

THE HUTT VALLEY ANGLER

Newsletter of the Hutt Valley Angling Club Inc

Issue No 418: November 2016



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Editorial

November is here and at last we have the opportunity for some excellent evening fishing on our local Hutt River. Many anglers including myself, have often been heard grumbling about the lack of fish or more truthfully, how easily the Hutt River browns spook and how hard they can be to catch. If that sounds familiar, my advice would be to come along to this month's fly-tying session at the Community House on Wednesday 30 November. There you will be introduced to wingless wets and spiders; small, sparse flies but both deadly when fished on the evening rise. You will learn how to tie them and more importantly, how to fish them successfully. And for those who want to see some of the best fly tyers in the Wellington region in action, make sure you come along to the interclub competition hosted by HVAC at King Lion Hall on Monday 14 November.

Catching a fish is always a thrill, but catching one using your own hand-tied fly makes it twice as sweet.

Chris Kuchel

President's Piece

It was great to see a good turn out of members at our club night in October to hear representatives from Fish and Game speak. Hamish commenced by giving us an update of significant developments from a regional perspective and then Bryce outlined from the national point of view what Fish and Game are involved with.



Certainly there is a lot going on and we as fishermen see from a personal perspective the impact that is occurring from large scale intensive agriculture close to our favourite fishing rivers and other activities that maybe having a detrimental impact on the environment. Bryce concluded that representatives from Fish and Game should come and speak to us as a

club at least once a year and that is something I would like us to work on. This is a partnership that has benefit's for all concerned as we are out there in the field most days observing activities and they have the contacts and means to sort out the issues that we know exist.

Opening morning weather was not that flash which meant I had to cancel a weeks leave and look for an alternative place to fish. The beginning of October is a time for unsettled weather and the rivers can be high and coloured from rain. Bill Harris usually gets it right by fishing the lakes; there could be something to learn from this. Unfortunately the weather was against the club trip to Pahiatua and Colin made the sensible decision not to proceed. Organising club trips is a difficult task as it is necessary to book well in advance and then close to the day the weather or river conditions are not satisfactory. Mike and I had been over there the previous weekend and we struck it lucky, whilst we were fishing heavy rain went to the east and west of us. It's a venue worth visiting and hopefully the next club trip will be successful. Thanks to Colin and Krystal for the work they do. Keep on putting your name down for club trips as they are an opportunity to fish different waters and to learn from fellow anglers.

Next month at club night we are hosting the annual fly tying competition with the Wellington and Kapiti Angling clubs. For those of us who have attended these in the past this is more than just a night out. This is serious and the persons who are representing our clubs are there to win. We currently are the proud holders of the shield after a very close victory at the Kapiti club last year. As the host club our members are required to bring along supper and help out with setting up on the night. I have been asked by Jeff Wood (Sponsor and Head judge) to ensure that we set up the tables where the competitors will be seated so that observers do not walk behind the competitors. We need to remember that hours of practise has been put in by the competitors to get to this stage, give them the space they need. If you could refine from speaking with the competitors whilst they are concentrating on the task at hand it would appreciated. Thanks to Jeff for

putting his hand up to Sponsor the competition and acting as Head Judge. Jeff is very knowledgeable when it comes to fly tying and fly fishing and is very helpful to those of us who pursue fly tying at a lesser level.

Recently along with a few of our club members I attended the Fly Fishing night held by Hunting and Fishing in Alicetown. There were about 25 persons in attendance who were mainly beginners interested in getting into fly fishing. It surprised me sitting listening to the presentation which was very good how much jargon we use. A number of questions were asked seeking an explanation on what is a leader and how is this different from a tippet. What is the difference from a wet fly, dry fly and a nymph. When does one fish upstream and not downstream and what technique should I be using. These are questions we have all asked being new to fly fishing so if you have a question don't feel embarrassed to ask one of us at a club night or at a casting clinic. Otherwise have a look on our excellent web site or explore the internet. Fly fishing is not easy to learn and as one guy said to me after the presentation he had been attempting it for two years without success. I explained that is why I joined a club and that he should consider doing the same. From the night we may pick up some new members keen to learn how to catch a fish on the Hutt.

Thanks to Pete, Steve and staff for hosting the night and Manic fishing for putting on the night. I have been visiting Hunting and Fishing regularly lately and hats off to them for upping their game when it comes to fly fishing. Our sponsors are important to us and they do offer not only products for sale but advice that cannot be obtained on Trade Me.

Ross Goodman

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October Activities

11 - 13th Tukituki trip

14th Special Club meeting - Inter-club Fly tying Competition - King Lion hall
7.30pm

20th Casting Clinic – Belmont Domain 10.00am

15th Committee meeting 7.30pm

20th Burgess Shield surfcasting competition – Lake Ferry – 9am to 3pm

30th Fly tying – Community House 7.30pm

Club News

Next club Meeting – King Lion Hall – Monday 14 November 7.30pm

This month, HVAC is hosting the annual inter-club Fly Tying competition. Teams from HVAC, Kapiti and Wellington will be competing. Members are encouraged to come along and support all of the competitors. Please bring a plate of supper and remember to identify your plate or container by labelling it.

Casting Clinic - This month's casting clinic will be held on Sunday 20 November at Belmont Domain. Be there early, ready for a 10am start. The co-ordinator is Ian Lawson. If you want to attend, please sign up on the clipboard at our monthly meeting or register on the website. Registration allows us to have instructors available for all attendees and who we contact if there is any change in meeting arrangements.

Burgess Shield Surfcasting Competition – Lake Ferry – Sunday 20 Nov

Meet at the car parking area early, ready for a competition start time of 9am. Competition finishes at 3pm. Be prepared for all weather conditions and bring sun block, food, water and warm clothing.

Library News

The library will be closed this month. Please return any items on loan to Ajit at the meeting.

Raffle Winners in October

Congratulations to Ian Lawson for winning the Green Trout Guiding entry. St John Wakefield took away the box of flies and John Rochester won the Hunting and Fishing voucher. Monthly winners of the Green Trout Guiding raffle go into the annual draw for a fantastic guided trip with Jim Rainey. You've got to be in to win, so make sure you buy your ticket each month at club meetings.

Photo competition

This month's winner is Krystal Smith who takes away the \$15 Fishscene voucher. Her winning photo "Mayfly Nymph" is on the front cover of this month's newsletter. Jeff Wood from Fishscene is the sponsor of the monthly photo competition.

Members are encouraged to support our sponsors.

Fish of the month

Congratulations to Ian Lawson for his fine 4lb 8oz brown taken on the Hutt River.

Fly Tying Meeting – Wednesday 30 November 7.30 p.m. in community meeting rooms off Logan Street.

The topic for November fly tying is soft hackles: spiders and wingless wets.

For the wingless wet, we will be tying a standard formula

Hook. Partridge G3AY #14 (which was kindly donated by Partridge)

Thread. 10/0 or 8/0

Body. Tying thread

Thorax. Hare's mask

Hackle. Hen cape

A normal nymph hook is ideal. If you prefer barbless, the Partridge G3AY is very good, so too is the Grip 12804BL. Barbed, Grip 12804, Kamasan B175 or Kamasan B170. Both the Grip and Kamasan are available locally. While we will be tying these on #14, #16 is also useful to have.

The fly is tied using the reverse hackle technique, winding the hackle in the opposite direction to the tying thread. A rib can be added for further strengthening.

Spiders can also be tied on the same standard nymph hooks. There is the issue then of what to do with the long hook shank. My choice is to use a short shanked hook for the old umbrella-shaped spiders, the Kamasan B160 being my favourite. We can tie spiders also using the reverse hackle technique but if you want to make a stronger fly, I'd suggest we tie the traditional way – tip first. When using game hackles like grouse, woodcock or partridge, tying in tip first is an excellent method of tying spiders. If we use starling hackles, the feathers are generally more elongated than game hackles and suit tying reverse hackle or tip first, equally well.



Wingless wet flies.



Spiders using starling hackle.

Up-coming club trips

Tukituki trip 11 – 13 November. This will be a joint event, hosted by our good friends from the Hastings Angling Club and staying at their club lodge at Patangata. Pub meal on the Friday night followed by a shared BBQ on Saturday night. HVAC members will be buddied up with Hastings members. This will be a very popular trip and numbers are limited to about 10 HVAC members.

All trips are weather dependant, with early bookings essential. Some venues do require a deposit, which should be paid by members directly to the hotel/BB/lodge to secure a bed. Members will be given the opportunity to sign up for club trips at the monthly meetings. To confirm a place on a club trip, email Colin at lewiscrew@paradise.net.nz or Krystal at krystalarrow@gmail.com not less than 3 weeks before the trip date. Accommodation details will be sent to participants as necessary.



TROUT TALK

MORE ON CATCH & RELEASE

Since last month's article I have not been exactly overwhelmed with



feedback so I've taken that as an indication that all our members agree with the sentiments and practise (or will practise!) responsible catch & release. I recently spotted this photo on a well known fly fishing Facebook page.

I commented as follows:

Fantastic fish. But I wonder whether it is time that we all thought a bit more about the welfare of catch & release fish (assuming the big brown wasn't hit on the head). The thing about that photo is that the fish is being pressured right where its heart and liver are and its weight isn't helping. It may swim away and look ok but it may die later. I would like to think that those at the forefront of our sport would think about leaving the fish in the net and

taking a new approach to the way fish are treated. Because the question is - why does the angler have to be in the photo at all?

The response – nil, nada, zip. So no-one supported the sentiments and no-one tore my head off either.

Recently I read an article in a fly fishing magazine. The author headed the article “C & R Another View”. He started by saying that it appeared that trout anglers were being singled out to return their fish when other anglers, such as salmon anglers were not. His view was that trout anglers should also harvest their catch and, in a lot of cases who could disagree. But he then went on to say *“Yet, if I was away for a week or more in the wilds, I could not eat all the fish caught if the fishing is as good as it should be, so I am faced with limiting my catch or stopping fishing or releasing my fish”*.

He then said that common sense and responsibility were called for and that while we sometimes become predators on the fish, we need not be ruthless and greedy and that any form of wastage is unacceptable. He then shared the views of a well know American angler and author on catch and release.

“Few anglers understand that a trout is heavier than water and would sink without the buoyancy of its swim bladder. The fish can expand or contract it to compensate for changes in temperature or water pressure. When a fish rises voluntarily, it expands its swim bladder to expedite its change in depth. Discomfort is unquestionably experienced by a fish removed from the water since its air bladder is suddenly expanded when contacted with the atmosphere whose density is almost 800 times less than water and the effect is clearly traumatic”.

The writer of the article then set out seven points that he had taken from that author’s work that would give the fish a sporting chance of survival:

1. Play the fish as quickly as possible to minimise stress.
2. Mesh it in a landing net which should be a decent size. Do not lift it out of the water for any reason.

3. Release the hook while the fish is in the net and in the water.
4. Use barbless hooks.
5. If the fish is weak, carefully hold it in the water. Move it to a fro (*some anglers may disagree with this*) until it is breathing steadily and is regaining strength.
6. If it is bleeding and this does not stop, kill it quickly.
7. Make sure it is only handled in the water to eliminate damage to the scales and slime on its body.

Not rocket science! The author also suggested setting up a code of conduct around catch and release that could be given out when a licence is purchased.

So, all this is pretty much in line with what I have written recently and the writings of anglers and writers such as Tony Bishop. But the interesting thing is that the article I am quoting is from Flyfisher magazine, June/July **1988**. The author of the article was one D H Ackerley about who I know nothing but he was quoting the words of renowned American angler and author Ernest Schwiebert Ph.D., who, among other notable achievements, wrote the two volume much acclaimed work "Trout".





It is a bit depressing to think that in the 28 years since this article was written little has changed and we continue to treat catch and release trout so poorly. Will it change? I have to say I have a pessimistic view when I continue to see photos such as these on social media.

Many photos have been taken either by guides or while anglers are with guides. So I emailed the Professional Guides Association to get their views on C & R practices. No response at press time but watch this space. Maybe an email to Fish & Game to revive D H Ackerley's suggestion of a code of conduct is called for.

Like Jim said.

By Tim Trengrove

This first appeared in Marc Fauvet's blog called The Limp Cobra, September 2016,

Tiny caddis were already crawling up my back when the first trout began rising. In the Southern Hemisphere summer, no rain for some weeks meant the flow was much lower for the post-Christmas period. Perhaps that and the extra hot day brought the caddis on as daytime hatches in this river were an unusual sight.

My normal fly choice would have been a caddis pupa but, having tied up some Partridge and Yellow spiders, I was keen to use them instead. The results were astounding, but unfortunately not for all the right reasons.

Browns and rainbows up to 3.5 pounds grabbed the fly and tore off down the pool. Some cartwheeling across the surface, others leaping high. There were break-offs and other midstream releases. What upset me way more than losing fish was the sight of seeing some of my flies unravelling. Flies that looked pretty in the box, but now were not surviving these fish. My spider tying technique was rubbish.

Later, after reading *The North Country Fly* by Robert L Smith, I adopted the traditional tying method for spiders. This made for much more robust flies and I've been waiting for another daytime caddis rise since then.



The whole “robust” thing got me thinking about fly construction. There will always be a place in my fly box for North Country fly designs like this Woodcock and Hare’s Ear.

The hackle is tied using the traditional tip-first method then wound once the body is constructed (Photo by Paul Slaney).

What I wanted was a fuller-bodied fly which was as strong as or stronger than the umbrella-shaped spider. Something along the lines of a Stewart's Spider but not as unruly in appearance. This led me to reading how Jim



Leisenring constructed his flies in *The Art of Tying The Wet Fly & Fishing The Flymph*. Jim typically used the reverse hackle tie-in for his soft hackle wet flies and instead of making a narrow collar of hackle, he spiralled the hackle rearward. The tying thread was then wound forward through the hackle to the tie-off position. This gave the hackle a fuller appearance and helped make the fly incredibly strong. I took those ideas and incorporated them into spiders.

Starling with hare's mask on a Kamasan B160 #16 (Photo by Paul Slaney).

If you can see differences in hackle construction looking at the two photos, your eyesight is very good! When both flies are moved about in the water together, the differences are seen more clearly. I tie these in #16 for slow, clear water and #14 for faster water. In the last season this pattern



accounted for brown trout in slower rivers near my home in Wellington and the Matura in the South Island, and rainbows in the fast flowing Tongariro. So long as I tie a decent knot and work on not being stupid after hooking

fish, most of these flies make it back home. That is a big improvement on my first spiders.

When it comes to tying wingless wet flies, I like to tie the hackle in a similar way.

As Jim Leisenring has been such an inspiration, I will leave the last words to him.

“The art of tying the wet fly rests upon a knowledge of trout-stream insect life, a knowledge of materials used for imitating the insect life, and an ability to select, prepare, blend, and use the proper materials to create neat, durable, and lifelike imitations of the natural insects”.

(The Art of Tying The Wet Fly & Fishing The Flymph by James E. Leisenring and Vernon S. Hidy, 1971, page 34)

Tim Trengrove
New Zealand

Just Add Water

By Grey Hackle

This instruction is quite often printed on packets or tins of prepared foods. What it tells us is that all other ingredients are contained in the correct proportions within the packet to make a dish which carries a promise of consistency and quality.

When someone decides to take up fishing, and in particular fly fishing for trout there is a lot to get their head around. Most anglers I know were lucky enough to be introduced to this great way of life by a family member or an enthusiastic friend. Many others drifted into fishing as part of their 'hunter gatherer' outlook and because they were already ensconced in other outdoor activities or lifestyle.

There is another group who came into the pursuit later in life and had perhaps been inspired by watching a fly fisherman expertly cast his line in idyllic surroundings. It was easy for them to visualise themselves doing the same.

Very often the would- be angler starts off by purchasing an inexpensive spinning outfit and eventually graduates to fly fishing after they have tasted some success as a spin fisher.

We can assume that they have blundered along on their own up until this point and gained some rudimentary knowledge of where trout can be caught and what sort of lure usually gets a result for them.

These days fishing tackle can be purchased over the internet from reputable dealers at fair prices and so the beginner doesn't need to buy from a tackle shop in the high street. However, they could be missing out on some valuable help that a knowledgeable shop assistant or shop owner has to offer.

My first foray into fishing for trout was with a single hook and worm at about age nine or ten. Spinning and fly fishing quickly followed as I earned cash by delivering newspapers. I had a few schoolmates who shared similar interests and so we gained experience and proficiency on the water.

This would have been a similar pattern of learning for most of the over 50's who started as kids.

It is a completely different ballgame nowadays, with widespread angling literature available and of course our friend the internet. There also has

been a revolution in the production of mid- range quality tackle at inexpensive prices and this has probably brought fishing within most people's reach.

Today's beginner anglers are very lucky to have so much information at their fingertips. The hardest job for them will be to separate the good stuff apart from the rest.

The best advice we can offer a beginner is to keep their wallet in their pocket and first of all join an angling club. Most clubs cater very well for novices with helpful advice and coaching.

Every beginner should make use of the literature and videos that are available through libraries and on the internet. There are many excellent short video clips on YouTube covering every aspect of fishing. Also there are a huge number of websites dedicated to trout fishing.

The beginner needs to gain proficiency in casting a fly in order to hit the target when trying to place his /her fly ahead of a trout. It is recommended to practice casting a fly rod on grass to begin with so that current flow does not complicate the process.

It may seem that the novice is being discouraged from fishing in river or lake in the early stages. This is not so but many beginners have been disappointed by trying to run before they can walk. Building the basic skills will lead to success.

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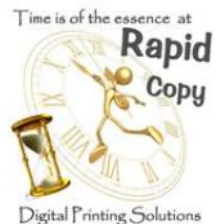
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It is really important for the new angler to spend as much time as possible at the waterside so that they become aware of where to find the fish and learn about that environment. Novices can learn a great deal by accompanying an experienced fisher and observing how they catch fish.



All the home study part of learning is hugely beneficial but an angler's education begins in earnest at the river or lake.

Just add water.....

Grey Hackle



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