



**NOTE: EARLIER TIME.** Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 23, 2012 • 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.

## From the President

WOW, it's October and we've already had one meeting. As we all know, the Fall Blitz is about to begin. The trout are starting to think about feeding for the winter – a good time to be a fly fisherman.

I hope everyone had a great summer of fishing. I know, I feel I did not get enough time on the water. I think we all feel this way. The hot summer we had, in some instances, hurt us. The low water did not help either for fresh water. On the other hand, seeing some great schools of young stripers looks very promising for the future. I hope everyone can come to the meeting and share stories of the summer.

There are great plans forming for the coming year – We are planning on having a raffle with Capt. Dave Porreca in December for a Rhode Island river trip. And, we will be working with Capt. Cory Pietraszek, planning a salt water trip for April 2013.

There are going to be new tying exhibits as well as some entertaining speakers. It should be a great year for the Club.

I ask every member to help in any way they can with ideas – teaching tying and any other way to make the Club strong. This is our Club and the stronger we can make it helps everyone.

Steve's computer is down so the web site is not current and the board apologies for this.

**We will start meetings at 5:30 p.m. and will send out for pizza. I hope you can attend.**

Looking forward to see you at the next meeting.

Joel

# Annual Crossroads Anglers Fishing Tournament

Check [www.crossroadsanglers.com](http://www.crossroadsanglers.com) for details!

*Facebook entry from Tom Rosenbauer of Orvis fame.*

## *Playing with epoxy*

Playing with epoxy these days. Testing 5-minute, 15-minute, 30-minute, *Clear Cure Goo*, and *Tuff-lye*. So far the 30-minute epoxy and thick *Clear Cure* give the best finish.

The final finish really depends on what kind of hair you use. The kinkier the hair, the harder it is to get a smooth finish. Also if you put all the material on top of the hook the finished fly does not look as good as when you add some hair for the belly. Regardless of what you use, they all need a coat of Sally Hansen's *Hard as Nails* at the end!

Love Bob Popovics' new Fleye Foils. Going to order some from Bear's Den right now.

# Fishing the 2012 Season

by Armand Courchaine

HAD SOME BIG FISH ON MY LINE but lost them in the weeds and underwater trees. Did catch a lot of fish but this was not my biggest fish year.

I have something to share with Crossroads Anglers.

I've been a serious fresh water bass fisherman all my life. 2012 was no exception. I'm proud to say I fished at least four evenings a week with my twelve foot canoe. I would launch three hours before the sun set and fish well into the night.

This is the first season I lived in shorts – from July 1 to September 21. What was fantastic about this you ask – I had no mosquito bites! Usually, I would mix Ben's 100, Cutter, and Off repellants and smear it on my body. At the end of the night I would still have at least twenty bites. This year – none. The secret...

At the Crossroads Anglers' cookout there was a person with this "gadget." I remembered the name – *ThermaCELL*. In June, I had made up my mind that if I want to continue fishing I didn't want to suffer from these buggers any longer.



I found the gadget in the camping section at Bass Pro Shops in Foxboro. The price tag is around \$25 with refills from \$7-\$20. I don't know about you, but I don't like hearing reports of people dying from West Nile Virus, EEE, etc.

I turn the *ThermaCELL* on about a hour before dark and leave it on the floor of the canoe. There is a faint odor, but it is so rewarding to look up and see those angry mosquitoes – knowing they *want* to suck your blood but *can't* – that it is worth a little smell. After putting the canoe and fishing gear in the car I turn *ThermaCELL* off.

I am already looking forward to the 2013 season. *ThermaCELL* – the way to go! I will bring it to the next general meeting.

— Armand



## Tying the Pickle

**Armand Courchaine** will be tying the *Pond Pickle* for fresh water bass and pickeral. Bring vise, scissors, bobbin, get spool of UTC G.S.P. 75 or 100 denier tying thread at Bear's Den. I will supply materials. Hook, tubing, craft fur and marabou.

The DVD for the night is *Secrets of Steelheading* with Jim Teeny. Learn techniques, line, flies, and leaders. Also, learn about holding water, making the drift, casting shooting heads, fish fighting and close.



# Streamers!

## How, When, and Why to Use Them by Robert M. Rifchin

The fly-type first tied and utilized by a majority of fly fishers of my acquaintance is the streamer. This fly design is perceived as easy to construct, though not really the case, and it readily fishes like a spinning lure. This provides an easier transition to fly fishing since spinning tackle is the point of entry to fly tackle for many a neophyte. The simple cast and retrieve approach used in still or moving water will fool fish, and simple manipulations of line speed to create erratic fly movement produce an easy upgrade of technique. In fact, several years often pass before the more experienced angler discovers what potent tools these baitfish imitations really are. Designing these flies for maximum effect within specific planned uses, based on adaptation of material, has proven to be the best way to make use of these tools.

The first use we'll look at will be stillwater fishing, simply because my home is surrounded with opportunities ceded to this medium. This was the classroom where I had the opportunity to learn the most, as I grew up. Here, marabou is the material without peer as it moves readily and enticingly without any need to flowing currents to provide force to push it around. The fly can be fished slowly, allowing the material to provide the action.

Streamer flies of this type generally have a wing of marabou plumes at least as long as the hook shank, anchored at the front of the body by the head. When the fly is allowed to sink, it does so bend-of-hook first. The heavier the hook and body of the fly, the faster it sinks. Knowing this, one can manipulate a fly to appear much like a crippled bit of food, but the angler should take care not to allow sinking movement that lets the lure appear too unnatural. Short, sinking pauses which allow the wing to bend as the hook begins to sink, followed by short forward movements are generally best. Lighter hook and



body combinations allow for longer pauses with this design type. The fly moves, stops and bends [as the back of the hook sinks faster], then moves forward again and regains its shape.

For many situations I prefer a design in which I weight the front half of the hook shank. When paused during retrieve, these flies dive toward the bottom headfirst, and they retain the

basis shape of the baitfish they are supposed to represent. I prefer to fish these flies very erratically, causing my imitation to dart forward, pause and dive, twitch rapidly toward the surface, stop and dive, and so on. This is most often the swimming pattern of a badly injured baitfish.

Both of these types, with their wing firmly anchored by the head of the fly, have two major failings. They most certainly catch fish but can be improved.

First, when patterns require wings longer than the hook shank, the wetted wing frequently wraps around the hook shank in casting. This may be corrected by adding a bit of stiffer material [like bucktail] as an underwing or by switching to the matuks type of fly. The key word to remember when using bucktail is "spares", and I really mean it. Fifteen or twenty hairs is generally plenty for most sizes.

Second, weighting the fly to improve silhouette re-moves the ability to imitate the very common baitfish behavior of pausing and hanging motionless in the horizontal plane.

Observation of any small fishes will show this is a normal behavior. No marabou fly [and remember we've covered nothing else yet] does this well except for the matuka style tied on relatively light-wire hooks and slightly weighted at the front of the shank. This light addition of weight offsets the extra metal of the hook bend and point, and the proper requirement for lead if found by trial and

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error. I use a double-edged razor blade set in a block of wood as a balance, fond the center of the shank for hooks I wish to use, and apply trial and error to determine the number of wraps for a specific lead wire size that is required for a particular hook design or size.

While there are certainly lots of other choices for still-water materials, I rarely use any of them except to embellish marabou designs, including the type we've not yet conceded. One is Jack Gartside's unique marabou Soft Hackle Streamer. Its characteristics are more like the Matuka than the conventional wing designs, since it is tied in the round, also a preferable characteristic. I generally use the fly in situations where a very full, high-visibility dressing and large sizes are needed (bass, pike, saltwater). I opt for the Matuka wherever I prefer sparser representations. The other type is the wooly bugger with its Marabou tail. It is extremely good where specific imitations is not required, and all of mine are weighted on the front half of the hook shank.

Hair-wing flies are my favorites in faster moving water, or in the salt where they are retrieved with quick motions. In these applications, hair moves very realistically and doesn't collapse against the hook shank, thus losing the desirable baitfish shape.

Bucktail is the most common of the hair materials used in fly constructions and, except for rare bits of very fine hair, I find it useful on number six hook sizes or larger. Other finer hairs are preferable in stillwater applications. My own personal favorites are not readily available, although they are certainly not rare... and some of you might not wish to have skunk pelts around the house.

If tanned, the pelts don't smell, and the tail hair (of either color) has few equals in texture, translucence, light reflectance or flexibility. Only polar bear is close, but it is generally stiffer and no longer available. The white hair can be dyed to any shade and produces superior appearance and results.

The second choice for streamer-winging hairs is not the

commonly available calftail, but tails from adult cows. The hair is usually curly but can easily be straightened with commercial hair straighteners made for humans who don't like the naturally wavy look. Although it reflects less light than skunk, it is a finer hair which absorbs water readily and moves well.

Knowing that there are better materials than bucktail, or that very rare hairs will outperform it, does very little to help the average angler and tier whose sources only have deer tail. The key word to remember when using bucktail is “sparse”, and I really mean it. Fifteen or twenty hairs is generally plenty for most sizes. Virtually all commercial hair-winged flies are overdressed (save a few salmon patterns) because they must catch fishermen first. Commercial fly tiers have more difficulty selling the more effective (though hardly as pretty) versions; however, reduction of hair density lets wing fibers move more freely and gives the fly much more action.

The picture for bucktail use changes dramatically when one leaves still water, but while still covering that medium, we'll take a moment to discuss the traditional feather-winged designs.

These types were, in large measure, designed to be trolled or stripped to produce a waving type of swimming action from the wing as the fly moved through the water. By design, and if properly placed, the fairly rigid saddle hackles act as a rudder to steer the fly straight; incorrect placement causes the fly to ride on its side or even to tortoise the wing, causing the same problems as a poorly tied fly. There is, then, a limit to the usefulness of these beautiful flies. With the shortage of quality, wide saddle hackles to tie these patterns properly, it's better that their use is limited.

If we turn to moving water situations, marabou still functions but expands much less with each pause. The wing of a traditional design is often over-compressed, distorting in shape because of the force of the current. Bending of wing no longer occurs with pauses in retrieve. Bucktail

# Streamers!

...cast the fly ahead of a fish, and let it settle to the bottom. As the fish approaches, I suddenly move the fly about a foot, leaving a puff of mud as it moves. Strikes will almost always follow.

can be added as an underwing to prevent shape collapse, and this may be preferable to traditional marabou streamer design, even though it is not as versatile as the Matuka types. In the case of the wooly bugger, the fly still swims nicely regardless of the type of current.

Hair-winged types of flies, with some integral material stiffness, come into their own in moving water. The material moves because of the additional force and reduced fiber. In fact, if simply held in the current, the fly will dance erratically in the water column. Fine movements of material are no longer as important as the action imparted to the fly by the angler, and the shape is maintained by design and material selection for each pattern.

Throughout each region of the world, one sees adaptations in flies to meet heavier flows. These additions even include additional weight both to sink the fly and to act as a keel to keep it upright.

Feather-wing designs also work well in flowing water, but are not a noticeable improvement in silhouette of design over the other types. Therefore, I cannot justify the cost of the usually more expensive materials required to properly tie these patterns.

Finally, we must consider salt water as a unique situation which includes both still and moving water. Here, overall shape and visibility are generally of more value than action provided by material choices. The more voracious and generally larger sea creatures are fealty discriminating only in very shallow, clear water where sloppy presentation or too much flash in the fly sends them off in panic.

The approach to fly design which has proved most productive for me in open salt water for pelagic species is to prepare a fly which presents the proper shape. This design should be crested with several color/reflection variations and contrasting colors in the same fly pattern. This allows for use when the water color renders one ver-

sion near invisible, yet allows another to stand out.

The flashy or light reflecting types are best used when none of the color variants are distinct. The simplest solution is to tie white, black, and mixed black and white... though I have a personal liking for bright colors.

In shallow salt water, the picture changes. The fly needs to be visible but no more so than real baitfish or shrimp. Their colors are in subdued shades in most cases. Shape is important and must be maintained as the fly is fished. This is where the more realistic fly types have a place in the "briny."

Too much flash or color, even with perfect presentation, and all that's left is a cloud of mud as your quarry heads for deeper places.

For ocean fish the behavior of the fly is important. The retrieve creates this movement while the materials maintain form. The food type should be studied for proper imitation. Sand eels, for instance, will burrow when afforded the opportunity. A favorite trick of mine to take visible, cruising striped bass is to cast the fly ahead of a fish and let it settle to the bottom. As the fish approaches, I suddenly move the fly about a foot, leaving a puff of mud as it moves. Strikes will almost always follow. If the worst occurs and nothing happens, change the fly to one which contrasts more with the bottom color rather than a flashier version. The same approach works as well with bonefish off Miami or redfish along the Texas and Louisiana coasts.

If saltwater fish won't follow a fly, I try a faster retrieve and consider myself a devotee of Lou Tabory's two-handed, high-speed retrieve. Simply cast, tuck the rod under your arm with reel behind and clear of clothing, and retrieve hand-over-hand. Coil the line carefully as this is done, either in a stripping basket or on the deck. Set the hook with your hand, then raise the rod tip. ■

Life is better when you fish.

October 2012						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Columbus Day	9 Crossroads Board Mtg	10	11	12	13
14	15 	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 	30 CROSSROADS Meeting NOTE: Meeting moved to the 29th.	31 Halloween			

November 2012						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Crossroads Board Mtg	7	8	9	10
11 Veterans Day	12	13 	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Day	23	24
25	26	27 CROSSROADS Meeting	28 	29	30	

## Crossroads Anglers 2012 Officers

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Sumner's Big 44 inch Monster Day

## Special *Savings* for Crossroads Members

Discounts will be offered to members of the Crossroads Anglers who show their Club membership card to the following businesses when they reserve their date out on the water:

**Captain David Porecca, River & Riptide Anglers**  
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