

Newsletter March 2020

President's Message

I just saw this and thought I'd share it: "As restaurants and stores temporarily close or restrict hours, it's important to remember that fishing remains open for business. As we all work together (by staying apart) to help slow the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19), we can still find solace and escape by finding time to make a few casts".

Through this crisis you need to be able to use fly fishing as a mechanism to help find mental peace and health. The act of standing in a river, pond or beach and casting a fly is a meaningful activity.

With the unbelievable warmish weather, I have been out a couple of times practicing my casting and trying to convince a fish to take my fly. But, no fish around even though the Mass trout stocking program is under way. I don't feel bad when even the spin and bait guys aren't catching either. So, how long does it take a stocky to get acclimated to its new environment and feed on my flies or at least show some interest.

If you missed the last meeting, you missed a great tying presentation by Joe Cordeiro on "Fishing the Estuaries and the flies to use". We learned about shrimp and crab flies and how to use them. I don't know anyone who didn't enjoy it.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has put a damper on a lot of plans for get-togethers. I am hoping that we can get back to "normal" in a short time.

Stay Tuned for upcoming fishing trips for both fresh and salt. There are some in the plan but as you know current situations make planning for group meetings difficult. As soon as we are able to, we will send out email notices. So keep a lookout for them.

We are always looking for ideas and new members. Invite someone you know or don't know, who might be interested in fly fishing, to a meeting. At the meetings voice your opinions, we need your input, this is your club. Even if you cannot make the meetings, we are very interested in hearing your thoughts and ideas as well.

On that note of your voice being heard, we were going to hold elections on our March 24th meeting but... So, if you want a change now is your chance to vote for someone new (at our next to-be-determined meeting date).

Tight Lines & Be Safe,
Ed



"The Last Trout"
TROUT FISHING "SOCIAL DISTANCING"

ATTENTION: ALL MEMBERS
The upcoming meeting scheduled for Tuesday
March 24, 2020
HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO THE
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK

To Occupy Your Idle-Time

Lots of Good Reading JUMBO ISSUE

- *A big story on Nymphs & Jig Hooks*
- *Another article on Matching the Hatch*
- *Updated Fishing Regulations*
- *A Celebration of Fly Tying Season*

The Bulletin Board

Crossroads Speaker & Events Series

March 24th:

CANCELLED!!

Ray Stachelek, Cast-A-Fly Charters, Presenting and tying a few of his favorite flies.

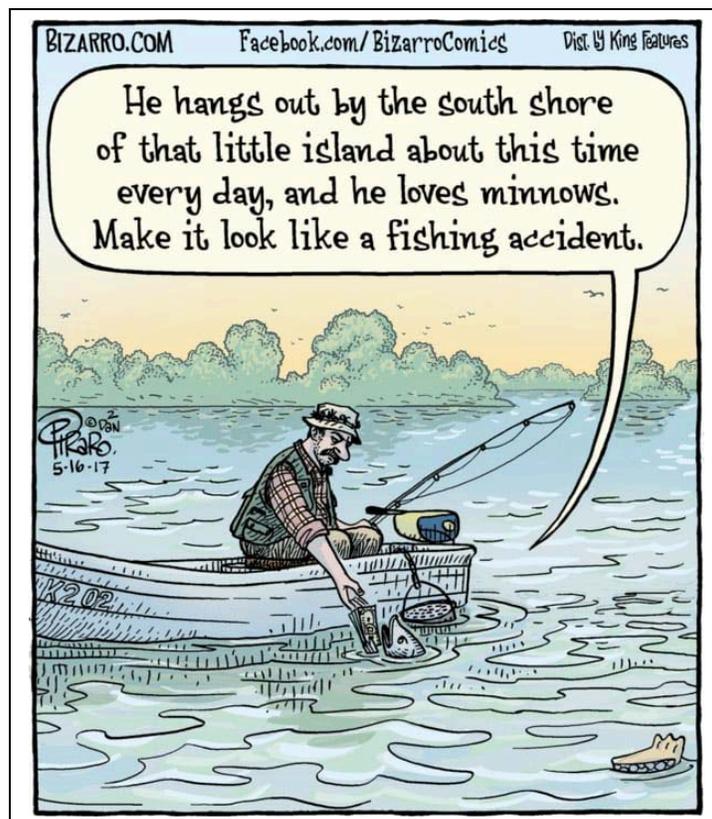
April 28rd:

Ken Elmer, Fly Tier and Guide, will be presenting on Central/Western MA rivers and will do a fly-tying demo beforehand featuring some of his “hot” flies.

May 26th:

BBQ Picnic Time!!

We are in the process of talking with some individuals to do a presentation—more info to come.



Nymph Hook Inversion — And the Myth of the Jig Hook

by [Domenick Swentosky](#) | Mar 15, 2020 | (courtesy of Ed Rosenbloom)

You probably make a lot of assumptions. Me too. And though we all understand the folly of assuming things, life isn't long enough to track down and test every piece of knowledge for ourselves. So we collect information, we discard it, or we add it to our reservoir of accepted facts. As anglers, this trouble gets worse. Since you don't get enough time on the water, you can't test every line, leader, rod or fly against all the others. So in the fly fishing world, misconceptions and misunderstandings grow quickly. And here's one that might blow your mind . . .

You don't need a jig hook to invert the nymph. In fact almost all nymphs invert, especially when weighted with a bead or lead. Furthermore, nymphs built on a jig hook probably aren't inverting the way you imagine. And how you attach the knot is much more important than the hook itself.

This is what most of us think a jig hook looks like under the water.



That's what I thought too. But about ten years ago, right when the popularity of jig hooks for nymphs took off, I did some simple tests to understand hook orientation below the surface. I've since repeated the test two times in the last decade. So I've learned a lot about what really makes a hook invert, how it suspends under tension and how it falls through the water column.

I'll share all of that below. And I'll offer this disclaimer: I've tested many hooks, beads and flies — but certainly not all of them. I'm absolutely open to the possibility that my conclusions may not apply to every hook and weight scenario out there. But I promise you, after dunking hundreds of hooks into a fish bowl, I'm no longer surprised. The results are predictable.

About the Testing

Seeing is believing. So I've documented every claim and conclusion below, showing you, through pictures, what I've discovered.

For the sake of continuity, every hook is a #14. I assure you, I ran the tests from #8 to #18 in each style, and the results are the same. Behind bead head flies, I added lead wraps of .015” to about mid-shank and covered that with a simple thread body. I’ve learned that whatever materials of dubbing or legs are added to the fly don’t matter much. The orientation is largely determined by the hook, the weight and the attachment angle of the tippet.

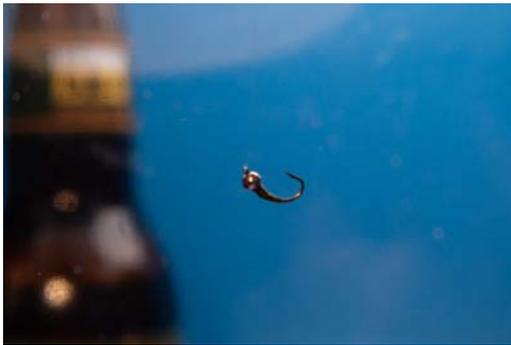
My gear list is as follows: 6X fluorocarbon tippet, a glass fish bowl, some mediocre lighting and a Bells Two Hearted Ale (. . .or three).

They All Invert

I ran this test a decade ago, and here’s what stunned me: All of the weighted flies in my box already invert. Meaning, the flies ride hook point up and not hook point down.

We most often see flies pictured in a vise, a catalog or a video with the hook point down and the shank horizontal, so that’s naturally how we assume they drift in the water. They don’t.

Every fly with a bead head inverts, brass or tungsten. And every fly with built in lead-wraps on the shank inverts also. They all lay back instead of lean forward.



Scud Hook



Standard 2XL Nymph Hook. (Also notice the attachment angle — More on that below)



Tactical with wide gap. No weight. Yes, even without a bead or weight, most hooks invert.

The unweighted flies are different. The orientation of an unweighted fly (like the last picture, above) is strongly influenced by the attachment angle of the tippet.

Let's address that next . . .

Attachment Angle

The first time I did this test, I missed how critical the angle of tippet to the fly really is. And I've since come to understand that it's the biggest factor.

I'm talking about the way the line comes off the fly. What is its angle in relation to the shank? Standing in the river, as we knot the tippet to the fly, we control this angle. Great. So if you like, you can very well make your jig nymph ride with the shank nearly horizontal (as in the first picture of the jig hook, or the 2XL standard hook two pictures up).

But how long does the attachment remain at that angle? The first time you touch bottom and tug a bit, the line angle changes to a more natural one — pulling directly away from the bend. Likewise, I believe the very act of casting creates the same look. I've been aware of this for many years, and I've often noted that the angle of the line coming off the fly always ends up the same, once the fly is fished for a while.

In short, you have very little control over the attachment angle. You may start with the tippet coming off at a right angle to the shank, forcing a more horizontal angle to the fly, but sooner than later the knot slips into its average position and the hook orients as it will.



Here's a jig hook with the tippet attachment forced to sit near the top. The fly almost lays back.



And here's a jig hook with the tippet attachment pulled around to sit where it usually ends up (in line with the shank). The fly is still inverted, but hangs more vertically than horizontally.



The same can be demonstrated with non-jig hooks. Here the knot is forced toward the top of the hook and the fly rides close to horizontal. But, remember, it will not stay there.



This is closer to a more natural position for the knot. And the fly hangs a bit more vertically.

Again, realize that the tippet attachment angle cannot be controlled for very long. The knot will slide into its average position soon enough.

Also realize that every one of these hooks invert. All of them. Not just the jig hooks.

Suspending vs Drifting vs Dropping

The pics above show what a suspended nymph looks like. So, on the river, this is how flies appear on a tight line.

But good nymphing is really about slipping in and out of contact. That's where the magic happens. And there are moments throughout a good drift where the fly is either gliding or dropping, uninfluenced by the attached tippet.

So, what do all these flies look like under the water? Does a jig hook make any difference?

[READ: Troutbitten | Tight Lining — Not All That Tight](#)

In short, no. All the flies featured above perform the same way. If allowed to drop, the head tilts down more, and the nymph flattens out. Or, the hook may tilt and drop with the head down and hook bend up (if the head is heavy enough).

Lastly, when allowed to rest on the bottom, all of the hooks pictured above settle with the hook inverted. There is virtually no difference in how a jig fly drops versus a standard fly. Ditto how it rests on the bottom.



The 2XL Nymph hook resting on the bottom of the fish bowl



Tactical wide gap hook on the bottom. Same as a jig hook.



Even the unbeaded fly lands with the bend first.

Mixed Currents and Things

Does any of this really matter, considering where most of us fish nymphs? In roiling, mixed currents our nymphs likely get turned around and flipped a good bit — especially smaller and lighter ones. But I suspect that most of the time, in a tight line system especially, all of these nymphs ride inverted, as that is their default position. They may be flipped and turned sideways, but gravity pulls them back into their natural position. And the less the currents *are* mixed, the more stable the nymph rides. That only makes sense.

But does it matter?

First, I don't think trout care one bit if our nymphs ride upside down or right side up. Second, I never found that jig hooks hang up less than my standard hooks — and that's why I did this test in the first place. While nymphing, I'm trying to *avoid* touching the riverbed. And it turns out that when I do tick the bottom with my flies, all of them are inverted anyway, regardless of whether they're on a jig hook or not.

[READ: Troutbitten | Forget the Bottom — Glide Nymphs Through the Strike Zone](#)

Also, the recently popular “inverting” tungsten beads don't change anything. They simply force a little more weight to the top of the head. So on the drop, the nymph's head may angle down a bit more than with a standard bead. But remember, the fly is *already* inverted with a regular bead. So the “inverting” beads are simply not necessary.

Real World

Here's a series featuring [some of my favorite nymphs](#), suspended in the fishbowl. In each picture, the attachment angle is set to average or default — meaning, this is how the nymph really rides after a few casts and drifts.



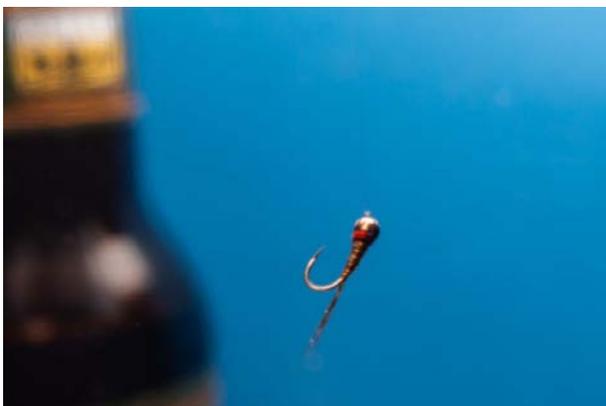
Walt's Worm on a 2XL Nymph Hook



France Fly on a Scud Hook



Polish Woven Nymph on a Scud Hook



Peridigon on a Tactical Wide Gap



Bread-n-Butter on a jig hook

Streamers are Different

Here's one more thing: Streamers on a jig hook really are different. When the weight of the jig head is enough (around 1/32 of an ounce), a near horizontal suspension angle becomes closer to the norm. Attachment angle still matters, but the head usually balances out the streamer on the hang. Adding to that, the rest of the materials on a streamer tend to be more neutrally buoyant or even float a bit, so an angle close to horizontal becomes standard on a jig streamer.

Me and You

None of this may matter to you one bit. And again, I don't think the trout care much either. But I meet a lot of anglers who are convinced that by using jig hooks, their nymphs are fishing differently. As I've shown above, I believe they are not.

I use jig hooks for a couple of my favorite patterns. On my [Bread-n-Butter nymph](#), for example, I tied it first on a jig hook, because at the time, they were the only hooks readily available with a black finish and an extra long, sharp point in a strong wire. So I still tie the Bread-n-Butter on a jig hook because I have a stockpile of hooks. But now that tactical hooks are more readily available in other styles, I prefer the non-jig versions, as the gap is more open. (The hook eye blocks part of the gap on a jig hook.)

Lastly, If you don't believe my conclusions, I encourage you to borrow the glass home of your kid's goldfish for a few hours, and have a go at it yourself. Keep an open mind, and document what you discover. In the end, everything learned makes you a better angler.

Fish hard, friends.

Enjoy the day.

Domenick Swentosky

TROUTBITTEN

domenick@troutbitten.com

Captain Ray's Guided Charter Trip Raffle

Have you been dreaming of catching that fish of a lifetime?

Now is your chance!

You could be the winner of a trip with Captain Ray Stachelek



Tickets for Capt Ray's guided trip Raffle are NOW Available. Ask any board member. They are \$15.00 a ticket. Or 2 tickets of \$25.00.

Drawing will be for 1 raffle winner with 1 or 2 guests. Don't forget to ask your fishing buddies if they'd like to purchase tickets too!

The trip includes 8 hours of fly or spin fishing with Captain Ray Stachelek in Rhode Island.



This is the best investment you can make to have a guided saltwater trip. So Pa-Leeze buy your tickets early. Only 75 tickets will be sold!!

For more info on the Captain go to: www.castaflycharters.com

“Chuggin’ The Moodah Poodah”

By: [Chester Allen](#) (courtesy of Mid-Current FlyFishing News)

There are two schools of fly anglers: Those that believe in matching the hatch — and those that worship the weird and wonderful.

The hatch matchers are usually serious trout anglers. They carry flies tied to imitate a specific bug at a specific moment in its life. These anglers carry boxes crammed with flies that imitate hatching bugs, egg-laying bugs, larval bugs, almost-dead bugs, long-dead bugs and bugs caught in the middle of life and death.

The weird and wonderful anglers are often bass addicts — or the mossy-backed, always-damp steelhead maniacs. A well-made bass popper looks like something from a 1950s comic book about evil invaders from space.

And the modern school of steelhead flies — with snaky, articulated shanks festooned with long hackles and dangly, wiggly legs — look like the creepy, fanged fish that prowl the darkest depths of the ocean.

I attend both schools, but I’m more of a hatch matcher when it comes to picky, wild trout, which are my favorite fish to pester. Nothing beats kneeling in shallow water and dropping a size 18 Pale Morning Sparkle Dun to a picky brown trout feeding on size 18 Pale Morning Duns.

But then came the Moodah Poodah.

What the Hell?

I discovered the Moodah Poodah — or did it discover me? — while rummaging through the fly bins at Blue Ribbon Flies in West Yellowstone, Montana. This shop is the cutting edge of hatch-matching trout fly design, and I shamelessly copy their creations.

The Moodah Poodah, a wild mixture of foam, rubber legs and synthetic yarn, almost jumped out of the bin into my hand.

“What is this thing?” I asked Katherine Robinson, one of the shop gurus.

“It’s a Moodah Poodah, and it works,” she said. “It could be a hopper, a beetle, a moth — lots of buggy things.”

I looked at the fly, which actually was invented in the trout-addled minds at FlyFishFood.com. It seems certain that certain herbs were smoked — or very rusty water sipped — when this fly was born.

Then again, I recalled finding the Chaos Hopper in a Blue Ribbon Flies bin years and years ago. The Chaos Hopper imitates a grasshopper all right — as seen through the fevered mind of Salvador Dali. On the water, the Chaos Hopper floats and wiggles like the real thing, and the sparse foam body bobs through choppy water, even after several fish chewings.

So, why not the Moodah Poodah?

Welcome to the Machine

I bought Moodah Poodahs in tan and screaming purple — if you can't run with the craziness, don't bother. Twenty minutes later, I was waded up on the banks of the Madison River in Yellowstone National Park.

It was a blustery mid-September afternoon, and Yellowstone National Park was just coming off the peak of one most glorious grasshopper infestations in years. The meadows were alive with hoppers from late summer on — in some places, it looked like the ground was moving — and the trout dialed into them fast and often.

Trouble was, the peak catching was probably a couple weeks earlier. Some really good fly anglers haunt the Madison, and they know what to do during hopper season. By now, most of the trout in the river — mostly resident fish, with a few early fall runner browns and rainbows — had gotten a crash course in modern hopper design for days on end.

Still, the warm wind gusted though the grass, so why not try to find a slow learner? I sat on the grassy bank and watched hoppers flush and clatter into the river. Little trout eagerly whacked the struggling bugs, but the larger fish rose slowly and closely examined the wiggling naturals.

They rejected most of the real bugs.

Sure, they wanted them, but they were wary.

After watching all this for a few minutes, I eased into the Madison and slowly minced my way through a maze of sunken weedbeds. My destination was a deep slot against the far bank, and the best way to fish it was to edge out just past the middle of the river and then use a downstream reach cast to plop the fly along the far bank.

Breaking Rules and Getting Lucky

A few years ago, this spot taught me a lot. The trout were used to feeling anglers stumbling up to the undercut bank and casting their hoppers and beetles upstream. I spooked more paranoid browns and rainbows than I fooled.

Actually, I didn't fool any fish. But I learned to sit, watch and think about things.

Then I tried slowly, slowly, slowly crawling my way through the tall grass to the undercut bank. I only scared the big fish when I did this.

Finally, I tried slowly wading to the middle of the river from the roadside bank, using the many weedbeds for cover. It takes about 20 minutes to wade 20 yards. I started hooking a few fish. On this day, I just hoped to see what one of the big browns would do at the sight of the Moodah Poodah.

My first cast plopped the fly about six inches from the trailing grass of the undercut. Nothing. The next cast caught on the grasses — and then slid off and into the current.

Suddenly, a big brown appeared under the fly. It was kind of like watching a ghost appear in a horror movie.

The trout backed down with the fly for a few seconds —and then sank into the green depths. I waited a couple of minutes and popped another cast in there. The fly slowly bounced downstream, as I fed line to stretch out the drift. I bungled one mend, and the fly dragged for a second or so before it went back to a dead drift. That second or two of drag made the fly dig into the current and then pop back, just like a little bluegill popper.

Then a big, spotted head appeared. When the head dropped back into the water, my fly was gone. I set the hook, and the trout dug for the undercut in flashes of buttery brown and yellow. The old Ross Gunnison buzzed as line vanished in lunging surges.

After some more tug and pull — which spooked other nice trout out of the hole — I slid the brown onto a semi-submerged weedbed for a quick photo. My heart rattled around in my chest. This was my first runner of the fall, and it came on a floating fly.

Riding That Little Chug

I wish I could tell you how clever I was, but most of this was sheer luck. Finding the Moodah Poodah, which was just weird enough — and new enough — to attract picky, fished-over trout was lucky. Being on Yellowstone's Madison River in the fall is always a lucky thing. And that little bit of accidental stop-and-go drag — kind of a chug — got that whacked-out fly quivering at just the right time.

I hit my favorite hopper/beetle spots on the Madison, Gibbon and Firehole rivers during the next few days, until a cold snap turned most of the hoppers into shriveled corpses.

I'm no genius, but I knew that little, ripply chug made the Moodah Poodah a living thing to some nice fish. I didn't wallop on the trout, but I caught enough nice fish — especially brown trout — on windy afternoons to make me really happy.

I also learned that the Firehole is growing some big browns these days. All it took was the Moodah Poodah, grass-rippling winds, sneaky wading, and a little bit of leg-wiggling drag. After a few days of this, I walked back into Blue Ribbon Flies and showed Katherine a couple photos.

"Moodah Poodah," she said. "Moodah Poodah."

THINGS TO DO
DURING THESE UPSIDE-DOWN TIMES

GO FISHING

(Keep "Social Distancing" in mind—so no less than 6 feet apart and no more than 10 flyfishermen at a time)

READ A GOOD (OR CRAPPY) BOOK

TIE FLIES
TIE FLIES
TIE FLIES

DON'T GET HYPNOTIZED AND DEPRESSED BY THE NEWS

TIE MORE FLIES
TIE MORE FLIES
TIE MORE FLIES

BUY (SEVERAL) BOTTLES OF TEQUILA—OR GIN, VODKA, JACK DANIELS, etc. (you get the idea....)

TIE FLIES TO INFINITY AND BEYOND

GO TO BED---☺



RECREATIONAL SALTWATER FISHING REGULATIONS



	Rhode Island	Connecticut	Massachusetts	New York
AMERICAN EEL	9" min • 25 fish no closed season	9" min • 25 fish no closed season	9" min • 25 fish no closed season	9" min • 25 fish no closed season
BLACK SEA BASS	15" min Jun 24 - Aug 31 • 3 fish Sep 1 - Dec 31 • 7 fish	15" min 5 fish May 19 - Dec 31	15" min 5 fish May 18 - Sept 8	15" min Jun 28-Aug 31 • 3 fish Sep 1 - Dec 31 • 7 fish
BLUEFISH	no min size • 3 fish no closed season (5 fish party/charter)	no min size • 3 fish (incl snappers) no closed season	no min size • 10 fish no closed season	no min size • 10 fish no closed season
COD	21" min • 10 fish no closed season	21" min • 10 fish no closed season	South & east of Cape Cod 21" min • 10 fish no closed season <i>*North of Cape see HADMP regs</i>	22" min • 10 fish no closed season
HADDOCK	18" min • no limit no closed season	18" min • no limit no closed season	South of Cape Cod 18" min • no limit no closed season	18" min • no limit no closed season
POLLOCK	19" min • no limit no closed season	19" min • no limit no closed season	no min size • no limit no closed season	19" min • no limit no closed season
SCUP <i>Porgy</i>	9" min • 30 fish no closed season <i>**See Special Shore below</i>	9" min • 30 fish Jan 1 to Dec 31 8" certain shore sites (charter rules differ)	9" min • 30 fish* April 13 to Dec 31 *max 150 fish per boat (charter rules differ)	9" min • 30 fish May 1 to Dec 31 (charter rules differ)
STRIPED BASS	1 fish • 28" - <35" slot no closed season 34" must have right pectoral fin removed	1 fish • 28" - <35" slot no closed season	1 fish • 28" - <35" slot no closed season	1 fish • 28" - <35" slot April 15 - Dec 15 <i>**special regs Hudson River, north of GW Bridge</i>
SUMMER FLOUNDER <i>Fluke</i>	May 1 - Dec 31 19" min • 6 fish <i>**See Special Shore below</i>	19" min • 4 fish May 4 - Sept 30 17" certain shore sites	17" min • 5 fish May 23 - Oct 9	19" min • 4 fish May 4 - Sept 30
TAUTOG	16" min Apr 15 to May 31 • 3 fish Jun 1 to Jul 31 • closed Aug 1 to Oct 14 • 3 fish Oct 15 to Dec 31 • 5 fish max 10 fish per boat	16" min Open seasons: Apr 1 - Apr 30 • 2 fish Jul 1 - Aug 31 • 2 fish Oct 10 - Nov 28 • 3 fish	16" minimum • 3 fish no closed season	<i>Long Island Sound</i> 16" min Apr 1-Apr 30 • 2 fish Oct 11-Dec 9 • 3 fish (<i>NY Bight differ</i>)
WEAKFISH <i>Squeteague</i>	16" min • 1 fish no closed season	16" min • 1 fish no closed season	16" min • 1 fish no closed season	16" min • 1 fish no closed season
WINTER FLOUNDER	12" min • 2 fish March 1 to Dec 31 <i>*All of Narragansett Bay, Potter Pond, Point Judith Pond and the Harbor of Refuge is closed to winter flounder fishing</i>	12" min • 2 fish April 1 to Dec 31	<i>North of Cape Cod</i> 12" min • 8 fish no closed season <i>South of Cape Cod</i> 12" min • 2 fish March 1 - Dec 31	12" min • 2 fish April 1 to May 30

Ri Special Shore Angling Sites (fluke and scup): India Point Park, Providence; Conimicut Park, Warwick; Rocky Point, Warwick; Stone Bridge, Tiverton; East and West Walls (Harbor of Refuge), Narragansett; Fort Wetherill, Jamestown; and Fort Adams, Newport

*Scup at Special Shore Angling Sites: Min. size 8". Total possession 30 fish/day.

**Summer Flounder at Special Shore Angling Sites: Min. size 17" (2 fish only). Total possession 6 fish; 2 may be 17", rest must be 19" and larger

It's time to celebrate fly tying season

By Bill May (courtesy of Carroll County Times, 01/26/20)

Mid-winter weather shuts down most of the fishing in our area. But there's good news: This is the heart of the fly tying season.

And this is not just the province of the trout guys. Mid-Atlantic tiers use flies for panfish, largemouth and smallmouth bass, pickerel, trout, carp, stripers, redfish, bluefish and other species. Besides building an inventory of effective fish catchers, with the attendant pleasures of taking fish with your own creations, fly tying can be a pleasant and relaxing activity in its own right.

Some of my fondest memories are of evenings in the finished basement of our house, converted to a hobby room where I worked at a fly tying desk, and my late wife, Carolyn was busy with a specialized sewing machine or hand sewing on quilts. She was an award winning quilter and president of The Faithful Circle Quilt Guild for several years until her death in 2015.

Cedric, our golden retriever, kept us company, though he mostly dozed. Carolyn and I often worked in silence, chatted occasionally and sometimes had music playing or the TV on if something special was happening. John Denver captured the spirit of these sessions in "Back Home Again" when he sang: "It's the sweetest thing I know of, just spending time with you."

I have a lifetime supply of Clouser Deep Minnows, Lefty's Deceivers and Boyd Pfeiffer pike flies among other patterns from these sessions. And an eternity of memories.

Years ago I went on several trips with Boyd Pfeiffer and learned to combine fly tying with the usual fish camp story telling sessions around the table after dinner. On a memorable sponsored writer's trip to Canada, Boyd and I tied 7- to 10-inch streamers of Boyd's design. Meanwhile, at the same table, award winning wildlife artist, Gerald Putt, worked on a finely detailed painting of a fisherman at a millstream.

All this occurred amidst the stories. When I asked Putt what about the phenomenon of the suffering artist, he replied, "That's bull****!" During the day Boyd and I cast those big flies with 8-weight rods and fast sinking lines, and the pike hammered those big flies.

When Ed Russell and I went to Alaska, I stayed in the lodge in the evenings tying cerise marabou and silver tinsel streamers, an idea I got from our guide, while I chatted with some of the Natives working at the lodge. Admittedly Ed and I had the best guide, but still I out-fished the entire camp catching leaping silver salmon with those flies.

So there can be a real social bonus along with the practical aspect to this activity. That's why a number of fly fishing clubs have member fly tying sessions. It's not only a chance to learn this skill as well as to share.

As for hearing old stories again, I defer to Tony Tochterman of Tochterman's Fishing Tackle. When a magazine interviewer asked if he got tired of hearing those same old stories from customers, Tony replied, "How often have you seen 'It's a Wonderful Life?'"

My favorite group is sponsored by Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, a highly successful national program helping to rehabilitate wounded service personnel and veterans. Larry Vawter has been leading sessions at Fort Meade for over 10 years. Fly tying (and rod building) and the camaraderie have proven beneficial to healing the traumas of military service. Similar sessions are also held at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda and at other locations.

See Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing at <https://projecthealingwaters.org>.

PHWFF also sponsors fly fishing outings. Perhaps the best review of PHWFF programs was given by the veteran who said, "The therapeutic effect is that it's not therapeutic." As the late fly fishing legend Lefty Kreh, observed, PHWFF has saved the lives and marriages of many veterans.

The following clubs [Editor's note: referenced groups are from Potomac Valley/Maryland area] all teach fly tying, have club tying sessions and organize fly fishing outings. All welcome beginners and can provide some materials and use of tools to tie with.

Some also donate flies to groups such as Heroes on the Water, an organization hosting kayak fishing trips for active military, veterans and first responders. Members and clubs also participate in programs for beginners and kids and with healing programs like Reel Recovery (weekend fly fishing outings for men with cancer) and Casting for Recovery (weekend fly fishing outings for women with breast cancer).

Potomac Valley Fly Fishers Club: <https://www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club/>.
Freestate Fly Fishers of Annapolis, Maryland: <http://fs-ff.com/>.
Potomac-Patuxent Chapter of Trout Unlimited: <https://www.pptu.org>.

There are plenty of books and websites teaching fly tying, too. Here is my list of simple, effective flies for beginners:

Soft hackles, size 12 to 16. Easy to tie, fun to fish, very effective for trout and bluegills – and sometimes bass.

Gurglers, size 10 to 3/0. Easy flies incorporating foam, good for everything from bluegills to big salt water fish.

Crossroads Anglers Newsletter March 2020

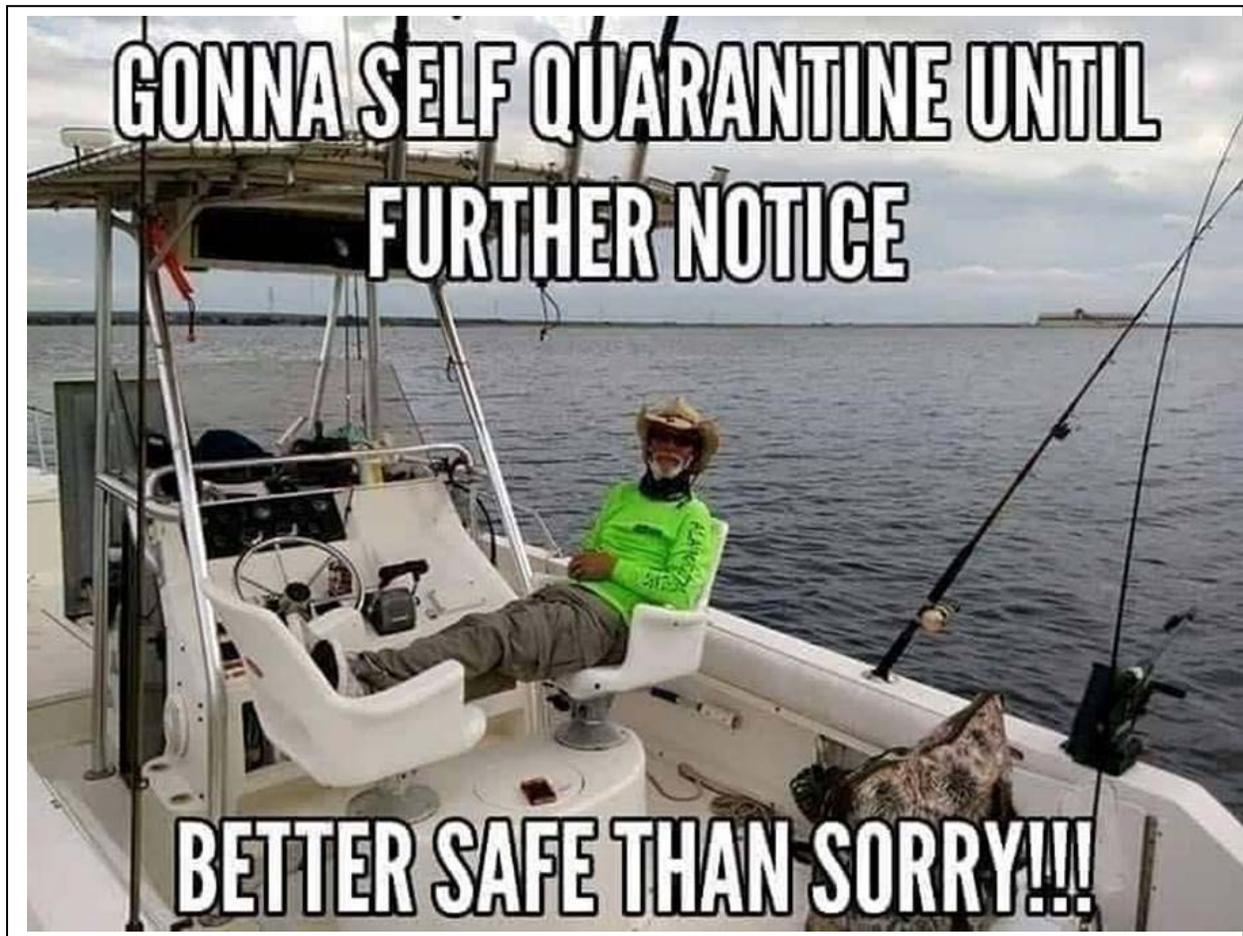
Wooly buggers, size 10 to 1/0. Often a beginners' first fly, good for trout, panfish, and bass.

Clouser Deep Minnow, size 10 to 3/0. Has taken over 80 species. If it has fins it will probably hit it.

Lefty's Deceivers. As above, especially good in larger sizes for big fish.

Squirmy Wormies and San Juan Worms, size 12 to 6. Easy worm flies, very effective for trout.

Bill May has been an outdoor columnist for The Carroll County Times since May of 1994. He has authored over 700 outdoor articles with photos for local, regional and national publications. Bill has a B.S. in English from Loyola University of Maryland and a M.A. in public relations and journalism from American University in Washington, D.C.





2019 Crossroads Anglers Officers

- Ed Rosenbloom.....President
Steve Dewar.....Vice President
Izzy Bettencourt.....Membership Chair
Sumner Levine.....Treasurer
Steve Dewar.....Webmaster
Dan Deneault.....Newsletter Editor
Armand Courchaine...Advising Board Member
Joel Kessler.....Advising Board Member
Bob Dewar.....RaffleMaster

This is our monthly newsletter for the 2019-2020 season.
Hope Everyone's well and surviving the Corona Surge!
Best Wishes to All to Stay Well!
See you at the Monthly Meetings (soon, we hope) *Editor*