



AUSTIN FLY FISHERS

October 2020
Volume 22, Issue 10



Los Pinos River, Colorado
Read about the trip on page 4



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Charter Club

President's Message by David Bush

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"The more you know, the less you need," according to Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard. His words of wisdom weigh on me because my natural inclination is quite the contrary. As I learned more and more about fly fishing, my acquisition of gear kept pace with my increasing knowledge.

My first fly fishing experience was targeting trout during a Colorado vacation so a 9-foot 5-weight outfit was a natural starting point. It turned out to be a perfect fit for the open rivers I fished there. When I returned home, I tried using it on some of the small creeks and rivers in Central Texas. That frustrating experience led to a shorter 3-weight outfit. By the time I discovered fly fishing, I had been fishing saltwater with conventional gear for many years so adding an 8-weight to my arsenal seemed like an automatic decision. And so it began. Gear creep.

Don't get me started on flies. I "knew" from my conventional bass fishing days that having a wide assortment of lures was essential. It had to be true because half the floor space at Bass Pro Shops was devoted to lures and plastics to cover every permutation of size, color, and other variables. So naturally one needs a similar complement of flies. And if you can't buy the fly permutation that you want, you can dang sure tie it yourself.

Somewhere along the way it started to sink in to me that less is more and just maybe Yvon Chouinard is right. Perhaps it was returning from a fishing trip and unpacking a bunch of stuff that I never used, but had along "just in case." Or maybe it was perusing my fly boxes packed with wide assortments of tantalizing options only to realize that more often than not I resorted to my limited number of tried and true go-to flies.

I'm not there yet, but I'd like to think I'm trending in the right direction. I recently packed for another Colorado trout fishing trip. I knew going in that I would almost certainly use a Tenkara rod, and I had a short list of the recommended flies for the rivers I

planned to fish. What could be more minimalist than that? A rod, a line, a spool of tippet, and a tiny box of flies. I was proud that my increased knowledge had led me to plan to pack and fish light. But that didn't prevent me from packing a couple of extra rods and reels and several extra boxes of trout flies...just in case. You guessed it, when I got home I unpacked that extra gear having never touched it during the trip. Maybe next time I'll have the confidence to leave it home to begin with.

Once again, we will be broadcasting our monthly meeting live on Facebook which can also be viewed at a later time. To participate, go to our Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/atxflyfishers/ at 7:00 pm on Thursday, October 15, to join live. Alternatively, if you are a member of the Austin Fly Fishers Facebook Private Group, go to www.facebook.com/groups/22082405715/ at the same time. If possible, I encourage you to join the meeting in real time so you have the opportunity to ask questions of our speakers. We will be going live a bit before 7:00, so feel free to drop in a little early to make sure you're all set up to join in.

Until next month, be safe...
Dave

Financial Report

by Jim Robinson

9/1/2020 to 9/30/2020

Begin Bal. Checking	\$17,929.35
Income:	
Total Income	\$00.00
Disbursements	
Total Disbursements	\$00.00
Net	\$00.00
Unencumbered:	\$10,058.00
Encumbered Funds:	
Casting for Recovery	\$2,365.52
SKIFF	\$5,505.83
Ending Bal-Checking	\$17,929.35

October Speaker – Steve Ramirez by Scott Kerrigan

Online Event with Steve Ramirez

Thursday, October 15 7:00 pm

www.facebook.com/atxflyfishers/

Our October speaker will be Steve Ramirez. Steve is a writer, educator, master naturalist, philosopher, and outdoor adventurer who lives and writes in the Texas Hill Country. He has lived in and traveled across four continents chronicling the unique historical landscapes, human cultures, and natural worlds that are in danger of vanishing.

Steve's stories have been published in various magazines and journals, including but not limited to: Trout, The Flyfish Journal, American Angler, Tail Magazine, Under Wild Skies, Explore Magazine, Texas Sporting Journal, Texas Trophy Hunters, The Houston Literary Review, Cutthroat: Journal of the Arts, and The Pecan Grove Review. He is an avid fly-fisher, hiker, naturalist, hunter, and outdoor educator who lives in a house in the hills, surrounded by trees. He lives in Boerne, Texas.

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Steve Ramirez takes us on an outdoor adventure, fly-fishing and hiking across the little-known rivers, streams and canyons of the Texas Hill Country.

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Fishing Tales from the Texas Hill Country

STEVE RAMIREZ
FOREWORD BY TED WILLIAMS



Muchas Truchas (Many Trout) by Juan Shepperd

Four of us made the trip from Texas to Chama, New Mexico in early October 2020. We stayed in a 4-bedroom, 4-bath cabin for 4 nights (including meals) with 3 days of guided fly fishing. We fished a combination of freestone and tailwater rivers, public and private lands, mountain meadows and alpine lakes. Wild Brown and Rainbow trout welcomed us to the Land of Enchantment. Each of us travelled separately and extended the trip before and after in different ways. Coincidentally, all of us visited Santa Fe (again, separately), enjoying good food and drinks before meeting at the cabin in Chama.

I'll share my experience. After spending the first night in Santa Fe, I stopped at the High Desert Angler, before pointing my car North. I pulled off Highway 84 several times to photograph the Chama River and the riparian vegetation. Rio Grande Cottonwood trees, Peachleaf Willows (trees the size of Cottonwoods when mature) and Coyote Willows (shrubs) lined the banks. It makes a nice Bosque, Spanish word for forest, with an oasis-like ribbon of trees along the river. The Chama River cuts through desert sand and red-rock canyons. As I drove North on Hwy 84, the road climbs, and the scenery becomes more fertile.

The village of Chama is about 7 miles from the New Mexico-Colorado border. At 7,800+ feet, it's in the Rocky Mountains. The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad runs through Chama. The steam-driven, narrow gauge train once connected Alamosa to Durango. However, the route was abandoned in the late 1960s and the tracks from Chama to Durango were torn up. Chama has about 1,000 people today.

Our cabin, about 3 miles South of Chama, sat in a lush valley, surrounded by mountains covered with spruce, fir and ponderosa pine trees. We saw mule deer, turkeys, ducks and geese. Once we saw a red fox. The nights were cool and days were sunny. It was an ideal setting. Fall color made it particularly pretty. Butternut, goldenrod and maize-colored grasses. Olive and forest green-colored trees. Yellow Aspen trees.

We fished the Chama River in New Mexico, the Conejos River in Colorado, the Trujillo Meadows Reservoir, and the Los Pinos River in Colorado. We used a combination of dry flies, dry-droppers, and nymph rigs. We wade fished primarily, walking alongside



Chama River, CO

Muchas Truchas cont.

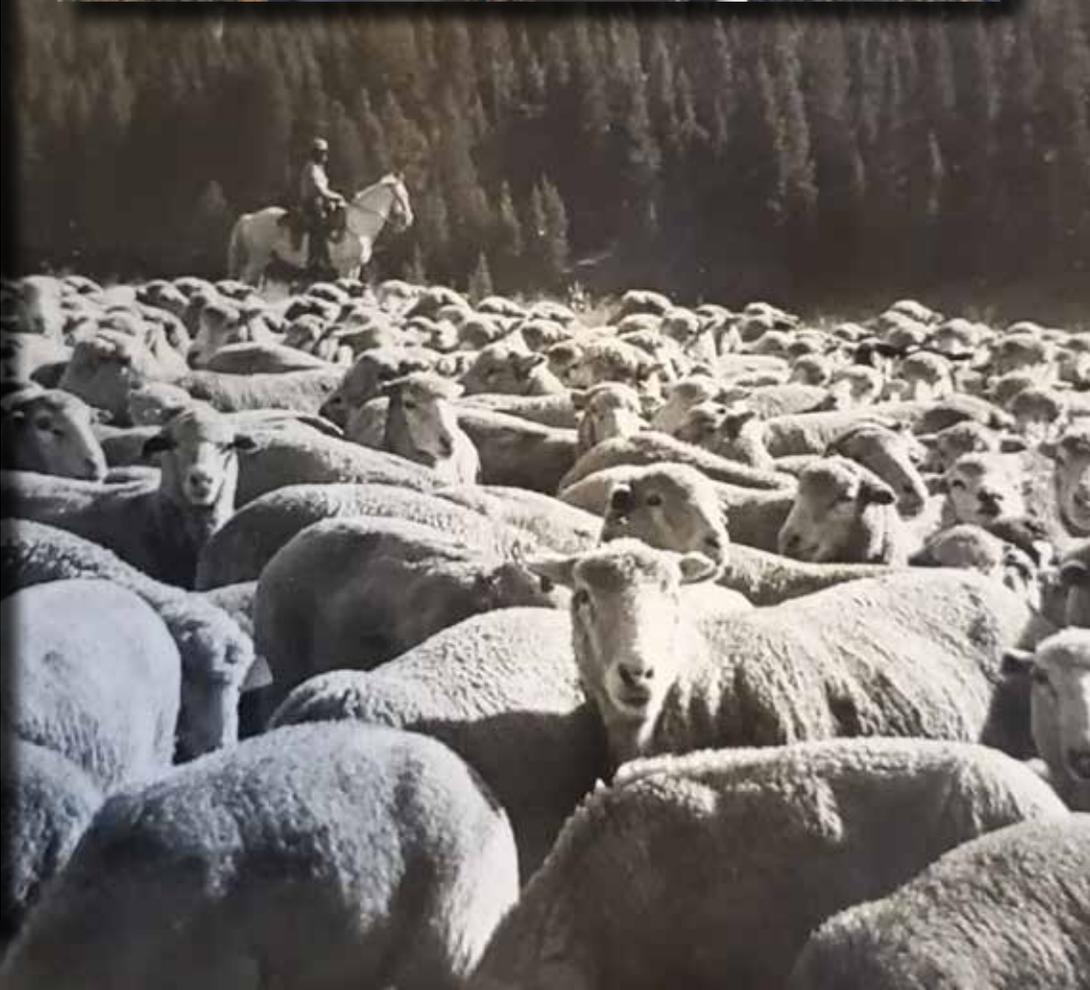
and in mountain streams and rivers. One day, we fished from a drift boat. The trout were selective, but they cooperated. Mostly. I missed a lot of hook sets. We all caught fish. We agreed too, our guides did an excellent job.

One night, I shared with the group a story of an old sheep herder I met more than 20 years ago when I passed through this area on my way to Yellowstone. I had camped and fished the Conejos River with a friend. The next day, on our way out, I rounded a mountain pass and slammed on my brakes. Sheep were crossing the highway, and soon surrounded my truck. My friend took a picture. We chatted with the shepherd in Spanish. He was herding sheep by horse and dog, grazing them on public land, and camping with them in the mountains. Imagine my surprise, having lunch on the Conejos River 20 years later, when an old man and his dogs walked across a field to greet my fly guide. The old man spoke Spanish only. He told us he herded sheep in the territory for 39 years. In the summer, he camped with them in the mountains. He now lives in a small house off the highway. I'll never know for sure, but I believe it has to be the same man. He wished us Muchas Truchas.

I enjoyed this trip. I like the area's mountains and waters. I liked my cabinmates. I found we had different backgrounds in fly fishing, but similar appreciation for nature and the outdoors. Driving back to Texas, I promised myself I would not wait so long to fish the area again. When I organize another trip, I hope you'll consider joining. It's not that far. Wonderful fishing. Delicious hatch green chiles.



Juan Shepperd with brown trout





Chama River, New Mexico

Juan Shepperd, Andrew Macfarlane, Chuck Diltz, Rocky Guerra

SKIFF Program by Bob Maindelle

Dear SKIFF Friends,

This year's rather disjointed return to public schools here in the school districts surrounding Fort Hood put the brakes on SKIFF trips in September as some kids attended in person, others attended remotely, but all saw their ~6 month-long Spring Break come to an end.

Although we did not get out on the water with kids this month, we did work behind the scenes on their behalf (Shawn

Riggs, Manuel Pena, and I) to submit the necessary paperwork to request the McBride Foundation grant connected with the Austin Woods and Waters sportsmen's club for yet another year.

Although we've requested, and have been granted, \$1,000 each year for several years now, we reduced the request to \$800 this year knowing that funding from last year will be rolled forward since this COVID-impacted season did not see as many kids get out on the water as we'd hoped for.

In the Fort Hood community, things are slowly returning to some semblance of normalcy, with troops reengaging in non-deployment related training and travel (to military schooling, temporary duty assignments, etc.). I hate to make any predictions in 2020, but, I hope we'll see an uptick in SKIFF trip requests around the remaining 2020 holidays and other school-year breaks.

Thank you, always, for your ongoing support of the Soldiers' Kids Involved in Fishing Fun (SKIFF) program!

AFF Outings by Juan Shepperd

This month's Austin Fly Fisher's October Outing coincides with the Fredericksburg Fly Fishers Oktoberfisch 2020, an annual event usually held in Junction on the Llano River, but this year being held Oct 16 – 18, 2020 at Edgewater Springs Resort on the Pedernales River in Fredericksburg, TX. Having just returned from New Mexico, I am not going, as there are a lot of honey dos to be done at my house. So, no official Austin Fly Fishers outing this month. Sorry. If you have not been to Oktoberfisch, it is a nice event. Many Texas Fly Fishing Clubs make the trip.

For those of you looking ahead to next month, I will be going to Broken Bow, Oklahoma to fish the Lower Mountain Fork River from Nov 5 – 8, 2020. That is a great tailwater river right below Broken Bow Lake. Spillway Creek and the Evening Hole are some great places to fish on that river. I fished it years ago and am looking forward to visiting again next month. If interested, let me know and I can give you advice. Wonderful place.

Speaking of great tailwaters, why don't we fish a local tailwater fishery the 3rd weekend in November? Pencil in Saturday 11/21/2020. Texas Parks and Wildlife will release their trout stocking schedule in mid November. The fourth bridge crossing on the Guadalupe River is a place they stock typically. If you are not a part of GRTU's Lease access program, no problem, Rio Guadalupe Resort has public parking available for fishing the Guadalupe River. It's \$10 for the day. If you are interested in fishing this great Central Texas tailwater on 11/21/2020, contact me. Or just meet there. Should be the perfect Fall Saturday for fly fishing with what I suspect will be cooler weather, ideal water conditions, and stocked trout in Texas.

To get to Rio Raft in Sattler, TX, take the FM306 off South IH 35. Go past the HEB Plus (nice place to grab a readymade sandwich for lunch on the river), past Gruene, TX signs until you get to Highway 2673. In Sattler, take River Road left and park at Rio Guadalupe Resort. I will likely arrive at 9 am. If you get there before the place opens, pick up an envelope outside the front door, fill out the form, and slip the envelope with \$10 through the slotted double doors. If you are new to fly fishing, the Guadalupe River is surprisingly cold, being water released from the bottom of Canyon Lake. You can wet wade, but I recommend waders. I'll lunch on the river and hope you can make it. FYI, this is the weekend before Thanksgiving. Tight lines, everyone.



Brandon Rabke with redfish caught in a lagoon on the Arroyo Colorado

Club Sponsors

The following individuals who made presentations to our club in 2017/2019. Please follow the links to get more information on the services they provide. You won't be disappointed.

Marcus Rodriquez – <http://livingwatersflyfishing.com/> Central Texas Guide

Capt. Billy Trimble – <http://trimbleflyfishing.com/> Fly Fishing Rockport/Texas Coastal Bend

Chris Johnson – <http://livingwatersflyfishing.com/> Living Waters Fly Shop and Central Texas Guide

Pat Dorsey – <http://www.bluequillangler.com/> Fly Fishing Colorado

Capt. Scott Hamilton – <http://www.flyfishingextremes.com/> Fly Fishing Florida's Atlantic Coast

Capt. Eric Glass – <http://www.captainericglass.com/> Fly Fishing South Padre Island

Kevin Stubbs – <http://www.expedition-outfitters.net/> Fly Fishing the Devils River

Kevin Hutchison – <http://hillcountryflyfishers.com/> Fly Fishing the Hill Country

Capt. Steve Soulé – <http://www.theshallowist.com/index.asp> Fly Fishing Galveston

Jeff Davis – <http://allwaterguides.com/jeff-davis/> Fly Fishig the lower Colorado River

Jud Cole – <http://centraltexasflyfishing.com/> Central Texas and Colorado

Capt. Rus Schwausch – <http://www.epicanglingadventure.com/> Fly Fishing Southwest Alaska

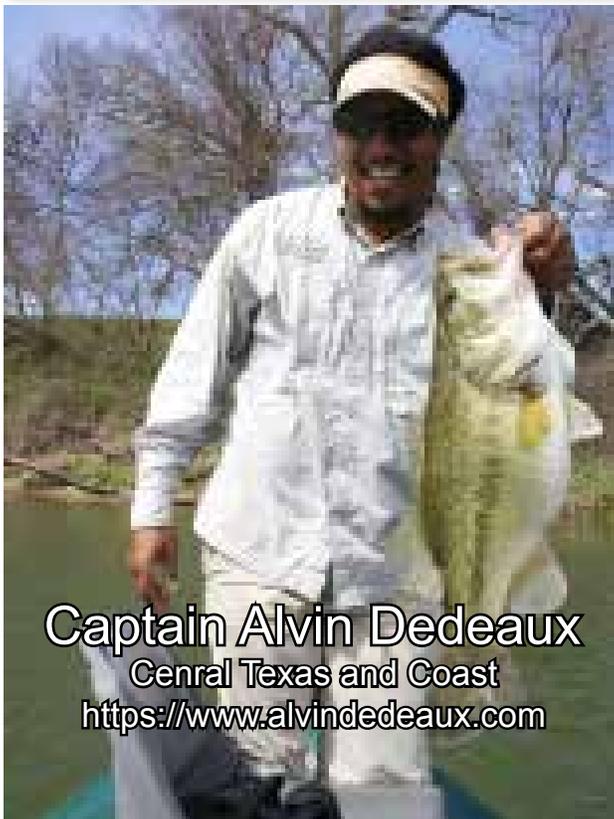
Nick Streit – <https://taosflyshop.com/flyguide/main> New Mexico and Southern Colorado

Capt. Randy and Truette Cawfield – <http://www.lagunamadre.net/styled-33/index.html>

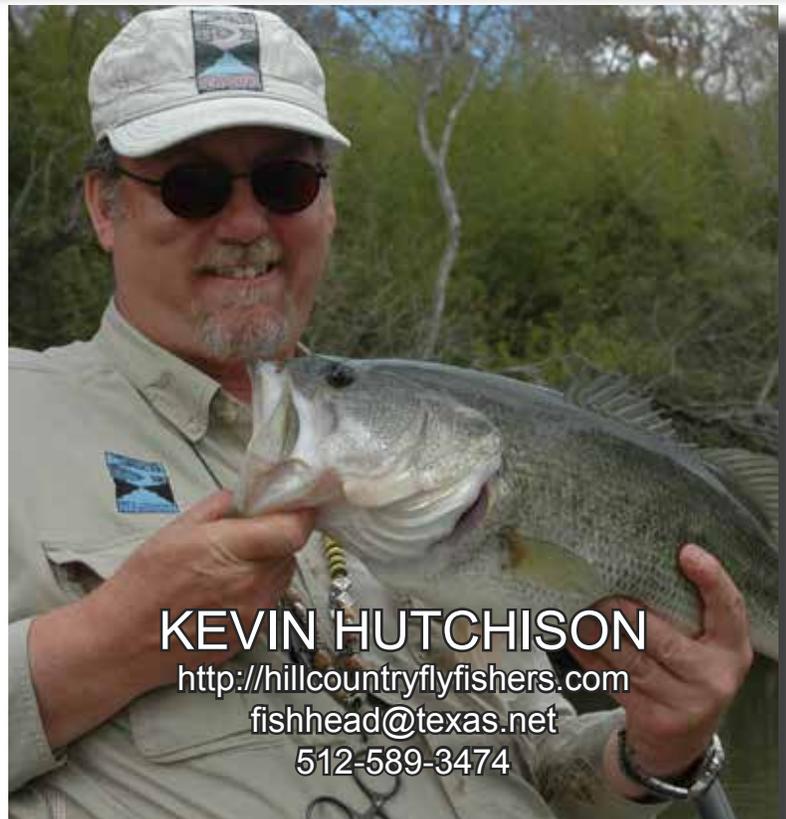
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Pat Vanek – BousqueValleyFlyFishing@gmail.com Rivers of Central TX

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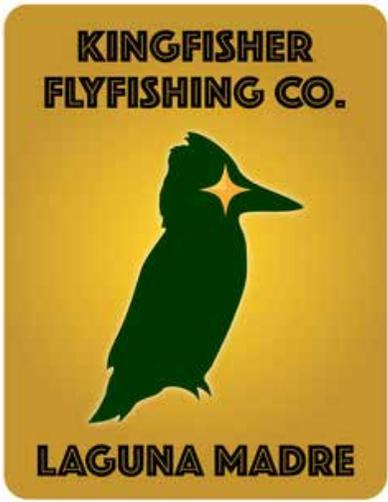


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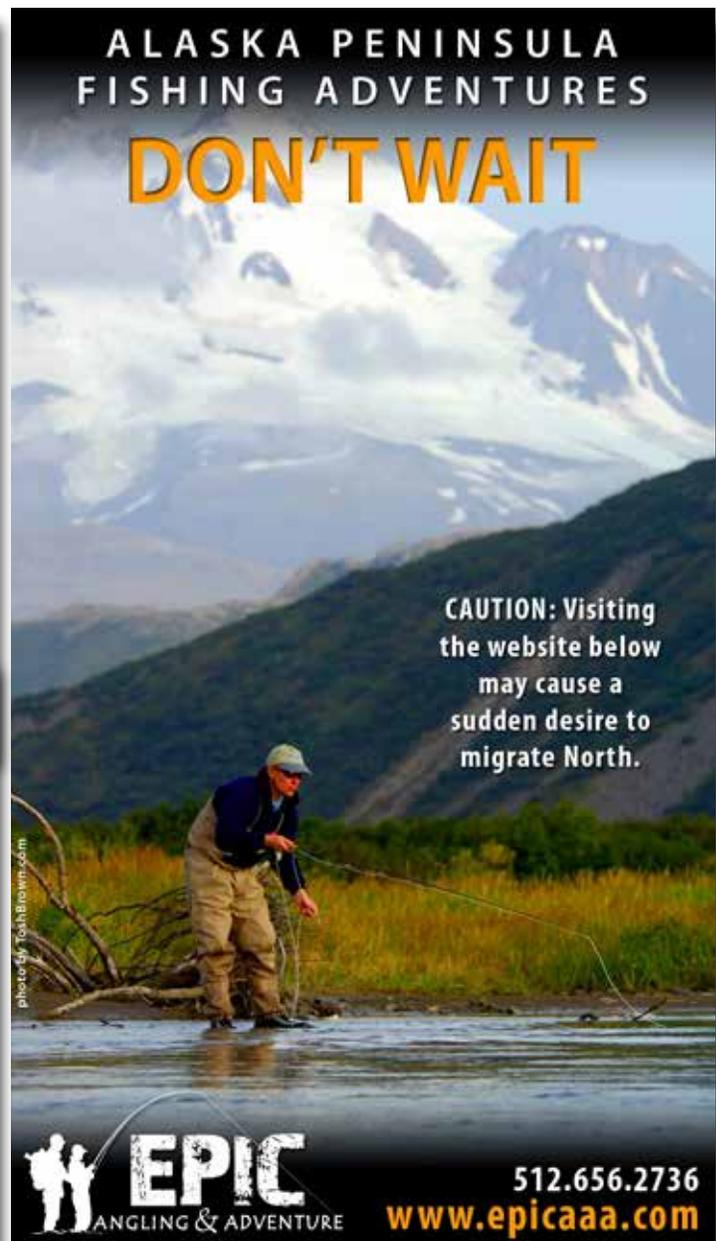
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