

Hickory NC Trout Unlimited August 2019 Newsletter



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A LINE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This past Sunday was really the first time that I have had the opportunity to walk Wilson Creek since the last big flood. I have spent time up there but mostly putting my own little space back together again, as is everyone else on Wilson Creek. So Sunday as I walked the Creek it seemed to me that the river itself has been damaged. I know that seems odd to say but this particular flood has affected the river in a way that is most troubling.

Yes, this is the nature of river life but this is more. The worst of the damage seems to be above the Welcome Center through the delayed harvest section in through the community of Edgemont. I believe our home waters of Wilson will not be the same for many years to come.

So in thinking on this subject, I have asked a friend Charlie Walker to write an article for you next month so that maybe just maybe you can see what I see in regards to the damage. I know the river changes every year. This was a really bad year.

I have also noticed another troubling effect on our River that I want to share and I do this carefully. However, the truth is the truth and I'm not sure about the solution. It seems that since the new no parking signs have gone up on the lower section that more and more people are venturing further north. We usually don't fish much this time of year so that is not what this is about. I'm concerned about the ecosystem of the river in our Delayed Harvest Section. This habitat cannot support what is happening in the gorge section of the river. Yesterday I read a study that talked about 250 people in a 300-yard section of the river. This study was done by common concerned people who actually talked to those along the river concerning waste left behind in an effort to curtail what is happening.

My concern is, that since the new signs, I personally have witnessed the increase in the number of those moving up. The ecosystem in the upper part is far more vulnerable and cannot, I repeat cannot be allowed to become the next big playground. Many of you have already given up on fishing Wilson. I hear it all the time, actually just yesterday I heard it again. It is sad that we talk and talk about our river. We hold meetings and invite people to talk. I wonder what they are thinking that they cannot see the river for what it could become if it were truly protected for the masses by the few. I thought that is what a Wild and Scenic River is supposed to be, set apart as special. Wilson Creek is struggling and with all that is going on it is crying out for help.

I tip my hat to those who are truly making a difference: Bruce Grey, Wes Waugh and A Clean Wilson Creek. Please give in support of their efforts to save this river. And please look for next month's article on flood damage. Our River needs us.

The tug is the drug,
Jackie Greene

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Thank you, dear God, for this good life and forgive us if we do not love it enough. Thank you for the rain. And for the chance to wake up in three hours and go fishing: I thank you for that now, because I won't feel so thankful then."

Garrison Keillor



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 (note: this site requires a minimum of 12 items)

THE FLY REEL

By Louis Cahill

What makes a fly reel worth the money?



Photo by Louis Cahill

I received this email the other day from my good friend Brian Boggs.

“Louis, I’m looking for the right four-wt reel. I am of a mind to shop the low end for reels since I don’t catch large fish that need to be fought on the reel. Is there any reason to not just buy a cheapie and get on with the fishing? How much difference does the reel make anyway? I think of it as line storage and little else.”

It always makes me a little crazy to hear that ‘line storage’ remark. I don’t know who started it, but they did a disservice to a great many anglers. Hearing it from Brian made me especially nuts. Brian, you see, is a man with a very specific skill set.

You may not be aware that there is a subculture among us who are devotees of an ancient art form, so ubiquitous that most of us take it completely for granted. These folks, craftsmen and collectors alike, obsess over the minutiae of this endeavor to the point of needing serious therapy. I am not even kidding. [Brian Boggs](#) is a chair maker.



Boggs Rocker

I realize that means very little to most folks, but to the initiated its a title like Captain or Reverend. And Brian Boggs is not just any chair maker. Since the death of Sam Maloof, in 2009, many people consider Brian the greatest living chair maker. He makes chairs for which the owner is measured to one sixteenth of an inch before

construction. They are so comfortable it makes you want to weep. He also designs exquisite, and outrageously expensive, hand tools for companies like Lie-Nielson. The man is brilliant, uncompromising and wildly obsessive. My answer to his question was simple.

“Yes Brian, a fly reel is line storage. In the same way that a chair is storage for your butt.”

After convincing Brian he should take his reel purchase more seriously, I decided to share what we discussed here. Fly reels are expensive and the design features that separate great reels from not-so-great reels are not always readily apparent. Especially if you are shopping online, as we do more and more. The reel is, however, a very important part of your set up, even when you think you’re not using it. It’s an important choice that is worth spending some of your time, and money.

Value

Before I get into the features of fly reels and why they matter I’d like to make a point about value. Lots of anglers have a hard time dropping a wad of cash on a reel, especially after buying an expensive rod. I know, I’m

a cheap bastard myself. Consider a few things about that expensive reel, though.

If you are like me, you have more than a lot of rods. I’ll wager that, like me, you have more rods than reels. Each of my reels serves a couple of my rods. I buy extra spools to stretch their usefulness as far as possible. That way one reel may serve a 3, 4 & 5 weight. If you think in terms of cost per set up, that cuts the price of the reel in thirds.

It is also worth pointing out that quality reels last. I have reels from Bauer and Orvis that I have fished hard for nearly twenty years. I have landed steelhead on hundred year old Hardys. That kind of service is worth some extra cash. Buy something you will stay happy with. You may not be catching big fish now, but you will. If you keep reading Gink and Gasoline that is.

Drag

Much is made of the power of a reel’s drag these days. Too much if you ask me. Most of the better reels today have drag systems that will lock down well past any practical application. Off the record, the designers of those reels will tell you exactly that. Modern drag systems could more accurately be called braking systems and that extra power invites overzealous anglers to break off fish. There is nothing wrong with having the power you need but there is such a thing as too much of a good thing and there is more to a drag than power.

The two things I look for in a drag system are smoothness (often referred to as start-up inertia) and the system’s ability to deal with foreign matter like sand and water. The problem with the drag systems in cheap reels is seldom the lack of enough drag but too much at the wrong time. A single grain of sand can cause a reel to lock up completely, ending in a lost fish. Water can cause the drag to hydroplane. This results in a free turning spool, allowing the fish to build momentum, until the water is burned away by heat, at which point there is an abrupt stop. Another fish is lost.

Sealed drag systems are great for dealing with contaminants. The problem is that you can’t get to them for maintenance. A good sealed drag system is maintenance-free and will last many years but a poorly designed one is no bargain. There is nothing wrong with a well designed cork drag but they do require maintenance. If they are not clean and greased, they’re trouble.

Weight

Rod designers have done a great job of producing lightweight, high performance graphite rods in recent years. It’s put a lot of pressure on reel designers to keep up. It’s much easier, and cheaper to make a heavy reel but a heavy reel on a lightweight rod puts the system out of balance. Fishing a rod that is out of balance causes

fatigue. This fatigue not only makes your day unpleasant but affects your performance. As muscles become fatigued and painful they lose the fine motor control required for casting. That's what I mean when I say a reel is important, even when you think you're not using it. A cheap reel may be storing your line and making you a poor caster at the same time.

Arbor Design

A good reel has a thoughtfully designed arbor. I like large arbors which take up line quickly and help the line relax by keeping it in a more gentle curve. This puts less stress on the connection of the coating to the core and doesn't train the line into tight curls. A well designed arbor also allows air to pass through, letting your line and backing dry. This dramatically improves the life of your line and backing.

Fit and finish

It seems like a small thing, but fit and finish are key to a reel the performs under pressure. I had a reel once with a handle that sat just high enough off the frame to trap the line. I can't tell you how many fish that reel lost me. The groove where the spool meets the frame is another place that can trap line and cause havoc. A fly line can always be trusted to find trouble, it doesn't need any help from your reel. Finish is important too. Sharp edges can cut line and skin.

These are a few of the things I consider when shopping for a reel. If it costs me a little more to have them, I'm willing to spend the money on a reel that I know I will love fishing for years to come. That said, like I told my buddy Brian, don't let money keep you off the water. It's better that you are out fishing than not. Still, we are out there to catch fish and if your reel is getting in the way it's going to affect the quality of your experience. That's the last thing you want.

Louis Cahill

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Tight Lines & Road Kill

Formula 1 Racers and Fly Rods

I have long been enamored with Formula 1 racers. They are some of the most amazingly engineered machines ever devised. The teams that run them spend hundreds of millions of dollars each year designing and racing just one car. They spend about \$9 million just on brakes! If I could have one totally ridiculous, unachievable wish in life, it would be to drive one.

In the August issue of *Road & Track*, one of the writers gets to drive a 2007 F1 car owned by a private collector and pens a great article about his experience. These cars are shorter than I am tall and weigh only about 1300+ pounds. They sound like a blender because the engines turn at about 19000 RPM. The displacement is only 2.4 liters, smaller than most of the cars you see on the highway, yet they turn out about 700 horsepower. That's not really all that much in the world of racing, but it's pretty impressive for an engine that only weighs 209 pounds! The tolerance of the bearings is so close that the engine has to be heated to operating temps before it can even be started!

The most amazing feature to my uneducated brain, however, is the aerodynamics. Shape is everything! They spend countless hours in wind tunnels. The carbon fiber bodies have small vanes attached in critical places to fine tune the airflow. Bottom line: with the total airflow, shape and wings, they produce downforce at 160 mph about two and a half times the total weight of the car. Put another way, that's enough downforce that if there were a track where it could get up to speed and then become inverted, **THE THING COULD RUN UPSIDE DOWN!!!**

So, what's all that have to do with a fly rod? Most would say that they're both made of space-age carbon fiber and nothing else. I think there are plenty of other comparisons. For one thing, fly rods have achieved an analogous reduction in weight over the past 30-40 years I've been holding one. Modern fly rods are merely a gossamer wisp of those of the past. Improvements in graphite technology have allowed much less carbon to become much stronger.

Like the F1 racer, however, the most remarkable advancement in fly rods has to do with shape. Shape is everything here too. If you don't know, most fly rods are hollow tubes of carbon fiber that taper to a finer diameter as they progress toward the tip. My very first fly rod had about the same thickness of graphite over its entire length, and the taper was flat or level, meaning it was unchanged throughout, like drawing two lines with a ruler tapering to a point.

Fly rod design revolution came about by learning to engineer the shape – just like the F1 racer. In today's fine rods the thickness of the graphite changes in various areas of the rod. More importantly, compound tapers are now used in top-quality rods. Simply put, the slope of the taper changes over the span of the rod. These two factors have produced incredible changes in how a rod loads and casts a line. The feel in your hand is night and day compared to rods of decades ago.

I'm pretty sure I'll never get to drive an F1, but I do drive some amazing line-casting machines. Their advances have probably been comparable to those of the racing machines. They don't give these rods away, but I'm lucky I can afford one. I couldn't afford the air in the F1's tires (actually, pure nitrogen)! Still, if you know someone who had an old F1 racer sitting around, I'd love to drive one. I'll be glad to buy my gas – assuming I can get a loan.

By Joel Miller

DRY FLY ON A TENKARA

If you've been following the newsletter the last few months you will know I have two goals for this year. I received a Tenkara rod for Christmas and hope to learn to use it this year. Also, I want to get up to the mountains and do some fishing for wild trout. Well this month I had a chance to do both.

Someone had posted on Facebook that Dutch Creek near Valle Crucis was a good place to try for wild trout. I headed up and drove to the head of the creek. I discovered two things: 1) Dutch creek follows the road almost all the way up to the headwater and most of it is in people's front yards. 2) It's basically a pile of large rocks with water trickling through and perhaps a small pool every 50'. I fish in the mountains for the secluded scenery and I'm too old to be a rock hopper, so I passed on Dutch Creek. From there I headed up to the Blue Ridge and ended up at the Boone Fork below the Price Park picnic area.

I've read many articles saying that wild trout in small streams are voracious feeders and fishing a dry fly is often the best tactic for catching them. So I rigged up my Tenkara rod with the furred leader that came with it and about 2' of fluoro tippet (that was stupid and I should have known better as fluoro sinks) and a stimulator dry fly.

Boone Fork below the park is a reasonably sized stream and fairly easy to wade, but it is a typical small mountain stream with brush crowding the sides and trees overhanging the deeper pools on the curves. To get to the pools you need a low side arm cast with an incomplete back cast due to the brush behind you. I have had reasonable success doing this with nymphs since they are generally weighted and will carry the line, but a light weight dry fly just won't do it. I struggled, but managed to have limited success and caught a chub and a mud bass.

The other thing I discovered was that the furred leader and fluoro tippet (my stupidity) were sinking and taking my fly down with it. As you fish, the furred leader begins to trap water and sinks even more. Even if I had used nylon tippet the rig would have pulled the fly under water.

When I got home I posted my issues on the Appalachian Tenkara Anglers Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/appalachiantenkaraanglers/>.

I got very quick and helpful results from the page members. The most important suggestion is to trade out the furred leader for a regular fly line. As with standard fly fishing, the line will cast the fly. And of course the other suggestion is to use a nylon tippet. The recommendation was to use a 2-3 wt fly line. Another suggestion I found interesting was if you have a regular weight forward line was to cut off a section of the fine butt and then the use rest on your fly reel. Others suggested that dry fly leaders are available from the major Tenkara dealers.

I've got all the parts I need to re-rig my Tenkara rod, so in the next few weeks I'll head up to the mountains to a new stream I have learned about that has recently been researched with reports of trout. If you ask, I will share the results of

how the modified rig works, but if I catch trout you won't be hearing the name of the new creek.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Summer Fly Fishing

My Favorite Grasshopper Fly Patterns

BY TIM ROMANO AUGUST 21, 2015
FIELD & STREAM MAGAZINE



It's the "magic month" when grasshopper fishing is at a peak in most regions. There's nothing quite like watching that slow, deliberate rise when a big brown trout tracks and eventually snarfs down a juicy "T-Bone." I've always loved dry-fly fishing with grasshopper patterns more than any other type of dry fly fishing.

But my preferences in specific grasshopper patterns has evolved over the years. When I first started out, I was partial to Josephine Sedlecky-Borsum's hopper patterns from Ed's Sport Shop in Baldwin, Michigan. They're still among my favorites, but I can't tie them as well as Jo did. They don't really look much like a true grasshopper at all, and they don't float that well in lumpy water, but most trout will not let this bug drift by them if it's presented right.

I also like Whit's Hopper and Dave's Hopper. Dave Whitlock is a genius. I found that the more a Whit's hopper got bit on a Montana river, and the rattier it got, the better it worked. I would trade my friends new flies for their beat up old ones.

I do indeed believe that hints of red, on the tail or tips of the legs of some grasshopper fly patterns enhance their effectiveness. I have no idea why.

Of course, many grasshopper flies aren't complete these days without rubber legs. We can thank the Turk's Tarantula, and the Madame X for that. I think Jack Dennis' Amy's Ant is probably the most versatile, go-anywhere hopper pattern ever made.

Foam, of course, changed everything. One has to love the Barr/Craven Hopper, especially as the top fly in a dry-dropper rig. And the Chernobyl Ant is the bomb, though I think the pink ones are overrated, except in the Driftless Area

of Wisconsin. I would not fish there during this time of year without them.

Eventually, it seemed like the grasshopper fly design contest turned into a race to make the ugliest, gaudiest bugs that float. Thing is, I have found that trout don't always like those extravagant concoctions. In fact, some of the most realistic looking representations of grasshoppers are the least effective flies, in my experience.

I'm gradually becoming more and more of a believer in the "less is more" theory. Many times when I'm hopper fishing these days, I'll use a simple XL, tan, foam elk hair caddis, like those tied by Stu Tripney. I might trim the hair wing back a little bit, but it's the plain foam tan body with some palmered hackle that the fish like, and that's all I need.

Another caddis fly that doubles well in hopper season is the Goddard Caddis, size #10.

And when I fish a Chernobyl Ant, it's usually a size #10 or #12, simple black, with rubber legs (clipped back a bit) and a tiny fleck of orange on the back so I can spot it. That's a good bug for partly cloudy days.

The one thing I would say is that if your hopper fly pattern clearly gains the attention of a trout, but gets refused, switch it right then. Don't make a second cast with a refused hopper. And wait between casts. Eventually you'll land on something they can't refuse, and more often than not, what they really want is a good drift.

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

Summertime Nymphing Practice When it's too Warm for Trout

By Brandon Harrison



We all know that the warmer water temps of June and July bring an end to most trout fishing in the South East, and most of us know a few places to go up high in elevation that gets us through into July. Above 3500 feet the water still runs cool, most days staying below 67 degrees, and dry fly fishing is quite fun. But if you are a hard core Euronympher or even just looking to learn about it and DH water isn't yet ready for good practice we have a glorious solution at hand.

Somewhere around late to mid-April you will start seeing smallmouth bass get active chasing streamers and even eating brightly colored "junk flies". These fish range from a few ounces to 3-4# range in many trout streams and a little further down where the pools slow and the water flattens out it isn't uncommon at all to see 4 or even 5 pound fish patrolling the deepest dark water. Smallmouth can be fly fished for with a number of patterns, but large heavy Nymphs and small deep running streamers are two of my favorites. Standard trout fishing for nymphs might involve an indicator, but for creek bass this will spook more fish than it will catch and lead to frustration as the fish hold in very tight brushy locations. Here is where the Czech nymphing comes into play. One of the different varying Euronymphing techniques, Czech Nymphing allows us to make 15-40 foot casts with a weighted fly and immediately run tight for a relatively drag free drift. We can also approach deeper pools and get great strike detection.



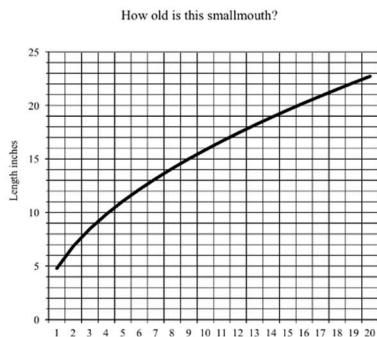
Running a sighter (0-3x) at the end of a 12' 3x leader with a 2 mm tippet ring and 4-5x tippet is fairly easy to set up and can be run on anything from a 9' 5 wt. with a soft tip to the standard 10-11' 3 wt. nymphing rods. My preferred rod is a 10'6" 3 wt. MastrNymph since its extremely fast recovery allows me to immediately be in control and ready to set the hook after a cast. The extra length gives good reach, and the soft tip makes even the smallest green sunfish or pumpkin seed strong. This rod is by far the strongest 3 wt. rod I have ever seen and is up to the task of 26" plus wild trout as well as any 3-4# smallmouth. It is important to have a lot of length as the casting style is much like short range gunning of streamers under brush. Water hauls and shooting 5-15' of line is mostly the technique.

Most days the fishing gets hot with the sun and fish are likely to be holding behind any structure or even out in shallow calm pockets. Look for the greenish backed fish with a dark tip on the tail and lighter color fins. Wearing polarized glasses greatly assists the fly fishermen in seeing takes as well as hidden fish. My favorite patterns are a 1/32 oz. jigging streamer in black with green flash or a large girdle bug with a 4-5mm tungsten bead. I keep an extra reel in my pack with a floating line to match the rod for foam bugs on large long slack pools.

Flash is key for the streamers and getting them to the bottom quickly so that they dart along toughing rocks. Smallmouth are extremely good and picking up prey so set on any bump at all especially if you see the fish's gills flare close to your fly.

Bi-Catch includes Pumpkin Seed, Green Sunfish, Rock Bass, the occasional chub, spotted bass in some drainages, and even some trout are still around. On a recent trip I just got my personal best Blue Gill which no doubt had washed in from a pond somewhere during a flood, at well over 11" and covering all of my out-stretched fingers it was quite a treat.

Try this in or below Delayed Harvest Water or do like I do and just ride around asking permission. Once a group or two of kayakers have passed the fishing gets markedly slow as the boat traffic definitely spooks the fish. For reference of what kind of trophy a 2 pound creek bass is I have included a chart that show just how slow these fish grow, and while they taste very good, please put them back as they are more fun to catch than eat.



Tight lines and see you on the river.

If interested in a guided wade trip or a float for Smallmouth Bass send me a message. I love to share the fun. bharrisonflyfishing@gmail.com

TACTICAL NYMPHING

Tactical nymphing is a project whose goal is to distill the secrets of success behind history's most effective fly fishing methods. It starts with outlining a set of fundamental fish-catching elements. These elements form the "tactics" in tactical nymphing. To trick fish, the angler uses five discrete tactics to formulate an on-the-water strategy.

Tactical nymphing is a way of thinking about your fly fishing. Tactical nymphing is not one particular rod, rig, fly, or method for fly fishing. In fact, it incorporates common elements shared by many different rigs and methods. Similarly, tactical nymphing is not the absolute answer to all of your angling needs. In fact, we argue there are no absolutes, no definitive solutions, no right and wrong ways in fly fishing.

The tactical nymphing project is also not complete. In fact, as long as there are more fish to catch, more waters to fish, and new days to do it the project will never end. We hope the tactical nymphing project reminds us anglers there is always more to observe and experience. There is always more to learn. That's what we like about fly fishing.

The tactical nymphing project is something I just stumbled across on the internet recently and I think maybe the engineer in me embraced it as a great way to think about fly fishing. I won't go into great depth here about the project. I just want to share a few highlights and why I believe it is something all of us need to use as a basis for our tactics on the river. If you want to study this in more depth, you'll find it on the internet at <https://tacticalnymphing.org/>

The study identified five tactics that will help you to catch more fish. Here is what they found:

Lightweight. A lightweight rig allows us to maintain ideal presentation with minimal effort. A lightweight line can be held off the water at greater distance. This feeds stealth and contact tactics. The result is improved fly control, strike detection, and hook set. Lightweight flies are animated by the current in a natural manner, further improving presentation. A lightweight rig allows complex casting without fatigue. A lightweight

angler, carrying only those items that fit the day's strategy, is also more efficient on the water.

Low Profile. A low profile rig has less surface area to create drag. A low profile rig is less prone to being pushed around by a breeze or varying currents. Low profile rigs pierce surface tension with minimal disturbance and invade the water column with minimal resistance. Low profile rigs allow lighter flies to reach a desired depth faster. This feeds lightweight, stealth, and contact tactics. The result is improved casting, fly control, strike detection, and hook set. An angler who maintains a low profile on the water also greatly enhances stealth.

Dense. Density ensures sufficient mass is maintained in a low profile rig to effect the desired presentation throughout the entire water column. A certain amount of mass is necessary to cast lines and sink flies. Thoughtful application of density provides the necessary mass without compromising lightweight, low profile tactics. Our time on the water should also be dense. The best anglers maintain focus. Every cast counts, and every action has a purpose. The best anglers make the most of their time on the water.

Stealth. Stealth is the soul of the five tactics. To trick fish, we have to interact with the underwater world without being recognized as a threat. The more we can do to improve stealth, the more fish we stand to catch. Stealth makes us better anglers in other ways as well. Stealth rolls into Leave No Trace conservation ethics, and is a good way to approach streamside manners, too. We don't want the fish to know we've been there, and we don't want anybody else to know either. Stealth is how we preserve the game of fly fishing.

Contact. Contact is the heart of the five tactics. Maximizing contact between ourselves and the fly ensures effective fly fishing. In general, contact involves eliminating anything that might interfere with our ability to sense what is happening with our fly. The best anglers use all their senses to maximize contact – physical touch, visual contact, sound, even taste and smell come into play at times. Contact results in improved casting, optimized fly control, strike detection, hook set, and more. Contact also reminds us to remain close to the world of fly fishing. We learn by engaging with the natural world. The more we maintain contact, the more we learn about the world, the better we become at tricking fish, and the more fun we have doing it.

The study goes on to discuss the elements used in fly fishing of rod, line, fly, rigging, and the angler and how the five tactics affect each of these. It caused me to think about several of the tactics I have decided are the best way to approach nymphing. As an example, I have decided through a lot of research that a weight forward line is the right thing to use. After reviewing these principles I find it violates at least three of them. It is not lightweight, it does not have a low profile, the heavier weight causes more slap on the water which reduces stealth. I'm also rethinking the weight I add to most of my nymphs. The density is likely causing them to look less natural. I'm right in thinking I need the weight to get it down, but perhaps it would be better to weight the line rather than the fly.

As you read through the analysis of each component, you'll perhaps find some new insights into how you fish nymphs and many of these things will carry over to how you are fishing dry flies as well. Take some time to check out this website. I think you'll find it can go a long way in making you a better nymphmer.

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ADVICE FROM THE VISE



Welcome to August's Advice from the Vise. I thought I would keep up the terrestrial theme as the trout and the warm water species are gorging on big bugs in preparation for the coming autumn. As a native of the Keystone State, this is one fly that was pretty popular and very productive on the limestones but is every bit gobbled up in our free stone waters. Ed Shenk is credited with the Letort Hopper, and it remains one of my confidence flies during the summer. With deference to Mr. Shenk, this variant of the original will use a strip of foam in place of a dubbing body, just to add some extra float power.

For this pattern I prefer Razor Foam. It's the thinnest available and gives you some options in tying a taper and even combining offsetting colors (like yellow and brown) on your body. Yellow seems to be the go-to color in WNC. I use the 1mm for 10-12 hook sizes and .5mm thickness for smaller flies. This is a pretty straightforward simple pattern without a lot of extras. We will be using turkey tail, and deer hair to finish off the fly.



Turkey tail or even wing feathers will also work for this fly and are pretty easy to obtain if you or someone you know hunts. I substitute turkey tail for pheasant in several patterns with no real noticeable difference other than turkey is a bit fuzzier and longer fibers to wrap. In this pattern, I use

a tail feather I have coated with a thin layer of silicon sealant thinned out with some mineral spirits and brushed on. The result is a waterproof wing that holds together under the thread. You can also use any spray on fixative that stays flexible, and even coating with SHAN will work as well. I do an entire feather, and it lasts a good long while.

We are going to leave bare hook about 2-3 eye lengths from the eye to spin the deer hair head. I would recommend a video for that, and like always, there are several videos on this pattern that will provide great instruction.

Spinning deer hair is one of those things that takes multiple tries to master. It can be pretty frustrating. Conceptually, you want to put the slick hollow fibers on a hook with a couple loose wraps. When you pull them tight, you crush the hollow hair and cause it to spin and flare out circumferentially around the hook. Then that gets clipped and groomed down to form a highly buoyant head on this fly. Spun deer hair can be used for popper and floating bass bugs. Some of the

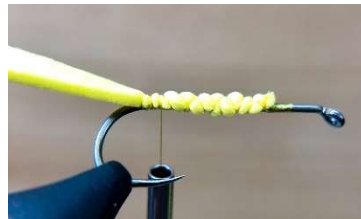
mosaic patterns the tyers that are practiced in this art create with multiple colors of hair are really works of art on the bigger flies.



These hoppers can be tied smaller than some patterns, but typically in a #10-14, I've tied them to an 18, and they make a dandy blue line bug. Hook is a 3XL streamer hook in size 12 for pictures sake, but curved nymph like the Firehole 720 in 10 or smaller looks great. The body is yellow razor foam strip about 1/8 inch wide by 3-5" long. 6/0 hopper yellow thread, or tan will be fine. The only thread showing on this will be the finish, so black, olive or brown would work just fine.



Dress with a gap in the front and take the thread to the bend and back to the tie in point.



Tie in the foam strip to the bend and return the bobbin to the tie in point.



Wrap the foam leaving just a slight lap for segmentation, then counterwrap your thread up the body for durability then to the top and capture the foam, removing the tag and tidying up. I find it helpful to put use some English hackle pliers to counterweight the foam while counter wrapping.



With the turkey tail, trim a segment about twice as wide as the body. I round the end, fit it across the top of the fly so the wing lies flat and parallel to the body and extends a touch off the body even with the bend of the hook.





The collar is stacked deer hair. Snip off a clump of deer hair that will be enough to form a collar around the fly. Using a hair stacker, get the fuzzies out of the butt ends and place the clump tips down in your hair stacker. Once your clump has even tips, place the clump on top and slightly around the tie in point and with two loose wraps, pull the third tighter flaring the hair out.



You should be left with a nice collar and a mess in the front. Don't worry, here comes the magic! Pull those long fibers back and put in a couple wraps.



Take another clump, purge the fuzzies and stack it. This time trim the fine tips off the clump, secure it to the hook shank with two loose wraps and tighten the third. The hair will slip and spin around when you pull tighter. Run a few wraps through the hairs to ensure you have a good pack of the hair.



Push these fibers back with your best tool (thumbnail) and clear the eye. I clip these, but a safety razor blade will make a nice job of the round head. Carefully trim the shorter head fibers close to the hook shank and you will see the head begin to form. Channel your inner artist or Edward Scissorhands to style the head. Once you are happy, whip finish with a touch of head cement.



You now have a great floating fly that should serve you well into the October stocking season. Use black on this fly and call it a cricket. I keep these in all sizes in my summer box. It's

not as sexy as some of the other hopper patterns but it catches fish. If fishing in slower water, the dubbing body works well, as it seems to lie just a little more below the surface film. Skate it, twitch it, give it some action and strikes should come, and they are usually pretty explosive.

Hope this one gets you back on the summer water. As always I'd love to hear your feedback and I'm always happy to answer any and all questions, give a lesson, or just talk fly fishing. Don't hesitate to contact me at jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com or check out some of my current ties on Facebook at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Dave Everhart

PLEASE SAY A PRAYER FOR SUSAN

Our chapter secretary, Susan Anderson, recently contracted a severe neurological disorder that has put her in the hospital with paralysis. It is an extremely rare issue, but fortunately is reported to be curable, although through many months of therapy. Please keep her in your prayers for a speedy and complete recovery. If you would like to send her a card, her address is 4410 Claralee Ln, Hickory, NC 28602.

EAGLE ROCK CAMP

The fall retreat is scheduled for the week of October 27 with the fly fishing day on October 31. Please mark your calendars to come and help out the veterans and their families.

CASTING CAROLINAS

Casting Carolinas is a free program for women cancer survivors. The fall retreat is scheduled for October 11-13 at Lake Logan in Canton, NC. Fly casting volunteers will be needed on the 13th. To apply for the retreat or to volunteer to help out, sign up at www.castingcarolinas.com.

REEL RECOVERY EVENT FOR MEN LIVING WITH CANCER

REEL RECOVERY is a national non-profit organization that conducts fly-fishing retreats for men living with all forms of cancer. Our purpose is to help men in the recovery process by sharing with them the healing powers of the sport of fly-fishing, while providing a safe, supportive environment

to explore their personal experiences with cancer, with others who share their stories. Retreats are offered at no cost to the participants and are led by professional facilitators and expert fly-fishing instructors. Reel Recovery provides all meals, lodging and fly-fishing equipment, and no previous fishing experience is required. A maximum of 14 men are invited to participate.

The Retreat Starts: 4:00 PM Sunday September 29

The Retreat Ends: 2:00 PM Tuesday, October 1

Primary Service Area: N. Carolina, S. Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia

Eligibility: Men living with cancer

To apply for this event, please fill out and submit:

Retreat Application Form

<http://reelrecovery.org/programs/application/>

Medical Release Form

<http://reelrecovery.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Medical-Release-Form.pdf>



HELP US TO RAISE \$80,000 BY AUGUST 31

Three generous donors have pledged to match up to \$40,000 during this campaign.

Gifts made between now and August 31 will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling your impact and helping us reach our \$80,000 goal!

To make a donation, visit:

<https://foothillsconservancy.org/donate/>

COME VISIT OUR FACEBOOK

I follow a dozen different fly fishing blogs and post many of them on our Facebook page. Many of these articles are too long to include in the newsletter so never make it here. Recently I posted a blog on fly fishing for big bluegill. It turned out to be one of the most followed posts we've ever had. There are also posts on targeting fish in small streams, how to tie a Tenkara fly, and even a bit of humor thrown in. Please visit our page at: <https://www.facebook.com/nwctu/> and be sure to like and follow the page so you will be kept up to date on the latest posts.

CHAPTER WEBSITE

For those of you who may want to give wild trout fishing a go this summer we have added a video of *How to Fish a Small Mountain Stream* on our website page that includes the nearby wild trout stream maps. <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/nc-wild-trout-streams/>

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS INVITED

I'm sure many of you will be taking trips to Montana, Alaska, the Bahamas or many other places this year. Take some great photos, put some words to them 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 for consideration of publication.

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