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# Tippets, Tapers & Tales

October 1, 2024

## President's Message

We had a pretty nice September weather wise and I hope all of you got out to fish sometime during the month. Here it is October already and we know winter can't be far off. There should be quite a few days yet to get outside and fish or enjoy the outdoors in another way.

We have a great Zoom presentation planned for this month so join us at Coral Gables on the 8th to watch it together in person.

Keep in mind again that the Club is always looking for donations, large and small of items to use in it's monthly raffles and for our main annual fundraising auction. As you are going through your gear to put it away for the winter, keep in mind a donation of some kind to the club.

Lastly, remember in the fall we pay our annual dues again so if you haven't already, bring your \$15.00 dues to the October club meeting or mail it to the club at the address on the back of the newsletter.

See you at the meeting on the 8th.

Mark



## RED CEDAR FLY FISHERS

*Okemos, Michigan*

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

## October's Presentation

By: Mark Johnson

For October we will be meeting in person again at Coral Gables in East Lansing on the 8th. Meeting starts at 6:30pm. Stop out and have something to eat or drink with the club members and enjoy the Zoom presentation that night titled: **Fly fishing in Argentina/Patagonia with Nomad Anglers Guide Lucas Buxton.**

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## Time to Pay Dues Again

By: Mark Johnson

It's that time of year again, the start of our club meeting year and that means club dues are due again. Bring your dues, cash or check for \$15.00 to the first meeting in October or you can mail them to the P.O. Box address listed on the last page of the newsletter. Our annual dues are just a small part of our financial picture but still very important for the financial health of the club. Don't forget to pay your FFI dues also when those come due. We are a Charter Club of Fly Fishers International which means all our club members must be FFI members also. Thanks for your prompt payment of dues!

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## Au Sable River Cleanup

By: Mark Johnson

We had a great time at the Au Sable River cleanup on September 7th. Thanks to Phil Stevens, Mark Johnson, Mike Knagg, Bob Kren and Mark Johnson. We cleaned a section on the South Branch. We didn't find much trash, which is a good thing and had a fun time on a beautiful stretch of river. After the cleanup we went back to Gates Fly Shop for a lunch provided by the Anglers of the Au Sable. It was a fun day.



Photos courtesy of Phil Stevens

## Robert Fischer: FUN WITH THE ONE-WEIGHT FLY ROD



Robert Fischer with a mahi-mahi he landed with a 1-wt.

### Ultralight fly fishing has always been an interest of mine.

When just starting out as a kid it was fun catching bluegills and saltwater snappers and small seawall fish with light tackle. After getting serious about fly fishing and meeting Rick Redd who opened a lot of doors for me, ultralight fly fishing took on a whole new dimension. Basically, ultralight fly fishing would be with a 1, 2, or 3 wt. rod and 4, 2, or 1 pound test lines. There are two sides to this type of fishing; the serious side and the not serious side. Either way, people will ask you the same questions like; Are you nuts? Or, what's the matter, can't you catch any big fish?

The serious side involves learning the IGFA rules so that you can possibly catch a world record. Consult the record books and see what's available in your area and then try to catch that record fish. That's a lot easier to say than to do.

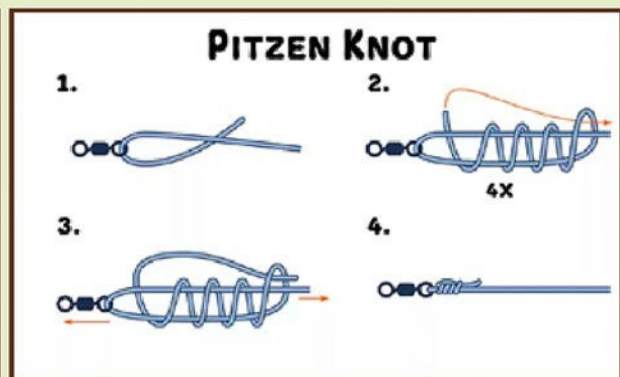
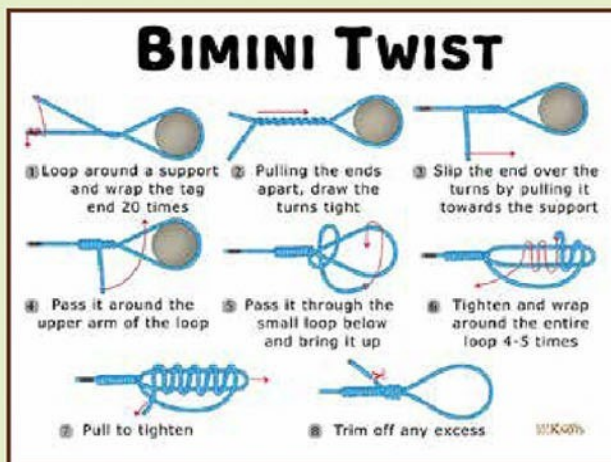
The ultralight lines will teach you which knots hold and which ones are weak. It will also make you a better knot tier. (Try tying a **Bimini twist** in 2# class line.) The doubled clinch knot and the **Pitzen knot** work well for line to fly knots. The doubled blood knot is good for leader knots in the class tippets. Other leader knots don't really matter because they are going to be stronger than your knot to the fly. Better yet is Bimini twist knots looped to looped together. This is very strong and allows you to change broken sections quickly. Flies will need to be small and hooks must be needle sharp and thin wire. You won't be making long casts because one of the keys to success is staying close to the fish. Even fighting fish you'll have to stay close or the drag of the line through the water will break the line. And you won't be casting in the wind, not with a 1 wt.

Most important will be learning to use drag. With 2# test you'll probably use no more than 8 oz of drag for the most part. 8 oz of drag will bend a 1wt rod into the cork. With practice you can put 1# of drag on a fish if you are close. You won't be using the rod but fighting the fish straight off the reel. Try lifting up an 8 oz sinker from the floor with a 1 wt rod and you'll see how critical this is. In fact, lifting different sized sinkers with your rod will teach you how much bend to put in your rod to establish that amount of drag.

Landing fish with this tackle is often a team effort with someone running the boat and someone using a net. Be prepared to lose a lot of fish and flies and get frustrated. Light lines have no tolerance for mistakes like bad knots, standing on the fly line, nicks in the leader, or using too much drag.

The not-serious side is much more fun. It's nice to see big bends in your rod since even small fish will do that. It's also easy to catch more fish, even if they are smaller, because of the smaller flies and the very silent presentations. The light weight rods are easy to use all day long without getting tired. However, after using a 1 wt rod, the next time you pick up a 5 wt it will feel like a broom stick with rope attached. It will help you get rid of some old flies (lots of breakoffs) so that you can tie or buy new ones. But it will really help you with learning to tie good knots and learning to use drag properly.

My only recommendation is to not use ultralight tackle on saltwater fish in the summer. It really tires them out and there is less oxygen in the water so they don't recover well. Trout especially are likely to die after a long fight in the summer. Other than that, try it, it can really be fun, and people watching from a distance will think you are fighting a monster.



Many thanks to Robert Fischer, his article and Bill AuCoin, Editor: On The Fly : Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers • St. Petersburg, FL

## Flyfishing Games

By Bob Kren, RCFer and Mr. Flyfisherpersonguy

Just vaguely remember the kids' game "Go Fish?" Just barely remember anything? Me too! "Go Flyfishing" wasn't on our juvenile minds, we were just trying to pass the time, before the invention of too much technology. But there are a lot of games that adults could play that reflect the glories and frustrations of our favorite sport. Let's try a few on, for size – without lying too much about size.

"Monopolly" is a game played between eager fishers and zealous landowners: it is also called "The Game of Glares." The rules are simple: the landowner glares at the flyfisher, and the flyfisher ignores the landowner. Hollering is not allowed, nor are threats or physical violence. And if a backcast results in a hooked landowner, just make sure you and your tippet is strong enough to drag a Jeep into the water. Catch and release, anyone?

"Chess," pronounced "chase," is a game played between flyfisher and prey, the smarter of the two being the winner. Long-term analysis of the moves of one's piscine opponent are the key to "winning." Despite the fact that fish have the intelligence of mud, the fish often wins. All we mortals can do is overanalyze the situation, and then do what we've always done – same fly, same approach, same presentation, same results.

"Checkers" is "Chess," without all the fancy words, equipment, and endless waiting in hushed, reverent silence while flyfishing. Whereas there're plenty of books about chess, and also about flyfishing, checkers requires no prior knowledge. It's just wormdrowning.

"Trout Poker" is an overthinking-flyfisher's game. Everything is based on "odds," and "psychology." Like "there was a fish over there three weeks ago, so how certain can I be that it'll be there today?" You can use your "poker face" to disguise your delight at being out on the water, at all.

You can play the game of "Fudge," as in "Oh, Fudge!, I lined it!," or "Oh, Fudge!, in a tree again!" This is the game you play while flyfishing, when others, especially pre-teens, are present. You can construct cathedrals of cussing, mountain ranges of blasphemy, all in the name of not offending others. "Frodymaddy packolackers!" is a favorite of mine. Make up your own, secret cursing. And use it often!

Playing "Guess" happens when you share the waters, and you have to guess what the other plans to do, and beat him, or her, to it. There is no teamwork here, like patterns of play in football, only the ability to read the other person's, or persons', mind(s). What's he casting, a dry or a wet, an imitation or an attractor? Upstream or down? Where can I move so I am, subtly of course, right in his way? Shall I issue false warnings, like "watch out for slick rocks over there," which is a way of getting the best water for yourself by being "caring."

And of course we have "casting hockey," which involves either making, or claiming to make, impossible casts to some spot, all the while hollering subtle insults at all others present, by pointing out your "expertise," as you imply that others have incurable flaws in technique or fly choice or equipment or common sense. Fights have been known to break out, but with waders and all that gear weighing you down, you and your opponent, or opponents, are ridiculously slow and clumsy. Perfect material for posting online.

"Trout Soccer" is a game of emotions, where every move is an excuse to complain loudly and passionately of some horrible injury, which, in truth, is minor or nonexistent. Everybody knows you're faking it, and mimics sympathy while choking back laughter. Aw, poor baby. Get over it!

Ever play Wordle? Me neither.

Surgeon General's Warning: "Fantasia" is better, if more bluntly, known as "lying." We all do it. It's so much an epidemic that I automatically subtract 30% from any measurement spoken to me: a "50 foot cast" is realistically adjusted to 35 feet, at most. I put small marks on my rod every six inches from the butt, out to 30 inches: that way, I can make a measurement of a fish's length, increase it by 30% and, when I tell somebody I caught "a 26 inch fish," (20 inch, actually) he or she can adjust downward to the true length. The weight of a fish is harder to measure, so I just outright lie.

The name of the word game "Jumble" is indispensable in describing my collection of flies. How in the (very bad word) can I distinguish between these three boxes named "Woolly Buggers?" Small, medium, large? Bright, muted, dull? Weighted, unweighted; hackled, not hackled? When I'm getting ready to go out, do I just give up and take from the boxes on the top of the heap? Do I make a smorgasbord of flies? Do I put them all into one box, with or without dividers, opaque or transparent? This is like a thousand-piece puzzle! Not to mention tackle and "stuff!"

Game on, anyone? Bob K

## Meridian on the Fly

By: Mark Johnson

We had a great time at the Meridian on the Fly event on September 20th at the Historical Village at Central Park in Okemos. Thanks to the Michigan Waterways Stewards and the Meridian Township Parks & Recreation for their Sponsorship of this event and the MSU Rotaract Club and the Red Cedar Fly Fishers members for their assistance in making this event a success. Special thanks to club member Bob Ceru for his efforts on planning this event.

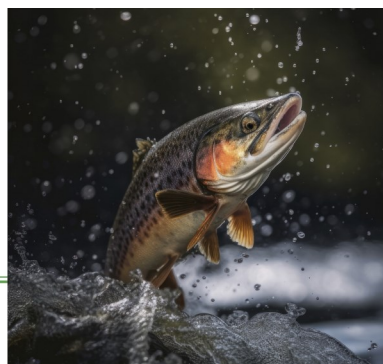
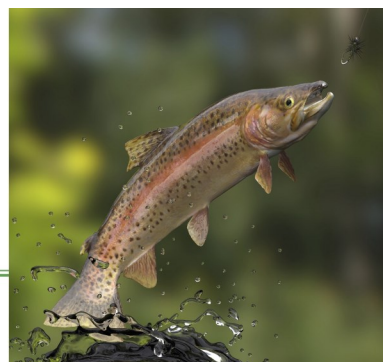


## New Club Banners

By: Mark Johnson

For those of you that were not at our Meridian on the Fly event on September 20th and saw our new banners, I wanted to show these here. We have 2 new updated banners thanks to the efforts of Mike Stout of Michigan Waterways Stewards and club member Bob Ceru. Mike and Bob worked together on these two banners and Mike did a lot of the design work and had these printed for us at a very reasonable cost. They are about 30 inches deep by about 7 feet long on weatherproof banner material and will be a great asset to us at our future events.

Thanks again to Mike and Bob for their work on these new banners!



## From A Fly Tying Bench Years Ago....



# The Iron Blue Dun

Article by A.G. Shimmel  
June issue of:  
*Pennsylvania Angler*- 1953



Alice Conba's Iron Blue Dun Wet Fly



By Eric Austin

*Few if any anglers will dispute the fact that blue-gray is among the most useful, if not the most useful color used in the construction of flies for trout. This is particularly true in our hard fished eastern waters.*

The physicist tells us gray is composed of equal parts of the primary colors and has the power to absorb and subdue other colors and thus bring them into harmony. It is common in nature being found in the under fur of many animals, the flight feathers of many birds and the coloration of many aquatic insects. The rarest occurrence is where the angler craftsman needs it most, in the hackle feathers of the gamecock. Natural blue gray capes are rare and are treasured accordingly. They are a necessity if we wish natural color in our imitations. Is it any wonder they are expensive?

Among the gray wet flies that have produced season after season, one of the oldest and best is the Iron Blue Dun. There are three patterns and a variety of sizes, all of them useful. The oldest pattern served as a lure in the Irish lakes in the time of Izaak Walton and won a place of affection beside the amber thirst-quencher and the shil-

lelagh in the hearts of the anglers of Erin (archaic or poetic/literary name for Ireland).

The Irish Iron Blue Dun was a wet fly having wings of darkest coot, body of dark gray moles fur spun on yellow tying silk and ribbed with fine silver wire. The tail was three or four scarlet fibers of silver pheasant crest, the hackle of softest blue dun to match the wings and body in color.

The pattern in England had a hackle and tail of rusty-red, the mole's fur body spun on red tying silk and a wing of black bird or darkest starling.

The American version has a mole's fur body, a woodcock wing, a dark blue dun hackle and tail. The tail is tied extra long. At times we rib it with silver wire to increase its visibility in dark or discolored water. Generally we like the solid gray pattern.

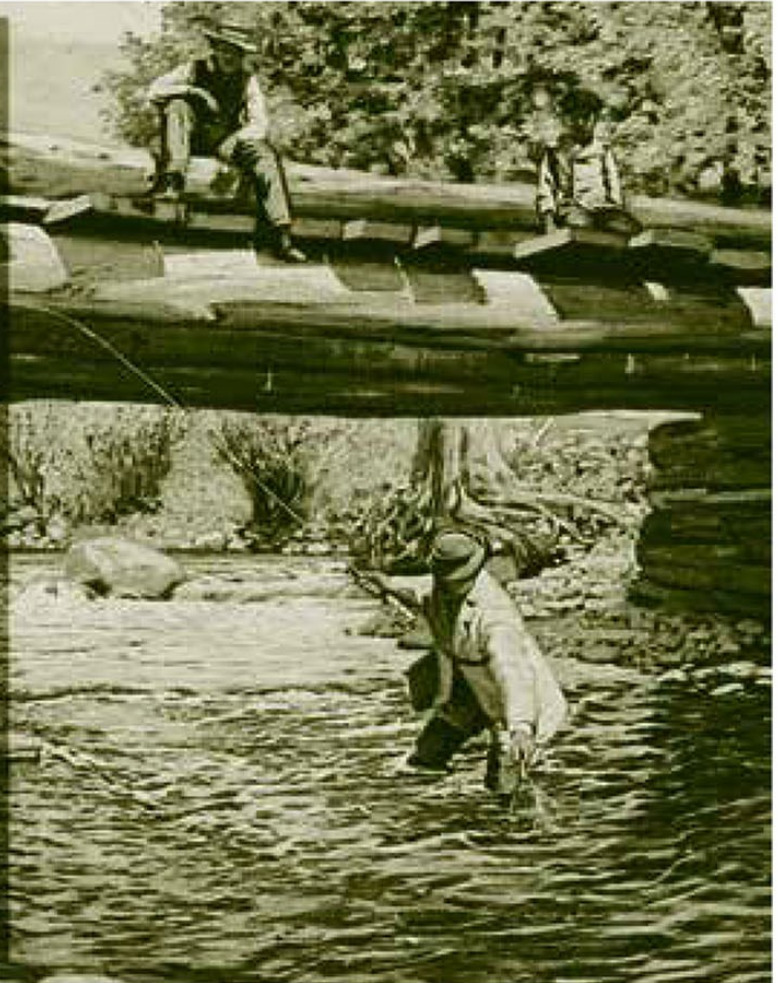
Many fly hatches have this blue gray coloration and for this reason the Iron Blue is a most effective pattern throughout the season. This is particularly true on limestone streams where brown trout have been established. A long fine leader and a number eighteen Iron Blue will often take a regular riser that has refused a dry fly. Some patterns are more effective at certain times during the season. When a hatch of Quill Gordon or Hendrickson are on and an occasional trout refuses them a switch to an Iron Blue as a second fly is sometimes effective. As an all around wet when the gray hatches are on the Iron Blue has the nod.

Its lack of popularity with anglers is hard to understand. One can only surmise that its mouse gray color is much more attractive to fish than fishermen.

### A Hobby.

The idea of a hobby is at least interesting to all men, to have some diversion to fill your leisure hours and to look forward to, to dream over on dismal winter days, and to divert your mind when cares annoy. What hobby can be more interesting, more captivating, more satisfying than the hobby of fly-casting. There are a hundred and one features to it—you can tie your own flies, make your own rods, mend, fix, adjust, always some delightful things to "tinker" over or with, arranging your flies and all that, and then the "art" itself. Nothing can be more enjoyable than to wade a stream, to feel the rush of water about you, the constant excitement, the forgetting of all other affairs, the outdoor life, the health and appetite, the meeting with other anglers and the telling over of the day's sport. Here is a fascination that will last you all your life, and be a delight to you in extreme old age. Let me warn you, my reader, if you are not a lover of Nature and out-door life you are missing one of the greatest blessings this world affords.

*Speckled Brook Trout*  
*Louis Rhead*  
 Published- 1902





**RED CEDAR FLY  
FISHERS**

P.O. Box 129  
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[www.redcedarflyfishers.com](http://www.redcedarflyfishers.com)



**Send your dues check to this address.**



### Refrigerator Reminders

#### **October**

8th: 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.

#### **November**

12th: 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.