

MARCH 2020

# FORWARD CASTS

OFFICIAL DESERT FLY CASTERS NEWSLETTER

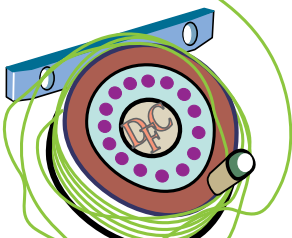
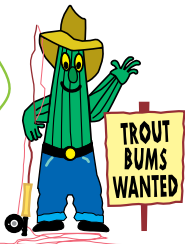


## MARCH

Wednesday,  
March 11, 2020

Chit-Chat & Dinner: 6:00  
Meeting/Guest Speaker: 7:00

Elks Lodge  
1775 West Chandler Blvd.  
Chandler, Arizona 85224



## President's Drift

Frank Schettino • March 2020



### Greetings DFCer's...

**Wow did we have a great Annual Banquet this year!!** Thank you to all who donated items to make this a success. And above all I want to thank our DFC Trout Bums who came in and enjoyed themselves...A big thanks to each of you who helped put this together, volunteers, wives, board members and significant others. What a team!

Now to start with...Rain postponed the February Danish Games. I'm working on setting up another date and will be working with the Gilbert offices to nail down a date. We'll keep you up to date on this, one of our popular yearly events.

We have on the calendar the Salt River Outing, March 14, 2020...A great event and lots of fun. Make sure you're signed up for a head count. Joe Staller is host (catch Joe at: (602) 568-9431 or joestaller@yahoo.com) ....Touch base with him if interested. Another DFC Outing coming up in April is at Big Lake. Big bass are known to haunt the lake. There is a limited space for this outing. We have private access for our club...there is a fee and as said..."limited space." Catch Joe Staller for additional information.

We've got a great guest speaker this month. **Dave Blackburn** will entertain us with his findings and expertise fly fishing the Kootenai River in Montana. Dave said hemight bring his banjo along...Guess we're in for some top notch entertainment for sure. Don't miss this one.

A side note here...We were honored at our banquet to have Sharon Nickel, Doc's wife attend the evening's event. She's such a wonderful person. We all sang "Happy Birthday" in honor of Doc on his birthday. I'm sure in Doc's own words somewhere he had some kind things to say about all us. Don't forget Sunday, March 15, 2020 there will be a Celebration of Life in honor of Doc Nickel. Information of this event is found on page 5 of this newsletter. I know I'll be there.

See you at the meeting.

Tight Lines,  
Frank Schettino

## MARCH DFC MEETING WEDNESDAY • March 11, 2020



DFC  
Trout Bums  
Wanted!

## DAVE BLACKBURN

Join **DAVE BLACKBURN** as he takes us with him on the  
Kootenai River in Montana

Get hooked up with us Trout Bums....Come talk Fly Fishing with us!

Join in.. meet-up with us Trout Bums...6:00 Dinner... 7:00 Club Meeting,  
followed by your monthly program along with fun and raffle prizes!

Every big trout is boss man in his pool and he has a particular feeding-resting-observation station all his own.



### DFC MISSION STATEMENT

To advance the sport of fly fishing in Arizona through education, conservation and community outreach efforts by:

- *Providing Education classes and clinics on fly fishing, fly casting, fly tying, rod building and other associated skills*
- *Committing to conserve, restore, and enhance local and regional fisheries*
- *Making fishing approachable, enjoyable and safe in family friendly environment*
- *Promoting responsible angling practices*

### CATCH US HERE:

Desert Fly Casters  
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[www.desertflycasters.com](http://www.desertflycasters.com)

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## THANK YOU!!! Our Annual 2020 Banquet

Below are the companies that donated to your 2020 banquet.  
We ask that you support them in your future purchases.

Tom McGrain  
Charlie Rosser  
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Cinda Howard  
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Susan and Kirk Geer  
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Susan Geer  
Jim Walker  
Joe Miller  
Brian Hunter  
Brian Foss  
Larry Kivela  
Jeff Voight  
Al Beatty  
Desert Sportsman  
Winston Aire rod,  
Built by Dave Weaver  
DFC Board

## 2020 Membership Drive is in full swing... Win a Dave Weaver Custom Built Fly Rod!

**It's time to renew your annual membership.** Support our club activities for the next year for only \$35. *Renew your dues or pay your initial dues and receive 1 ticket, if you're a Lifetime member you will receive 2 tickets for a chance to win a Dave Weaver custom built fly rod.*

You can renew at the January meeting or by mail at Desert Fly Casters, PO Box 6404, Chandler, AZ 85246-6404. If you have any questions catch me, Brian Foss, *The Membership Guy* at: [bfoss-fly@gmail.com](mailto:bfoss-fly@gmail.com)

## HAVE DFC LOGO EMBROIDERED ON YOUR FISHING SHIRTS...

*Please bring your fishing shirts to the DFC March 11, 2020 club meeting to have the DFC logo embroidered on your shirts.*

**The cost is only \$10.**

*They look great. Ask anyone who has had it done.  
One caveat we need a minimum of 12 shirts for an order.*

Any questions catch me, Jerry King, at:  
480-766-9170 or email me at: [webfootking@aol.com](mailto:webfootking@aol.com).

**THIS IS LAST CHANCE!**



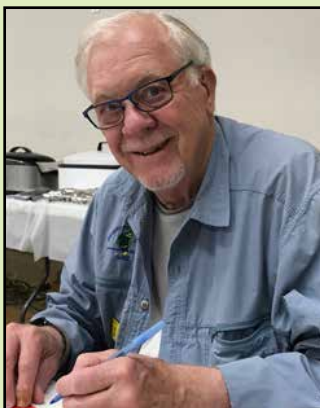
***Thanks to all DFC members who donated raffle items and attended this year's '20 Banquet.  
Your support of the club is what makes this such a great club!***

The yearly banquet is a big part of DFC in starting a new year.  
The funds raised will go a long way in helping the board fund programs, projects, events, and much, much more for 2020.

Best to all you for the coming year. • 2019-2020 DFC Board of Directors.

Comments, Questions & Suggestions, please catch one of our Head Wranglers:

**Frank Schettino- DFC President: [sketno1026@hotmail.com](mailto:sketno1026@hotmail.com) • Joe Staller- DFC V. Pres.: [joestaller@yahoo.com](mailto:joestaller@yahoo.com)**







B-19  
I-23  
N-15  
G-17  
ahhhh...  
O-19





# ALONG THE OUTER BANKS

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## Dr. Wayne Nickel • Celebration of Life

Sunday, March 15, 2020 • 3:00 6:00 PM

KC HALL • 644 E Chandler Blvd, Chandler, AZ 85225

*Also we are doing a potluck, like we did for Doc's Super Bowl parties. As Doc would always say... "Bring your favorite dish for everyone to taste."*

Questions, please catch me, Sharon Nickel at: (602) 999-2831

Thank you



## MARCH DFC OUTING



### DFC Salt River Trip

Saturday,  
March 14, 2020

Host:  
Joe Staller

Catch Joe at:  
[joestaller@yahoo.com](mailto:joestaller@yahoo.com)

**Where:** Salt River east of Phoenix, downstream from Saguaro Lake, Phon D Sutton Access point.

**Route to get there:** Take US 60 (The Superstition Freeway) to Power Road, north. Power Road turns into Bush Highway and runs along the Salt River all the way to Saguaro Lake, but you will take a left at Phon D Sutton access point. Or, take US 60 to Ellsworth and go north over Usery Pass, which will take you to Salt River Recreation.

**Trip description:** This is a rafting trip from Phon D Sutton down to Granite Reef. Expected duration is 4-5 hours, could be quicker if the water flows are high, and could take longer if you stop and fish every likely looking spot.

**When:** Let's meet at 8:00 a.m. We will need to shuttle some vehicles down to Granite Reef. Plan to start rafting at 9:00 a.m.

**Equipment Requirements:** Preferred craft would be a kick boat with both oars and fins. U-boat float tubes will work as well, but you may need to carry it over some shallower sections. Kayaks are fine also. Life preserver/flotation device is required by law and common sense. March is still cold, so you will probably want your waders. Some may want an anchor, just be careful and don't anchor in swift currents. If this trip happens to be your first time using your kick boat or float tube, we strongly suggest that you take it out on some still waters prior to this trip so that you are comfortable with how your boat is assembled and how to move around. Moving water is too challenging for your first attempt at kick boating.

**Safety:** Wear your life jacket, or at least have it handy. Look downstream and scan for obstacles: large rocks, tree branches hanging over the water, shallow water, other boaters anchored etc. Plan your route. One useful tactic is to point your raft at upcoming obstacles (large rock, mid-river tree, island etc.) and row directly away from it. Re-orient your craft as you approach and pass the obstacle, and keep the nose pointed at the obstacle until you have completely cleared it. Bring plenty of water and snacks. Put your keys, phone and wallet in a water proof container. Stay close to your buddy. If using an anchor, bring a knife to cut the line if it gets lodged in the rocks.

**Permits:** A valid Tonto Pass is required. Plan on buying this before you arrive. They can be purchased at Big 5, Sportsman's and other places. Pass can also be picked up at the Shell station on Power Road and McDonald. Must be paid in cash or debit card, as they may not take credit cards.

**Fish:** Bass - will be the main fish targeted with 9 - 16 inch fish being common place with larger fish being present in the river. Blue Gill/Trout - Smaller streamers can be very effective. Carp, Chub and Suckers - Not unknown to catch a few each trip and they can be very fun on a 5 weight.

**Recommended Tackle:** 5 or 6 weight rods. Floating, intermediate and sink tip lines should work. Bring strike indicators to dread drift flies with a floating line, 3X, 4X, 5X leaders and tippet. You can go heavier if you are just going to target bass.

**Flies:** Tan and white Clousers, and black wooly buggers should always work. Standard trout nymphs will work for the bluegill, trout and suckers.

## Fly Tying Corner

**Intermediate session • Wednesday, March 25, 2020 • 6:30 - 6:30 PM**

*McQueen Park Recreation Field (Located on the 510 N Horne, Gilbert)*

**We don't have a guest tyer identified yet but theme will be Bass flies for Hidden Lake and other local lakes for the spring.**

Material will be provided.

### March Flies of the Month



**Helmet Head Minnows**



**Rubber legged wooly buggers**



**Red Squirrel Crawdad**



**Bead Head Simi seal leech in Peacock**

**Recipes will be provided in a blast before the tying session**

Also we will hold Beginning Tying Sessions. There will be 4 classes. Tuesday and Thursday over two weeks. There are 2 sets of dates being considered. March 16, 29, 24 and 27 \* or Or April 17, 19, 24 and 26.

*See Bob Harrison at March meeting to sign up and indicate preference . We will select dates that work best. These will be open to public to satisfy agreement with Gilbert Parks.*

**For more information or to sign up, send email to:  
Bob Harrison harrn7963@aol.com or call/ text to 480 735 9743**





## East Verde River and Tonto Creek Field Trip Opportunity

Jim Stroger

Jim Stroger, Writer/Columnist -  
Life on the Fly -  
Payson Roundup Newspaper  
Catch Jim at: jimstrog@gmail.com

### ***Have I mentioned that I love living in Payson?***

The reason is that I have been a dedicated small stream fly fisherman since I was a kid. And while I enjoy fishing Canyon and Upper Christopher Creek, I spend a great deal of my time on Tonto Creek and the East Verde River. I can be on a section of the East Verde within a five minutes drive from my house, and both the Upper East Verde and Tonto Creek are only about a half hour drive.

Last year I offered field trips to Payson Flycasters' Club members and Desert Flycasters' Club members to orient folks to what I consider the best spots on both creeks. I will be offering that opportunity again this year and hope that you can join us.

Although these are not fishing field trips, participants often stay to fish after the trip in the afternoon utilizing the information they just learned that morning about the creek.

On the East Verde River, we will car pool from the Home Depot parking lot in Payson and head to several locations on the river. The focus will be on identifying great spots that have continually produced fish over the years and discuss strategies on those sections that have worked for me in the past.

One of the added benefits of participating in an East Verde trip this year is that I will also point out the stream improvement structures that were just placed in the creek. AZGFD in collaboration with Natural Channel Design and the US Forest Service installed these structures that were partially funded by the Gila Trout Chapter of Trout Unlimited/Payson Flycasters' Club and the Desert Flycasters' Club.

Within hours of their placement, the crews saw fish on these structures. And when I visited them a few days after they were built, I saw a trout jump right next to one. This is amazing, since trout were last stocked in the East Verde in September.

I can't wait for the first stocking which should be occurring in early April. There is also the possibility that the spring and early summer stockings this year might include Gila trout on the East Verde. If that happens, I will let you know in an upcoming newsletter.

The East Verde trips will end at the Upper East Verde River at Washington Park. If you haven't fished the Upper East Verde before, you will definitely want to learn about this gem. My biggest fish so far is eight inches! I am al-

ways thrilled to catch and release these beautiful wild rainbows. Often folks on the field trip that drive up, stay to fish the Upper East Verde.

The Tonto Creek field trips again start at the Payson Home Depot parking lot. It is a bit more instructional in terms of small stream strategies, and you will have an opportunity to get in the water (or stand on the bank while I get in the water) to learn about the aquatic insects that thrive in the creek. I will demonstrate various casts that I use on this brushy creek, and we will talk about effective strategies to stalk trout on small streams.

Even though a lot of the spots that are stocked weekly starting in April are right next to the road on Tonto Creek, there are some great hidden locations on the creek that I want to share with you as well. I'll show you where I typically catch wild browns that have entered Tonto Creek from Horton Creek after winter high flows, and where you might encounter some hold-over rainbows from the last fall stockings.

These field trips are best accomplished with small groups of no more than six to eight folks. For that reason, I will limit the number of participants to allow us to access the creek more effectively. You will need to sign up in advance so that I can assure the small group size for each trip.

Participants should plan on leaving the Payson Home Depot parking lot at 8am. We will be back in town sometime before 1pm. Please plan on bringing water and any snacks you might want for the morning. If you plan on fishing after the morning field trip, you may also want to pack a lunch. ***I hope you can join us as we explore the East Verde and Tonto Creek.***





## Let's go fish the East Verde River and Tonto Creek, together, with Jim Stroger...

### East Verde River and Tonto Creek Field Trip Information:

#### Field Trip Dates:

##### East Verde River

Saturday, March 21st\*  
East Verde River

Thursday, March 26th  
East Verde River

Friday, April 3rd\*  
East Verde River

##### Tonto Creek

Friday, March 20th\*  
Tonto Creek

Saturday, April 4th\*  
Tonto Creek

Thursday, April 9th  
Tonto Creek

**\*Note:** On March 20 /21 and April 3/4 you could sign up for both the East Verde and Tonto Creek and plan some fishing in Rim Country around both field trips.

- **RSVP with Jim Stroger (480-242-2569, jimstrog@gmail.com)** if you are a DFC member and are interested in participating in any of these field trips. I will need to limit participation for each trip to no more than eight. So once a date is filled, I will not be accepting additional participants for that date.
- We will leave from the Payson Home Depot parking lot on the north end of town at 8am. We will meet in front of the Garden Center and plan to return by 1pm each day. If you drive your own car to the stream locations during the field trip, you are welcome to fish on your own after the trip, but we will not be fishing during the field trip.
- Please plan on bringing water and any snacks you might want for the morning. If you plan on fishing after the morning field trip, you may also want to pack a lunch.
- I would suggest that you bring a wading staff or walking stick as we walk along the banks. If you are participating in the Tonto Creek field trip, you are invited to get in the creek to look for aquatic insects with me, or observe from the bank as I bring the bugs to you.



1)- Learn where this is on the East Verde field trip. • 2)- Joe Miller fishing another pool on the Upper East Verde River in March. • 3)- This spot has complicated currents and requires a stealthy approach. We will talk about effective strategies to fish it on the Tonto Creek field trip. • 4)- On the field trip, we will learn where the new stream improvement devices are on the East Verde River and where some of the still very functional structures are on Tonto Creek. • 5)- We will end the East Verde field trip on the Upper East Verde. Joe Miller is fishing for wild rainbows on the UEVR by staying back from the creek near the tree to help hide his presence.



## Desert Fly Casters Conservation Corner

March 2020



Questions/Comments?

Catch Joe Miller

*The Conservation Guy at:*

jamiller101@gmail.com

**This month we have short updates on five topics of interest about our Arizona streams, fisheries and the forests they're in:**

### ***East Verde River Project***

Stream Restoration work at 2nd Crossing, 3rd Crossing and Flowing Springs on the East Verde River just North of Payson is DONE! The Payson Fly Casters and Gila Trout Chapter of TU worked with AZGFD and Tonto National Forest last week to plant Willow Cuttings to help stabilize the banks where work was done. DFC contributed funds for the Heavy Construction Work. The project results look great, fish holding areas have been increased, there are a few carryover fish there already, and Gila Trout will be stocked there for recreational angling very soon. A detailed article will be in a near future DFC Newsletter.

### ***Lees Ferry Rainbow Trout Fishery***

There will be a Guides, Anglers and AZGFD Meeting about the Lees Ferry Fishery at Marble Canyon at 4:15 on Thursday April 23 to discuss Incentivized Harvest of Brn Trout, Bug Flows, Recent Trends, and trout stocking. It's being organized by Scott Rogers AZGFD and Terry Gunn. Location to be announced. No significant news about the NPS plans for Brown Trout control yet, we're still waiting, hopefully more will be known by then. "Bug Flow" studies have apparently been going well, and will be reported on at that meeting.

### ***Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) Status***

This 1.24 Million Acre Forest Restoration Planning effort is on-going. The Final version of the EIS is now being developed based on the recent comment period, which produced significant requests for more attention to the water resources on and below the Mogollon Rim. Forest Service hopes to finalize by early next year. Joe Miller is deeply involved in these efforts, as is AZGFD. We'll keep you posted!

### ***Black River Forest Restoration Project - White Mountains***

This project, on the Eastern slopes of Mt Baldy and around the Big Lake area, is to develop an Environmental Assessment to authorize Forest Restoration and Streams Restoration work. The area includes many streams with Apache Trout and Brown Trout. It's being conducted by the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, but has experienced some delays. The A - S has decided to conduct an additional 30 day Public Comment Period to ensure they understand current interests of the many involved parties, Including US. That 30 day period will likely start in the next few weeks or month. A group of Stakeholders including Joe Miller will be meeting before that starts to work with the A - S on the effort. We'll advise on how to submit comments in the near future.

### ***Tonto National Forest Management Plan Public Comment Period Ending 3/12/2020***

**You can submit comments by:**

- Using the online commenting portal at <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=51592> to either upload a comment form or create a comment.
- Sending through postal mail addressed to Tonto National Forest, Attn: Forest Planner, 2324 E McDowell Rd. Phoenix, AZ 85006.
- Delivering them in person to any Tonto National Forest office Monday thru Friday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The Draft Plan, DEIS, and other resources, including Frequently Asked Questions and a How to Comment Guide, are available on the plan revision website at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/tonto/landmanagement/planning>.

Development of the new Tonto Plan is on-going. It appears there is a lot of good attention in the draft plan to water resources on the Tonto, which includes many streams we fish a lot: The Tonto, East Verde, Christopher, Haigler, and especially Canyon Creek. The comment period for Public input will end on March 12. Joe Miller will be submitting comments for DFC.



## 2020 DFC OUTINGS SCHEDULE



**Joe Staller**

*The Go-To Outings  
Chairman Guy*  
joestaller@yahoo.com

Month	Location	Date	Host
March	Salt River Raft trip	Sat • March 14	Joe Staller
April	Hidden Lake	Sun • April 19	Rod Buchanan
May	Seneca Lake	Sat • May 16	Joe Staller
June	Big Lake, Fir Campground	June 12-14 <i>Campground reserved</i>	Linda McAteer
July	Becker Best	July • 10-12, <i>Aligned with WMLF</i>	Gentry Smith
Aug	Utah, Boulder Mountain	Aug • 14-19	Dick Brooks
Sept Sept	Links at Queen Creek San Juan	Sept • 12 Sept • 21-26	TBA Billy Wingo
Oct	White Mountains	Oct • 15-18	Joe Staller
Nov	Rocky Point	Nov • 4-9	Vince Deadmond
Dec	Something Local	December 12	TBA

## 2020 DFC EDUCATIONAL SCHEDULE



**Gary Hitterman**

*DFC Educational Guy*  
1Bighand@excite.com

**March 28, 2020 • Saturday 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM**  
**DFC Fly Casting for DFC Club Members**

*weather permitting*

**Gilbert's McQueen Park**

*Please plan on bringing your rod, reel and line-  
Ready for action an' fun!*

# DESERT FLY CASTERS

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

Are you a member of our parent organization? Int'l Federation of Fly Fishers (IFFF) Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_  
Visit the IFFF website, support the IFFF and sign up: <http://www.fedflyfishers.org>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **YES, I would like to volunteer- Please contact me**



### Individual or Family are:

**For Yearly Membership - ☐ \$35/year - Email **Color** newsletter**

**For Life Time Membership - ☐ Email **Color** Newsletter  
\$350**

Type of Membership: Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_

**Name Tags (please print):**

Name 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Name 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Deductible Conservation donation: (DFC is a 501C3 Non-Profit Org) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every Month

**Meeting Location – ELKS LODGE, 1775 W. Chandler Blvd, Chandler, AZ**

Take the 101 south to Chandler Blvd, go East just past Dobson Rd to SW corner at Pennington Dr.  
(Behind the Car Wash) \*Push the Door Bell at the Door\*

**DESERT FLY CASTERS – PO BOX 6404, Chandler, AZ 85246**

Attention: Membership

Web address: [www.desertflycasters.com](http://www.desertflycasters.com)



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**DATES TO KEEP IN MIND...2020**

**MARCH • SALT RIVER TRIP**

**Saturday, March 14, 2020**

Host: Joe Staller • joestaller@yahoo.com • (602) 568-9431

**DFC Fly Casting for DFC Club Members**

**MARCH 28, 2020 • Saturday 9:00-11:00 AM**

**Gilbert's McQueen Park**

Host: Gary Hitterman 1bighand@excte.com

**APRIL • HIDDEN LAKE**

**Sunday April 19, 2020**

Host: Joe Staller • joestaller@yahoo.com • (602) 568-9431

...Additional information at March Club meeting



**February  
Danish Casting Games  
CANCELLED!**

**...due to bad weather**

The DFC Board of Directors  
are working on another date  
with the city of Gilbert.  
Additional information will be  
discussed at our March  
club meeting.