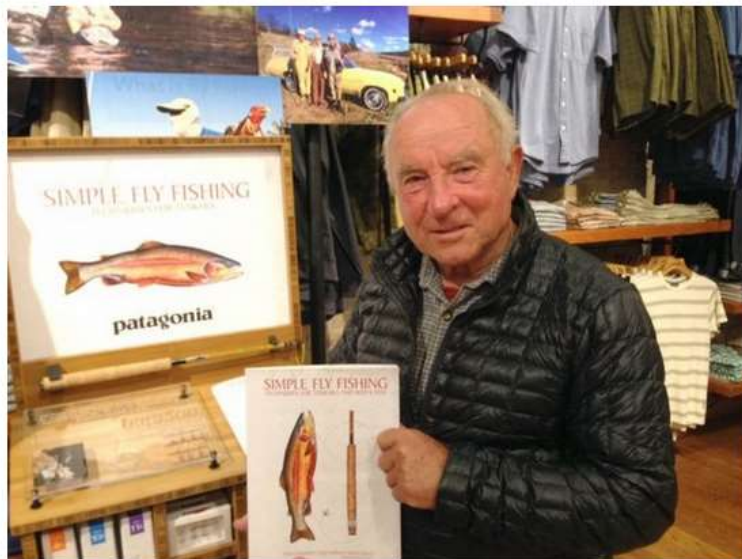


Patagonia founder Chouinard explains fly-fishing technique

By Doug Thompson Special to The Star
Posted April 18, 2014 at 3:12 p.m.

Discuss Print A A A f t g+1



Doug Thompson/Special to The Star Yvon Chouinard holds his book on tenkara fishing on Thursday at Great Pacific Iron Works Patagonia in Ventura.

Community West Bank
Let's work together™

Shred Events in April

click for more information #rec

About VCS Outdoors

Your source of how to enjoy and protect the outdoors in Ventura County.

Learn More:

- About the Team (Contact information included)
- What is VCS Outdoors
- Facebook | Twitter | Instagram

Making an artificial dry fly flitter and hop on a stream to tempt a feeding trout is challenging for most fly-fishing anglers. Water current and wind conspire to thwart a good cast, and it always seems the best spot is located just a bit out of reach.

Yvon Chouinard, founder of Patagonia, believes there's a better, simpler way to put that tiny Elk Hair Caddis in the right spot to do its tempting dance. During a Thursday evening talk at Great Pacific Iron Works Patagonia in Ventura, Chouinard, 75, explained the concept of tenkara, a nearly 2,000-year-old Japanese fly-fishing system. Tenkara is similar to fly reel-and-rod fishing with one important difference: There is no reel.

"People fish like this around the world," said Chouinard, author of the new book "Simple Fly Fishing: Techniques for Tenkara and Rod & Reel." "They use a pole with a line on the end. That is how I learned to fish and it's very simple."

The Japanese originally made tenkara rods out of bamboo, which are plentiful and pliable enough to provide the proper bend and strike response needed to set the hook. Today, many tenkara rods are made of carbon fiber and fiberglass, just like regular fly rods.

"Tenkara is so effective because in normal fly fishing you are trying to get an absolute dead drift of the fly on the water," Chouinard said. "With tenkara I totally disregard the current when using a wet fly, which is imitating an emerging nymph struggling to get to the surface. With tenkara the line is straight and every little twitch of the rod imparts that twitch to the fly. When there is a strike you feel it immediately."

A regular fly rod and line is heavy compared to a tenkara setup. The heavier rod and amount of line in the water make it difficult to cause the small little twitches to the fly, and anglers often miss strikes.

"You are trying to get that predatory instinct going with the trout," Chouinard explained, while he demonstrated casting with the 8.5-foot rod. "The action comes from the last foot and a half of the rod. If you think you are twitching too much, then you actually want to twitch less, by just squeezing your hand."

Casting is simple, and Chouinard gave quick lessons to both children and adults after the talk, and within a few minutes everyone was casting a small fly straight to distances of 30 feet.

Chouinard has designed a line of rods in lengths of 8.5-, 10.5- and 11.5-foot lengths for Temple Fork Outfitters, and the rods are available to try out at Great Pacific Iron Works. A rod costs \$220, and for another \$75 you can by a kit that includes the book, fishing line, leader, flies and quick set-up guide.

"We wrote the book to adapt what they are doing in Japan for American rivers and bigger fish," said Chouinard, who catches trout and bluegill locally in the Matilija, Sespe and Santa Paula creeks — when they have water. "This is a very athletic sport because when you hook a fish you have to run after them. That's because you don't have a reel to play the fish."

© 2014 Ventura County Star. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Discuss Print A A A f t g+1

Recommend Share Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

Connect with us

Facebook Twitter Instagram

VCS Outdoors
Like 431

VCS Outdoors shared Wendy Raymond's photo.

Locals get ready for race day. Less than 24 hours... Check out what they're doing and seeing in Boston!



Bib number pick up with Ventura County Boston Runners! @futuretrack @adidasrunning with Charlie Brown /Conein

Facebook social plugin

Keeping track

Tell Us

We want to know

Has debris piled up on your favorite beach? A bear wandering around your backyard? Are the fish not biting?



Picnic tables sit in the center of a flooded campground at McGrath State Beach.

Tell us about an issue: Detail what environmental issue you're concerned about.



UPLOAD

Location?

Phone or Email:

SUBMIT

Every second your car is LOSING value...

\$ 7 0 0 0
TRADE IN NOW before it's TOO LATE!

VALUE YOUR TRADE NOW!

PANAMA CITY