



The April 2020 NEWSLETTER

Northern Arizona Flycasters
An active member club of the World Wide organization
“Fly Fishers International”
“Conservation, Restoration, and Education through Fly Fishing”

We support active involvement in cold water fisheries conservation. We work to insure that Arizona’s habitat is not degraded and in the development and maintenance of fly fishing opportunities.

We support the practice of “catch and release”, the use of barbless hooks, and quick and harmless release practices. Fish should never be kept out of the water for over 60 seconds.

Northern Arizona Flycasters meets the first Wednesday of the month at the Arizona Game and Fish Regional office at 3500 S. Lake Mary Road, Flagstaff. Meetings start at 7 PM with a board meeting at 6:00 PM. The meetings are free and the public is invited.

PRESIDENT’S DRIFT :

I miss meeting all of you. Our meeting for April is canceled. At some point, this will pass. Plan a short get away to an uncrowded area or set a goal to take that dream trip. For me, a fin and feather to the North Woods-maybe the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Catching some trout on a modest stream and taking a few birds with my Labrador and a Wingmaster would be about as good as it gets for me.

Every club member is important to the wellbeing of our club and to our local fisheries.

NAF needs your involvement and there are many volunteer venues available such as fishing trips, conservation, writing about club activities, and fund raising. Remember, NAF raises funds to

support conservation efforts; we are a non-profit organization. You can sign-up to volunteer on our web site. <http://nazflycasters.com/volunteer/>

Notice – TU is running a statewide raffle for a two-day guided Lee’s Ferry fishing trip. Lee’s Ferry Anglers will supply the guide and boat for two anglers plus three nights lodging. Meals and tips are not included. The offer expires one year from the date of drawing. Only four hundred tickets will be sold and the drawing is on April 25th. The value of the prize is approximately \$1,300. See Steve or Gary Woodburn for tickets.

Scholarship Application

It is time to Identify good applicants for this scholarship. If you know someone who qualifies, make a copy of the following application and make it available to the individual.

The Paul Weitz Scholarship

The Northern Arizona Flycasters is proud to announce the 2020 Paul Weitz Scholarship in the amount of \$500.

Paul Weitz (July 25,1932 – October 22, 2017) was an American naval officer and aviator, aeronautical engineer, test pilot, and NASA astronaut, who flew into space twice. He was a member of the three-man crew who flew to Skylab 2 to rescue the first manned space station. He was also Commander of the STS-6 mission, the first of the Space Shuttle Challenger flights. He was also an avid fisherman and hunter and was active in efforts to improve wildlife habitat.

The scholarship is open to currently enrolled NAU students who are following degree paths that will lead to careers in fisheries or wildlife management and who are current members of the NAU Forestry Club or the NAU student chapter of the Wildlife Society. The scholarship of \$500 will be awarded at the end of the Spring 2020 year.

Applicants are required to provide the following information in a written application.

Full name and contact information including phone number and email address

NAU Degree program enrolled in as well as class standing (first semester junior etc.) as of the end of Spring 2020

Describe any practical experience in the fields of wildlife or fisheries management (internships, work experience, volunteer work etc.)

Make the case that you are the best one for this scholarship and tell us what your subsequent career goals are.

Completed applications are to be submitted via email to gary.tallman@nau.edu no later than April 15, 2020. The scholarship recipient will be announced by May 7, 2020.

EDUCATION

[Home](#) [Fly Fishing How To](#) [What You Need to Start Fly Fishing for Pike - A Beginners Guide](#)

Over the last couple of years fly fishing for pike has become more and more popular. Pike is a great fish to catch on the fly and will fiercely strike flies both at the surface and further down in the water column. It is also a sturdy fish that is widely available in many waters throughout the world and North America. Just like bass, this makes it an ideal fish to target for fly fishermen who might not have a trout stream nearby.

In this post we give you a detailed summary of what you need to start fly fishing for pike.

CHOOSING A ROD

Fly fishing for pike requires heavier rods compared to those used for trout in streams and lakes. Rods suitable for pike fly fishing generally range in weights from #7-10 with the most versatile rod being an 8- or a 9-weight. Both of these rods allow you to cast all except the largest pike flies and the 8-weight also has the added benefit of doubling as a rod suitable for bass fly fishing.

Fly fishing for pike requires heavier rods for several reasons and when choosing a rod you should consider factors such as the fly size, the wind, and weed conditions (cover) you are most likely to encounter on the lakes and rivers you fish the most. Each of these considerations is covered in more detail below.

The size of the fly is a major determinant of what rod to use. The larger, bulkier and wind resistant the fly is the harder it will be to cast and therefore necessitates more of your rod. Most **pike flies** will average 4-9 inches in length and are generally well suitable for an 8-weight rod. If you are planning to use larger flies than that you are better off going with a 9- or a 10-weight rod. Larger flies will also invariably also attract bigger fish which is some lakes and rivers can reach weights of 20 lb or more and a heavier rod will allow you to more efficiently fight these larger trophy fish.

Pike is also a weed-oriented fish and a heavier rod allows you to fight the fish out of cover that could cause you to lose the fish. If there is plenty of nasty weed cover around choose to go with a 9-weight to be able to better control the fish once it is hooked.

The last thing to consider is the wind. In heavier winds more is required of your rod to generate enough line speed to fire the fly to its designated target area. If you know that the waters you fish the most are prone to windy conditions I would certainly suggest to upsize to a 9-weight rod.

REEL

Although most pike do not require fighting them on the reel it is always best to choose a reel with a large arbor. This will allow you to pick up line faster and better control the fish when the situation arises. It is also good to choose a reel with a decent drag system for fights with those larger fish that might pull some line.

Finally, consider purchasing a reel with a cassette system. This will allow you to very quickly switch between different types of fly lines whether it being a floating line, intermediate or full

sinking line and is far more economical than buying an individual reel for each line type. Fly lines for pike are discussed further below.

FLY LINE

The first choice of a **fly line for pike** is very different from that you might be used to fishing for trout in streams and rivers. Compared to trout fishing, a floating line is probably one of the least used when fly fishing for pike. This type of line is only really required when fishing topwater flies such as poppers or when fishing a slightly weighted fly just beneath the surface. Instead, the most versatile fly line is in my opinion a type 3 sinking line, which sinks with a rate of 3-5" per second. This line will allow you to efficiently fish both shallow (1-5 feet) and even intermediate depths (5-10 feet). Pike have their eyes on the top of their head and therefore tend to feed upwards in the water column and there is therefore no need to get your fly all the way down and bounce bottom which is more important when fishing for bass. An intermediate line with a sinking rate of 1-3" per second will also work well for shallow (1-5') depths or when fishing the fly just above the top of the weeds.

During the warmer months of the year pike tend to strike flies that are stripped with a fast speed using techniques such as the "Rolly Polly". However, stripping flies with a faster speed forces them higher in the water column and out of the striking zone. To counteract this, and maintain depth, consider using a heavier sinking line such as a type 6-7 sinking line which has a sinking rate of 6-8" per second.

Although, it is hard to efficiently target fish in depths of 15 feet or more while fly fishing, a type 6-7 sinking line combined with a heavily weighted fly would also be a good choice if you choose to do so. However, the only time you might need to target these depths is during the summer when larger pike head for the deeper parts of the main basin of the lake in search of cooler water temperatures. Smaller pike generally do stay shallow even during the height of summer, and the larger specimen do feed in the shallows as well if the conditions are right so opportunities for pike are still abundant even without targeting the abyss.

Finally, consider using fly lines designed with heavier heads such as [Scientific Anglers Mastery Titan fly line](#). These lines facilitate turning over large pike flies.

LEADER & TIPPET

When it comes to leaders and tippets for pike fly fishing it is time to go big or go home. As mentioned above the majority of flies used for pike are large and on average between 4-9" in length which requires a powerful leader to turn over the flies properly. In addition, pike have very sharp teeth and are notorious for biting off even heavy mono tippets and a [wire tippet](#) is therefore required.

See our guide "[how to set up a pike fly fishing leader with a wire tippet](#)" for complete instructions on how to set up your own pike leader.

FLIES

Most pike flies range from 4" to 9" inches in length and imitate baitfish of various types. The flies are generally tied with a combination between bucktail and synthetic materials such as flashabou. These materials not only give them great movement in the water but also have the added benefit of not soaking up water, which would make them heavier and harder to cast.

Copied from the Rapax web site

NAF EVENTS SCHEDULE

April 1 – Prof. Westerlund – The Mount Elden Mystery cancelled

May 6 – To be announced

June 3 – BBQ to thank Game and Fish

Under discussion by board

Fishing outings to local lakes

Fly casting sessions on a regular basis.

The Board welcomes suggestions from members.

There will additional events so watch this space

NAF CLUB OFFICERS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

President	Charles Simpson
Vice-President	Tom Hudnall
Secretary	Mac McIlwaine
Treasurer	Denise Dean

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