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Tippets, Tapers & Tales

January 2, 2024

President's Message

I hope everyone had a good Holiday Season and Happy New Year! With this milder December weather I hope some of you got out fishing too. Our January club meeting will be in person again on the 9th at Coral Gables in East Lansing. We will meet in the front Sun Room at the restaurant. We have a great presentation lined up for January. Josh Greenberg of Gates Au Sable Fly Shop will be joining us by Zoom. See details inside this newsletter. We are scheduled to do another beginning fly tying class at the Grand Ledge Public Library in February. I will be confirming the dates and times here soon so all of our local club members watch your email for a request to volunteer for this event. I hope to have the details for everyone by the January club meeting.

Just a reminder that we will have our first January Sunday Fly Tying night on the 7th from 6-8pm at the Blue Gill Grill in Haslett. This is before our January club meeting. Plan on joining us for this always fun time. There will be extra tying vises and tools there if someone needs some or just wants to come and try tying for the first time.

See you on the 7th and 9th!

Mark



1981 McKenzie Cup Winners

The Red Cedar Fly Fishers is a Charter Club of Fly Fishers International.

It's purpose is to promote fly-fishing through Education, Restoration and Conservation

January's Presentation

By: Mark Johnson

January's presentation is titled "20 questions with Josh Greenberg of Gates Au Sable Lodge Fly Shop", Josh will lead a multi topic discussion of what's happening with Josh and the many different issues surrounding the fly fishing community. This should be a great presentation and one not to miss. Join us in person or on the Zoom link for what promises to be a very informative discussion.



RCFF Spring Online Auction

By: Mark Johnson

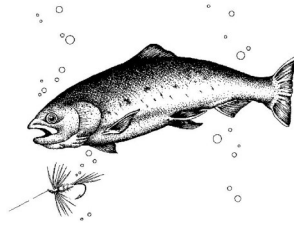
We will be having another online Spring Fundraising auction coming up in April or early May same as last year. We are looking for donations of all sorts of new or gently used flyfishing gear or other items to put in the auction. We do have some items left from last year and several fly rods and reels of Terry's to put in there but can always use other items. Any gift certificates for hotel stays, float trips or retail stores make great items as they always seem to be desirable and they are easy to transfer to the auction winners by mail. Please consider donating something as the online auction is our largest fundraiser of the year for our Terry Greiner Memorial MSU Fisheries Grant, other club donations and to support our Conservation and Education programs. You may bring your items to donate to a club meeting or contact a board member to arrange pickup. I will be starting to work on the auction page in January with the setup, photographing and listing of items so get your donations in as soon as possible.



RCFF Powerpoint Presentation

By: Mark Johnson

I need some help here, seems like I remember that sometime a long time ago the club had a Powerpoint Presentation that was a slide show of pictures of our various meetings, tying classes, outings, work projects, etc., that we could play at shows or events to highlight the club. Does anyone else remember this and possibly have a copy of that presentation? If you do and have it can you email me a copy of it.



FFI Fly Tying Group

By: Mark Johnson

I thought I would give a mention about the FFI Fly Tying Group. I had heard about this group and decided to join after looking into it. It's \$20.00 a year. There is a lot of resources there for the fly tyer. They have a quarterly newsletter, the Whip Finish Journal, Fly of the Month Recipes, a fly tying forum, twice monthly fly tying Zoom presentations, November through April, I watched one last night with Al Beatty on deer hair wing techniques, pretty interesting. Check out the link below for more information on Fly Tying Group.

[Fly Tying Group Overview \(flyfishersinternational.org\)](http://flyfishersinternational.org)

Spring Club Garage Sale/Gear Swap

By: Mark Johnson

I wanted to give you a heads up that the club is planning on a Spring Garage Sale/Gear Swap at our April or May club meeting. We are waiting to confirm a presentation for the other month. More details on this as it gets closer but wanted to let everyone know and maybe over the winter you can go through your gear and see if there are items you want to part with that you don't use anymore. Don't forget, as I mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter that the club is also looking for donations for our Spring Online Auction, hopefully you may come up with some items for each. More details on this as it gets closer.



Indicators are a Great Fly Fishing Tool

By Jim Strogon

Even though we can really be quite successful with one rod and reel, a few flies, and a limited amount of equipment, indicators would likely make the short list for many fly fishers as a critical tool when fishing with flies under the surface.

For those that haven't used them, an indicator acts like a bobber in the stream or lake. It helps keep the fly floating through the current at a desired depth where fish are anticipated to be feeding. It also acts like a bobber in that if it dips under the water, the angler should set the hook because it might indicate that a trout has grabbed the fly.

There are many more subtleties to fishing an indicator than a bobber, which is probably why some fly fishers can get a bit defensive when they are accused of using a bobber when fly fishing. But truth be told, we are using a bobber, albeit in somewhat modified designs and technique.

When teaching new anglers just getting started with fly fishing, I use an indicator set-up for them. In my opinion, it is the simplest method to assure that the angler puts the fly where a lot of fish can see it easily, and gives the angler the best chance of setting the hook to catch a fish on a fly.

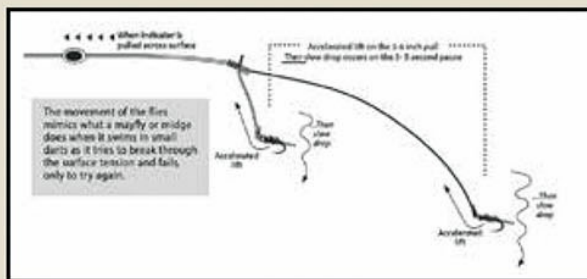
Part of the value of the indicator is to try to maintain the fly at a depth where the trout are most likely to be feeding. Often, that is near the bottom, but sometimes it might be at a middle depth. Many fly fishers will tie on two flies at different depths to target trout feeding in both zones of the stream or lake.

In a stream, any slight pause of the indicator in the current can mean a fish has grabbed the fly. The indicator might be pulled underwater suddenly, or instead stay on top and move sideways or even upstream; all of which could indicate a fish has taken the fly.

Those occasional pauses of the indicator might be the fly briefly bouncing off of the bottom of the stream or catching a weed. In any case, fly fishers know to set the hook as if it is a trout that has taken the fly. It is important to set the hook quickly, before the fish has a chance to spit it out.

A critical component of successful indicator fishing is the hook set. It should be firm, but not so strong as to pull the indicator and your fly out of the water. This is particularly important on small streams where an aggressive set will usually end up with the fly being pulled out of the water into the branches behind you. To minimize tree tangles, and to increase my percentage of time that my fly is in the water in front of fish, I set the hook parallel to the water with only about an eight inch, sharp pull of the rod.

That amount of pull will set the hook, yet keep the fly in the water if it isn't really a trout grabbing the fly. Besides keeping my fly out of the bushes, that allows the fly to continue to drift through productive water and extend the time that it is in the pool



Movement of the indicator as described moves the flies like the real insects would move.



A variety of indicator types and sizes. From top to bottom: Palsa pinch-on indicator, 2 New Zealand yarn style indicators (green cut for less weighted flies, and white cut for slightly heavier flies), cork indicator, two sizes of Thingamabobber indicators.



The two sizes of Thingamabobbers next to the traditional bobber are both great for kids fishing with mealworms for panfish. They give notice of a bite much better than the traditional bobber because they are smaller, and result in fewer hook swallows because of the quicker hook set.



These Palsa pinch-on strike indicators land lightly on the water, and are very sensitive to strikes.

< Illustration by Robert McKeon

or run without having to make another cast. Another advantage of this short strike-set is that sometimes the quick movement of the fly attracts a nearby fish to grab my fly immediately after it starts to drift again.

Indicator rigs work equally well in lake settings. While you can simply let it rest on the surface, I find that providing a small, occasional movement seems to better imitate an aquatic insect moving in the water column. A short pull on the indicator causes the fly to rise as if it is swimming toward the surface, then begin to sink after the pull is completed. I suspect the fly looks more vulnerable to the fish as it sinks, and that is when fish often grab the fly.

There are a variety of indicators on the market, and there are proponents for each type since there are advantages to each. A common indicator type is the air-filled, soft plastic Thingamabobber. A slightly lighter model of similar design is made of cork. These indicators have the advantage of being able to be quickly adjusted along the leader by the angler to change the depth that the flies ride in the current. They work very well in faster currents, or with heavily weighted flies, but both types land with a splash on the water so could scare fish in calmer water settings.

The New Zealand yarn strike indicator lands lightly on the water, and can be moved to different parts of the leader as needed. It does require a specialized tool to attach to the indicator rig to the leader, but is light, quite visible, and is easy to use. It can also be reused again and again like the air filled and cork indicators.

Palsa strike indicators are made of a sticky foam material that attaches to the leader. They land very lightly on the water, but are not easily moved to a different location on the leader if the angler encounters different water depths.

There are other kinds that twist on, and some rigs that will slide along your leader if you are fishing it deep lake settings.

Ideally, you want to present your fly as lightly on the water as possible, so the smallest size that you can use, the better. It is critical that you are able to see the indicator, so it is good to have a variety of colors with you. Different light or stream conditions sometimes makes one color or type easier to see than another.

For kids, the ability to focus on an indicator to wait for a fish to grab the fly is sometimes challenging, but if they master it, they are very successful catching fish on a fly. Adults that use indicators to fish, often enjoy the degree of focus required, and actually seem to find it relaxing. If you haven't used indicators before, give them a try to improve your fishing.



Jim Strogon, Writer/Columnist, *Life on the Fly* Payson Roundup Newspaper

Catch Jim at: jimstrog@gmail.com

Photos by Jim Strogon

Flyfishing Constitution

By: Bob Kren

Flyfishing Constitution, Bill of Rights, Amendments, and Rumors

By Bob Kren, RCFFer, Mr. Flyfisherpersonguy, Delegate, and Co-Signator

We, the members of this Sacred Organization, to insure onstream Tranquility, provide for Common Sense, and secure the Blessings of Flyfishing, do hereby list and establish a certain set of rules of governance and behavior, to be inflicted on all who are stricken by the flyfishing bug, or fly.

Section One

This Sacred Organization, hereafter referred to as "SO," shall be comprised of two separate but equal Branches; Fly Fishers International (FFI), and Trout Unlimited (TU). Fundraising by these branches shall be inventive, relentless, and bullying. Competition for members shall be fierce, in a friendly way. Membership shall be open to all, regardless of sex or gender or lack thereof, eye color, hair color or style, choice of clothing, preferred beverage, native language, income, or just about anything else, except **no bait fisherpersons!**

Section Two

Neither branch of the SO shall participate in, nor advocate for, the introduction of foreign species into our waterways, by any means, legal or illegal. To this end, the SO may urge the various States to set up walls and minefields, and establish programs for trapping and moving illegal species to other States, that piss them off.

Section Three

A well-regulated fishery, being necessary to catching lots of fish, the right of fisherpersons to keep and bear rods shall not be infringed. Open carry is mandatory, mostly to impress other people and provoke a dmiration.

Section Four

The drawing and quartering of game wardens, or other "protectors of the environment," shall not be permitted, except under instances of harassment, shaming, spanking, and scolding

Section Five

"Guess-Stop-o" thugs shall not be allowed to violate the security of persons, houses, property including whatever means of transportation, papers, effects, fishing vests or slings, waders, goofy hats, or lanyards, based only on vague suspicions and threats, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation or social media rumor, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Section Six

No person shall be held for a capital crime, except refusing to "catch-and-release," nor shall he or she (or they or it) be twice put in jeopardy for the same type of offense; so offend early, and you won't have to worry when you do it again. You can't testify against yourself, so keep your yap shut. If things make it so you wind up in court, you have the right to a speedy and public trial by a jury of your equals, chosen because they wear Patagonia or Simms. When, occasionally, you are found guilty, excessive fines shall not be required nor imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted, unless you did something really naughty.

Section Seven

There shall be a "Super-Duper" Court, of nine flyfisherpersons with lifetime tenure, to pass final judgment on all matters involving the best fly, the best technique, the best "stuff," the best scotch whisky, and all imaginable matters that have traditionally incited fisticuffs in flyfishing. "The Big Nine's" decisions shall be binding, in a triple Davy clinch knot, using fluorocarbon leader material made in the Good Old U. S. of A..

Section Eight

Just because there are certain stated rights doesn't mean you don't have lots more: what happens in Grayling stays in Grayling, just don't let it happen in a more civilized place, like Kalkaska. The rules dictating flyfishing behavior shall take precedence over all other rules and laws, foreign or domestic, profound or silly. No flyfisherperson will be judged by two or more sets of standards.

Section Nine

All flyfisherpersons shall be a member of one, or preferably both, parent bodies of the SO, shall pay dues, donate their time and money to projects, lobby their elected representatives to governing bodies, provide ideas and money, serve on boards, work for the common good, and generously donate time, effort, and money.

Section Ten

All members of the SO shall be guaranteed the right to have a wonderful life, practicing and perfecting the greatest sport ever invented.

(Signed in a big scrawl, by) Bob Kren

RED CEDAR FLY
FISHERS

P.O. Box 129
Okemos, MI 48805



Refrigerator Reminders

January

7th: Sunday Night Fly Tying at the Bluegill Grill in Haslett from 6-8pm. We meet in the back room of the restaurant.

9th: RCFF Monthly Meeting, 6:30 P.M. At Coral Gables in East Lansing.

This month's meeting will take place in the Sun Room in the front of the restaurant.

February

13th: RCFF Monthly Meeting, 6:30 P.M. At Coral Gables in East Lansing.

This month's meeting will take place in the Sun Room in the front of the restaurant.