

The Creel

A Publication of Northern Kentucky Fly Fishers



June 2020



The cover photo is of NKFF member Austin Nichols with his 3 year old son Andreas and his 6 month old daughter Jane fishing on Gunpowder Creek. What a great dad !!



Another great dad, NKFF member Josh Lillard, shown here with his 14 year old daughter Hilary. Hilary caught this big bass on a live bluegill. Josh is bound and determined to get a fly rod in her hand soon, but she is already a pretty great fisher.



A Message From The President

By Sheila Meyer

Here we are at the beginning of June and as you already know all of our official, face-to-face events have been cancelled for the month. I want to express my appreciation to all of you who took the time to fill out the survey about reopening the club. The results were very helpful in making our decision about June activities. We have come to learn that just about every club around the country is struggling with the same issues, so we are not alone.

I do know that people are getting out and doing some fishing and they are being very careful when they do.

We have had great attendance at our May and June virtual meetings and have had 2 excellent speakers. These have turned out much better than anticipated so if we do cancel additional face-to-face meeting we will continue to offer these opportunities.

If you have thoughts about what criteria should be met before we get back together for our monthly meetings, please let me know by emailing me at sheila@nkff.org. Also, what about our local fishing outings and our education classes? Please let me know your thoughts.

Randy Arrowood is holding online fly tying meetups 3 times a week on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 7:00 PM. You can join these meetups at <https://meetingsamer5.webex.com/meet/randy1>.

We are also sponsoring interviews with leading fly fishers with Jen Ripple of DUN Magazine **every** Thursday evening live as well as broadcasting them on podcasts. You will read about these on the next page (page 5) of this newsletter.

What else can we do? I would like your ideas for other things we might do in a virtual way until we can get back together face-to-face. Please contact me at sheila@nkff.org.

Take good care of yourselves and your families and wash your hands !!



DISCOVER DUN



DUN Magazine Editor-in-Chief Jen Ripple sits down with DUN authors and advocates to talk fly fishing, on the water adventures, and what inspires them to share their stories. The DUN Magazine Instagram Live is sponsored by Northern Kentucky Fly Fishers.

You can join these Instagram Live interviews every Thursday at 7:00 pm EDT. Just open Instagram on your phone or other device and search for dunmagazine. Go to their page and you will see a circle in the upper left of the screen. When the interview starts it will say “Live” in the circle. Just click on the circle and it will take you to the live interview.

Instagram

You will be able to see the interview, but your camera will not be on. You will hear the interview and you can use controls to ask questions, comment or send emoticons. It is lots of fun.



Then on Friday, the interview is posted as a podcast on buzzsprout.com. There you can listen to all the past interviews plus the one that took place the evening before. There are also many other options available to listen to the podcasts.

So do yourself a favor and tune into DUN Magazine Instagram Live on Thursdays at 7:00 pm EDT. If you can't make the live interview, then listen to the podcast on buzzsprout.com. You won't be sorry.

June Calendar Highlights



June -

We are not yet certain how we will handle events in June. Stay tuned for more information

4 Thu NKFF Meeting @ Florence Lions Clubhouse in Florence, KY - 5:30-9:30 – Programs TBA

5-7 Fri-Sun or 8 Mon NKFF Tennessee Caney Fork Float and/or Wade trip – guided trips possible with Southern Brookies (Susan Thrasher) - (M Arnold, T Guilfoile) – planning on staying at Southern Brookies Trailers or B&B and taking our kayaks to float on our own and/or as a group guided kayak trip with Susan. Maximum of 12

6 Sat Florence Rotary Club Handicapped Adults (Bawac & tions) Fishing Derby at England-Idlewild ponds in Burlington – (D New Percep-Bottoni) – 1:00pm – 4:30pm

9 Tue NKFF Monthly Fly Tying at various locations TBD – 8:30pm (R Arrowood) 6:30pm –

10 Wed NKFF Family, Kids & Parents & GrandPar-Derby – 6:30PM-Dark – England-Idlewild Shelter # 1 ents Fishing and Ponds – Hot dogs, brats and metts, sides and chips and soft drinks

11 Thu NKFF Boltz Lake Boat/Canoe/ Kayak Float & Fish – 4:00pm – dark (J Lillard)

12-13 Fri-Sat League of Kentucky Sports-Clarion Hotel in Lexington, KY – Banquet Haungs) men Convention – At the Tickets \$30 / \$35 – (J Lillard, K

14 Sun NKFF Modified Basic Fly Fishing Class for Crestview Hills, Winding Way residents – 2:00- 4:30pm - (NKFF Educators)

17 Wed NKFF BOD Meeting - 6:30pm – Emerge ITS at 1895 Airport Exchange Blvd #170 in Erlanger, KY

20 Sat 5th District Youth Fest Fishing Derby at Leary Lake in Lloyd WMA – 9 am – 1 pm (J Lillard)

20 Sat NKFF Cave Run Lake Tailwaters Float Warm Water Fishing Day Trip (M Arnold) – Rain / High Water date - Sun Jun 28 - meet at 6am in Florence to drive to the Cave Run Lake dam tailwater access park, put in and Float & fish downstream a mile or two then paddle or be towed back upstream by a small powerboat (need one boat with a motor for this).

24 Wed NKFF Local Fly-Fishing Introduction Day Trip to Gunpowder Creek at Camp Ernst Rd – learn to catch stream bluegill and bass – Camp Ernst Lake will be our high water backup

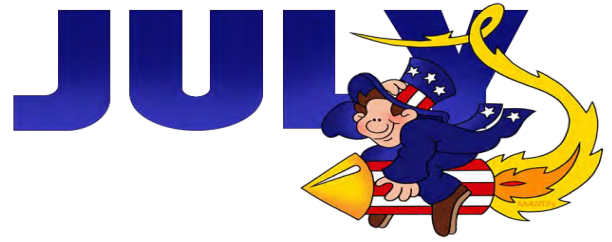
27 Sat Pendleton County Library/Kincaid Lake Fly-Fishing Class @ Kincaid Lake State Park Falmouth KY) 9:00am – 3:30pm (NKFF Educators) - will definitely need several casting and knot-Tying instructors

30 Tue 5th District Federation Meeting – Moonlight Hunting & Fishing Club in Burlington, KY - 6pm

Cancelled



July Calendar Highlights



July

1-4 Wed-Sat Signups for 2nd Rod-sions to be finished by August 31

2 Thu NKFF Meeting @ Flor-KY - 5:30-9:30 – NKFF's Annual ings - Programs TBA

7 Tue Fly-Fishing Sum-ty Conservation District – 8am – enced fly fishers to guide sum-creek – box lunch provided by

8 Wed BUFF meeting @ OH – NKFF members invited

9 Thu NKFF Bullock Pen Lake Boat/ 4:00pm – dark (J Lillard)

11 Sat NKFF Wading Day Trip to the the Englewood and / or Twin Creek

Metro-Parks – 8am – 6pm (M Arnold) – meet across from Florence Mall at 6:45am

12 Sun NKFF BOD Outing – Dutch-

13 Mon Boone County T-Baller's Fish-and the two upper ponds (6pm-8pm) (D

14 Tue NKFF Monthly Fly Tying at (R Arrowood)

15 Wed NKFF On-Stream Bug-Camp Ernst Rd– 6:30pm – dark –(NKFF

18 Sat NKFF Local Fly-Fishing Intro-learn to catch bluegill and bass from a ca-craft coordination required)

21 Tue Dinner and Shore Fishing at Yum Shop (truck stop diner) at 6:30pm -

25 Sat ? Gallatin or Grant County brary (???????, KY) 9:00am –

3:00pm (NKFF Educators)

28 Tue 5th District Federation Meeting – Boone Lake Club in Walton, KY - 6pm

Building Class of 2020 – working ses-

ence Lions Clubhouse in Florence, CHICKENDINNER and all the fix-

mer Camp Day for Boone Coun- - we need several NKFF experi-camp youth fishing gunpowder (NKFF Educators)

Metropark Pavillion in Mason,

noe/Kayak Float & Fish –

Stillwater River in Dayton, OH in

at Staples/Shoe Carnival parking lot

man's Rod & Gun Club

ing Derby @ England-Idlewild Shelter #1 Bottoni)

various locations TBD – 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Identification Clinic – Gunpowder Creek at Educators)

duction Day Trip to Bullock Pen Lake – noe, kayak, float tube or boat (prior water-

Gallatin County Fairgrounds ponds – Yum fishing from 7:30pm– dark – (M Arnold)

Fly-Fishing Class @ ??????? County Li-

Banquet 2020 Update - Josh Lillard

As I write this banquet update, spring fishing is in its prime. I've read reports of the skipjack & spoonbills running below Meldahl dam along with some white bass and the always present blue catfish. The walleye have already spawned on the Dam at Brookeville lake. Crappie are on the banks (the closer the better) and the bluegill & bass have just started to make their beds. For a fly fisher living in the Midwest, this is what we dream of, but I'm sure like me, most of you haven't gotten



out as much this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When I have gotten out, I can assure you that the fish don't know anything about it. Anyway, this is supposed to be a banquet update, so here goes.

I would like to thank all of those that have made donations to our banquet, we realize during these uncertain times that how and where you choose to spend your money has been limited and you are probably focusing more on your savings (wish I always did that) right now. We are still taking donations, if you would like to help us meet our goal by September. We currently only have \$8,770 left to reach our goal!

I'd like to remind you that you can donate a prize as well, please just contact me first so we can discuss it.

NKFF 2020 Banquet Highlights

Banquet Date: Saturday November 7th, 2020

Offsite social hour: 5:00pm – 6:00pm (TBD Location)

Banquet Start Time: 6:15 pm

Banquet Location:

St. Barbara's Sterling Event Center

4042

Turkeyfoot Rd.

Erlanger, KY 41018

Keynote Speaker:

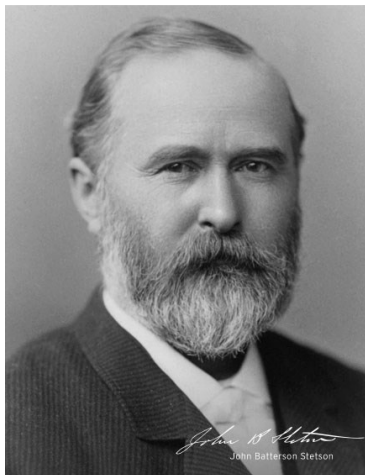
Karen Waldrop, PhD,
National Conservation Director
Ducks Unlimited

Prize Highlight:

A \$200 gift certificate for:

STETSON

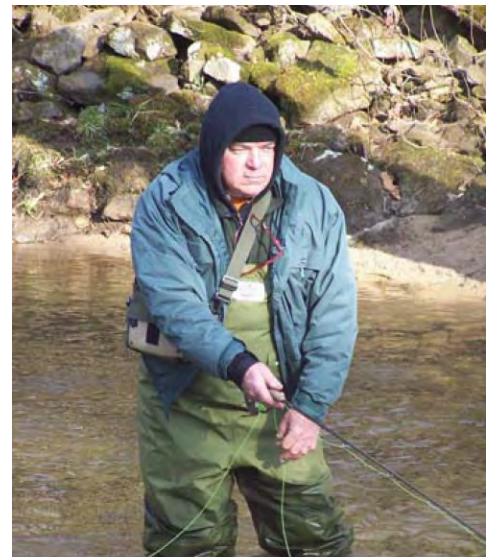
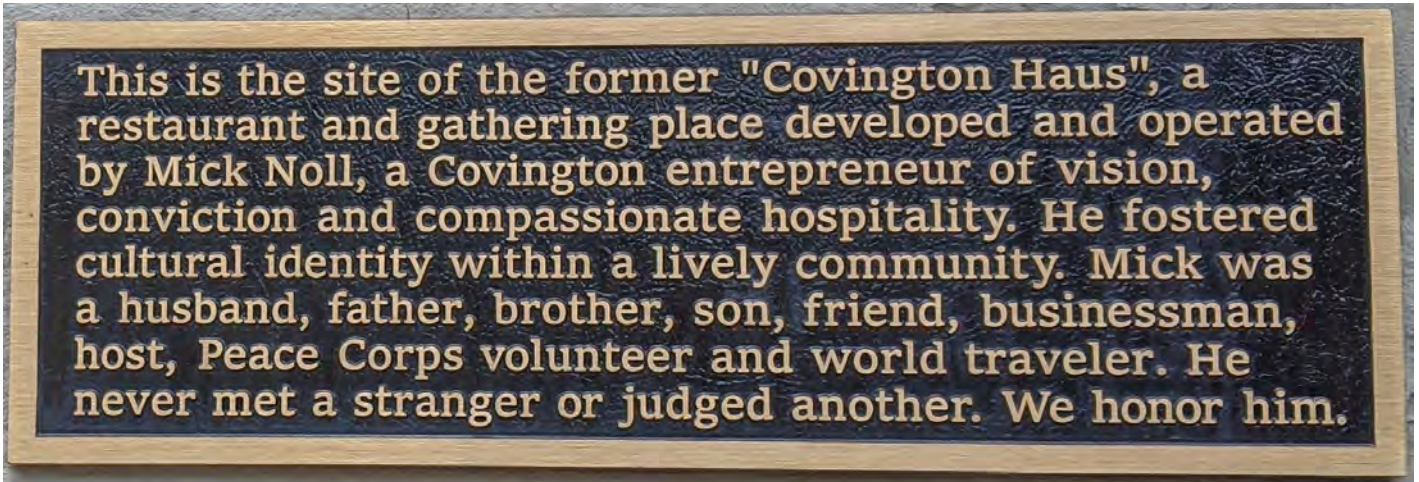
Hats, Boots and Outerwear for Men and Women



Founded in 1865, Stetson was born from the spirit of the West and grew to become an American icon. John B. Stetson's friendly gesture towards a wayward traveler on the new frontier gave birth to what is now known, the world over, as the "cowboy hat."



Editors Note: Wayne Noakes was walking downtown Covington when he came upon this plaque honoring Mick Noll. In addition to all the attributes mentioned in the plaque, Mick was an avid fly fisher and long time member of NKFF. Wayne's photo of the plaque reminded me of all of the times we fished together, his dry wit and his kindness to all. He really did embody the spirit of NKFF. Mick died in 2016 but his spirit lives on.



Editors Note: NKFF board member and Trip Director, Jack Randall got out for a day of bluegill fishing in his belly boat in late May and landed a colorful array.



5 Things Maine Has Contributed to Fly Fishing

Dedicated to NKFF members David, Noelle & Coltrane Houben who reside in Maine

From the Conway Daily Sun

Maine is one of the nation's best-known and loved states by fly fishers. The state is home to many legendary regions like: the Rangeley Lakes, Grand Lake Stream, the Belgrade Lakes and Moosehead Lake.

Maine has given us many legendary sportsmen as well: Cornelia Thurza Crosby, better-known as "Fly-Rod Crosby," Carrie Stevens (the Gray Ghost), Herb Welch (artist and fly shop owner) and Louise Dickinson Rich (author of "We Took to the Woods") to name a few. With all of this going for it, Maine has produced a few notable inventions that have contributed to the sport of fly fishing. Here are a five of my favorites.

At No. 5 is the classic L.L. Bean hunting boot. Leon Leonwood Bean began selling his rubber bottomed boot with leather upper in 1912. His first shop was in his brother's basement in Freeport, Maine. Freeport is still the home of the flagship store. A smart marketer he obtained a list of nonresident Maine hunting and fishing license holders and set up a mail-order business. Ninety percent of his first run of boots failed and Bean famously refunded the money to all of those who had purchased them.



The rest is history and today L.L. Bean is a major part of Maine's economy. The boots are must have if you hunt or fish. They are waterproof and comfortable and come with the same money-back guarantee as they did in 1912. The boots are also highly regarded by fashionable ladies, too — just ask my daughter-in-law.

At No. 4 is the famous Old Town Canoe. The first canoes were made in 1898. The

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5 Things Maine Has Contributed to Fly Fishing

Dedicated to NKFF members David, Noelle & Coltrane Houben who reside in Maine

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company used the name Indian Old Town Canoe. The first canoes were wood and canvas, a Maine intonation that replaced the birch bark canoe.

The company introduced the first square stern canoe in 1917, for use with outboard motors that were then coming onto the market. After World War II fiberglass began to replace canvas.



In 1995, the company began making kayaks and by 2000 they were producing more kayaks than canoes. In 2009, the company opened a new factory in Old Town, Maine, where the watercraft are made today. Wood and canvas canoes are still apart of the company's business although made and restored at a separate facility.

Generations of fishermen have enjoyed Old Town canoes and the old wood and canvas are highly sought after. I own two Old Town canoes, a 13 footer and a 17 footer, both purchased in the 1970s. The smaller one belonged to my dad and still gets a lot of use by our family.

At No. 3 is the Down-Easter trolling rod holder. The Down-Easter was the brain-child of Fritz Peterson in 1946. It is still manufactured in Lewiston today by the Peterson family. The original models are still available. There are newer models with added 20th century innovation.

The first powder-coated model came was introduced in 1996. The Down-Easter rod

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5 Things Maine Has Contributed to Fly Fishing

Dedicated to NKFF members David, Noelle & Coltrane Houben who reside in Maine

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holder is the third hand of many anglers. I own a couple of the old school models designed to clamp to the gunnel of a canoe, and for my money nothing has come along in the last 70 years that comes close to their versatility and quality.

No. 2 is the six-sided split cane fly rod. OK, I will admit that the bamboo fly rod was not invented in Maine, but none can deny that it

was perfected in Maine. The story is that someone showed Hiram Leonard an early four-sided rod and was asked if he could duplicate it. Leonard said he could and not only that he could do better. And that he did and the H.L Leonard Rod Co. and the six-sided rod became the standard.



Down-Easter Rod Holder



LEONARD, H.L. Model 38H "Baby Catskill Bamboo"

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5 Things Maine Has Contributed to Fly Fishing

Dedicated to NKFF members David, Noelle & Coltrane Houben who reside in Maine

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Leonard was a noted gun maker and hunter before he made bamboo rods, but the rods are what he will be forever known. Not only did Leonard rise to the top of the rod industry of the day, but along the way some of the men who worked for him became minor gods in the lexicon of fly fishing legends.

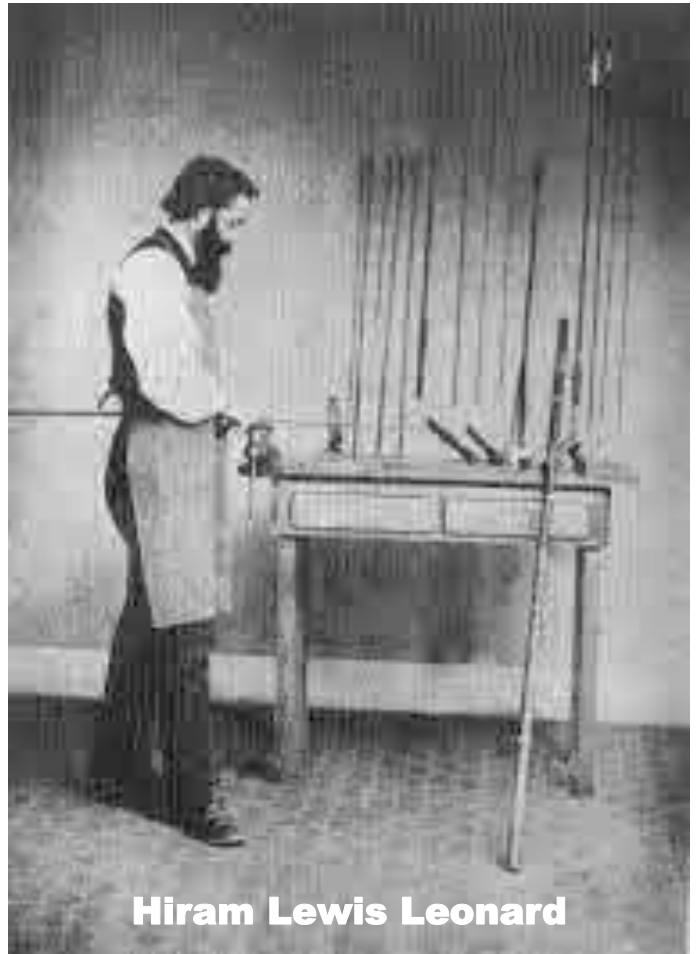
Edward Payne, Fred Thomas, Bill Edwards and the Hawes brothers all worked for Leonard. The company was moved from Bangor, Maine, to Central Valley, N.Y. Thomas left the company and returned to Maine, where he founded the F.E. Thomas Rod Co. Edwards also worked and built rods in Maine of his own and perfected the heat-treatment method for bamboo fly rods.

Last but not least, the No. 1 thing invented in Maine that has had the most lasting and most important effect on fly anglers is the creation of the streamer fly. Legend has it that a Grand Lake Stream guide, by the name of Alonzo Bacon, plucked a white feather from a canoe seat cushion and tied the feather on a hook. The new feathered fly, dubbed the "Roosters Regret," caught trout and salmon and thus the first streamer was born.

The idea was copied by other Grand Lake Stream guides and soon streamer flies were the rage all over Maine. The story may well be true but flies of this type had been tied all over the world for centuries.

As for the bucktail streamer, that honor may go to a fellow by the name of Theodore

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Hiram Lewis Leonard

5 Things Maine Has Contributed to Fly Fishing

Dedicated to NKFF members David, Noelle & Coltrane Houben who reside in Maine

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Gordon, the father of the American dry fly. A couple of other enterprising anglers, Herbert Sanborn and Emile Letourneau, went on to create the tandem streamer. Letourneau is the brother of noted Maine outdoor writer Gene Letourneau. Today, the classic Maine streamer is used the world over.



Roosters Regret

Maine not only gives us its beautiful lakes, streams and mountains, it has also given us fly fishers some nifty stuff. Despite Bill Green's warning: "Kids don't go bragging just because you're from Maine," I am proud to be a native son of the "Pine Tree" state.

See you on the river.



Theodore Gordon's Fly Box, located at the Anglers' Club of New York.

Fishing for Trout

By **Phil Pursley** (*Editor's Note: Phil Pursley joined NKFF in January, 2020*)

This is a true story. I'm not lying this time. Some of you may know that I enjoy an occasional day on the stream. OK the truth is that I am addicted to fishing especially trout fishing. My resolution this year is to only fish on days that have the letter "y" in their name. Thursday afternoon was one of those days when I couldn't refuse the stream. The nearest water that holds trout is the tailwater of Brookville Lake because it is cold water out of the bottom of the dam and it has some measurable flow. Trout prefer water about 57 degrees and not more than 70 degrees.

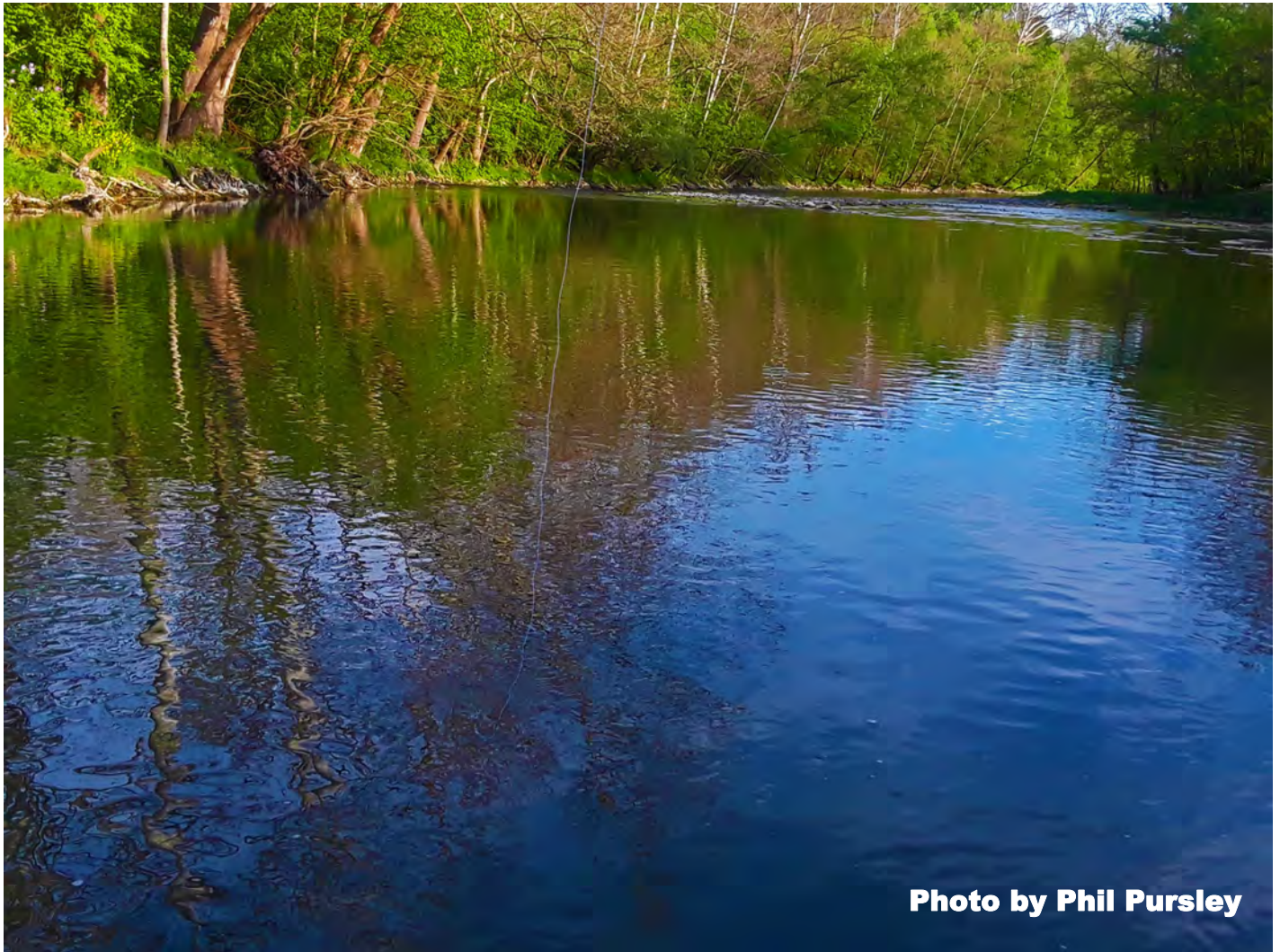


Photo by Phil Pursley

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Fishing for Trout

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I told Alice that I had the calling of an out of state trout stream and I was going to go to Brookville to fish. If the trout weren't biting, I would then go to Liberty Indiana to fish the "white bass run". After arriving in the town of Brookville I got wadered-up and grabbed my rod (never call a rod a pole, so uncouth). I headed to the bridge on Indiana 101 where I could easily walk to the stream. The bridge is actually quite wide, and I noticed a "work truck" broken down on the side of the bridge, or at least it seemed to be broken down.



Photo by Phil Pursley

One of my usual rituals that I do as soon as I go to the river is to pray. A prayer of thanking God for the beautiful water and of course to ask for a little divine assistance in catching these wonderful creatures. Trout are fun for me to catch because the catching is so challenging. After I stepped into the stream and said my prayer, I stripped some line and make my first cast.

Before my fly hit the water, all hell broke loose. It was manna from heaven or maybe from the trout stocking truck parked on the bridge. The next two minutes or so my full attention was directed toward trout and water falling from heaven, or at least from the deck of

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Fishing for Trout

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the bridge. These fish were so stunned that they weren't interested in most flies that I put in front of them. Every step I took resulted in eight or ten brown trout splaying out like fireworks.

Right on schedule, these fish were looking for something to eat about 30 minutes later. Any black or orange colored fly produced a fish on the end of my line and eventually in my



Photo by Phil Pursley

net. After fishing for a couple of hours my tally was 51 fish in the net. All were gently released as my gift to the next fisherman. Normally, I don't keep a tally of my fish once the number gets above 10. Somehow, I knew today was different, so why 51 fish rather than 50? I simply wanted to be able to say I caught over 50 fish.

My trip home was a little later than I had planned. However, the 23 mile trip to my garage from Brookville sure seemed shorter than the trip from my garage to Brookville.

VIRUS DIARY: On a river, with rod and reel, he finds peace

By Rob Jagodzinski

ROSCOE, N.Y. (AP) — The Catskills village that calls itself “Trout Town USA” is all but a ghost town this spring.



Fishing shops in Roscoe, New York, that should be overflowing with anglers are empty, due to the coronavirus outbreak. Guide services are idled, since they are nonessential businesses.

Yet the region's famed rivers remain open, mercifully.

Like many who love the outdoors, I've been pinned down lately by stay-at-home

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Virus Diary

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guidance along with work, house chores and storms that have struck during days off. When I finally see a one-day window of clear weather, I leap through it.

I have always found spiritual connections in rivers. As a child in Erie, Pennsylvania, I caught chubs and suckers in a polluted creek down the block. Later there were trips with my older brother for Allegheny Mountain brook trout. During Army tours, I caught golden trout in the Sierra snowmelt, and rainbows in brawling Alaskan waters.

There's a tune by "The Band" entitled "The River Hymn," a gospel reverie:

"The voice of the rapids will echo

And ricochet like an old
water well

Who'd ever want to let go

Once you sit beneath its
spell"

It's noon when I park at the trailhead of a hike-in Catskills fishing spot. There's not another soul. Social distancing will be easy. I head down the path under vaulting blue skies, and tranquility enters.



Trailhead in the Catskills

When I arrive at the shore, the river is high, cold and discolored from a storm. Mayflies hatch on the water and drift on the breeze, but no trout rise.

I rig up anyway and cast a dry fly, a bit of fur and feathers resembling natural bugs

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Virus Diary

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that trout eat. I cast for hours. Nothing.

Hope springs, so I tie on fly after oddball fly. Beadhead stone nymphs, partridge-and-orange wets, zonker streamers that mimic baitfish. If I had a Rat-Faced McDougal, I would throw it.

Nothing. The fish have lockjaw.



Mayfly hatch on a Catskill's river

Out here in the woods, there is at least one reminder of the virus: This river is on a local airport's approach path. Normally, commuter planes and military transports sometimes break the spell. Now the skies are still, no contrails, only mare's tails.

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Virus Diary

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It's evening, the breeze has died. Mayflies fill the amber air.

The river has pitched a shut-out. The wise angler says catching trout is icing on the cake – the river is joy enough. Fact is, getting skunked hurts.

I break down my rod, kick off my waders.

I hear the sound my ears have been tuned for: a trout sipping mayflies.

I spot the rings of the rise that blossom in the evening current. The fish rises again. Shivering, I pull clammy waders back on, re-string my rod, knot on a fly.

I get into casting position, one suspender trailing, cold water slopping over my waders.

My achy shoulder balks. The line snags a branch and the fly snaps off. I grumble, tie on another.

I get a drift over the rise and this time the trout inhales. My brain catches fire.

The rod comes alive, the reel ratchets and the fish dives. It leaps, droplets spray.



Brown Trout sipping mayflies

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Virus Diary

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I gain line and the trout tires. I net it.

It's a wild brown, maybe 15 inches, silver sides flecked with black specks and faint red embers. I snap a photo and release it to become part of the river again.



A few more trout rise. I wade to shore and listen as I pack up at dark. All around, day creatures find shelter as night creatures stir. A beaver glides to its lodge. Wood ducks wing to nest. An owl calls, “who-cooks-for-you.” The current whispers.

That’s the river hymn.

“Virus Diary,” an occasional feature, showcases the coronavirus saga through the eyes of Associated Press journalists around the world. Rob Jagodzinski works on the Nerve Center at AP headquarters in New York.

Smaller and Quieter May Be Better

By Skip Morris

In the low, clear flows of summer rivers, smallmouth bass can turn difficult. This is especially true if the water is clear and smooth, as in a pool. Under these conditions I try a series of tactics. Sometimes one or more of them work, sometimes none of them work. One that can work is going small.



Art by Carol Ann Morris

A fly tied on a size 12, 1X long hook is small for smallmouth bass—especially alongside a size 6 Clouser Minnow, a more typical river-smallmouth fly. But I've gone down to size 12, to 16, even to size 20 flies on occasion. The bass insisted.

I've drifted and twitched a size 18 nymph eight feet down to move smallmouths that refused all else. It was around the time I first got serious—if, in fact, fishing is ever

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Smaller and Quieter May Be Better

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supposed to be serious—about understanding river smallmouth bass, about three decades ago. There they were: at least a dozen smallies of around 10 to perhaps 15 inches, holding deep in a clear run of Oregon's lower Umpqua River. I figured, So long as I stay out of sight, this should go well. It didn't.

I stayed low but could see the fish holding down among small boulders. First, I tossed a Clouser Minnow up-stream, let it sink, and then jiggled it up to them. A few moved over to give it a look, but



that was all. I drifted a big stonefly-nymph imitation through them, tugging it to make its rubber-strand legs quiver. More looks, no takers. I started working down through various weighted nymphs. Refusal, refusal, refusal....

Finally, I was down to the smallest nymph in my smallmouth boxes: a size 18 Chironomid-pupa fly with a tiny metal bead for a thorax. I tied it on and gave it a fling. By now I knew the run; I got the fly down with the smallies on the first try. My hope was nearly gone. The tiny nymph seemed entirely inadequate for crayfish-crunching minnow-chasing smallmouth bass of respectable size.

Five of the smallies let the current carry them downstream with the fly, soon surrounding it and still drifting. They'd followed other flies already, but this had the look of more commitment than I'd yet seen. I dared to hope. I gave the dinky nymph the gentlest of twitches. Then one of the bass lurched at it with an open mouth and I

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Smaller and Quieter May Be Better

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set. How can I tell you how gratifying the surging weight on my line felt?

I hooked three or four more on the dinky nymph before the smallies wised up.

It was as close to laboratory conditions as my fishing gets. A controlled (in the scientific-research sense) group of fish, controlled conditions, repeated testing through diminishing hook sizes. Seemed as clear to me then as it does now that those bass



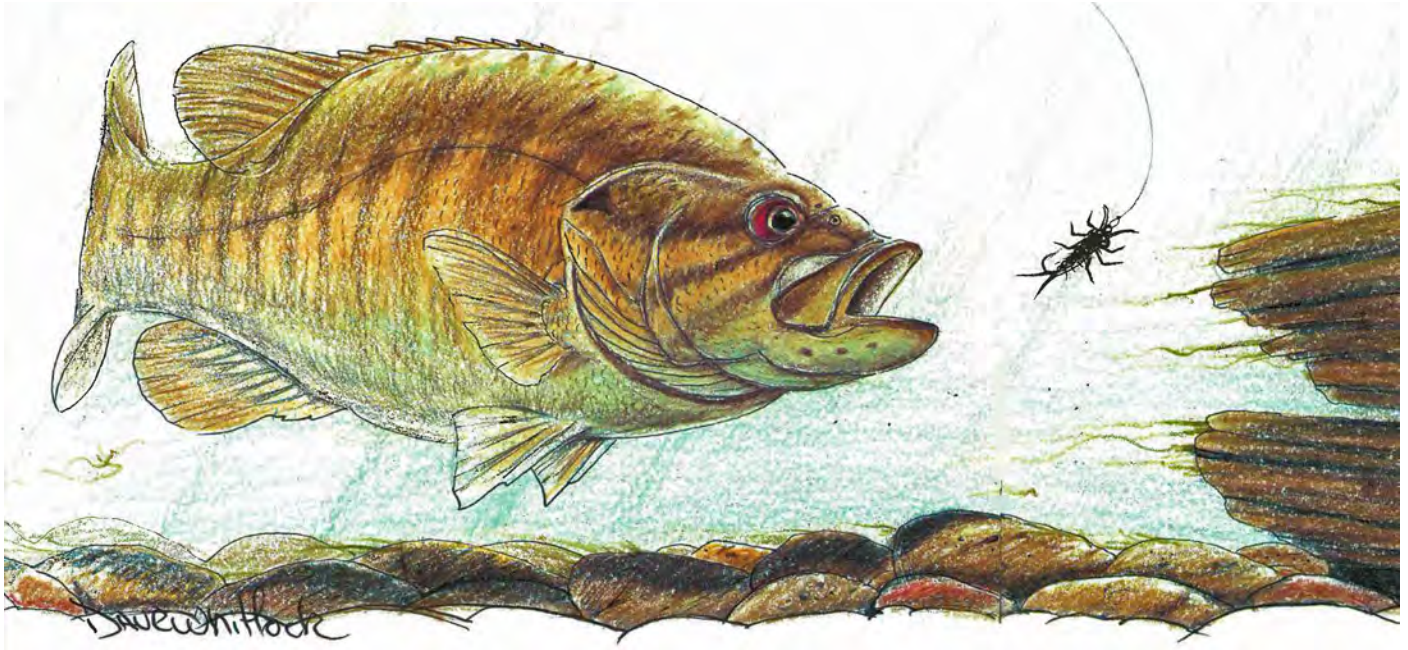
wouldn't have budged had I not shown them my size 18 fly.

One morning on an August river, another river winding clear between desert bluffs, I watched smallmouth rise as gently as lazy trout to a fall of tiny Tricorythodes may-fly spinners. That took me a while to comprehend—bass sipping Trico spinners? No. . .really? The closest fly I had was a Griffith's Gnat, or maybe a tiny ant dry fly—I'm uncertain now—but I do recall that it was a size 20. Should have been a 22, but why

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Smaller and Quieter May Be Better

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quibble? I was lucky to have anything under a 14 on me for a strictly smallmouth trip, so the tiny fly brought a sigh of relief when I found it nearly hidden in a tangle of much larger flies.

It worked. Presented dead drift to rising smallmouths it took me several fish that were just big enough to be fun. I'd taken smallmouth on dry flies during hatches before, but I'd never imagined a smallmouth big enough to put a respectable bend in a six-weight rod would come to a size 20.

Look, I'm not suggesting you pack all your trout-fly boxes along to summer smallmouth rivers. Only that you bring a few varied small-to-tiny nymphs and dry flies and emerger-flies with you, and that you consider them if all else fails.

Going to a smaller fly when fish aren't responding isn't a new idea; it's just a good one that needs an occasional mention for the enlightenment of the newcomer and a reminder for the old hand. And—lo and behold!—it can even apply to smallmouth bass.

A Case for Glass

FIBERGLASS MAY NOT BE FAST ACTION, BUT THAT SERVES WELL IN MANY SITUATIONS

By Alex Stidham

Headed back from a recent fishing trip, I decided to hit a local fly shop and replenish my gear. The usual— two extra spools of tippet, an improved tippet spool holder, and anything else I couldn't live without. As I looked around the shop, I was drawn to a row of conspicuous, brightly colored red, white, green, and blue rods, standing as harbingers of what I believe to be a growing revival in fly fishing: fiberglass. Not the usual rod thrown in among the graphite legions, but a legitimate selection of glass.

Ever since glass was introduced, people have fished it; but its slow, laid-back subtlety was all but replaced by graphite's fast, aggressive, modern performance. Somewhere along the way, anglers realized glass had something to offer that graphite couldn't afford. Hence, over the past decade, glass has slowly crept its way back to the water.



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If you want the fastest, most accurate rod to achieve the greatest casting distance and precision landings, fiberglass isn't your material. If you want something super-sensitive and crazy strong, glass is worth a second look. It gives me everything I want. Here's why.

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A Case for Glass

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Most glass junkies prefer these rods for the connection they feel to the fish. The slower, more progressive action of a glass rod lets you feel the subtleties of a fight. Rather than being dampened by stiff material and a fast recovery, every move a fish makes is felt through the length of the rod and into your arm. Fighting a fish with glass is a more tactile, sensory experience, providing an almost intimate connection with your quarry.

An angler battles a snook on a fiber-glass rod in Everglades National Park. Photo by Ian Lowery

Another benefit touted by glass anglers is versatility. Glass allows for a wider range of usable line weights, and ultimately a wider range of flies and techniques you can employ



with a single rod. A few modifications to the length of the casting stroke make it easy to delicately present dry flies one minute, then swing heavy sinking tips the next. My go-to, all-purpose trout stick is a modern glass, 8-foot-6-inch 6/7 weight. I can handily switch between presenting dry flies, pulling streamers on a sinking tip, casting a full sinking line, and dredging heavy multi-nymph setups under an indicator. Because there is so much action in the rod, I can have fun catching enthusiastic little brook trout or a chromebright steelhead, all with the same stick.

The most tangible benefit of glass is tippet protection. The deep bend of glass is like a built-in shock absorber. This protects light tippet during the hook set and initial

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A Case for Glass

(Continued from page 30)

run. Anyone who enjoys large fish on spring creeks, such as the Henry's Fork or Silver Creek, or likes to throw small flies to big fish on massive, flat-surfaced tailwaters should at least consider glass as an option.



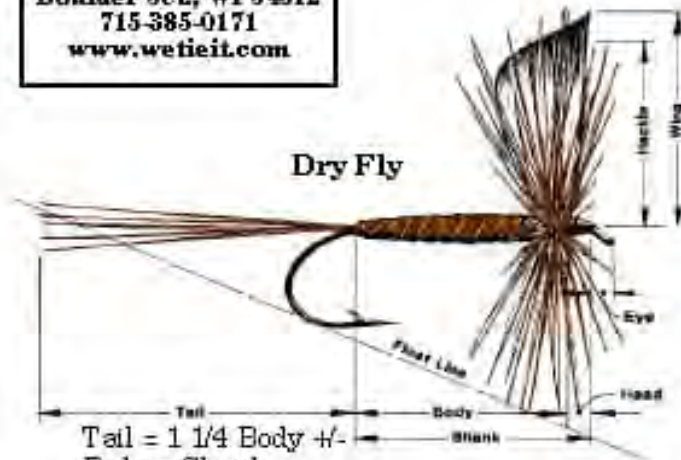
A demand for glass has carried over into the two-hand world as well. Several companies offer switch and Spey rods built with modern glass in modern tapers. The fast- or extra-fast-action graphite rods deliver a lot of power and precision, but they also demand a substantial amount of resistance to load and cast. Poor timing, an ill-formed D loop, or a less-than-straight-line path on a heavy rod leads to little more than frustration. With a slower, softer action that is easier to load, timing and form are less critical. Beginners are able to move slowly through the casting stroke, and feel the rod load.

While glass may not be everyone's final answer, it has a place in my quiver. Simply put, glass is a joy to fish and I prefer the connection to fish it gives me, something I can't experience any other way.

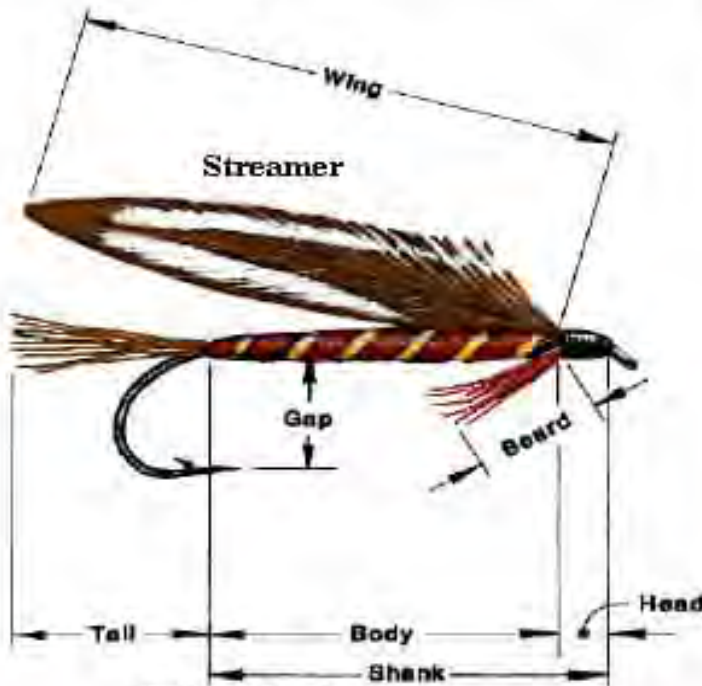
From Joel Stansbury

Hook & Fly Proportions:

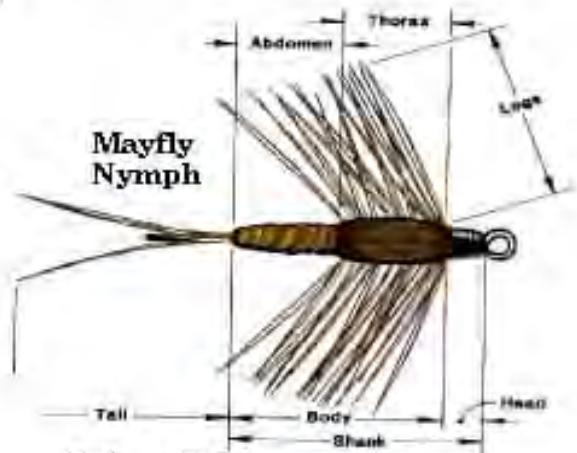
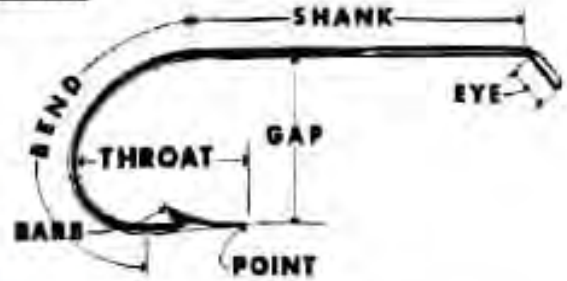
Bill Sherer's
We Tie It Fly Shop
P.O. Box 516
Boulder Jct., WI 54512
715-385-0171
www.wetieit.com



Tail = $1 \frac{1}{4}$ Body +/-
Body = Shank
Wing = Shank
Hackle = $\frac{3}{4}$ Body +/- or $1 \frac{1}{2}$ Gap +/-
Head = 2X Eye



Tail = $\frac{1}{2}$ Body +/-
Body = Shank
Beard = Gap
Wing = Tail + Body or $1 \frac{1}{2}$ Shank
Head = 2X Eye



Tail = Body
Body = Shank
= $\frac{2}{3}$ Abdomen & $\frac{1}{3}$ Thorax
Legs = $\frac{3}{4}$ Body (max.)
Head = 2X Eye



Tail = Body
Body = Shank
Beard = $\frac{3}{4}$ Body +/-
Wing = Hook
Head = 2X Eye

Rob's Steroid Sally

By Rob Fightmaster

Little Yellow Sally stoneflies are one of the most prolific hatches in the Smoky Mountains. Most years, we begin seeing the first ones around mid April and they tend to hang around until sometime in July. They're small, dainty and bright, usually a bright yellow to sometimes chartreuse color.

For years I tied and fished very exact imitations of these bugs, and I still do on more heavily fished rivers where fish seem to be a little pickier. But those smaller, more delicate versions are harder to see on the water and they have a tendency to sink in faster currents. Both of those features can spell trouble, or at least frustration, when guiding a beginner angler.

As a fisherman and especially as a guide, I like simplicity and versatility. The more variables I can remove from a situation (like a sinking dry fly), the better I can put clients in a position for success. Additionally, in many of the backcountry streams in the Smokies, the fish are not overly particular on fly patterns. Not spooking them and getting a good drift will

usually produce strikes more than fly pattern. But if you can have a fly that is at least in the same ballpark of color, profile and/or size as the naturals, you'll stack the deck even more in your favor.

So a few years ago, I began creating a fly that would be highly visible, extremely buoyant, durable and at least vaguely suggesting a Yellow Sally. I ended up with a beefy foam bug about two sizes bigger than a typical Yellow



Little Yellow Sally



Steroid Sally Profile

(Continued on page 34)

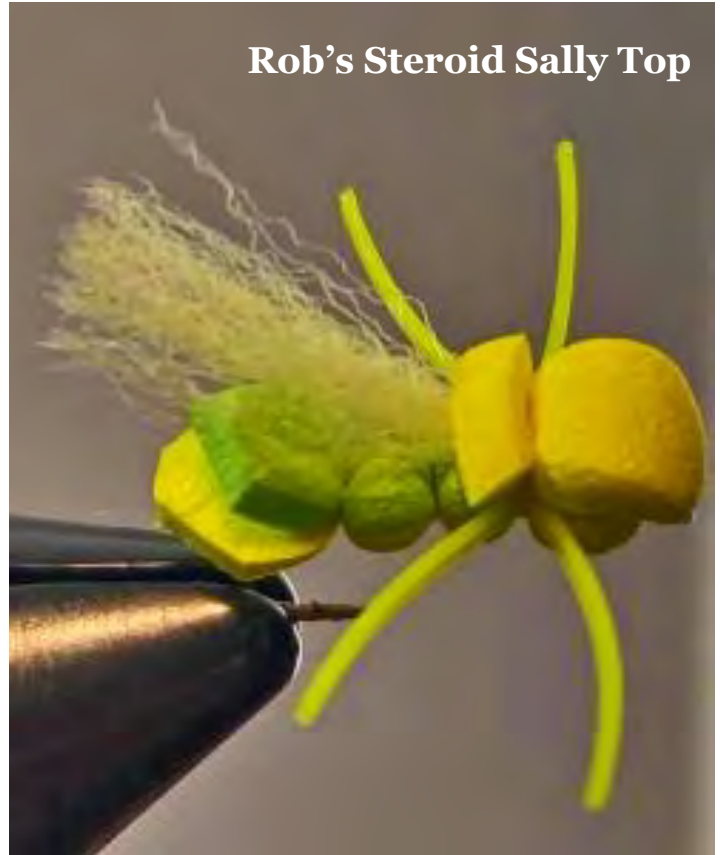
Rob's Steroid Sally

(Continued from page 33)

Sally – hence the name “Steroid Sally.” And if I’m being totally honest, I designed it more as something to support a dropper nymph than a dry fly to cast to rising trout. It would basically be an edible strike indicator. But you guessed it... the trout loved it.

Though no dry fly is totally unsinkable, this one is probably the closest I’ve found, at least in the smaller, trout fly category. It has become a go-to dry fly for me from late spring through early fall. And while yellow is still my favorite color, variations in orange, tan and lime green have also been very productive.

It has quickly become the most frequently requested fly for the custom tying orders I do in the winter. Give me a shout if you want some or check out the recipe below if you want to tie some for yourself.



Rob's Steroid Sally

Hook: 3XL Dry Fly #12

Thread: 8/0 Yellow

Lower Body & Head: 2mm yellow foam

Top Body: 2mm lime green foam

Wing: Yellow floating poly-yarn

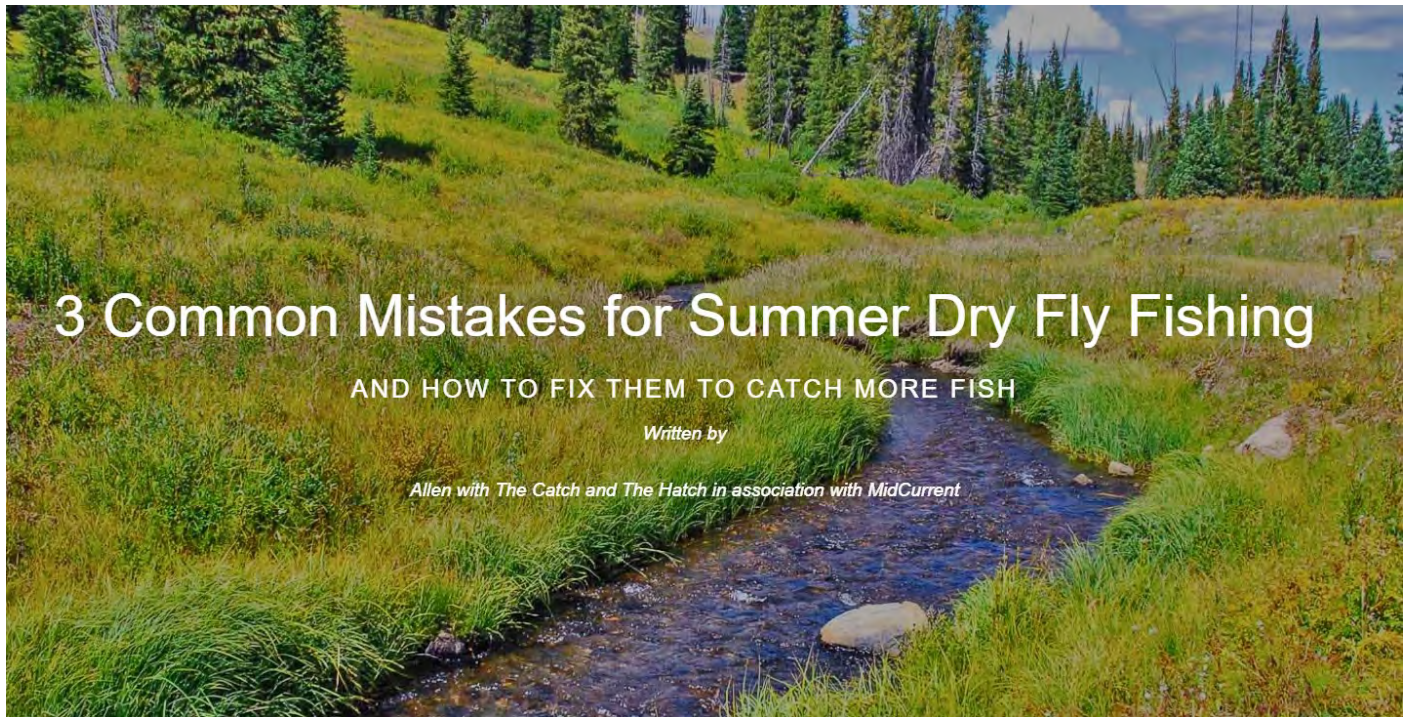
Legs: Small round rubber, yellow



Join fly fishing, casting, and tying experts every week for entertaining and instructive live online discussions and fly fishing talk. Click [HERE](#) to view previously recorded webcasts.

Here are some samples of topics covered:

- CONSERVATION CONVERSATION WITH JASON ULSETH
- CAMEROON - THE FINAL FLY FISHING FRONTIER
- MENTAL PREPARATION FOR FLY FISHING SUCCESS
- BE AN ARCHER WITH YOUR CAST W/ MOLLY SEMENIK
- BIG FISH AT OUR BACK DOOR - CANADA
- CONSERVATION CONVERSATION WITH DR. RICHARD WILLIAMS
- CONSERVATION CONVERSATION WITH SPENCER SHAVER
- ANAA ATOLL - SALTWATER FLY FISHING IN FRENCH POLYNESIA
- SOFT HACKLES FOR PAN FISH: A COVID CONFIDENTIAL
- THE MYSTERY OF THE UNDISCOVERED KEYS BONEFISH SPAWNING GROUNDS



3 Common Mistakes for Summer Dry Fly Fishing

AND HOW TO FIX THEM TO CATCH MORE FISH

Written by

Allen with The Catch and The Hatch in association with MidCurrent

Summer dry fly fishing is what most fly fishers look forward to the most out of any time of the year fly fishing. The weather is warm, water is cold and bugs of nearly every kind are out on the water with hungry trout actively feeding on them. There is often nothing more rewarding than catching fish during the summer on dry flies, but over the years fishing with friends and analyzing my own actions, I've found that we make some very common and critical mistakes that keeps us from getting the most out of the summer months on dry flies.

We're going to go over three of the most common mistakes that fly fishermen make when the temps go up and dry flies come out. Then we'll discuss in each mistake, what you should do so you can catch more fish on your next fly fishing adventure.

Click [HERE](#) to take a close look at the pointers.

The Creel

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Editor: Tim Guilfoile tim@nkff.org

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