GPFF Yuba River, March

FISHMASTER: Bob Fabini, bobflyguy@gmail.com, 510-932-2186

LOCATION: Sierra Foothill REC 8279 ScottForbes Road Browns Valley, CA 95918

DIRECTIONS: From Highway 20 you will turn on Peoria Rd. At the bridge, Peoria continues to the left and Scott Forbes will be straight ahead. Continue on Scott Forbes passing Deer Ridge and Wilson Way. You will cross the cattle guard and see our Welcome Sign. The gate will be the second red one on the right and will take you down a gravel road to the River Pavilion. The gate will be unlocked and opened at the following times. Please be on time. Friday: 5pm, Saturday: 8:30am, 5pm Sunday: 8:30am, 5pm. Text me if you have arrival time issues.

CAMPING AND COOKING: There is a large covered cooking area with several tables, a propane firepit, and a small barbecue. I will verify that we can use those before we go. Campstoves are fine. There is a very nice restroom, but it has a limited water supply, and has to be pumped after each group leaves. Bring your own drinking and cooking water. There is a large parking area—small campers are ok. There is plenty of room for tents. We normally have a haphazard potluck on Saturday evening with music and merriment. If you play or sing, join in. I will have my guitar.

SAFETY:

The Yuba is pretty big water. Rocks tend to be grapefruit to cantaloupe sized, and they can roll under you, even on dry land. Some areas along the river require long walks or wades over these rocks. Take your time, don't rush. The river is cold and swift, and can change flows without notice. Last year a GPFF member, who shall remain unnamed, waded across, caught fish, and discovered that the flows were too high to wade back. Fortunately, he hitched a ride in a passing drift boat.

Just above the camp area, there is a section that can be wadeD at less than 2000 cfs, depending on your height and wading skill. Please do not attempt to cross alone or without a wading staff. Carry a whistle in case you get in trouble. 3 blasts! There is a lot of water to fish without crossing the river. If you take an unplanned swim, make your way out of the water, and let someone know what happened, so they can keep an eye on you. Unless it is unseasonably warm, return to camp and get into dry clothes. Hypothermia is no fun.

FISH FOOD:

At this time of the year we can expect the following bugs to be maturing and active. Whether they will be actively hatching and fluttering around the river is anyone's guess.

Skwala Stoneflies: #10-8 The Skwalas may be done by the time we arrive; however, sometimes fish get used to a bug and still take an interest even when there aren't many around. Olive Stimulator, Twenty-Incher, Sloan's Persuader, Mercer's Skwala, Morrish's Stone.

Blue Wing Olive Mayflies: #18-22 BWO's often show in the early spring and late fall, or when the weather's uncomfortably cold and wet. Personally, I always carry BWO's—they just have a habit of showing up. Olive or tan Sparkle Dun, Compara Dun, Hackle Stacker, Thorax BWO, Pheasant Tail, Quigley Cripple, Olive Paradun, any olive nymph pattern.

Epeorus (Pinkie): #18-16 Sparkle Dun, Yuba Pinkie, Adams, Yellow Soft Hackles, Hare's Ear, Pheasant Tail

Pale Morning Dun (PMD): #18-16 PMD dries, PMD Cripple, Sparkle Dun, Hackle Stacker, Biot Emerger, Film Critic, Burks HBI, Pheasant Tail, Skip's Nymph, Red Headed Step Child, PMD CDC emerger, PMD Floating Nymph, PMD Spinner, Trusty Rusty Spinner

March Brown Mayflies: #14-12 March Browns often start hatching in…..March! Bird's Nest, Sparkle Dun, AP Nymph, Adams, Brown Parachute

Bugs that are likely to become active soon would be the following. We may not see them, but if they make an appearance and you're not prepared……..

Caddis: There are 3 of these, Mothers' Day Caddis: Brachycentrus: #16-12, Sedge Caddis: Hydropsyche: #14-12, Green Rock Worm: Rhyacophila: #16-14. Most are in the tan/olive/green range. Most imitations will be for the pupae or emerging dries. Cutter's EC Caddis, Elk Hair Caddis, X-Caddis, Sparkle Caddis, Spotlight Emerger, Goddard Caddis, Missing Link, La Fontaine's Sparkle Pupa, Fox Poopah, Z-Wing Caddis, Soft Hackles.

Little Yellow Stonefly: #14-12, Yellow Elk Hair or Sparkle Caddis, Cutter's LYS, Yellow Stimulator

The following are expected later than our scheduled time, but they could arrive early due to the warm winter so far.

Mayflies:

Gray Drake Mayfly: #12-10 Parachute Hares Ear, Gray Comparadun, Hares Ear Soft Hackle

Other worthwhile patterns:

Wooly Buggers, Leeches, Streamers, Prince Nymphs, Zug Bugs, Midges, Soft Hackles,

Techniques

Nymphing with an indicator, or tightlining can both be effective. The Yuba has long stretches of river that run the same depth—indicator nymphing probably fits these areas better.

Dry-dropper with a Skwala on top and a weighted nymph below.

These same long stretches are ideal for swinging flies—soft hackles, streamers, leeches. The two best fish I hooked last year were by swinging a #10 olive Leech.

If bugs are hatching, and fish are rising, try dries, emergers, or imitative soft hackles. If there are no fish rising, dries are still worth a shot. If there are midges in the air, a Griffith's Gnat is worth a shot, otherwise try imitations of the expected bugs. If no go, and you want to stick with dries, try a range of attractors.

On Saturday morning, I'm planning on seining a section of river so we can see what bugs are there. If you don't have a seine or at least an aquarium net, one or the other is worth acquiring.

Leo recommends the following three fly patterns in 14 or 16. Mostly they are tied on jig hooks, but you could also tie as a regular beadhead, or use a standard hook with an inverting bead.

Duracell Fly

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IiiyFX8gBlc You don't need the rotary technique.

Hook: Fulling Mill Jig Hook #12 #2 or Partridge Jig Hook #12

Bead: Plummeting Tungsten, 3.3mm, Nickel

Thread: UNI 8/0, Camel

Tail: Coq De Leon Tailing, Dyed Brown

Body & Thorax: Ice Dub, UV Brown
Ribbing: UTC Ultra Wire, Small, Red
Collar: Nature's Spirit CDC, Brown

Jigster Fly

https://www.theflyshop.com/mercers-jigster-nymphs.html

Mercer's Jigster PMD – Recipe
Hook: TMC 413J, #16 & #18
Bead: Slotted Tungsten – Gold; to match hook size
Thread: Ultra 140 Thread – Orange
Tail: Z-Lon (Polytron Yarn, McFlylon Poly Yarn, or Antron Yarn) – Brown; sparse
Abdomen: Ultra 140 Thread – Orange; ribbed with pearl Flashabou and coated with Loon UV Flow
Thorax: Dubbing – Bright Yellow; preferably with some flash to it. Ice Dub – UV Hot Yellow will work
Legs: Same as tail (Polytron Yarn, McFlylon Poly Yarn, or Antron Yarn)

Mercer's Jigster BWO – Recipe
Hook: TMC 413J, #16 & #18
Bead: Slotted Tungsten – Gold; to match hook size
Thread: Ultra 70 Thread – Olive
Tail: Z-Lon (Polytron Yarn, McFlylon Poly Yarn, or Antron Yarn) – Brown; sparse
Abdomen: Ultra 70 Thread – Olive; ribbed with pearl Flashabou and coated with Loon UV Flow
Thorax: Arizona Diamond Dubbing – #29 Light Olive
Legs: Same as tail (Polytron Yarn, McFlylon Poly Yarn, or Antron Yarn)

I'm looking forward to seeing you on the river. Email me if you have any questions.

Bob

Bugs and Pattern suggestions Caddis Mothers' Day Caddis: Brachycentrus: #16-12 Sedge Caddis: Hydropsyche: #14-12 Green Rock Worm: Rhyacophila: #16-14 Cutter's EC Caddis, Elk Hair Caddis, X-Caddis, Sparkle Caddis, Spotlight Emerger, Goddard Caddis, Missing Link, La Fontaine's Sparkle Pupa, Fox Poopah, Z-Wing Caddis, Soft Hackles Mayflies Pinkie: Epeorus: #18-16 Sparkle Dun, Yuba Pinkie, Adams, Yellow Soft Hackles, Hare's Ear, Pheasant Tail Pale Morning Dun (PMD): #18-16 PMD dries, PMD Cripple, Sparkle Dun, Hackle Stacker, Biot Emerger, Film Critic, Burks HBI, Pheasant Tail, Skip's Nymph, Red Headed Step Child, PMD CDC emerger, PMD

Floating Nymph, PMD Spinner Gray Drake Mayfly: #12-10 Parachute Hares Ear, Gray Comparadun, Hares Ear Soft Hackle, WD40 Tricos: #20-22 Trico Sparkle Dun, WD40, Trico Spinner Terrestrials: #10-6 Hopper Patterns, Chubby Chernobyl, Chaos Hopper, Sloan's Persuader