will likely spend much of your day casting at rockfish and stickfish. Instead, your primary focus should be on movement. A camouflaged turkey hunter sitting motionless against a tree trunk can be nearly invisible, but when he moves, the turkey will see him. Rocks and sticks don't move, but trout always move, and the trout that move a lot are the ones you're likely to catch. Trout don't just move to feed, they also chase other trout from their turf—they are territorial and that often gives them away. When they chase interlopers, they often return to their primary feeding position. I love these bully trout, because they are often aggressive when a fly comes along. A trout feeding subsurface will often exhibit quick lateral movement when it grabs a nymph or larva drifting near the bottom. These sudden, erratic movements often result in flashes in the sunlight as they turn. The slow pulsating movement of a nonfeeding trout is harder to discern with the movement of the water, and the weeds, and changing light.

Sight Fishing Strategies

Let's talk about light . . . sunny days help your eyes penetrate the water more easily, which is why sight fishing is easiest from about 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. The light helps you see into the water better, but it also casts shadows. And while trout do have excellent camouflage that optically hides their outlines, they still create solid shadows. After you find the shadows of a trout, you'll be able to find the trout itself. I learned this trick long ago while saltwater fishing—bonefish have scales like mirrors, and the fish themselves can be difficult to see, but they cast very obvious shadows. When a fly fisher sees five bonefish at 125 feet, what they most often see first is five shadows moving across the sand. When they get to about 60 feet, you can actually see the fish.

Defeating Glare

Glare is always your enemy. One glare-reduction strategy is to gain elevation. Climb a tree, get up on a boulder, or walk along a high riverbank so you can look down into the water. This way, the background is the river bottom, and you're not getting all the bounced light from the horizon. Have you ever fished an evening hatch and crouched down low so you can see your tiny dry fly floating on the surface? In this instance, you are enhancing the glare on the water to silhouette your fly against the gunmetal surface of the water. Getting up high in a cliff or cutbank does the exact opposite. It helps eliminate reflected or indirect light, allowing you to see directly into the water much better. However, on overcast days, and in early mornings and evenings when trout are most likely to be feeding confidently, this still isn't enough light getting through. Costa's Sunrise Silver Mirror lenses (25% VLT) and Smith's Low Light Ignitor lenses (40% VLT) are objectively the best lenses in this category. Both are yellow, a lens color that is a detriment to color vision, but greatly enhances contrast when viewing objects against a dark background. (Gerry and I always loved fishing Carnaro when the clouds go over—fish jump straight out of the water and yes, they catch easier too.) Sunglass tints can come in many colors, but in trout fishing they aren't just a fashion statement. They make a difference in your fishing. Gray-based tints are neutral. They reduce the amount of light coming to your eyes but otherwise don't alter your vision. Colored lenses like copper, amber, rose, and brown tints increase contrast to help you more easily identify a submerged weed bed, a drowned stump, or a brown trout under a root wad. Pay attention the next time you are sight fishing—don't just throw your line out there and hope for the best. More on this subject—Fly Fisherman—2006)

March WMFF meeting with Andy Ryboldt on Fishing Belize and other members



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.



Good to see Greg out fishing again so soon , nice

Please look this link up—your president asked me to put this in all newsletters.

<https://freeemergencycontactcard.com/>

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
Treasurer:	Marcie Greenberg	(480) 993-4623
Board Member at Large:	Andy Rybolt	(541) 281-2011
Board Member at Large:	Gary Miller	(602) 478-0883
Board Member at Large:	Margie Dennis	(602) 203-6414
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Conservation and Community Projects Chairman:		Unfilled
Education Chairman/Banquet:	Gary Miller	(602) 478-0883
Newsletter Chairman/Website:	Kitty Wiemelt	(480) 329-6996
Speaker Chairman:	Andy Rybolt	(541) 281-2011
IFFF Representative:	Gary Hall	(480) 510-7381
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