

## Trout go to School



### **Tri-Valley Fly Fishers “Trout in the Classroom” Program**

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The Tri-Valley Fly Fishers are proud to be a local area sponsor of the Trout In The Classroom (TIC) program. Since it was first introduced in local classrooms the program has been exceptionally well received by teachers and students alike. It has proven to be a very effective learning tool and the kids love it.

Participating classrooms are equipped with aquariums and related equipment. Fertile trout eggs are delivered and placed in the aquariums where the students get to actually witness the tiny fish hatching and developing through the early stages of their life cycle. They monitor and maintain the aquarium and teachers develop fish related curriculum that teach the students about the fish's life cycle, habitat requirements, and threats they face in their quest to survive. When the fish have developed they are taken to an approved location where the students bid them farewell and release them to swim freely in their new home for the rest of their lives.

#### **ABOUT THE PROGRAM:**

The Tri-Valley Fly Fishers TIC program is established and operated under strict guidelines of the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). Teacher training, classroom equipment, egg deliveries, and fish releases are all approved by the DFG. They provide permit forms and other documentation as required to maintain program records.

Teachers participating in the program are required to complete DFG training before they are approved to receive fish eggs. The training is a one-day workshop and prepares the teacher for setting up the aquarium and related equipment, monitoring and maintaining the operation of the aquarium, providing the young fish with all they need to survive and develop. The training introduces the teachers to suggested classroom lessons, projects and activities designed to familiarize the students with the fish's life cycle and unique characteristics, habitat requirements, some of the survival problems they face, and things people need to do to ensure their continued existence.

Teachers are responsible for the proper operation of the equipment, and for seeking immediate assistance if unusual problems develop that pose a threat to the fish. They provide care for the fish, such as proper feeding procedures, and water quality. They are expected to provide relevant classroom lessons, activities and special projects that teach the students about the characteristics of the fish, its life cycle, and special needs. In addition they show the students how important it is that the fish live in clean streams and reservoirs with good water.

The teachers arrange field trips. They coordinate the trips with school officials and ensure that they comply with any DFG requirements (release locations etc.). They also maintain program success records (fish survival rate etc.).

The Tri-Valley Fly Fishers are program sponsors. In most cases they are able to purchase (through donations and grants) and supply classrooms with aquariums and related equipment and supplies. They work closely with DFG to guarantee that the program is in compliance with their guidelines and requirements. They help ensure that “Egg Request Forms”, “Take Permits” or other related forms are completed and returned to DFG. They coordinate teacher training and assist the teachers in setting up the aquariums and related equipment. They transport the fish eggs from the hatchery to the classrooms and ensure that they are placed in the aquariums in accordance with established procedures.

TVFF members provide technical assistance, and are “on-call” to help teachers resolve any unusual problems. They may, at the teacher's request, visit the classrooms as a guest speaker

or to answer questions students may have about the fish, or the program. They are also available to assist the teachers with field trips such as fish releases etc.

TVFF members monitor the fish's progress periodically for normal and healthy development, and for early signs of developing problems that may need to be resolved.

TVFF members are dedicated to the success of this program, and to the education of the kids about our fish. They feel that it is very important that people be aware of how critical it is that they understand that the future existence of the fish is in their hands.

### **ABOUT THE EQUIPMENT:**



Pictured is the typical aquarium equipment provided to each classroom in the TIC program. Included in the photo is the aquarium tank (10 gal), a chiller probe unit, an under gravel filter (complete with filter bottom plate, uplift tube, gravel, and "power head" pump/aerator), Styrofoam insulating box (custom made) plus thermometer and miscellaneous items and supplies. The teacher-training workshop provides the teachers with information on how to assemble and operate the equipment.

Some classrooms may be equipped with larger, more advanced aquariums. TVFF members will assist these teachers with the setup and operation of these units.

### **ABOUT THE CURRICULUM:**

Curriculum manuals are issued to teachers at the training workshop. These manuals contain detailed lessons about the fish, it's life cycle, it's unique characteristics, and it's habitat and food requirements.

The manual also contains a selection of detailed classroom activities and projects related to the fish and the program. Projects etc. are included

for grade levels four through middle school. The curriculum is designed to be fun for the students and to hold interest in the program. This has proven to be an effective learning combination.

### **ABOUT THE FISH:**

The current source of eggs for our program is from brood stock of Rainbow Trout that are used by DFG to stock local reservoirs and streams in the bay area. (Salmon eggs are available by special request.) The eggs are supplied by the DFG hatchery in Yountville, Napa County. To insure good hatch rates the eggs are not delivered to the classrooms until there is evidence that they are fertile eyed eggs.

#### **Eggs Placed in Classroom Aquarium**



The fish hatch and develop to the "fry" state under the observation and care of the students. When they are ready they are escorted to local release sites (Del Valle, Shadow Cliffs, Contra Loma, Lake Chabot etc.) where they are set free to spend the rest of their life in a natural, hopefully healthy environment.

#### **Class Field Trip Outing for a Fish Release**



### **MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM:**

To learn more, or to donate to the program, or to participate in the program please contact:

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