



## *The April 2021 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.**

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Northern Arizona Flycasters meets the first Wednesday of the month  
(Meetings currently on Zoom) 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.

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### **PRESIDENT’S DRIFT :**

Jackson Gilmore will be presenting at the April 14 th NAF Club meeting. Since he is in Oregon, he will have to present via zoom. You may remember him as an young and active member of the Flycasters who has spent the last few summers working at a fishing camp in Alaska. It should be interesting. Zoom invitation to follow.

See you there

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/>

## **EDUCATION –**

# **Spring Fly Fishing Tips Using Nymphs**

In spring, I usually forget about dry-fly fishing and plan to nymph fish to catch big fish. Water temperatures in most freestone streams are in the high 30s or low 40s. Smaller browns and rainbows can be found rising to midge hatches, but until the first active hatches start popping, I take larger fish on nymphs. Trout do feed heavily at times during the early season and their diet consists primarily of nymphs with some sculpins, dace, or other small fish.

Nymphs are the most abundant early-season food source for most trout, especially before the stonefly and caddis hatches occur. Catching trout with nymphs isn't as tough as many anglers believe, and with a few basic techniques, even a beginning fly fisherman can catch many springtime trout.

## **Techniques for Nymph Fishing in Spring**

Spring time nymphing success depends on three key factors: getting the fly down quickly and keeping it close to the bottom; fishing with a dead-drift, rather than a tight line or a retrieve; and learning to recognize a strike and react as quickly as possible to hook the fish. Getting deep. The best way to get down deep, and do it quickly, is to use a long leader with weight on it.

using split shot fly fishing

I like to use non-shiny removable split-shot (sizes B & BB), and I change weight often as I move from pool to pool so the shot just ticks the bottom of the stream occasionally on the drift. Normally, one or two BB split-shot is just right in conjunction with a moderately-weighted nymph.

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Heavily-weighted nymphs do not react naturally to the current or look alive to the fish. The fly should ride slightly above the split-shot if possible, minimizing hang-ups. When casting split-shot, use a slower, more open loop than you'd use to cast a dry fly. Remember, you don't cast split-shot . . . you lob it.

## Learn How to Drift your Nymph without Drag

Drag-free drift. A floating line and long leader are the ingredients for perfect, drag-free drifts. The long leader allows a floating line to ride the surface, while the smaller diameter monofilament cuts through the water with much less resistance. I use a 12-foot leader with a fluorescent butt section as the standard leader on all my floating lines, whether I use them for nymph fishing or dry-fly fishing.

Both Orvis and Rio sell colored tippet. You can read the reviews and check prices on Amazon with this link – [Colored Tippet Spools](#)

The 6-foot fluorescent butt helps me spot strikes more quickly by allowing me to watch farther out on the leader for an indication of the strike. Seeing the strike and setting the hook. The most critical part of nymph fishing is detecting the strike and reacting to it. Good nymph fishermen develop a sixth sense and react to strikes that most beginners never see.

Use a strike indicator. Indicators have done more to simplify nymph fishing than anything in the past. There are a variety of indicators used today—from the light, fluffy, yarn indicators to large cork and polystyrene indicators that resemble bobbers.

## Nymph Fishing Approach and Presentation

Fish a short line whenever possible and learn to make an approach that will allow casting at close range. I often fish a nymph with only the leader and a few feet of line out of the rod tip. Wade close to the water you want to fish. This close approach allows you to control your line better and avoid cross current drag.

**Guide Tip:** “When the fishing is slow—move fast (and cover more water), but when the fishing is fast—move slow (and fish the water more thoroughly).”

Cover the water and don't put more than one cast in the same spot unless you want casting practice. An early-season trout will invariably take a nymph on the first cast that goes by its position, if the fly is presented with a good drag-free drift.

Nymph Flies in Spring Time

In the early season, when water temperatures are cold, trout often school together. Once you find them, you can often catch a half-dozen fish from one casting position. Learn to fish the drop-offs, the seams along the current lines, the pockets, and rocks. Look for good holding water along the edge of faster currents, especially at the head of a pool. In cold water, a trout's metabolism is slow, and it can't afford to expend the energy necessary to hold in faster water where you might find it during the summer months.

A trout must find a holding spot in relatively slow water, but one adjacent to a feeding lane where it can move out into the current to pick off a hapless stonefly nymph or other juicy morsel.

## Early Season Nymph Patterns

I don't think it's critically important to match a particular nymph pattern down to the leg joints in order to be a successful nymph fisherman. Most good impressionistic nymphs work well if they are presented properly. Stonefly nymphs are always a good early-season pattern for many Western and Eastern freestone streams.



Trout Nymphs Zebra Nymph, Hares Ear, Frenchie, Prince Nymph

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[Hey David](#) here the maker of Guide Recommended. I'm super passionate about everything fly fishing fishing; writing, teaching and even video.

- Read my About Page – [David Humphries](#)
- Check out my Youtube Channel – [Guide Recommended](#)
- PLUS if your looking for 24/7 instruction check out my online class – [How 2 Fly Fish](#)
- I run a really small online store selling fly boxes at [River Traditions](#)

### NAF EVENTS SCHEDULE

On hold due to the X#%&\*@x Virus.

**Under discussion by board**

Fishing outings to local lakes

Fly casting sessions on a regular basis.

Zoom meetings

**The Board welcomes suggestions from members.**

**NAF CLUB OFFICERS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

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

Northern Arizona Flycasters  
PO Box 2924  
Flagstaff, Arizona 86003  
Website- [www.nazflycasters.org](http://www.nazflycasters.org)