



Editor's Eddy



In usual fashion, this issue is running a little too late to make it in time for the Holidays (at least in the mail), but I hope that you will have or have had, as the case may be, a great Christmas season, and that the New Year will bring you all the best of everything – not the

least of which is superb fishing with all the goodies that may have arrived. My personal aspiration is simply to be able to get out onto the river a little more often than last season.

In the vein of the Season (sort of), Elliott Deighton's photo, shown below right, arrived in my inbox with the words: "Times are tough, things are hard, here's your *fishing* Christmas card!" (or something to that effect). What a combination of "the Bassman's" superb tying skills and sense of humour – with a little help from photo software!

Despite the pleasantness of this time of year, we are all – save those, perhaps, who have the ability for exotic travel or don't mind sitting over a hole in the ice for a total change of pace – experiencing the mid-winter dearth-of-fishing blahs. So we keep ourselves busy – or should be – with tying flies (please, no pictures of things like "Elf-caddis" or "Red-nosed stonefly") and preparing for the spring.

IWFFC is busy making plans, too. In a way, it's Christmas for conservation. We have adequate funds available to make significant contributions to aquatic rehabilitation efforts in our region, and Conservation Chair Pat Kelly is open to project ideas from members and elsewhere where our involvement would be most effective. If you have an idea for a conservation project – warm- or cold-water – please contact the club. Of course, we will also be focusing on our usual lending a hand though volunteers, so why not make a New Year's resolution to come out on just one workday in 2006?



All the best!

Bob Kuehnbaum, December 20, 2005

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Correspondence to the Editor may be sent via fax (905-276-2401), phone (905-276-6684) or e-mail at (r.kuehnbaum@sympatico.ca), or to the address on the last page.

Quotable / Notable Quotes

Our tradition is that of the first man who sneaked away to the creek when the tribe did not really need a fish, a tradition developed for us through thousands of years and millions of river lovers. We fish for pleasure from within ourselves in proportion to the skill and knowledge, to the imagination and flexibility of the soul that we bring to it.

– Roderick Haig-Brown

A guy named Art Flick once spent three years doing nothing but catching and identifying the bugs trout eat. He carried a rod only so other fishermen wouldn't think he was nuts. Maybe those were the best years of his life.

– Nick Lyons, *Fishing Widows*, 1974



Club News & Events

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

January 3: Tying Meeting – Happy New Year

Guest Tyer - TBD

Beginner Programme - Continues

January 17: General Meeting

Guest Speaker: Michael Anderson, an avid photographer, will present "The Art of Artifice of Digital Imaging". This will show you how to photograph your favourite flies using a digital camera – just in time to create Christmas presents for everyone you know. Bring your camera and a laptop with Photo Shop, if you have one.

February 7: Tying Meeting

Guest Tyer - TBD

Beginner Programme - Continues

February 21: General Meeting

Programme: TBD

March 7: Tying Meeting

Guest tyer: Michael Dinner will demonstrate how to use latex in patterns such as crabs.

Beginners Program: continues

2006 Forum, April 8 & 9

This is just a reminder for the 30th **Anniversary Forum**. As the show approaches, there will be a need for volunteers. If you think it's your time to contribute to this significant event, please contact Ted Armstrong at 905-637-2058.

Second Annual IWFFC Fly Swap

This year's Smallmouth Bass Patterns fly swap, organized by Swapmeister Elliott "Bassman" Deighton, was so well received that it was fully subscribed within days. A total of 18 tyers committed themselves to the worthwhile project. The number of participants had to be limited because the more tyers there are, the more flies each tyer must prepare.

Each tyer will submit two more flies than the number of participating tyers, and will in turn receive a set of all the flies. One set of the spare flies will be framed for the 2006 Forum Banquet Silent Auction, and the second will be donated for a meeting raffle. Pictures and patterns will be reported on in upcoming issues of the *Single Haul*.

Remember, tyers: your flies must be submitted to Elliott by the **end of February 2006**. Thanks for participating in this effort to help out both the Forum and Club.

New Membership Coordinator

Jayne Butler, a relatively new IWFFC member, will be handling our membership database. As noted before, it's currently being reorganized and integrated with the Forum database. Happy to have you involved, Jayne.

Ernie Schwiebert: Loss of an Icon

The first news of the death of Ernest G. Schwiebert on December 10th arrived in an email note from Don Moore: "Looks as if the fly fishing fraternity has lost another giant." Indeed. Dick Talleur wrote on the internet that "Ernie was arguably the most brilliant mind the fly fishing world has ever seen."

How many of us, when we were near the bottom of our fly fishing learning curves, picked up one or two of Schwiebert's books from a library or bookstore, and were inspired and completely astonished by his prose, artwork and far-reaching knowledge of the many facets of fly angling? Until 1977 when he decided to pursue fly fishing as a full-time calling, Schwiebert worked as an architect (with two Ph.D.s!), and I always wondered how someone with such a demanding career could complete such an important body of angling literature and travel to so many places. His clearly was a "brilliant mind". In fact, his first book, "Matching the Hatch" was published in 1955 before he had graduated from university. Other major works are the 1,745-page, two-volume "Trout" which covers just about every aspect of its subject, and "Nymphs", which has, in addition to intriguing tales, hundreds of detailed watercolour drawings of all major and a lot of minor aquatic insect species. Schwiebert's fly patterns are very detailed and intricate.

Not the least of Ernie Schwiebert's accomplishments was his involvement in the early fisheries conservation movement and the founding of Trout Unlimited, Theodore Gordon Flyfishers and the FFF.

Ernie was at our Canadian Fly Fishing Forum twice, the latter time being in 2001, along with other notables Dick Talleur and Gary Borger. He gave two presentations: one on "salmon flies and tactics" which, as I recall, was principally about

Atlantic salmon fishing in Russia's Kola Peninsula; and another on fly fishing in New Zealand. In the *Double Haul* that year, he submitted an article from "Remembrances of Rivers Past", originally published in 1972.

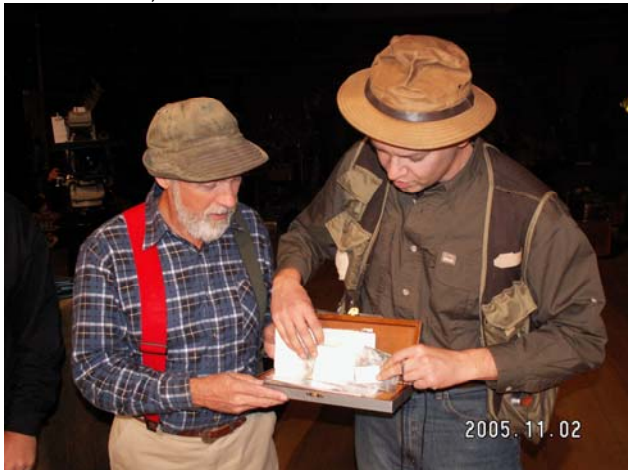
Finally, Dick Talleur also wrote that "we have lost probably the single most important angling theorist of the last century, the most important figure in North America this side of Theodore Gordon."

The Final (Duct) Taping

Bob Lundy

It seems some folks up in Edmonton recently had a bit of time on their hands. So Lance Taylor decided to do a fly swap. In case you're unfamiliar with fly swaps, my wife suggested it sounds like cookie swaps at her office; in the case of fly swaps, everybody ties enough flies of one pattern of their choice so that each person in the swap gets a copy. Normally, fly swaps are constrained with some sort of theme. In this specific case, the theme was developed to honour the last taping of the Red Green Show. The flies needed to incorporate some combination of the colours – what else? – red and green (with "mystery meat", a.k.a. duct tape, tossed in at the last moment).

Well, one thing lead to another and fellow Izaak Walton member Eli Robillard and I got the opportunity to attend the last (duct) taping of the show (on November 2, 2005), and to present a copy of the flies from the swap, along with some other memorabilia, to Steve Smith/Red Green.



Steve Smith, a.k.a. Red Green, with Eli Robillard

In the accompanying photo of Eli presenting the Fly Swap results and other gifts to Steve Smith, Eli is *not* wearing a costume: it turns out his

cleanest shirt is his fishing shirt – a bad sign of working too hard. I would have worn one of my fishing shirts too, but they were all too dirty: a sign of not working enough!

Conservation Corner

Conservation Workday Reports

Pat Kelly, Conservation Chair

October 30th: Spawning Survey

On a cool but sunny day about a dozen people turned out. Mike Warrian headed a group that covered the area between the Grange Sideroad bridge and Inglewood. CVC's Amy Doole took a group along the West Credit. Ken O'Brien, Pat Kelly, and another person found six brook trout redds on the West Credit in the Woollen Mill Conservation Area behind Erin.

Nov. 5th: WeCARE Event - All About Fish Day, at Belfountain Conservation Area

Lots of fun for everyone! The rain was only light and the cold was countered with barbecued rainbow trout from Lou Maieron's Silver Creek Aquaculture ponds. Brian Greck and Mike Warrian manned the WeCARE booth; Eli Garrett gave casting lessons; David Nonomura and Pat Kelly tied fourteen flies; Ms. Bass and Amy Doole organized a wader race for the kids (hilarious!); the CVC crew demonstrated a log emplacement along the edge of the river; and the NMR crew set up aquaria for Atlantic salmon and brook and brown trout caught by electrofishing at the site.

For information, contact Pat Kelly, IWFFC Conservation Chair, at 905-277-2505 or patckelly@look.ca.

Fly Tying

Red Wire Griffiths Gnat

Eric Schubert - North Idaho Fly Casters Club

Those of us who have been involved with rivers, trout and fly fishing are probably familiar with this month's fly, the Griffiths Gnat. This very effective fly was developed by George Griffith, a

river and trout conservation icon from northern Michigan. George grew up in Ohio in a family that loved hunting and fishing. As a hosiery salesman in the early twenties he had the good fortune to have northern Michigan as his sales territory, and he eventually settled there on the banks of the world-famous Au Sable River. He named his house "The Barbless Hook" and lived there for more than sixty years. He also had the misfortune of serving as a witness to the development and pollution of the river that put the trout fishery in peril. In 1959, he invited a group of prominent friends to his home to follow through on a vision to form an organization that would protect trout and rivers in the same way that Ducks Unlimited has protected waterfowl and wetlands. This diverse group eventually founded the hugely successful Trout Unlimited. The world lost a conservation and fly fishing icon, when George passed away at the age of ninety-seven, early this year.

Among many of the accomplishments of George Griffith was the development of the Griffith's Gnat which occupies some space in almost every fly fisher's flybox that I know. It is a remarkably effective small fly that is best tied in sizes 20-24.

The Griffith's Gnat imitates the half-hatched stages of midges. Midges look much like mosquitoes, but have no mouth parts with which to bite. These flies abound in the spring, even before the snow has left the ground. They can be seen in areas of the Western United States, as they rise up from the ground in incredible numbers, sometimes making a humming noise like a distant waterfall. During the reproductive cycle, both males and females swarm above the surface of the water and appear as small floating clusters. The Griffith's Gnat was designed to replicate this "cluster appearance".

Our fly of the month was made with one significant change to the original pattern, that is, by adding a segmented body of red micro wire. Since the floating cluster of insects rides partially below the water, the addition of the wire weight assists in presenting the fly in the proper manner.

Tie this fly by using a standard dry fly hook, such as a Mustad 94845 in sizes 18-24 or even smaller. The body of the fly is made with a peacock herl and a segmentation of micro sized Ultra Wire. The final step is to wrap some grizzly hackle over the peacock herl body. Make sure that you select a very good quality hackle in the correct size in order to give the Red Wire Griffith's Gnat its required semi-flotation qualities.

After you've tied a few of this simple pattern, remember that the Red Wire Griffith's Gnat can also be fished during cold weather periods, as

midges remain active throughout the winter in varying stages. If you are fishing at this time of the year, ... fish it in very, very small sizes with delicate leaders.

Book Reviews

Smallmouth Strategies for the Flyrod

By Will Ryan

Lyons Press - US\$19.95

Reviewed by Frank Flowers in FFF Northeast Council newsletter

Sometimes for us trout anglers, trout waters are neither nearby or readily available. Sometimes we look for fishing alternatives such as warmer waters or perhaps waters which contain not only trout but warmwater species as well. [Sometimes called two-tiered or two-storied water.]

Such is the nature of smallmouth bass fishing. *Smallmouth Strategies for the Flyrod* is a book which introduces the angler/reader to the always interesting and sometimes challenging world of the smallmouth bass. New England is blessed in with both species and both types of waters.

Will Ryan takes us through the historical beginnings of smallmouth fishing – a long and revered sport in New England, especially in Maine – its early origins, rods, reels, flies and methods.

Traditionally, a bait-casting or spinning rod was used for this species but in the past few decades many anglers have discovered the excitement of angling for smallmouth bass with fly tackle.

Topics in this book include an introduction to the biology and the life cycle of the fish as well as where they live, their behavior, their habits, where to find them and, ultimately, how to catch them on a fly rod.

Equipment is discussed in detail with segments on rods, reels, lines, leaders, flies and the various methods used to go after this fine sporting fish. Other topics include: best seasons such as pre-spawn, beds in May and June, and fall fishing and what the fish are feeding on, where, when and why.

Ryan has included a lengthy chapter on imitating aquatic insects, dry flies, caddis flies, leech, sculpin, minnow and crayfish patterns. In the back of the book are many patterns for some very effective flies for smallmouth.

He includes chapters on where the fish hold in streams, what to look for, how to fish structure – and how all this differs from largemouth bass habitat. Also discussed are lakes and ponds and some special methods for success.

The book covers the characteristics and methods of each season, and there are four color plates of appropriate flies. And finally, for the traveler, Ryan discusses each region of the country for smallmouth availability, where to go, how to get there and tips.

All in all, this book is a valuable addition to any angler's library.

Miscellany

Characters in the Stream

Toney Sisk, Housatonic Fly Fishermen's Association Newsletter

We've all seen them – Characters. Fellow flyfishers who have given us pause – either because they inspire us, humor us ... or cause us to run the other way. The following is a collection of people I've seen or fished with who strike me as interesting fishing characters (some bizarre, a few possibly insane). None of these characters remotely resemble you or me, keep in mind. And it is not relevant that some of them catch more fish than you or me. That's not the point. The point is ... well, I'm not sure what the point is, but follow along anyway.

The Entomologist: This one knows bugs. All bugs. Doesn't even have to make up bug names. Can pronounce the scientific names of all bugs, as evidenced by his pointing out that you cannot pronounce any of them correctly. Has one fly box for every species of midge, caddis, and stonefly. Two for mayflies. Three for spinners. His six "summer boxes" have dozens of grasshoppers with three colors of legs, ants in three shades of cinnamon, locusts (in preparation for the 17th year hatch) and billions of beetles. He has no woolly buggers. Often seen peering into small streams, exploring two-inch fingerlings with the same excitement as the Rambo type (see below) fighting a 38-inch steelhead. Sometimes dons scuba gear in two inches of water, getting animated about little pink eggs.

The Connected Crowd: This is the walkie-talkie/shortwave flyfisher, possibly touting a GPS and mapping software on his car laptop or palm-sized digital assistance. If he doesn't have a fly on a line, he is researching fly fishing online, and has his browser's favorites set to every flyfishing and insect

database in existence. Where spotted: steelhead streams. He needs a worthy adversary. This one has the stalking skills of a sniper, that's why he brings a friend as a spotter with a walkie-talkie. Some may even be shortwave pirates on the lam, occasionally seen throwing dipoles in trees, launching their thoughts over USE and FM, watching their [backs] for the FCC.

Rambo with a Fly Rod A very courageous trout warrior. He has fished where no man has fished before. Has his proven steelhead flies pinned into the wall above his bed, to "impress the girls." Has been known to follow a small drainage for four days with a 50-pound pack on his back, with a compass or GPS in one hand and a fly rod in the other, catching 15-inch indigenous cutthroat trout, the color of which has never been seen before. Doesn't even have to lie as he sucks all the air out of the club house proclaiming his gift to flyfishing godliness. When not in the mountains, is sometimes seen with the Connected Crowd.

Average Joe This one has just started out fly fishing 10 years ago, dropped the sport for five years, and is picking it up again, and again, and again each season. Has 6 types of flies, but fishes with only a Royal Wulff, but is beginning to think about bead-head nymphs. Will dutifully listen to anything you have to say about fishing, but won't understand anything you have to say about fishing. Will automatically assume you are a better fisherman and worth listening to because. . . well . . . you're the one doing all the talking and he is nice enough to not tell you to shut up.

The Terminator Has the cunning of backyard cat. Tee shirt reads, "I practice catch and kill." Bumper sticker reads "My other car is pan-fried fish." Fish is food--no ifs, ands or buts. One thing is certain: this one is getting plenty of Omega-3 fatty acids and will outlive you or me. He wants big fish, really big fish, and catches them with one of five flies: black woolly bugger, red woolly bugger, brown woolly bugger, olive woolly bugger, and a yellow woolly bugger. Could easily beat the crap out of 12 Entomologists. Sometimes seen with the Rambo type. Show him a chironomid and he'll punch you. Mention that he should try an Ephemerella pattern, and he'll beat you up, thinking you just called him a homosexual.

No Fish Guy This is the person who is dutiful about all aspects of the sport. Practices casting on occasion, studies bugs to an extent, buys reasonable flies, kicked over a rock once to see what was underneath and then decided what he saw resembled bugs in books but nothing he or anyone else has ever tied. Catches small fish, but

seems happy anyway. Also known as most everybody.

The Old Man This man fished with Theodore Gordon, so he says. He probably has. He ties Bumblepuppies, Tup Indispensables and Cocky-bundhu patterns just for laughs and shows them to the "chironomid kids", as he calls the young kids on his once favorite lake, which he'll constantly tell you was *his* lake until flyfishers started becoming more numerous than the midges. Being resourceful with materials at hand when need be, he has been known to tie with dog hair, but mainly ties with starling wings and bizarre parts of mammals and birds from English parts of the world. Sometimes found crouching next to a stream tossing ancient flies to a trout named George, who has been caught and released hundreds of times with the old man's flies. The fish will soon die of old age or boredom.

The Agnostic For him there are no fish here, no fish there, no fish anywhere. When confronted with an unsuccessful day of fishing, he assumes the fish weren't present. Sometimes suspects winter kill or human intervention. If it's true that 10 percent of the fishermen are catching 90 percent of the trout, then the Agnostic assumes the remaining 90 percent of the fishermen are catching not much more than nothing (and probably using attractors). Disturbingly familiar person. Though not to be confused with you or me.

The Shop Guy This person has the finest flies, all tied by people who don't fish and who live in countries not easily pronounced. Easily recognized by the plethora of clothes and gear more expensive than the cheap stuff you have. Sometimes donning the latest design in fly vest/bag combinations complete with hydration system and possibly a radio, if not a GPS. Knows the cfs of every river and creek within a thousand miles. By definition, shop people are very nice people, but like many, won't shut up. Can sometimes be seen with the Connected Crowd.

The Woolly Bugger Guy Has only one fly box. Doesn't like the fact that 90 percent of the fish are caught by 10 percent of the flyfishers, and plans to do something about this with woolly buggers. Ten percent of the flyfishers are getting really pissed.

The Paranoid Schizophrenic He keeps a gun in his waders because, after all, "there are some strange people out here." After giving you a cautious glance, if he decides you aren't the enemy, he'll talk your head off. Commiserate with him on all issues, or you're fish bait.

The Well-Traveled Angler This one has been on every stream in every continent on the

Earth. He has fished in more places with unpronounceable names than you can find in an atlas or online. "Then there was the wild anadromous brook trout in Lake Abacikerizeryz on the northern ridge of the Ural mountains in Russia. You won't find that place even on the internet." He would rather talk your ear raw than fish. A great fisherman. Just ask him.

The Beginner After talking to the Shop Guy, this one appears on the stream with half-a-shop worth of gear: Gortex hat, coat, gloves, vest, underwear; fly rods named after exotic metals and polymers and geometric shapes; boots that actually fit well and don a podiatrist's endorsement; flies beautifully tied (unlike the crap you and I tie) by people in countries who are in the news a little too often for vague political reasons. Sometimes seen fighting a fish bigger than you and I will ever hope to catch, running up and down the river like he has just stuck the devil. Damn it.

Little Girls and Boys Will stand on the edge of a lake as patient as a young tree. Staring at a metronome would be more stimulating than looking at them casting. For kids, fly fishing is fly casting, especially false casting. Don't giggle too much. With enough time, they will eventually catch a big fish on the most technical water in three states. Of course, they will love to learn more about flyfishing from you. Act intelligent around them. Someday, if not now, they will become better than you in most ways that are important.

The Other Guy Stands in the middle of the stream, not fishing. Not doing anything. Just staring at the edge of the stream. Looks around more than fishes. Bends down on occasion. If you are lucky, you'll see him raise his arm for a single cast toward a crease in the current only he, the fish and a nearby rock know about, and then catches the largest fish in three states. He knows you're watching. He knows what fly you are going to use before you do. The only reason you see him is that he probably allowed it. Don't bother being like him. You can't.

The Liar Talks a lot. Fishes little. Needs more friends than fish. You don't need friends. You need to fish.

The Drunken Flyfisher A member of the Liar Crowd. Also a member of the Woolly Bugger Crowd. Has been seen with Rambo types. They catch more and bigger fish than you and I do.

The Hummer Guy Can blaze a trail to the last pristine lake in five states with a simple axle shift. Be careful, though; he could also be a member of the Drunken Flyfisher, the Liar, the Rambo, or the

Woolly Bugger Crowds. Fishes with dry flies the size of a small bird. Catches fish the size of a small whale.

The Girlfriend Doesn't have a clue how to impart the kind of precise action to a fly that took you 15 years to learn. Doesn't understand mayfly entomology. Thinks a spinner is something you do in the parking lot. A nymph is something she'd rather not talk about. Catches more fish than you do. Don't get her started on fly fishing. Has tendency to learn quicker than you did, and manages to stay put long enough on the edge of a stream and catch the fish you missed.

The Morally Superior Doesn't even fish. Don't talk to him. When he asks why you hurt fish, tell him "I fish; therefore I am." Be careful, though. He may be right. If a fish ever spoke one word to me, I'd hang up my gear for life.

The Flyfishing Worm Slinger Fishes with bait at the end of a fly line. Easily spotted by his casting style, which consists of a kind of lobbing stroke one would use to cast a tomato. Easily confused with the Rambo type, but generally smaller in build. Don't get mad. Get even. Tie a piece of red yam on your hook and fish it like a worm. Tell yourself it's a leech if this bothers you.

The Elated One Sees poetry in everything. Irony is afoot. The rising fish and the bent supplicant branches are messages only he can decipher. Just say Hello and walk on. Or introduce him to the Terminator.

The e-Bay Flyfisher Approaches the sport a little more carefully, knowing that anything bought on e-Bay will be cheap and of the highest quality, even if it never arrives. A frugal bargain hunter on e-Bay will typically own the most expensive equipment but somehow still look uncomfortable in his new trappings, sort of like a hobo trying to look well-heeled in an Armani that he found rooting in a dumpster.

Any resemblance of the above to actual people you've met is entirely possible, but probably coincidental and imaginary.

Courtesy of FFF ClubWire newswire service

Contacting IWFFC

Website: <http://www.iwffc.ca>

IWFFC information line: (905) 276-6345

Mail: Unit 6, Suite 283
2400 Dundas Street West
Mississauga, Ontario
L5K 2R8 Canada

The Vise Quad

Where members share favourite fly patterns

Warmwater Corner

Elliott Deighton

Our first fly is the Gurgler. Created and made popular by Jack Gartside, it is one of my better bass bugs. Designed for stripers and bluefish, Jack originally tied this fly with a white tail, foam back and with a white or grizzly hackle and a red throat. Since then, the Gurgler has evolved into a fly for just about every species of fish that preys on bait fish. It is a pattern that is easy, quick and cheap to tie; I wouldn't be without it.

A lot of saltwater fly fishers retrieve the Gurgler fast, ripping it through blitzing schools of bait fish while the stripers and blues feed from below. This is done with a two handed retrieve but most of my success for largemouth bass comes from fishing it in the usual popper retrieve of very slowly to dead stop. In fact, an all-black Gurgler is a very effective fly for stripers at night when fished very slowly. A two-handed retrieve is used, but not so much for retrieving the fly than to be able to feel every tick and bump of the fly as it swims seductively in the current. I often use this two-handed retrieve when largemouth fishing as well as it enables you to continually keep the fly in motion slowly and it keeps you in direct contact with the fly for an instant hook set.

Frog Gurgler

Hook: Mustad wide gape Stinger #37187

Thread: Yellow 6/0

Weed guard: 20lb mono

Tail: Chartreuse bucktail & pearl Krystal Flash or Flashabou

Body: Yellow closed cell foam strip and a webby yellow Chinese cock hackle

Back: Remainder of the yellow foam strip coloured with chartreuse and olive permanent marker.

Tying instructions

Wrap a short length of mono around the outside of the hook bend to about one half or two thirds of the bend. Coat the thread wraps with 5 minute epoxy for durability and let harden.

Tie in the tail of bucktail which should be about one and a half hook shanks in length. I like to start the

thread wraps for the bucktail just behind the hookeye and bind the tail down to the start of the bend. This ensures a tail that will not pull out and also gives an even underbody to your fly. If you judge the length of bucktail to cut off the skin, you can just bind the butts of the hair down behind the hook eye and eliminate the step of having to trim the butts off later. I'm all about saving unnecessary tying steps and use this cutting to exact length method on many of the materials I use.



Take 4 or 5 strands of Crystal Flash or Flashabou and fold them in half over your thread. Tie this down securely and trim to a little longer than the tail. This doubling over is a more secure method of tying in slippery material than just tying in by the cut ends. It is the tying technique I use on any synthetic material that can be trimmed to length.

The foam I use is just regular craft store closed cell sheet foam. Much has been written about the proper foam to use for Gurglers and its mostly is a lot of hype meant to generate sales for whoever is advocating this or that type of foam. If you want a more buoyant Gurgler, or one with a stiffer lip, just add a second layer of foam by tying two strips at the start of the fly or you can just super glue a short second strip on top after you have the first shellback formed. The width of your strips should be proportionate to the hook size; around 10mm is about right for a size 4 or 6 bass hook.

With the thread at the head of the fly, I add a thin layer of super glue to the thread under body then carefully fold the foam over the hook shank and onto the wet glue. The strip should be positioned starting slightly behind the hook and I bind the foam to the shank in open wraps going to the rear of the fly. Be very careful not to touch the wet glue as it is easy to instantly glue your finger and thumb to the fly or, worse still, glue them together.

Tie in a large Chinese cock hackle by the tip at the rear of the body and spiral wrap the thread up the body in open turns to just behind the hook eye. Wind the hackle forward trying to keep the stem in the groove formed by the forward wrap of thread. I usually use up all of the hackle at the head of the fly

by winding whatever is left in close turns before tying the stem off. This gives me a nice full throat.

Gently fold the hackle fibres on the top of the fly down as you bring the foam strip over the back of the fly. Take several loose turns of thread around the foam and the fly just behind the hook eye and gently start to tighten binding the foam down securely. Care is needed at this stage because too much thread pressure applied too quickly will cut through the foam ruining the fly. After the foam is tied down, lift the tag end of foam and take a few more turns of thread under what will now be the lip of the fly.

Bring the end of the mono weed guard through the hook eye and after sizing the loop to about a half larger than the hook gap, bind the mono down with several turns of thread. Pull the tag end of mono back over the fly towards the tail and bind it down again. This doubling over of the mono ensures that the weed guard will not pull out of the fly if you happen to get it caught on a snag. By using a heavy leader, I can usually just pull the fly free without fear of damaging the weed guard.

Trim the thread and cut the tag end of foam to a short lip as shown, cement the head and the fly is finished.

You can colour the back of the foam with permanent markers to roughly represent a frog if you like but since the fish mostly see the fly from below this step is debatable.

Good luck with your tying and if you have any questions I can be reached at an IWFFC meeting or bass.man@sympatico.ca.

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