

Kokanee Karnival - Philosophy & Outline

“Tell me, I forget – Show me, I remember – Involve me, I understand.” - Ancient Chinese Proverb

Kokanee Karnival began in September 1996 when The Central Oregon Flyfishers (COF), the Sunriver Anglers (SRA), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the USDA Deschutes National Forest sponsored an outdoor field trip for three local schools. The students were rotated through a series of stations demonstrating the life cycle, food and habitat of Kokanee salmon.

Presently the Kokanee Karnival Youth Education Program is implemented by the efforts of many groups—The Central Oregon Flyfishers (COF), Sunriver Anglers (SRA), two Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Programs - Salmon Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) and the Aquatic and Angler Education Program (AE), the Deschutes National Forest (DNF) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Representatives from these groups form the Kokanee Karnival Board. Their responsibilities include the complete direction, development, implementation and budget management of the Kokanee Karnival. The chairperson is an appointed member of the Central Oregon Flyfishers Board of Directors. The Committee applies for grants and also receives donations from organized groups and many individuals. These funds support the Kokanee Karnival. Board members are required to report to their respective organizations.

The efforts of this committee and the countless volunteer hours and miles have evolved the program to include the following curriculum:

Classes in Central Oregon, usually fourth and fifth graders, initially sign up for one or more Elective opportunities:

FISH EGGS TO FRY

Classrooms are supplied with the incubators to hatch and raise fish. Eggs are furnished from local hatcheries and placed in these incubators and over several weeks students must monitor and record observations, handle (remove) any mortalities and test water quality. The fish are then transported to an approved ODFW release site.

FISH DISSECTION

Students are supplied with fish, equipment, and volunteers to study the external fish anatomy and how these features enable them to survive in streams and lakes. The next part examines the internal organs and their functions. It is a very popular, exciting activity.

ANGLER EDUCATION

Students spend several weeks completing The Oregon Angler Education Manual, supplied by ODFW. Subjects include:

1. Get Ready to Go Fishing.
2. Fishing Fun- Getting to Know Fish: Fish Identification.
3. Understanding Fish and Where They Live.
4. Fish and People.
5. Giving Something Back to the Fish.

In addition, the students must complete a two page exercise concerning Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations.

Next, at a pre-arranged time, a Fish Crew visits the classroom to spend a two hour seminar covering:

1. Angling Regulations
2. Knot Tying
3. Ethics/Dilemmas
4. Safety

The lead instructor of the volunteer team is a Certified Angling Instructor, who is trained by ODFW and cleared through a background check by the State of Oregon.

COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP

This option is designed to encourage classrooms to give back something to the watershed. This is tree planting, storm drain marking, stream clean-ups, water quality testing, and other similar projects.

THE COMPREHENSIVE LEVEL

Classrooms willing to commit to all the electives are eligible to apply for the an enhanced program - the Comprehensive Level. In this program, two field trips are added to the electives, the Fall Field Trip and the Spring Angling Experience:

Fall Field Trip (Two Parts)

The Streamside Experience

One-half of the day involves observing Kokanee salmon spawning in Browns Creek or Sheep Bridge, including hands-on activities at three stations.

1. "Nature's Restaurant" introduces aquatic entomology, what fish eat, and the food web concept.
2. "Comforts of Home" explores the importance of good habitat, cold water, dissolved oxygen, food, shelter, competition, and avoiding predators.
3. "Incredible Journey" highlights the life history of Kokanee salmon.

The Hatchery Experience

In this half of the Fall Field Trip students are transported to Fall River Hatchery where they are introduced to the various components of raising trout and salmon. These stations cover brood stock, eggs and milt spawning, incubation, the hatch house, the feed room, rearing ponds, liberation, and stocking methods.

Spring Angling Experience

Traditionally, this field trip occurs in April. The setting is Shevlin Pond in Bend, Oregon. It starts with a game of Hooks and Ladders which emphasizes the critical components of the journey to the ocean and back. Following the Hooks and Ladders game, the students are rotated through four stations:

1. Fish Biology and Care of the Catch
2. Casting and Water Safety
3. Knots
4. Tackle and Fishing Methods

Lunch is provided to the students and volunteers. After lunch, students fish in Shevlin pond with assistance by the volunteers. Students who catch a fish receive a First Fish Certificate and can take the fish home if they choose.