

# Hickory NC Trout Unlimited

## January 2019 Newsletter



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### A LINE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I've been toying with this Hellbender stuff for several months now and my quest to learn more about these creatures has been a challenge. It seems that many people have never heard of them. Quite a few know something about them but only a select few know a lot about them. Actually, at this point, I have discovered only two people who could answer my questions. My guess would be that's why they're in such peril, people are just uninformed.

It turns out that these Ancient Giants have inhabited the Appalachian waterways for millions of years, they were once abundant in Middle Eastern Tennessee and Western North Carolina and yet we don't know anything much about them. I guess I'm a little shocked at this but I can't tell you the number of people I have asked, "Do we have Hellbenders in Wilson Creek?" but no one knew. Even people who should know didn't. Several gave me wrong information. Finally, I found someone who did, Morgan Harris, a conservation biologist with an organization called Wild South. Morgan explained how we could know which North Carolina Rivers would have Hellbenders.

So I'll share this with you in his own words. "there are no Hellbender's known to be in Wilson Creek or any other Atlantic slope streams". So there it is, no Hellbenders in Wilson Creek! I'm sort of disappointed actually. Then he

goes on to explain "They were once noted in the Savannah Drainage, but that is the only Atlantic slope stream that they were known to exist in North Carolina." In other words, Atlantic slope just means all of the rivers that flow into the Atlantic Ocean rather than the Gulf of Mexico. He says "Hellbenders today are strictly a Gulf slope species. Atlantic slope are systems like the Catawba and Savannah, while Gulf slope in North Carolina is represented by the Hiawassee, Little Tennessee, French Broad, Watauga, and the New River Basin. One thing that you could bring to your network though" he said, "is that since they have been seen in the Atlantic drainage before that it isn't out of the question. There could always be undiscovered populations out there". He goes on to say, "the closest known populations to Hickory would probably be the North Toe, South Toe, Swannanoa, and the Watauga Rivers. One famous Trout River they are in is Boone Fork".

In talking with Morgan I became aware of some efforts to restore the Hellbender population. One such effort being conducted by Wild South is creating and planting concrete Hellbender nesting boxes. It seems that sedimentation is burying their nesting rocks. Right now they are in the monitoring phase of around 250 nesting boxes scattered about the region.

Another effort is the South Eastern Hellbender Conservation Initiative. They have secured over 1.2 million dollars in grant money to hire three partner Biologists to implement conservation measures for the Hellbender. It turns out that my contact Morgan Harris with Wild South has been hired to fill the North Carolina position for this project.

It seems that the plight of the Hellbender is now so dire that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is considering listing the species Under The *Endangered Species Act*.

Even though I would describe myself more as a fishing enthusiast rather than a conservationist, in studying this gentle giant, I have become more enamored with learning about this salamander.

So what now that my question has been answered. Am I done with this series on Hellbenders? The answer is No, there's still more to learn. There's still more to share, so until next month.

The tug is the drug,  
Jacqueline Greene  
[HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com)

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Hickory NC Chapter 032 of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to [HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com) and let us know.

## NEXT MEETING

**When:** Tuesday, January 15  
**Where:** Market on Main Cellar  
**Across From 325 1<sup>st</sup> Street SW, Hickory**  
**Time:** 5:30 Buffet Dinner (\$10.00)  
6:30 Program  
7:30 Mini Board Meeting

**Program:** Tenkara 101 Plus

**Speaker:** Jason Sparks

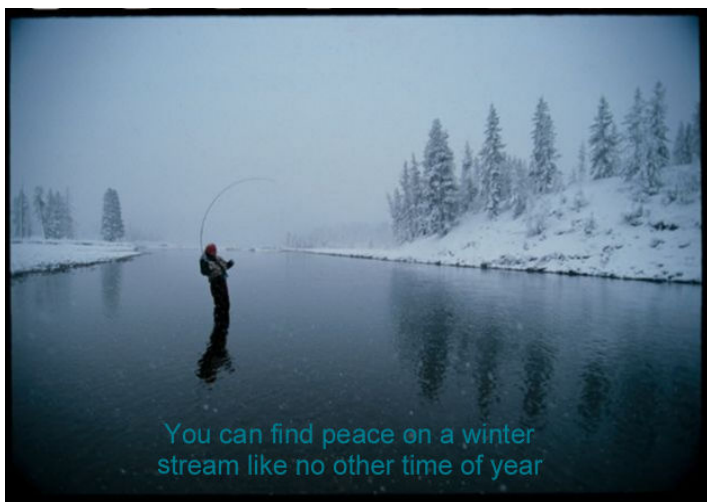
**Note:** You must park across the street or you may be towed. Only handicap is available at the building.

Jason Sparks is a leading ambassador for Tenkara fly-fishing across the Southern states. He is the founder of “Appalachian Tenkara Anglers”, a growing community of fishermen that embrace the elegant simplicity of the traditional Japanese method of fly-fishing. He established “Tenkara Jam” as the first multi-vendor educational exposition in North America. Jason developed the first state adopted Tenkara curriculum which he conducted for NC Wildlife Resource Commission at the Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education in Pisgah Forest. He has written articles for “Tenkara Angler”, “Blue Ridge Outdoors” and “Southern Trout” magazines on the subject. He often conducts clinics, instructs techniques and speaks to groups on the subject of fixed-line fly fishing. He chartered the High Country Trout Unlimited Chapter in Boone, NC in 2015 and established a Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing program there also. He is recognized by Tenkara USA as a Certified Tenkara Instructor. Jason is a Navy Veteran and has fished the world in waters from the Azores to the Appalachians. He carries a Tenkara rod with him everywhere he goes.

**February meeting**—Drifting the Catawba Trophy Water with John Zimmerman of Upper Creek Anglers in Morganton.

**March meeting**—A panel discussion of what can be done to slow the loss of public access to our trout streams. See Dr. Joel’s column for more detail.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH



You can find peace on a winter stream like no other time of year

## Suggested New Year Resolutions For Fly Fishermen

Last month I polled our Board regarding what they wanted for Christmas and had some great results. This month I polled them regarding their fly fishing resolutions for 2019. I guess they must have gotten what they wanted for Christmas and were too busy playing with their new toys to respond. So I did a little searching and found an article written by Pat Straub (author of several fly fishing books) with his recommended resolutions for 2017. It seems things have changed little since then, so I took his ideas and built on them to develop a suggested list of resolutions for our Hickory TU chapter members. Here goes.

**Learn new ways to fish nymphs.** I actually did get a response from Spencer Welland that I thought was excellent. He responded: “I would resolve to try different styles of nymphing such as Czech or a dry dropper. To date I usually just use an indicator rig but I’d like to try using other styles more.” That struck a chord with me as my resolution for 2019 is to learn to fish Tenkara. I think most of us just stick with the old standby of an indicator over a nymph, perhaps with a dropper. It works, but is it the most effective way? We had a presentation not long ago on “high sticking” and I’ve talked to several who do that, but with a conventional rod, it’s often difficult to reach out to the drift line you need. Tenkara rods are longer than our conventional rods and give you that added length to get over the fish. It so happens that our January program will be a presentation on Tenkara fly fishing. Make your resolution to learn more ways of nymphing and come to the January meeting.

**Get involved now for the future.** Whether you believe it is a human or natural cause, the earth is getting warmer and has been since the last ice age ended 20,000 years ago. North Carolina is at the very southern end of the range for trout. As the climate is warming, the trout are receding from the lower elevations and we may lose them in many streams without some action. There are many things that can be done including replacing access blocks created by poor culvert construction in the past, eliminate silting issues, and reforestation along streams to keep them cooler. Trout Unlimited under the direction of Andy Brown here in NC is taking action on this. You can help if only by watching for these issues and reporting them so that action can be taken.

**Catch a native trout on a fly.** Almost all of us limit ourselves to fishing delayed harvest streams and that means limiting our fly fishing to October through May. There is some terrific native trout fishing in the high mountain streams that can provide action all year. We had a great presentation last spring on wild trout fishing and were given a set of maps of those streams nearby. You can find the maps on our website at <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/nc-wild-trout-streams/>. Most of these streams have a road nearby so access is not too difficult.

**Fish more.** Rip the Band-Aid off. A great angling friend of mine once said, “The sooner you put things off to go fishing,

the more time you have to make them up once you catch the biggest trout of the day.” Or something like that. There’s truth in that statement. Fishing can be a means to escape the pleasant distractions in life: jobs, kids, spouses, and keeping-up-with-the-Joneses. Or fishing can be an opportunity to enhance those relationships—bring along the family and the spouse or invite Mr. and Mrs. Jones to go fishing. Obligation or opportunity is in the eye of the rod holder.

**Fish safer and better by investing in better gear.** You took care of all the nice people on your holiday list. Now take care of yourself. None of us is getting any younger. Fortunately, gear manufacturers know that and have created products to help us stay safe, which means we can fish longer and more effectively. Patagonia’s Foot Tractor wading boot—the product that’s done the most to enhance angling safety and success in the past five years—has made walking-and-wading on slippery rocks safer.

**Learn more and better knots.** Here you are very fortunate. All you need to do is to read the article on knot tying and then do a little practicing. And here again you can get a great deal of information on our website. If you go to the helpful links tab you can find information under the Fly Fishing Merit Badge subtab and some really cool ways to tie knots on the newly added Knot Tying with Forceps subtab.

**Take five minutes to observe before fishing.** This will cue you into what could be hatching or could help you see wildlife you might have missed while sprinting from car to riffle.

**Be more friendly on the river.** We fish for various reasons: to be in nature, to challenge ourselves, for exercise, for solitude, for camaraderie, and many other personal reasons. Upon encountering other anglers, offer a polite “hello” or a “how’s the fishing?” You might meet a new angling friend or learn of an effective fly. If not, at least you offered a pleasant greeting.

**Attend at least one chapter meeting.** Only about 10% of TU members nationwide attend their local chapter meetings. That is sad because a lot can be gained at the meetings. Not only can you learn a lot of great information at the meetings, but it gives you the opportunity to meet and talk to other fly fishermen and to develop friendships that can help you achieve the resolution fish more. Many of us are always looking for someone to go fishing with and those friendships create the opportunity. Our meetings are family friendly. Children are welcome and often do attend. If you have decided to embrace that first resolution on the list to learn more ways to nymph, you can achieve this resolution by attending the January chapter meeting about Tenkara. The meeting details are in this newsletter, we hope to see you there.

## DELAYED HARVEST

The fall stocking is complete and there will not be another stocking until the first week of March. Be very careful with your releases over the winter as these are all the fish we will have until spring. Especially remember if you are out there when it is below freezing, the gills can freeze very quickly and kill the fish.

## HICKORY NC TU LOGO GEAR



The Hickory Chapter has an account at Lands’ End for clothing and other items with our logo. There are frequent discounts available that you can sign up for by going to <https://business.landsend.com/>. To access the account go to: <https://business.landsend.com/store/hkynctu/>

We also have a second option for logo gear that Zan’s wife Peggy has set us up with. Check out the following website: [www.companycasuals.com/hickorytrout/start.jsp](http://www.companycasuals.com/hickorytrout/start.jsp) (note: this site requires a minimum of 12 items)

## Tight Lines & Road Kill

### Smile Again and Plan Ahead

Last month I shared some of my favorite fishing jokes. We needed a smile or two then, and, GOK, after the December snow, stock market tumble, and the ongoing D.C. political zoo, we can certainly use another. I challenged folks to send in a fav joke with the best one winning a dozen new flies tied by Editor Chick and me. Ralph Griffith wins. Ralph, you can claim your flies at the January chapter meeting. Here’s his smile submission:

*A man was stopped by a game warden in Northern Algonquin Park recently with two buckets of fish leaving a lake well known for its fishing.*

*The game warden asked the man, “Do you have a license to catch those fish?”*

*The man replied to the game warden, “No, sir. These are my pet fish.”*

*“Pet fish?!” the warden replied.*

*“Yes, sir. Every night I take these here fish down to the lake and let them swim around for a while. I whistle and they jump back into their buckets, and I take ‘em home.”*

*“That’s a bunch of crap! Fish can’t do that!” replied the warden in disbelief.*

*The man looked at the game warden for a moment and then said, “Here, I’ll show you. It really works.”*

*“O.K. I’ve GOT to see this!” The game warden was curious.*

The man poured the fish into the river and stood and waited...

After several minutes, the game warden turned to the man and said, "Well?"

"Well, what?" the man responded.

"When are you going to call them back?" the game warden prompted.

"Call who back?" the man asked.

"The FISH," the warden said sternly.

"What fish?" the man asked.

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Now to the more serious stuff. I'm sure you all recall my August column. (Don't lie, nobody does!) I wrote about the trip Chick Woodward and I took along the three great rivers of the NC High Country: Elk, Linville, and Watauga. I shared our shock and concern about how much of all three of those great fisheries was now closed to public fishing. You can refresh your memory by going to the chapter website and rereading the August newsletter (<http://www.hkynctu.org/past-newsletters/>).

Well, just complaining about it does nothing, so, at Chick's urging, I decided to convene a group of folks who need to hear from us about the problem and who can hopefully start to reverse the trend. At our chapter meeting on March 19, we will have an influential panel to discuss the problem of the loss of public waters.

I have recruited a stellar lineup of panelists: Mike Johnson, our regional commissioner on the NC Wildlife Resources Commission; Doug Besler, Mountain Region Fishery Supervisor for NCWRC; Jake Rash and Kinnon Hodges, NCWRC Officers from our area; Mike Mihalas, NCTU Council Chair; Ron Beane, Board Chair of the Foothills Conservancy; and Andy Brown, TU Southeastern Stream Restoration Manager.

The loss of public trout waters should be of great concern to all of us. Mark your calendars for March 19 and DO NOT MISS THIS MEETING! Bring your friends and anybody else who should be concerned about losing our great places to fish.

The Scotts invented golf to keep the unworthy out of the trout streams. If we lose all the streams, we'll be stuck on a golf course!

By Dr. Joel Miller

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## WHY CAN'T SOMEONE INVENT A TIPPET-TO-FLY VELCRO CONNECTION?

When we put together the program for the scouting merit badge, we had to put together a great deal of information on knot tying. Many of us were surprised at the number of knots we need to know and we discovered some excellent ones that none of us were using. That led us to make the November meeting a knot tying workshop. It turned out to be one of the most interesting with the most participation of any meeting we have had in the last few years. The meeting started with a request to show how to use forceps to tie a fly to the tippet. Very few people had seen that before and everyone gave it a try. Several people at the meeting also suggested some different ways of tying from the Davy knot to the noose knot. As a result, we have added a great deal of knot tying information under the Helpful Links tab on our website. That includes a sub-tab that shows how forceps can make tying easier for six different knots. Following is an article on the variety of knots you need between your spool and fly and how to tie them.



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### FLY FISHING KNOTS BASIC KNOTS FOR FLY TACKLE

Scientific Anglers pioneered a concept that underlies all other decisions in fly tackle selection: The Balanced System. By this, we mean your tackle-rod, reel, line, leader and tippet should be balanced for better performance.

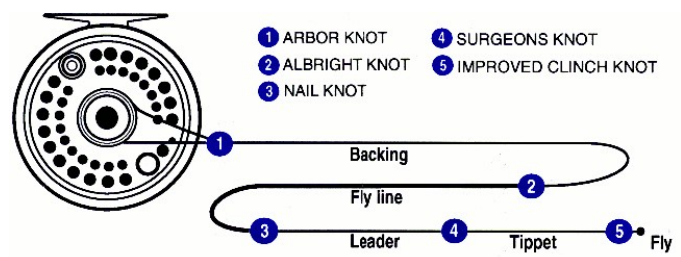
#### THE BALANCED SYSTEM

You can easily select balanced components for your system because the fly tackle industry follows a common standard when labeling products. For example, most rod manufacturers label the proper line weight right on their rods, so that any 6-weight rod will balance with a 6-weight line. This is also true for most reels.

No matter what quality rod, reel or line you buy, they won't perform properly if they aren't balanced. So check these components of your fly fishing system and make sure they are balanced before you assemble the rest of your system.

#### THE BASIC CONNECTIONS

The following diagram shows the basic fly fishing line connections and knots:



Before you start putting line on your reel, find out how much backing you'll need by reading your reel instructions. Then collect the components and spread them out on a flat surface with good lighting. A pair of nail clippers is the only tool you'll need to assemble them.

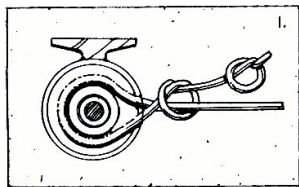
Even if you've done this before, you might want to spend a little extra time practicing the knots we recommend before you actually put the line on the reel. A leader, a piece of rope, or best of all, some old fly line make it easy to practice tying the knots you'll need to securely join the components of your system.

One other thing, most new reels are set up for left-handed retrieve, so if you reel from the right, you'll have to change the set up. This is usually a simple process and instructions should be found in the reel box.

The illustrations that follow show the easiest knots favored by experienced fly anglers.

### THE ARBOR KNOT, TO CONNECT THE REEL TO THE BACKING

We strongly recommend you attach your fly line to backing, which goes on the reel spool first. Backing comes in different strengths, usually 20 lbs or 30 lbs. There are two ways to determine the right amount of backing to use. You can wind the line on first,



followed by enough backing to fill within 1/8 to 3/16 inch from the edge of the spool. Then reverse the process. To avoid this extra step, many manufacturers include

a chart with their reels that tells the proper amount of backing.

There are several good reasons for using backing. It lets your line form larger coils on the reel, which dramatically reduces line memory and also helps you wind your line more quickly. And, when you're playing big fish, the extra backing may save that fish when it makes a long run.

To assemble your tackle, many anglers first fasten the fly reel to the reel seat of the rod. With the reel in place, the rod handle and stripper guide will help you wind on components more easily and efficiently. Pull off several feet of line from a spool of backing. Pass the tag end of the backing through the line guide closest to the rod handle. The most basic connection – anchoring backing to the reel arbor (or spool center) – uses the Arbor Knot.

Tie an overhand knot on the backing end and tighten it. Insert this knotted end between the reel foot and the arbor, circle the arbor, and pull the knotted end out so it's next to the standing part of the backing. Tie a second overhand knot with the tag end around the standing part of the backing.

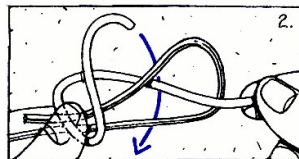
Holding the reel in your left hand, pull on the standing part of the backing with your right hand, snugging the knots against the arbor. Trip the tag end, and wind the backing onto your reel.

Make sure the line feeds from the guide on the rod to the bottom of the reel. If not, you're winding in the wrong direction. Make tight, smooth layers across the arbor as you wind on the proper amount of backing.

The next step is attaching the line to the backing and winding it onto the spool.

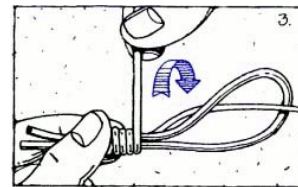
### THE ALBRIGHT KNOT, TO CONNECT THE BACKING TO THE FLY LINE

Unwind 2-3 feet of fly line from the plastic spool it came on (make sure you unwind the end marked "this end to reel"). Start by doubling back a couple of inches of fly line

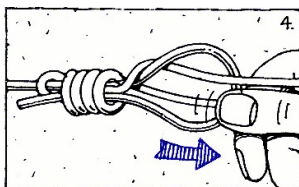


and hold the loop with your left thumb and forefinger. From the right, insert about 10 inches of the backing through the fly line loop.

While holding the loop, pinch the backing between your left thumb and forefinger, and use your right hand to wrap the backing tag end back over both strands of the fly line and the backing. Start next to your fingers and working toward the loop end, make 10 to 12 fairly tight wraps.

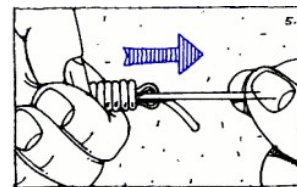


Push the tag end of the backing back through the loop on the side opposite where it originally entered so both backing strands exit on the same side of the loop. Pull on the standing part of the backing to remove the loop you were holding in your left hand. Pull both ends of the fly line

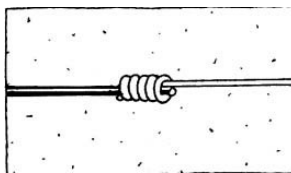


backing.

Pull gently on both ends of the fly line loop with your left hand; squeeze the knot with the fingers of your right hand and work it down to the loop end, but not off the fly line. Moisten the knot.



Hold the standing and tag fly line strands in your left hand, and the tag and standing backing strands in your right hand. Pull as tight as possible. Clip off the tag end of the fly line and the backing.

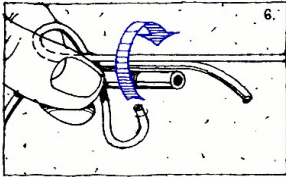


You're now ready to wind the line over the backing onto the spool.

Here's where a friend can help by inserting a pencil through the hole in the line spool and holding it while you wind the line onto the reel spool under slight tension. Once the line is fully transferred to the reel spool, you should have approximately 3/16 inches between the line and the outside rim of the spool. As a final touch, put the pressure sensitive label, "Fly Line Marker," on the reel spool so you can always tell what line is on that spool.

### THE NAIL KNOT, TO CONNECT THE FLY LINE TO THE LEADER

You may use the Albright Knot for the leader to line or a slightly more complicated, Nail Knot, can be used for a smoother finish. The Nail Knot requires a small diameter tube, such as the barrel of a ballpoint pen, a nail knot tool,

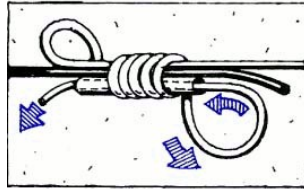


or other similar object about twice the diameter of the fly line. Using a small diameter tube makes the knot easier to tie.

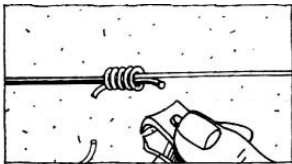
Hold the tube and the end of the fly line with your left thumb

and forefinger so about two inches of the fly line and the tube sticks out to the right.

With your right hand, form a 2" loop in the heavier end of your leader. Pinch down and hold this loop with your left thumb and forefinger next to the tube and fly line. Use your right hand to grasp the short leg of the leader loop and make 5 snug wraps over the tube and fly line. These wraps should butt against each other, and be at least 1/2" to 3/4" from the end of the fly line.



Then slide your left thumb and forefinger forward to hold the wraps so they don't unwind while you work the tag end of the leader butt through the tube from right to left.



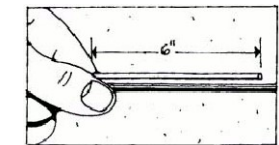
Carefully remove the tube by sliding it to the left. Slightly tighten the knot by pulling gently on both ends of the leader. Don't pull on the fly line!

Moisten the knot area, inspect the knot wraps for smoothness, and tighten the knot by simultaneously pulling on both ends of the leader so it "bites" into the fly line. Then pull hard on the fly line and leader to "seat" the knot. Finally trim the leader tag end and the fly line end.

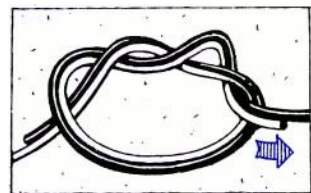
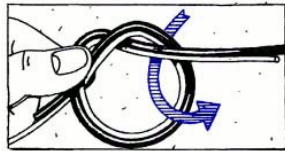
**THE DOUBLE SURGEON'S KNOT, TO CONNECT THE LEADER TO THE TIPPET**

The easiest and fastest knot for attaching the tippet to the leader in all kinds of conditions is the Double Surgeon's Knot.

The Double Surgeon's Knot requires the leader and tippet to be placed side-by-side so they overlap (for about 6") with ends facing in opposite directions.



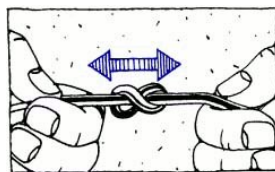
Pinch the standing leader and tippet tag end with the left thumb and forefinger and use the right hand to tie an overhand knot with the leader tag end and the tippet.



completed overhand knot!

The entire length of the tippet must be passed completely through the overhand knot loop; even though the leader tag end is only about 5" long. Don't tighten the

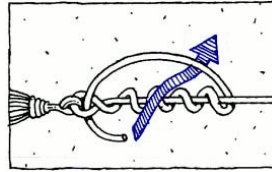
Grasp the completed loop with the left hand and make another pass through the same overhand knot, passing the full length of the tippet and the leader tag end



through a second time.

Draw the loop down by simultaneously pulling on leader and tippet. Moisten the loop; grasp the leader and tippet tag on the left with your left hand, and the tippet and leader tag on the right with your right hand. Pull all four ends simultaneously to snug the knot tight. Trim tag ends.

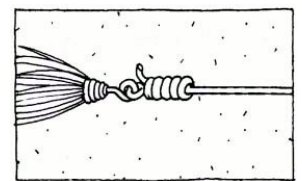
**THE IMPROVED CLINCH KNOT, TO CONNECT THE TIPPET TO THE FLY**



The final knot in putting your tackle together is the Improved Clinch Knot, which we recommend for tying a fly to your tippet. The turtle knot is also good. Insert 5" to 6" of tippet

through the hook eye. Make five turns with the tag end around the standing part of the tippet, winding away from the hook.

Push the tag end through the opening between the hook eye and the first wrap. This creates an open tippet loop over the wraps. Push the tag end through this open loop and pull slightly until the knot begins to close.



Moisten the knot area. Alternately pull on the standing portion of the tippet and the hook until the knot snugs up against the hook eye. Trim the tag end.

You have securely joined all the pieces of your tackle system – backing, line, leader, tippet and fly – and you have learned the basic knots of fly-fishing. The most important of these is the Improved Clinch Knot – the one you use to tie on your flies –because you will use it the most. So make sure you can do this one easily under any condition. Heavy winds, poor light and toughest of all, when that big fish is working the shallows!

**EFFECTIVE KNOT-TYING**

Few knots are 100% of the line's rated strength but if you moisten all knots before drawing them tight, tighten them slowly, and test every knot by pulling on it – hard – you will reduce the chance for knot failures. Be sure to replace leaders, tippets and lines when they show wear or abrasion. Never discard used monofilament anywhere but in a trash receptacle or recycling bin and be sure to cut into many short pieces.

**FLY CASTING**

With your balanced fly-fishing system in hand, there's one more thing to consider before heading off to your favorite waters. It has often been said, "The worst time to practice casting is when you're fishing." The excitement of working on feeding fish makes it pretty tough for most of us to do our best casting, let alone think about practicing! So get instruction and practice before you get into the field. They are the keys to success.

## JANUARY FLY PATTERNS

Reprinted from MIDCURRENT Winter Trout Fishing Tips  
November 12, 2014 By: Philip Monahan

Winter fishing is almost exclusively a nymphing game, with a light leader under an indicator. I have never worried about matching specific patterns, choosing instead to go with generalist nymphs, such as a Hare's Ear, Copper John, Scud, or Pheasant Tail. And because fish aren't willing to move very far to eat your offering, fish a two-fly tandem rig. Two patterns in the water means a better chance of bumping a fish in the nose with one of them. Winter trout usually hold in slower water—deep pools, long runs, and at the base of waterfalls—so you'll want to focus on these areas. Work slowly, making a lot of drifts through each piece of water. It's amazing that you can drift through a spot 20 times without the slightest bump, only to have the indicator dive on the 21st pass.

But don't leave home without a few winter dry flies. About two or three years after I caught that first trout on the Musconetcong, I was fishing Big Flat Brook in the north-western corner of the Garden State, when I was shocked again by the sight of several trout rising at the tailout of a pool. These were the first winter risers I'd come across. Luckily, I had a few Griffith's Gnats in my vest, and I managed to take one of the trout by swinging the fly just under the surface. This was another proud moment in my maturation as an angler.

For more information on fly hatches and patterns, visit our website helpful links page at <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/> and look for the NC Fly Hatch Chart.

## FLY CASTING ESSENTIALS...

By Gary Hogue

Gary has been an outdoor educator for over 35 years working as a guide, outfitter and fly casting instructor for various groups including the YMCA, American Camping Association and Sierra Club. Locally, he has started Fish Tales an instructional program in fly casting and fly fishing.

### THE ROLL CAST

If you had to learn two casts to feel more comfortable and proficient on the water, it would be the roll cast and the basic pick up and lay down casts. The roll cast is the easiest cast to learn because it has only one forward cast. It is your "get out of jail cast".

We use the roll cast when obstacles, like trees, banks or a very strong wind prevent a normal backcast. We also use it to position the line prior to a pickup or change the direction of the line on the water before picking it up. As you become more proficient you may find you are using the roll cast most of the day especially on small creeks or rivers with a lot of overhang. Casts of 30-50 feet can easily be made with practice. Also, it is less tiring than the PULD cast.

Steps to a Roll Cast:

1. Rod tip low to water: Set up the cast by removing all "slack" from the line in front of you. Secure the fly line from the reel under the middle finger of your rod hand.
2. Tilt rod slightly away from body. Tilt the rod tip to the right if right handed, left for left handlers.

3. Slowly drag the rod back to form a D-loop behind the shoulder. Begin the cast by slowly bringing the rod to about one o'clock, keeping the end of the line in water in front of you.
4. Check hand, rod angle position to insure rod is tilted away from the body. Bring your hand up high, angle your hand away from body and keep your elbow in so that the line can move freely behind you.
5. Forward cast stopping just above the horizontal. Aim slightly left of the line on the water, pulling down leading with the elbow forcing the rod to load or bend directing the energy of the cast to the target finishing with a positive stop about 45 degrees from the horizontal.
6. Lower rod tip to water.

The Off- Shoulder Roll Cast: The easiest and most efficient technique is to tilt the rod to your left side while maintaining your casting hand in the usual position on the right.

Rotate your casting hand so that the back of your hand is on top of the handle and your palm is facing out.

Hope this helps you to stay out of jail on your next outing.

Remember to practice, practice and practice....

For a video demonstration of this technique visit: <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/orvis-guide-to-fly-fishing/>

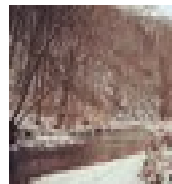
Fish Tales... Gary

If you have an interest in becoming a better fly caster you can also find several books on the subject in the chapter library. Just go to <http://www.hkynctu.org/library/> and look under the INSTRUCTIONAL category.

## TIP OF THE MONTH

### Winter Fly Fishing: Leave the Cotton at Home

by Ben Kryzinski - Friday, Nov 14th, 2014  
Hatch Magazine



Anglers have no shortage of options for gear designed to help keep them warm when heading out into the typically frigid conditions encountered when fly fishing in winter. Products based on natural materials like wool and down have been available for as long as most of us can remember and advances in technology continue to make synthetic fabric, insulation and outlayers better and better. Many of the products on the market today, whether a baselayer, warmth-providing midlayer or an expedition-proof, damn-the-elements outlayer allow anglers to get out on the water and stay out longer in the worst of conditions. The best of these products don't come cheap, but anglers are noticing the true value of comfort and safety on the water, and more and more of them are ponying up.

Some of these anglers, however, continue to handicap their technical winter gear with the heartbreak of cotton. Those bomber waders and the \$400 Gore-Tex wading jacket you saved up for all summer aren't going to do their

jobs if you're donning blue jeans and a hoody underneath them. But they're not failing because they're over-hyped pieces of junk, they're failing because you crippled them with winter's worst fabric.

Cotton may indeed be the "fabric of our lives," but it has no place on any icy winter stream. Not in any amount. That means your favorite t-shirt stays home and your game-day sweatshirt gets stowed. And don't even think about wearing those old-school waffle-textured long johns. Cotton boxers or socks? Nope. And again, blue jeans? Stop it.

The reason is simple, and still one that is seemingly unknown to hordes of people out there: cotton holds water. Unlike natural fibers like wool and synthetics like Patagonia's Capilene, cotton doesn't wick water. Instead, cotton gets saturated and holds water. Wet fabrics steal heat from your body at an alarming rate. In addition to being uncomfortable, wet cotton can literally be dangerous during low winter temperatures and can lead to a much more rapid onset of troubling developments such as frostbite and hypothermia. At best, cotton is going to leave you trudging along the banks of your winter rivers cold and clammy, possibly with two numb feet in tow, translating into shorter days on the river. Isn't that enough?

Unfortunately, leaving the cotton at home means digging into the wallet a bit more. While cotton options can range from cheap to dirt cheap, winter-friendly fabrics and garments can often be pricey. But, their price is often properly proportioned to their performance in the field. For our money, there's still no better option for fabrics that touch the skin than merino wool (think Smartwool or Patagonia's 80/20 merino/Capilene blend), but it is also considerably more expensive than 100% synthetic options.

Explore the options, explore the costs. But whatever you do, leave the cotton at home. All of it.

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*Say welcome to Dave Everhart this month with his first monthly article on fly tying. Dave has twice supported us with fly tying demonstrations at the Wilson Creek Visitor center. I was very impressed when I tied with him at the first event and he handed me a piece of dubbing wax that he had created. It's the best I've used and maybe along the way he'll share the recipe with us.*

## ADVICE FROM THE VICE

By Dave Everhart

Welcome to Advice from the Vice. Fly tying, just like fly fishing can prove to be addictive. I was asked once which I enjoy more, and I'm still not sure I have an answer. What I can tell you, is that the feeling of catching a fish on a fly you tied has no comparison for me. In this month's column I

want to introduce the basic tools to get started if you are a beginner, and entertain questions about techniques as we progress through the year.

Scissors are the most important tool you have in your kit. If there is a place for a good quality tool it's here. Razor sharp scissors make



tying a pleasure, and dull ones will be the source of frustration. There are plenty of good ones out there. Look for scissors designed for tying with a fine point. Additionally, a pair to cut wire, or a simple pair of nail clippers are nice to have to save your good scissors.

Vises are a source of debate throughout the tying arena. A good quality rotary vise is really nice to have, but not necessary to get started. My advice to new tiers is always start with a vise that meets your budget and when you find yourself tying enough to want to move to the next step, upgrade. No one needs a Helios 3 as a first fly rod, and so it goes with vises. It needs to firmly hold the hook. Above that, it is up to yourself as to features, like true rotary, you require. Much like scissors, a good quality vise will be the source of enjoyment.



Bobbins hold tension and dispense the thread. Like the vise, there are a wide range of prices and features. The most important aspect here is that it does not have any burrs that fray or cut the thread. Ceramic tips are dependable for that, but I still tie with my Sunrise bobbin from 40 years ago

routinely.

The finish of your thread wraps are secured by a knot known as a whip finish. This tool, a whip finisher, is, or shall I say has become, indispensable. I learned to whip finish a head by hand, but once I had one of these, I felt like I had gone to a new level. The whip finisher is like riding a bike, clumsy at first but once you get it, it's as natural as can be.



A bodkin is a large needle that can be used to pick out dubbing, pick up a bead, hold a wrap, or drop on head cement. It's the tiny extension of your fingers as you tie. A good one will be a one time purchase as it's a lifetime thing. I seldom tie a fly without using it for something.



Hackle pliers come in many different designs, and I think each have their place dependent of the type of fly you tie. I have several of different design and find that they are all useful dependent on the situation. Fly tying becomes a game of exacting tension to thread and materials, hackle

pliers are that third hand with really strong fingers. I would encourage a new tier to start with the English type, but do



not hesitate to try others as you progress to find the right one that works for you.

I often get the question about kits. It's my recommendation that you pay a visit to your local fly shop and see what they can put together for you. I think you end up with better quality and appropriate tools and materials for starting out on the basics.

Fly tying is one of those amazing things that continues to challenge skills and provide a life-long opportunity to learn and improve. I'm excited to bring you this column and hope to be able to get some folks started tying and provide some tips to improve established tiers, and of course learn some things myself along the way. I'm happy to answer any and all questions, so don't hesitate to contact me at [jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com](mailto:jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com) or check out some of my current ties on Facebook at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

About Me:

*A native of Pennsylvania, I grew up fishing the storied waters of south central PA. I started tying in the late 70's after a friend got a tying kit and found he was not really into it. Tying actually led me to fly fishing rather than the other way around. And once I caught the first fish on the fly, I never went back, no matter what the water or species was. 27 years in the Navy afforded the opportunity to live and fly fish in the UK and Spain as well as travel and fish around the country. I was fortunate to have a mentor in the UK that really accelerated my skills and introduced me to a lifetime of tying and rod building techniques- and a whole new discipline in Atlantic salmon flies in the pre-internet world. Spending several years on various coasts, I got to be the odd man out with a fly rod while my peers were bait fishing for blues, mahi, reds and specks. Tying and fishing saltwater flies proved to be a lot of fun and often more productive. After retiring from the Navy in 2011, we took a year's sabbatical and traveled the country in our RV, tying and fishing along the way in 20 different states. We settled in Hickory in 2012 to be back in the land of mountain streams and trout. I spend a few hours a weekly on the vise for the sheer relaxation and creativity it brings to me.*

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## **TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM**

Last year a lot of you signed up with Southern Trout Magazine and helped us win a beautiful Thomas & Thomas fly rod worth over \$800. We are having a raffle for the rod to raise money for TIC. Tickets are \$5/each or 5 for \$20. Bring your checkbook to the meeting to get your tickets.

Last month I put out a request to anyone who may have a used laptop that they can donate to the TIC program. Ryan Rowe has been using his own personal laptop for streaming the aquarium on the internet. As a result he needs to take it offline fairly often for his own use. If you have a laptop to donate, he could then keep the streaming on all the time. Contact us at [hkynctu@gmail.com](mailto:hkynctu@gmail.com) so we can make arrangements to get it.

## **ATLANTA FLY FISHING SHOW**

The biggest fly fishing show in the south is back in Atlanta on February 1&2 at the Infinite Energy Center in Duluth,

GA, about a four hour drive from Hickory. For details about the show visit <https://flyfishingshow.com/atlanta/>.

## **VIRGINIA FLY FISHING AND WINE FESTIVAL**

If you're looking for something with a little more flavor, visit the Virginia Fly Fishing and Wine Festival on January 12 & 13 in Doswell, VA. You'll be able to sample wine from several vineyards around the State of Virginia and then if you can keep your eyes open browse the exhibitor booths and attend a fly fishing class. For details visit:

<http://www.vaflyfishingfestival.com/>.

## **CHAPTER LIBRARY**

We have created a Hickory Chapter library of fly fishing books. The listing is available on the Chapter website at <http://www.hkynctu.org/library/>. You will make your withdrawal request on the website and then pick up and return your books at the Chapter meetings. We will initially start with book donations from our members and if the activity warrants it we may purchase additional books. Susan Anderson has graciously agreed to serve as our Chapter Librarian. If you have any books that you would like to lend or donate to the library, please bring them to the chapter meeting. Please indicate in the book whether you are donating or loaning it to the library.

## **FLY FISHING MERIT BADGE & MEET UP**

The fishing trip to Betsy's to wrap up the fly fishing merit badge was wiped out by our December blizzard. We will reschedule in early spring to assure we will be fly fishing and not ice fishing. Thank you to everyone who has helped with the merit badge program. We hope we'll see you at the final event in the spring.

## **CASTING CAROLINAS**

**RETREAT:** The first retreat for 2019 is scheduled for April 12-14 at Lake Logan Center in Canton, NC. To apply for the retreat visit: <https://castingcarolinas.com/retreats/>.

**VOLUNTEER:** Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. To sign up to help with their programs: <https://castingcarolinas.com/community/volunteer/>

## **ZAN THOMPSON IS FEATURED ARTIST**

In case you missed it, the October/November issue of Southern Trout Magazine featured our past president Zan Thompson as the artist of the month. The article is on page 116 of the issue that can be found at:

[https://issuu.com/southerntrout/docs/39\\_st\\_october\\_nove\\_2018](https://issuu.com/southerntrout/docs/39_st_october_nove_2018).

## **CHAPTER WEBSITE**

This month an event calendar has been added to the website. You can check there for upcoming events. If you

have a fly fishing related event, you can send the information to us at [hkynctu@gmail.com](mailto:hkynctu@gmail.com).

### THE HICKORY CHAPTER NEEDS YOU

The revived Hickory Chapter has now been back in existence for almost three years. Many terms on the board of directors are retiring soon and we need new members to step up and help continue our programs to keep the chapter going. If you would like to help out as either an officer of volunteer, please contact President Jackie Greene at [HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com).

### NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS INVITED

I'm sure many of you will be taking trips to Montana, Alaska, or many other places this year. Take some great photos, put some words to it and submit it to the newsletter. Your adventure may inspire others to start planning their own trip for next year. Send it to us at [HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com) for consideration of publication.

### CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE

When you're sitting in the waiting room for the doctor or in the lounge at the airport waiting for a plane, take a little time to check out the posts on our Facebook page. You'll find the latest status on the Trout In The Classroom

and many tips to help improve your fishing. Search for **Hickory NC Trout Unlimited**.


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