

Hickory, Table Rock, High Country Trout Unlimited January 2026 Newsletter



Welcome to

AI. I asked my son to go to his AI program and give me a photo of a trout celebrating the new year.

It's the beginning of a new year and time to think about your resolutions. How about this year you think about making yourself a better fly fisher and how you can give back what the sport has given to you. The first article in the newsletter is a suggestion of 9 resolutions to consider. One of those is giving to a good cause. There are many opportunities in the coming year for you to make a donation of your time or some money. These include groups that support veterans, cancer patients, disadvantaged kids, and teaching conservation to kids like Trout in the Classroom. A major program that has started locally is the Tie-a-Thon that supplies flies to these groups. A major contribution of your time is to attend the many stream clean and river reclamation projects that help restore and improve the rivers we fish. The August and September newsletters last year name and describe many of these groups. You can see these newsletters at [Home - Past Newsletters](#). In addition, you need to check the newsletter each month for upcoming events.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year and Great Fishing

HICKORY TU

When: Wednesday, January 21st, 6 PM

Where: Old Hickory Station

232 Government Ave. SW, Hickory

Who: Thomas Johnson, NCWRC

What: Status of NC Hatcheries and Stocking

Please take some time to go through your fishing equipment to see if there are things in good condition that you no longer need and bring them to the meeting to share in the monthly raffle.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Live staking and Tree Planting Workday with NCWF's High Country Wild Chapter Valle Crucis Community Park, 2892 Broadstone Rd, Banner Elk, January 8th. Noon to 3 PM
[Details](#)

Clean-up at Chimney Rock Village River Park, January 9th 10AM-1PM, 195 Main Street Chimney Rock [Details](#)

25th annual Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival Jan 9-10 in Doswell, VA For details and to buy tickets visit [Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival](#)

Tree planting at Green Valley Park in Todd, Saturday, Jan 17th 10 AM at 3896 Big Hill Road, Todd, NC 28684. We'll be planting 250 trees. Please bring shovels and work gloves; if you have an auger to lend, let us know. Bring your own lunch. [SignUP](#)

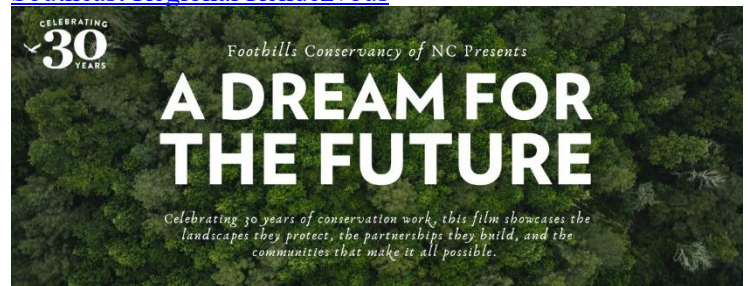
Tie for a Cause, Jan 17th, Patterson School, 4646 Patterson School Drive, Lenoir 28645. We will be tying flies for the national Tie-a-Thon organization that donates flies to organizations throughout the US. The flies we tie are [Walt's Worm](#), [Y2K](#), [Squirmy](#), [Egg Fly](#). The second Tie-a-Thon will be February 21st at Patterson. We need a head count for lunch, so if you are coming, please RSVP to theflytyingsanta24@gmail.com.

Live staking and Tree Planting Workday, Valle Crucis, Jan 19th. For details and location see [Details](#)

Tree planting at Watauga High School along Hardin Creek in Boone, NC on Saturday, January 24th. (Should weather be an issue, a back up date of January 31st) Get details at [Details](#).

Atlanta Fly Fishing Show Cancelled for 2026

2026 Southeast Regional Rendezvous, March 13-15. YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly, Black Mountain, NC. They are now taking reservations for limited rooms at the conference. If you live within driving distance, sale of daily attendance at a modest fee will be available in the coming months. [2026 Southeast Regional Rendezvous](#)



On January 15th at 6 PM, Foothills Conservancy is celebrating it's 30th anniversary by presenting a film about their

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to HkyNCTU@gmail.com and let us know.

30 year history of land and water conservation across western North Carolina. The film will be held at the CoMMA Performing Arts Center, 401 S. College St, Morganton. Tickets are free. Reserve your ticket at [Tickets](#).

Note: If your organization has an upcoming event and would like it in the newsletter, send it to HkyNCTU@gmail.org.

NCWRC FLY FISHING CLASSES

<u>1/7/2026 - Entomology for Anglers- Virtual</u>
<u>1/10/2026 - Beginning Fly-Tying Workshop Lenoir - Patterson School</u>
<u>1/14/2026 - Fly-fishing Basics: Nymphing 101- Virtual</u>
<u>1/15/2026 - Intermediate Fly-tying Workshop - Morganton</u>
<u>1/21/2026 - Fly-fishing Basics: Understanding and Selecting Fly-fishing Equipment - Virtual</u>

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Fly fishing teaches us that, sometimes in life there must be things we patiently wait for." ...unknown author



FISH UNTAMED

9 FLY FISHING NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Just for Fun

Every year, people make New Year's Resolutions to go to the gym, eat better, read more, and save money. And, every year, those same people give up on their resolutions after a few months because most resolutions aren't fun.

What if New Year's Resolutions were for things we *liked* doing, though? This year, I thought it'd be fun to come up with a few fly fishing resolutions and goals. They're meant to be enjoyable, not a chore. This means that they may actually be achievable, and will lead to happy, healthy, and successful anglers.

Here are some ideas for fly fishing resolutions and goals to aim for this coming year.

1. Switch presentations before flies

After a few casts in a run with no fish, it's easy to get frustrated and blame the fly. While switching flies in this scenario could change your odds for the better, the more likely culprit for a lack of fish is presentation. Many times, fish won't be that picky about the actual bug. They may, however, want that bug essentially served to them on a silver platter.

Changing techniques is frequently more effective than changing flies, and can also be quicker and easier. Instead of retying every fly on a nymph rig, it may be as simple as moving an indicator or adding some split shot. Even easier, try getting a more drag-free drift. If you've exhausted presentation styles and still aren't getting anything, a fly change might be the answer.

This year, make a resolution to try a new presentation before switching flies. As tempting as new flies always are, you may be rewarded with half the effort.

2. Have good etiquette

Nothing ruins a day of fishing faster than a stranger walking through your run, fishing right on top of you, or generally being obnoxious. While we like to think we're never the bad guy, it's easy to fall prey to showing bad etiquette at times.

Maybe you show up to "your run" and there's already someone there. Even though the right thing to do is fish somewhere else, it can be tempting to try and squeeze in. Alternatively, you may be in a drift boat on course to cross a wading angler's path, and need to decide between just following the current and rowing to give him space.

It's easy to be an asshole when you're not avoiding being one, so this year, consider making a conscious effort to have good etiquette on the water. Your fellow fly fishermen will be grateful.

3. Treat fish well

You just caught the biggest fish of the day and want a photo. Even if you already made a resolution to have better angler etiquette, try to have good etiquette toward fish, too! No fish in its right mind wants a hook jammed through its lips, so the least we can do as anglers is treat them well once we've landed them.

Though the natural reaction may be to hoist the fish up and take a hundred photos of all its good angles, taking care of the fish once in the net will give it the best chance of survival (if you plan to release it). Making a New Year's Resolution to use barbless hooks, keep fish in the water, and spend time reviving them is a great way to keep the fishery healthy.

Check out [How to Handle Fish the Right Way](#) for more ideas for this resolution.

4. Be a better fish photographer

One of the most frustrating qualities I notice in fishing partners is an inability to take appealing photos of fish. I'm by no means a photography expert, but I know a bad fish photo when I see one.

It doesn't take an expensive camera, technical knowledge, or a photography class to get good-looking photos, so making a New Year's resolution to try being a better photographer for your pals is definitely achievable.

The things I notice most often (which all happen to be very easy to fix) are focusing on a person's face instead of the fish, having the sun at a bad angle, and taking the picture down over a crouching angler.

If you're using a smartphone, which is likely, the camera may automatically sense a face and focus on it. This leaves the outstretched fish blurry. Tapping on the screen to make sure the fish is in focus will greatly improve the photo.

Angles are also very easy to fix. There isn't necessarily a single correct angle to have the sun, since different angles will produce different effects, but not paying attention to the sun at all is definitely a mistake. If you aren't sure what angle is best for the effect you're after, or aren't sure what's best for that time of day, the easy fix is to take the photo from several different angles. Then, you can pick your favorite afterward.

Getting down in line with the fish is a good way to up your photo game.

Probably my biggest camera pet peeve is when the photographer stands upright and takes a photo down on a crouching fisherman. Not that this can never work, but I find that the

photo almost always looks better when the photographer gets down to the same level as the angler. Once again, this is a super easy fix that can make a big difference.

For the new year, try resolving to be a better photographer for your buddies. With a couple quick tips, they can return the favor.

5. Start a fishing tradition

Something about having a tradition to look forward to makes nearly any activity more enjoyable. Fishing is no exception.

Some crews listen to the same type of music on their way to the river every time. Others take a shot of whiskey together while they put on waders. Meeting up for a beer afterward is probably one of the most common.

The beauty of these rituals, though, is that they can be whatever you want. If you don't already have a fishing tradition, consider making that a goal for the coming year. Not only will it give you something to look forward to every time you hit the water, it'll provide lasting memories that you and your friends can look back on and laugh about.



6. Try a new technique

It's easy to fall into the trap of continuing to use the same techniques that have always worked. This is a great way to catch fish if you have it dialed in, but part of the fun of fishing is being surprised by the unexpected.

There are constantly new flies, rods, and techniques being developed. Fishing styles that have been around for ages are gaining popularity, and even tactics that have been common for years are still new to someone who's never tried.

Spey casting, tenkara, and Euro nymphing are a few examples of methods you can try if you're getting bored with the same old dry-dropper rig. Even something as simple as tight-lining is fun for someone who's used to only using an indicator.

Consider a New Year's resolution to try a method outside your comfort zone. Not only will it give you something to practice, but it may be the only thing that works at times!

7. Catch a new species

Along the same lines as trying a new technique is catching a new species. This is a fun and often easy goal to achieve, and you'll probably become a more well-rounded angler along the way.

Catching a new species doesn't necessarily mean going to an exotic destination in search of taimen, dorado, marble trout, and the like. There are most likely new species to be caught within a few hours of home if you're willing to look.

If you feel like you're running out of new species to catch, you can edit this resolution in other ways. Maybe you've caught a brook trout, but never a brook trout in its native region. Maybe you've caught a catfish, but never a catfish on a fly rod. These resolutions are meant to be fun, so don't feel bad about altering them to fit what you're looking for.

The bonus to this one is that in targeting new species, you'll almost certainly learn a technique or two you didn't know before, and these may be applicable to species you catch all the time.

8. Show someone else how to fish

Once you have a lot of fish under your belt, it's fun to see the joy on someone else's face when they land their first fish.

There are a ton of people out there who would love to learn to fish (bring up fly fishing in nearly any group setting, and someone will likely mention that they've always wanted to try). Taking up fly fishing is an intimidating ordeal, though, and most people won't really give it a try unless someone shows them. Offering to give them a hand may be all they need to start down the path to a new lifelong passion.

This resolution is both satisfying for you and really helpful for someone else. Plus, you'll probably get a new fishing buddy!

9. Give to a good cause

Ideally, every time you bring a new angler into the world of fly fishing, you also bring one more person into the world of conservation. On that note, don't forget to make a resolution every year to put some time or money toward a good cause in the outdoor world.

Although this sounds like one of the loftier goals on the list (it doesn't necessarily involve *actual* fishing, which is the fun part), it doesn't take much to make a difference and is arguably the most important resolution you can make if you want to have clean and healthy waters to fish for years to come.

There are also a ton of options to fulfill this resolution. Joining or donating money to organizations like [Trout Unlimited](#) or [Backcountry Hunters and Anglers](#) helps protect what we love, and is also a great way to connect with likeminded individuals. Alternatively, go to a creek cleanup, participate in a fundraising event, or contact your representatives to encourage them to fight for conservation. These are just a few ways to help out even if you don't have the money to give.



ADVICE FROM THE VISE

Winter fishing is some of my favorite time to be on the water, and with some decent temperatures the fish are still active. I've had some great afternoons over the break and wet flies have been the ticket. Thought I would use one of my most productive, for this months article.

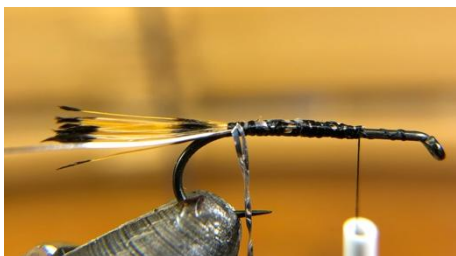
The Peter Ross is an old pattern from Scotland that was used in lakes and slow moving water called sloughs. I learned this one when I was in the UK, and recall it being called a "a lovely little fly". It took many fish for me there. With the lower water this year, there have been some very slow pools and so pulling this one out seemed a good idea. Turned out it was, the take was just second after the fly landed and went just below surface on almost every fish. With water temps below 40 I didn't have much expectation- but fishing this almost as a dry made for some nice fish on a cold day.



For the hook, this is a 2XL wet fly/nymph, but it can be tied on a shorter or even fished on a streamer hook. The tail is golden pheasant tippets- not a common tailing in the US, but it gives it that kind of exotic look. I've used standard pheasant tail with equal results. The rib is silver wire, the abdomen is silver tinsel, the thorax is red or claret dubbing, the wing is wood duck or gadwall, and a black hens hackle rounds off the collar.



Dress the hook from the eye to the bend and line up the tailing fibers and tie those in. Keep them long enough on the shank to form the foundation for the abdomen.



Tie in the tinsel and the ribbing wire, again the length of the abdomen to keep that level as possible.



Wrap the tinsel from the bend to about the $\frac{3}{4}$ mark, then back to the bend and forward and secure that in. That gives a tad more girth to the abdomen and natures coverage. Take wraps back to the $\frac{2}{3}$ mark as that will be the thorax.



Wax the thread and lightly dub the thread. The key here is sparse dubbing with lots of wraps to build up the thorax. (I think this was a hotspot-just way ahead of its time.)



Wrap the rib up and tie it off leaving space for the wing and hackle, and take some wraps to form a base for those.



Trim out some of the wood duck flank fibers and stroke them tougher to form the wing. I take it to just past the bed, about half the tail when sizing. Take some loose wraps to get it in place, then snug it in and trim the butts. These fibers tend to stick straight up with a lot of pressure, so tension management is important to get a nice angle. Start to build up the thread head to make an even foundation for the hackle.



Strip the fuzzies at the base of the hackle and tie in stem first, stroke back the fibers with each touching wrap, secure the tip and take some wraps to give the hackle a rearward sweep.



Build up a thread head, whip finish and touch it with a little UV black resin, and you have a dandy addition to your box for these slow winter days. Even though any day spent in waders is a great day, it is nice to have a fish in hand for your efforts.



Please don't hesitate to contact me at Jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com with questions or to just talk tying. Please follow along on Instagram check out some current ties @ Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Dave Everhart

SOUTHERN FLY TYERS GUILD



If you completed the online form for the Museum Fly Tyers Guild you are automatically considered to be a part of the Southern Fly Tyers Guild. The new name reflects the broader geographics of our fly tying community as well as welcoming fly tyers that focus not only coldwater but also on warmwater and saltwater fly patterns.

GUILD MEMBERSHIP IS FREE. Simply follow us on Facebook http://fb.me/g/p_wLBN1837748X2hAR/10A5qltN and complete a brief questionnaire to join. The Southern Fly Tyers Guild is a non-profit, volunteer led organization with shared skills, knowledge and a passion of fly tying and fly fishing.

We are still associated with the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians but we have a new home location, the Cap Wiese Fly Fishing Center which is officially the home of the Southern Fly Tyers Guild - located at the Patterson School campus, seven miles north of Lenoir (zip 28645) in Happy Valley, North Carolina (directions: Take US 321 to Cheeks Store, then right 4 miles on NC 268 to 4646 Patterson School Drive).

You may contact the Southern Fly Tyers Guild via e-mail Southernflytyersguild@gmail.com or the Patterson campus at (828) 394-9606. The Office Hours are Monday 10 am-2:30 pm, Tuesday/Thursday 10 am-5 pm, Wednesday/Friday 11 am-5 pm.

EVENTS - We schedule quarterly fly tying events at the Cap Wiese Fly Fishing Center. The guild and our sponsors provide lunch for all fly tyers willing to come a give a few hours to tying for a good cause and socializing with the best and most active fly tyers in the South. For the winter quarter we tie flies in both January and February as part of the national Tie-A-Thon. All fly materials are provided and the resulting flies are donated to the national organization to help other non-profit organizations that use fly fishing as a part of their mission. In each of the other quarters with tie and donate flies for specific named organization directly. During 2025, the guild tied and donated over 8,850 flies. As an annual fund raiser, the guild participates in the annual Patterson Alumni fund raiser event with demonstration fly tying which we promote as the Annual Sheep Fly Festival. We also promote the Maggie Valley Trout Festival and help supply demonstration fly tyers at that event.

EDUCATION - The North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission schedules a FREE monthly class related to fishing or fly fishing. There are over 40 class topics such as Fly Tying, Fly Rod Building, Fly Casting, Fly Fishing Tools, Fly Fishing Knot, Leader Making, Fly Fishing, Tenkara, Euro-Nymphing, Soft Lure Making, Kayak Angling and many more. Hosted by the Southern Fly Tyers Guild.



FLY FISHING REFERENCE LIBRARY - All fly fishing books donated to the museum are being cataloged and shelved in the Patterson campus library.

These books preserve the documented guidance and history of fly fishing and are available for reading, study and research while visiting the campus.

FLY FISHING MUSEUM EXHIBITS of the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians (Satellite Exhibits) are on display focusing on museum local "Stream Blazers that include Cap Wiese, Newland Saunders, Stanley Tuttle, Cato Holler, A J Johnson, Joe McDade, Bill Seehorn, James Todd, Raby Woods and Tony Woods.

FLY PATTERN TOUR - Thousands of ancient/origin, coldwater, salmon-steelhead, warmwater and saltwater fly patterns displayed throughout the campus.

HISTORIC FLY CASTING AND FISHING POND - Original pond that Cap Wiese demonstrated and taught fly casting.

HOST TO NON-PROFIT FLY FISHING ORGANIZATIONS - Invitation to Fly Fishing Groups and Board Retreats. The campus has Dorm facilities (single, double & quad rooms), an Outdoor Kitchen and dining or Catering, Primitive Camping Areas and a planned Camper Hookup Area, 1400 acres with hiking trails on Ripshin Mountain, a section of the Yadkin River for canoe/kayak fly fishing for smallmouth and trout and stocked trout waters. Organizations like Project Healing Waters (for veterans) and Wounded Warriors (for veterans) have established spring and fall outings which is celebrated as Heros for Heros. Conservation organizations like the FFI/Carolina Fly Fishers Club and Trout Unlimited Chapters and Councils

hold board retreats. Other supported organizations include: Casting Carolinas, Casting for Hope and Casting for Recovery (for women and recovering cancer patients), NCWF Chapters & Great Outdoors University, Scouting America - Fishing and Fly Fishing Merit Badges and the Mayfly Project (for foster children).

About the Patterson School campus



Founded in 1909 by Samuel L. Patterson (motto: *Dedicati nobis totis*; colors: Blue & Gold). The Patterson School was a private, non-profit, co-educational, non-denominational, multi-cultural boarding and day school for grades seven through twelve, and one year of post-secondary study. The legendary Caldwell County Fly Fishing Angler George Frank "Cap" Wiese (1900-1981) was School Headmaster 1936-1968.



"The Mission of the Patterson School Foundation is to provide educational opportunities with a strong commitment to environmental stewardship, sustainable agriculture, historical preservation, and our community. The Patterson School Foundation now owns and manages the wonderful property that was previously known as "The Patterson School", and it now offers a wide range of enriching educational opportunities to the community." CAP WIESE FLY FISHING CENTER LEADERSHIP - Be a Business Sponsors for one of the many campus projects, or an Anchor (\$1,000), or a Founder (\$500) or a Charter Member (\$100). Make donations to: PateronSchoolFoundation.org (memo: fly fishing) - A 501c3 charitable organization.

10 TIPS TO BE A BETTER FLY FISHER

Written by: Seth Berger, [Orvis Adventures](http://OrvisAdventures.com)



Travel Specialist Seth Berger with a gorgeous Kamchatka rainbow trout.

Orvis

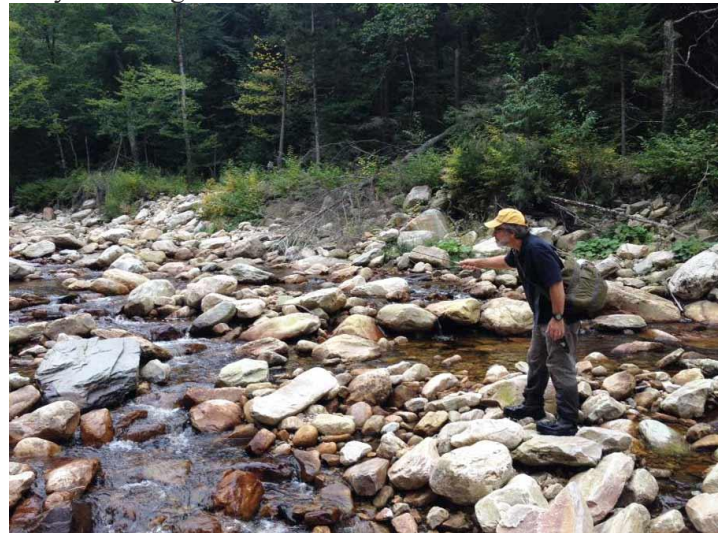
One of the great things about fly fishing is that you never stop learning. No matter how long you've been at it, there is always another technique, style, or fishery to explore. Every day, we offer tips and tactics that will help make you a better angler. Here are 10 such useful tips—from Tom Rosenbauer, Pete Kutzer, and Phil Monahan—to help you make the most of your time on the water.

1. How to Make a Delicate Presentation

The secret to a delicate presentation is in controlling the rod tip. If you drop the rod tip too early on the presentation cast, the fly line doesn't roll out completely and instead "crashes" to the surface. Instead, the rod tip should stop at or around eye level to let the loop roll out. Only then should you lower the rod tip. Tell yourself, "Stop, then drop," and you should get a better presentation. —Peter Kutzer

2. Fish Upstream in Small Water

Always work upstream, which gives you the advantage of approaching trout from the rear. Some folks take extreme stealth measures—crawling on hands and knees up to each pool—but if you simply crouch, avoid jerky movements, and keep your shadow off the water, you should be fine. Because you're working upstream, you can see the series of pools and runs ahead of you. Plan a course upstream that will put you in the best position to cast and avoid throwing your shadow on the water. A good small-stream angler is like a chess player, always thinking several moves ahead. —Phil Monahan



Tom Rosenbauer works upstream on a stream in Green Mountain National Forest.

3. How long a tippet do you use?

In my opinion nearly all tippet sections on knotless leaders are too short. They're designed to look good when you cast, but a 20-inch tippet leaves little room for changing flies, and it does not help with delicacy and drag reduction. I use a minimum of four feet for my tippet on leaders from 9 to 12 feet long, and I might go five feet on a 15-footer. For furled and braided leaders you can even go longer—they'll straighten a 6-foot tippet on a calm day. —Tom Rosenbauer

4. The Slip Strike

If you're heavy-handed and sometimes break off fish when striking with light tippets, you can use the slip strike, which uses only the friction of the fly line against the guides. As you raise the rod tip, don't pinch the line but make an O with the

thumb and forefinger of your line hand, letting the line slip through as you raise the rod tip. The tippet can't break because the tension on the line is so slight. —Tom Rosenbauer

5. How to Approach the Water

Before you wade in and start casting, stop well back from the water's edge and survey the pool. You may be able to see trout lying close to the bank. It's sometimes hard to figure out why trout choose certain spots that seem to offer no protection. Many times, I've seen big fish finning lazily in 8 inches of water, over a sandy bottom, well out of the main current on the inside of a bend. These are the fish that impatient anglers often never see. —Phil Monahan



Bass love to hide in lily pads.

9. On the Water Checklist

Fly-fishing is such a process oriented sport that it's easy to become fixated on the specific task at hand—whether it's drifting a dry fly along a fallen log or high-sticking a nymph rig through a riffle. But there are lots of other things an angler needs to pay attention to if he wants to be successful. How many times have you hooked and lost a fish, only to ask yourself, "When was the last time I checked that knot?" or "Why did the tippet break there?" Here's a brief checklist that every angler should run through periodically through the day.

Hook Point (every 10 casts): Is it sharp? Did you remember to crimp the barb? Is the point still there, or did you break it off on a rock behind you?

Fly (every 10 casts): Is it floating (or otherwise performing) as it should? Are all the parts still intact? Is there any schmutz (weeds, etc.) on it?

Tippet (every 10 casts): Are there any bad nicks that might weaken the test strength? Any wind-knots? A lot of abrasion from running over rocks?

Knots (every 10 casts): Do they look smooth and well tied? Give a little tug to check. And retie anything that looks suspicious.

Ferrules (every 25 casts): Are they properly seated? Are the rod sections aligned?

Fly Line (every 50 casts): Is it floating (or sinking) as it should? Are there any bad nicks in it?

Wading Position (as often as it changes): Are you in a safe spot, or have you accidentally wandered into trouble? Is the water rising? Are there any obstacles (fallen logs, holes, boulders) that will make getting out of the water difficult? Are there any really dangerous features—sweepers, waterfalls, etc.—you need to avoid if you do slip and fall?

Personal Health (hourly): Have you been drinking enough water? Are you wearing enough sunblock? Are you warm or cool enough? Are your legs getting too tired to wade in fast water? —Phil Monahan

10. Use Bigger Flies in High Water

This is not a time for match-the-hatch tactics. Conehead streamers that move a lot of water, big stonefly nymphs, or flashy attractors—such as Copper Johns—in sizes larger than you'd normally use will get a trout's attention in high water. Strangely enough, black is one of the best colors for dark-water fishing, although white and fluorescents often work well, too. Patterns that offer a lot of eye-catching motion are a plus. —Phil Monahan



Streamers with marabou and other materials that undulate the current work well on a dead drift.

6. Dead-Drifting a Streamer

One great tactic is dead-drifting a streamer along a bank that its profile is perpendicular to current. Use your line to control the fly, as you would when fishing a nymph. A high sticking technique works great when you want to drift the streamer along a cut bank or through a deep slot between two boulders. The advantage of a streamer in these situations is that the take is not subtle. When a trout attacks a baitfish, it almost always does so aggressively—no strike indicator necessary. —Phil Monahan

7. How to Cast in a Dangerous Crosswind

If the wind is blowing directly into your casting arm, turn around and face the other way. By turning around, you put your casting arm on the other side of your body, so the wind blows the line away from you. The trick is to cast normally, but lay out the presentation on the backcast. You'll need a little discipline to make sure you fully stop the rod tip on that final backcast, to get the line to unroll correctly. —Pete Kutze

8. How to Fish Thick Lily Pads for Bass

Worm fishermen have long known that bass can see through translucent lily pads and will wait in ambush below a pad on which they see food, so pulling a worm off a pad often results in a vicious strike. This works for flies, as well. Drop a dragonfly, grasshopper, frog, or worm pattern onto a lily pad and let it sit there for a few seconds. Then jerk it off the pad and into a hole in the weeds and hold on! Sometimes the bass is too excited to wait and will nudge the lily pad from below in an attempt to dislodge the prey. —Phil Monahan



GRASS ROOTS FLY FISHING— PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BY LOUIS CAHILL



Is it time you gave something back?

You can't go to school for fly fishing. You can take some classes or workshops, here and there, but most folks learn to fly fish one of two ways. On their own or from a friend or family member. Either way it's a tough learning curve. Information is pieced together from tips and suggestions, successes and failures. Some anglers hire guides or casting instructors to teach them but that's not an option for everyone. What if there was a better way?

Well, there is. There are local clubs and groups that take on the mission of educating anglers and creating a community around our love of the sport. Some are better than others and some are great. At their best, these groups do more than share information. They share the passion, the ethics and the camaraderie of fly fishing. I'm going to tell you about one of them.

I didn't know my life was about to change when I met Scott MacKenzie. We fished together, and hit it off right away but I had no idea what a positive influence he would be, for me and others. Scott is just one of those guys who radiates positive energy. He came along at a time when things were pretty tough at G&G world headquarters. It is not an exaggeration to say there would be no Gink and Gasoline today, if not for Scott.

He and I fished together in the Bahamas, on one of my bonefish schools. Scott had been a fly fisherman for many years but had never tied flies. I taught him to tie a bonefish fly and when he caught fish on it the next day, he was hooked. From that point forward he was all about fly tying. I'd get a couple of text messages a day with questions or photos of flies.

Soon he asked me, "Would you teach me to tie?"

"Of course!" I answered.

"While you're at it, would you mind teaching six or eight other guys?" He followed up.

I agreed and Atlanta Fly Tying was born.

Scott threw down his own money and bought eight complete tying setups. Eight Regal Revolution vises, eight sets of Rising tying tools, thread and materials all in lots of eight and scheduled the first class. We met at Scott's office. He reached

out to The Atlanta Fly Fishing Club, another great organization, and they spread the word that there would be free tying classes, open to anyone.

That first night we had about six guys show up. We sat around Scott's conference table to tie redbud flies, because Scott and I were going redbudging in a couple of weeks. I dove right in to the instruction. We were cranking along when Scott brought up G&G.

"Here comes the pitch!" One of the guys blurted out. I was floored. "I'm sorry man," I told him, "I don't have a pitch. I just run a fly fishing web site, and it's free."

It never occurred to me that these guys were sitting around that table thinking we had something to sell them. I should have realized. That is the kind of world we live in, where any act of generosity, no matter how small, is suspect. Maybe I'm stupid for not having something to sell them. If I had a fly shop or a guide service, maybe I would, but all Scott and I had to offer was knowledge and enthusiasm. Those guys wound up chipping in for the beer and food Scott had brought and about half of them went on that redbudging trip with us. They all still come for tying nights.



Atlanta Fly Tying grew quickly. Scott's office got small in a hurry. Before long, monthly tying nights were being held at the Orvis Store and The Fish Hawk. I still teach a class once in a while but Scott now brings in tyers and guides from all over. It's turned into quite a community. Some guys are really on fire about fly tying and some just show up to hang out and talk about fishing. Scott brings his eight vises for those who don't have them but most guys now bring their own. Sometimes folks passing by the fly shop come in and tie. It really is amazing.

Oct 28th at The Fish Hawk, AFT is hosting Chip Drozenski and Gonzalo Flego of Andes Drifters for a night of wine tasting and tying flies for Trout and Golden Dorado.

I will be teaching bonefish flies again soon and the G&G Bonefish School will be at the Abaco Lodge, March 15-22. Email me for details. hookups@ginkandgasoline.com

Atlanta Fly Tying is just one example. There are people giving back to fly fishing just about everywhere there are fish. If you are involved in or know of a great group for anglers in your area, share it in the comments so that folks can find out what's happening near them.

Thanks!

Louis Cahill

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TIPS FOR KEEPING ICE OFF OF FLY ROD GUIDES

Hatch Magazine

by Colin K. Breck - Wednesday, Feb 19th, 2014



With much of the country still well in the midst of what is beginning to seem like an interminable winter, cabin fever has sent many of us out to the stream on days which would typically keep us indoors in the warmth and comfort of home. Fishing on those frigid days can be frustrating at times. You're cold. The fish are lethargic. Conditions are tough. And your rod guides and tip keep icing up, causing you to have to break from fishing to clear the ice. Patience can wear thin.

Although there's nothing you can do to improve the cold temperatures, sluggish fish and lousy conditions, you can put a dent in the frustrations that come from iced up tips and guides by experimenting with one or more of the remedies below.

STANLEY'S ICE OFF PASTE



This is the only remedy of the few listed here that is actually made for the topic at hand. A Loon Outdoors product, Stanley's Ice Off Paste is designed for the sole purpose of keeping ice off fly rod guides. According to Loon, it is the only product designed with this goal in mind. As such, it is a specialty product, and thus comes at a premium price. You'll pay \$7.50 for a small container of paste which you smear on to your guides before hitting the water and as needed while the day goes on. Although the price isn't exactly wallet bursting, it is significantly pricier than the other available remedies. For that price jump, however, you'll get a product that is designed for, tested on and declared safe for your rod and fly lines by a company that makes nothing but fly fishing products.

CHAP STICK



Chap-stick lip balm and other similar products are a favorite homemade remedy of many fishermen for preventing, or at least delaying, icy buildup on rod guides. Similar in consistency to Stanley's Ice Off Paste, Chap-stick will significantly cut down on the amount of ice that builds up on your guides. While there's no evidence regarding how the ingredients in lip balms will affect the resins on your rod and the coatings on your fly line over time, the reality is that gear won't likely see enough exposure to those ingredients -- unless you're very frequently out fishing in icy conditions -- to make a difference. Some anglers have voiced concerns about the potential fish-chasing effects of lip balm scents/odors disseminated into the water, but we're betting these worries are likely overblown as well.



PAM COOKING SPRAY

A noted favorite of steelheaders, many of which claim it to be the ultimate rod de-icer, PAM cooking spray has been shown to help slow the build up of ice. And, as you likely guessed, there's no reason to go name brand

here. Grab the cheap store brand stuff. Spray it on before hitting the water, and if you're so inclined, carry it along for reapplications throughout the day. When re-applying on the stream, you'll want to be sure that your guides are clear of ice as dry as you can conveniently make them, to help the spray adhere.

ONE OTHER THING

If you're clearing icy buildup from your rod guides or rod tip by snapping or plucking it off with your fingers, please stop. This is no more than a recipe for a broken guide, not to mention a tedious waste of time. Instead, simply dip the rod into the water, which is warmer than the air and allow it to melt the ice away.

FROZEN FERRULE



I'd like to add one more warning. Both my son and I have had rods break when water got into a ferrule and froze. When moisture gets into the ferrule and freezes, it expands. The expansion can crack the tube portion of the ferrule which destroys the connection and you need to replace it. It would be wise to put a little ice off paste on the connection before you slide the rod pieces

GET YOUR NCTU LICENSE PLATE

When it comes time to renew your license plate this year, consider getting a Trout Unlimited "Back the Brookie" plate for your car. With each plate there is a \$10 donation that goes to NCTU to help support their programs.



www.almanac.com

10 TIPS FOR FLY-FISHING BEGINNERS

By [Catherine Boeckmann](#)

This advice comes from Bobby Malouin from Rhode Island. Back in 2003, when he was just a 15-year-old. Bobby won the top prize and a \$1,000 scholarship for college at the fly-fishing competition sponsored by United Fly Tyers Inc. We featured him and his fishing tips in *The 2005 Old Farmer's Almanac*.

Here are Bobby's recommendations for fly-tying and fishing:

1. Ask local fishermen about which flies are best to use. Or find out for yourself with a dip net, which is usually dragged across the lake-, river-, or streambed to catch nymphs, emerging insects, and other aquatic life. It works especially well after you've turned over stones, wood, and other matter on the bottom.

2. When learning to tie, start with big and easy ones so that you become confident with the basic technique. Try Woolly Buggers, Woolly Worms, and Montanas.
3. When fish aren't biting any of your flies, try the Pheasant Tail. Add a copper thorax to it so that it sinks faster, head down, into the water.
4. Don't worry about losing your flies—you can just tie more.
5. The color of a fly has a lot to do with catching fish. If the fly doesn't look like what the fish are feeding on, they won't go for it. Woolly Buggers work very well. Put flash—a shiny, sparkly material—on the sides.
6. Time of year and weather conditions determine which flies work best. When the trout are hitting wet flies or nymphs, try heavily weighted flies colored olive and black.
7. Practice your technique. Use a crude fly (to help straighten the line out) with the hook clipped off (to help avoid injuries).
8. Mash down the barbs on your hooks. This makes a smaller hole in the fish's mouth, and you won't lose the fish as long as you keep pressure on the line when you're bringing it in.
9. Fish in places where fish hide or stay to save their energy: undercut banks, obstructions, on the side of the current, in front of and behind rocks. Never fish from upstream to downstream; stirred-up debris will scare the fish.
10. Wear polarized sunglasses; they'll help you to see the fish. Have patience. You'll get better as you go.



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