



## Editor's Eddy

*The lyin' season is upon us.*

– Jack Pine Joe to Gordon MacQuarrie

A less rustic alternative of the above might be: "We are entering the upward trend in our annual cycle of verbal inflation." Witticisms aside, it's gratifying to think that by the time this issue arrives in your digital or metal mailbox, opening day for trout will be not far off.

As nice as it will be to once again stand on the streambank, the first couple of weeks are in no way my favourite part of the season. Sometimes we are met with water that is, as author Ted Leeson puts it, a "roily disappointment," but often it's just too cold and the weather too unfriendly for the fly angler. The trout are reclusive and unresponsive; indeed, the waters seem less populated by fish than anglers anxious to chill their cabin fever. For any success, it's generally required to endlessly cast weighted flies, so I remain as sulky as the trout until they begin to show themselves with the onset of the hatches; sulky not because I prefer dry-flyfishing (which I do) but because, in a large sense, what I'm looking for is reassurance that the trout are still there, that they have survived yet another winter in our stressed local (what might be termed "peri-urban") streams. Only firm evidence of that can fully rekindle my angling spirit.

So, for me, opening day (and a while thereafter) gives occasion to just shake off the shackles of winter, get back my "river legs" and, perhaps most importantly, reawaken any streamside friendships that have been in hibernation. I prefer to ease myself into the season, and may linger at the coffee shop or around a cluster of vehicles a little too long. When I do fish, catching one or two is sufficient, after which I can relax. If the sun is shining warmly and the water is not too high or off-colour, it's pleasant to stand on a bridge or other vantage point and watch for signs of life – a fleeting shadow, perhaps – or maybe venture into the stream and chill my hands to a bluish-white numbness rooting around for insect larvae, even if I *have* done it a thousand times before.

Wherever and with whomever you may go for your "opener," I hope that you meet with your own personal measure of success. *Have a great season!*

*Bob Kuehnbaum, April 1, 2004*

*Single Haul*<sup>TM</sup>, the newsletter of the Izaak Walton Flyfishing Club, is published eight to ten times a year. *Single Haul* is provided free of charge to all club members, and is distributed to clubs, fly shops and other interested individuals.

All rights are reserved, copyright, 2002. Copyright in individual articles and artwork is retained by the author or artist. Articles and artwork may be reproduced only with permission.

*Single Haul*<sup>TM</sup> and *Double Haul*<sup>TM</sup> are trademarks of the Izaak Walton Flyfishing Club.

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.

## On a Very Sad Note

It is with much sadness and regret that we report the death of **Bob Foote** on March 28<sup>th</sup> at Credit Valley Hospital in Mississauga. He is survived by his wife, Lori, two children and three grandchildren.

Bob joined the club in late 1998, and soon became involved in activities, including helping out with the Forum club booth and kids' fly tying at the Spring Fishing Show. He had a great sense of humour and fun, and would tackle any job, always wanting to know "What's next?" He ran the club's "mail room" for about a year, until last fall when he became ill. His tenure on the executive was all-too-short, but he will be remembered for his hard work, and perpetual cheerfulness.

The club has made a donation in his memory to the World Wildlife Foundation Canada (WWFC). Members are invited by the family to submit personal donations to the WWFC (416-489-8800), or to the Daily Bread Food Bank (416-203-0050).

## Quotable / Notable Quotes

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it, but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains.

– Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854

## The Forum

We should all take our fishing hats off to Ken Geddes for his outstanding job in this his second (and final) year as Program Chair. Ken has worked very hard – with Assistant Chair Sharon Cook – to make it all happen. And many thanks to the other members of the Forum Committee for their contributions.

Results of the Forum will be reported in the next issue of this newsletter.

This year's award winners are as follows:

The **Maurice How Award** went to **Pat Kelly** as the most enthusiastic and involved member of IWFFC for exhibiting an interest in conservation and for encouraging others.

The **Gregory Clark Award** was presented to **Ted Knott** in recognition of outstanding contributions to the arts of fly fishing. Ted also received a **Life Membership**.

The **Jack Sutton Award** was received by Dave Prothero Sr. in recognition of outstanding creativity in the delicate art of fly tying.

The **President's Award** went to Ken Geddes in recognition of continued efforts to support the objectives and philosophy of the IWFFC for contributing toward the progress of the club and for encouraging a spirit of fellowship among its members.

### Forum Chair Needed

Having just completed his second successful year as Forum Chair, Ken Geddes is stepping down. The Forum, a major focus of our club's activities, takes a lot of advance planning, and we need to locate a new Chair as soon as possible.

If you think that you might be up for this important and challenging position, please get in touch with Ken Geddes (416-757-2084) or the club through the number below, or at a meeting. Your participation would be deeply appreciated.

## Upcoming Meeting Schedule

**April 6<sup>th</sup>: Fly Tying:** *Guest Tyer:* Dan Kennaley will demonstrate some of his favourite trout flies; *Beginners* will be instructed by Pierre Turgeon.

**April 20<sup>th</sup>: General Meeting:** Mike Zimmer will present the outcome of 1½ years of radio-tracking brown trout on the Credit River.

**May 4<sup>th</sup>: Fly Tying:** *Guest tyer:* Elliott Deighton will be tying bass bugs. *Club tyer:* Bob Kuehnbaum will do some terrestrial patterns. Beginners will be instructed by Pierre Turgeon.

*Note: The first meeting in the fall will be a general meeting on September 21<sup>st</sup>.*

## 2003 Conservation Workday Schedule

The 2003 workday schedule for the upper Credit River is listed below. As you can see, it's going to be a busy summer. IWFFC has four events planned; the May 15<sup>th</sup> small experimental planting will be coordinated by CVC's Dave Beaton with Knights of Columbus volunteers, but we will still need people for the other three. And, of course, you are encouraged to help out on any of the Trout Unlimited-sponsored events or the joint workdays. *Please try to get out on at least one event!*

For more information, please call Bob Kuehnbaum at 905-276-6684. There is a detailed listing of these events (and other workdays) at [www.creditvalleycons.com](http://www.creditvalleycons.com).

**April 18<sup>th</sup>** (Sunday): TUC annual Sligo & Forks of the Credit cleanup. 9 am to 1 pm. Meet at Sligo.

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>** (Sunday): IWFFC Workday: Planting 300 trees on CVC lands on the West Branch of the Credit River in Erin. 9 am to 1 pm.

**May 15<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday): IWFFC Workday: Experimental planting along Credit River at Hwy. 10 crossing (no volunteers required)

**June 13<sup>th</sup>** (Sunday): TUC Caledon Mountain Trout Club planting. Meet at Sligo Bridge. 9 am to 1 pm.

**July 24<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday): UCRRI silt trap repairs. 9 am.

**August 8<sup>th</sup>** (Sunday): IWFFC Workday: Logjam installation around Forks of the Credit. Meet at Dominion St. Bridge. 9 am to 1 pm.

**August 14<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday): TUC installation of garbage kiosks

**August 28<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday): IWFFC Workday: Logjam installation around Forks of the Credit

**September 25<sup>th</sup>** (Saturday) Open workday, to be selected later

**October 31<sup>st</sup>** (Sunday): CVC-sponsored brown trout spawning survey. 10 am.

**November 7<sup>th</sup>** (Sunday): CVC-sponsored brook trout spawning survey. 10 am.

## Club Outing: Humber Springs

For all the still water anglers in our midst, an outing for IWFFC members is planned for May 15<sup>th</sup> at Humber Springs. Fishing is from 9 am to 6 pm, at a cost of \$25.

The Humber Springs ponds are stocked with rainbow and brook trout. Wading is not allowed, but there are small boats available (no charge), or you can bring your float tube if you've got one.

For directions, please check the club website or phone Ted Armstrong after 6 pm at 905-637-2058.

## Beginners' Day

Sheldon Seale is organizing an outing for beginner fly fishers on the upper Credit River on Saturday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 2:30 pm. Instruction will consist of an introduction to basic equipment, setting up a rod, casting basics, fly selection based on observation, and fighting and handling a fish. This will be followed up by fishing until dusk. There will also be discussion on the importance of conservation.

If you'd like to spend a very informative afternoon / evening with Sheldon, or if you know someone who wants to learn about fly fishing and how it's done, please contact Sheldon at 905-855-9369 or [sheldon.seale@sympatico.ca](mailto:sheldon.seale@sympatico.ca).

You'll need to be prepared to wade and fish. Bring rod, reel, line, leader, flies and waders as a minimum. If you need something, let Sheldon know and he'll see what we can be begged or borrowed.

## Community Events

IWFFC has been invited to participate at the following events. We will have a booth to promote our conservation activities, demonstrate fly tying and enrol new members. Perhaps 2 to 6 volunteers are needed for each event, depending on how long they can stay. *Riverfest* and the *Bruce Trail Day* are opportunities for those of you who live in the Georgetown-Oakville area.

**Riverfest:** June 5<sup>th</sup>. A village festival in Norval celebrating "Life on the Credit River," with several community activities. 9 am to 5 pm.

**Bruce Trail Day:** June 6<sup>th</sup>. The Toronto Bruce Trail Club is hosting a Bruce Trail Spring Hike Day in the Limehouse Memorial Hall. 10 am to 3 pm.

**Canadian Rivers Day:** June 13<sup>th</sup>. The Toronto Region Conservation Authority is holding this event at the Kortright Centre. They are hosting the Waterwalkers International Film Festival featuring work by canoeist and outdoor filmmaker Bill Mason. 9 am to 5 pm.

## Spring Fishing Show

Over the last weekend in February, club members once again participated in the Spring Fishing Show, helping out at both the club booth and the kid's fly tying for the annual tie-wool-on-hook event. The young fellow below hadn't concentrated that hard since being dragged from his video game a few hours before; but it looks like he had fun.

Thanks to all who helped out, and particularly to Sheldon Seale who organized the booth.



photo by Pat Kelley

## FFC Championship

Fly Fishing Canada has announced that the 2<sup>nd</sup> FFC National Fly Fishing Championship & Conservation Symposium will be held in the beautiful setting of the world famous Kenauk Lakes Preserve in Quebec, from October 17 to 20, 2004. The Symposium topic will be management's successful program to restore native species to the preserve. The top three rods will be invited to join Team Canada to compete in the 2005 Worlds.

There are upcoming international competitions in Norway, Slovakia, Scotland and New Zealand. Enquiries about any of these events should be directed to: Jack Simpson, 8 Harrowby Court, Etobicoke, ON M9B 3H3, Ph: 416-231-1418, E-Mail: [flyfishingcanada@rogers.com](mailto:flyfishingcanada@rogers.com).

## Poached Salmon, Anyone?

In February, the MNR announced that a Toronto man was fined \$500 for keeping two Atlantic salmon caught in the Upper Credit River near Belfountain on October 4, 2003. Atlantic salmon are protected under a no-kill regulation. At the time, it was actually not illegal to fish the upper Credit after the close of the trout season (September 30<sup>th</sup>). Had he not had the fish in his possession, the angler could have claimed to be fishing for suckers. Under the revised regulations, however, the angling of any species in the Upper Credit area within the Town of Caledon will be prohibited during the traditional closure of the trout season.

Wherever you fish, you are responsible for knowing seasons, and size/possession limits. Pick up your new *The 2004 Recreational Fishing Regulations Summary* at any MNR office or sporting goods outlet. The regulations are also available online at [www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/fishing](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/fishing).

The above-mentioned poacher was turned in by a member of the public. You too can help protect our fish by reporting violations to MNR's Aurora District Office at (905) 713-7400 or to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

## Imitation versus Attraction

*Dan Kennaley*

Growing up, and before I started fly fishing, I was nonetheless attracted to the sport. Those many colourful flies fascinated me: fancy salmon patterns like the Durham Ranger or the Jock Scott, or fancy trout flies like the McGinty, the Parmachene Belle, and the Professor, which are not only beautiful and intricate, but also have those great names. These are the flies that showed up in popular culture, and since I wasn't yet, at that point, hopelessly mired in fly fishing culture, these were the fly patterns I noticed. If, for instance, someone wanted to use fly fishing to market a birthday card, a car or a coffee mug, these were the patterns that they tended to use.

So when I started fly fishing and fly tying in the mid-1980s, I was actually a little disappointed. The trout flies being recommended to me in the books were consistent with the concept of matching the hatch and were relatively drab and boring. But, as I soon discovered, they caught fish and it wasn't long before I began to realize just how powerful the concept of matching the hatch was. However, I still wondered about all those other flies, the colourful ones with the great names, which by then I had learned were for the most part wet fly attractor patterns. I wanted to understand where the concept of matching the hatch had come from, but I also wanted to know where those attractor patterns fit in. So I started reading some fly fishing history.

What I discovered is that, while fly fishing history is fascinating, it is not exactly straight forward, and that understanding where things fit in isn't easy. For instance, within fly fishing there's been a series of long running battles. One has pitted the proponents of more precise imitation against those who suggest attraction is the key. Another has pitted those who favour the wet fly against those who favour the dry. Yet these two battles have not been entirely separate battles since many of the attractor patterns tended to be wet flies, while the proponents of dry fly fishing tended to be more solidly in the precise imitation camp. Layer in the fact that the battles played out a little differently in Britain as compared to the United States, and things start to get complicated. And who knows what was happening in Canada? We were likely a kind of hybrid as we would have had greater cultural links to Britain than the U.S. would have had with Britain, and at the same time our proximity with the U.S. would have also led to lots of American influence. Of course, today we are fly fishing-wise even more strongly interconnected with the Americans.

If we look at the time from when Dame Juliana Berners' *A Treatyse of Fysshynge Wyth an Angle* was "published" in 1496 through to the time of Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton's *The Compleat Angler* in 1676, we can, nevertheless, say several things without too many qualifications: first, that there wasn't a lot of emphasis placed on precise imitation; and secondly, that not too many people were using dry flies (probably none). In calling them flies, it would seem that even Berners understood that artificial flies were imitation of the naturals. But it is obvious from the literature up to Walton and Cotton's day that fly anglers did not really understand where the insects came from, nor did they really care. Trial and error was the basis for fly design, not observation of the naturals.

I must, at this point, make one of those qualifications. Even by the time of *The Compleat Angler*, the seeds of more precise imitation had been planted. For instance, Arnold Gingrich, wrote in his 1959 book *The Well Tempered Angler* that the idea of matching the hatch first made it into the literature in 1631 when Gervase Markham wrote the following in his book *Country Contentments*:

"Now for the shapes and proportions of these flies, it is important to describe them without paynting, therefore you shall take of these severally flies alive, and laying them before you trie how near your Art can come unto nature by an equal shapes and mixture of colours; and when you have made them, you may keep them in close boxes uncrushed, and they will serve you many years."

It was another 200 years, however, before the next big advancement occurred in the more precise imitation/matching the hatch school of fly fishing. In 1836, a Briton, Alfred Ronalds published *The Fly-fisher's Entomology* which was the first to contain drawings of both the artificial flies and the naturals which the artificials were designed to imitate. Even more importantly, Ronalds linked vernacular names for flies with their scientific names. Gingrich, in his 1974 book *The Fishing in Print*, emphasizes the importance of this latter accomplishment, "by correlating the angler's names with the scientific descriptions, which had been around for a hundred years since Linnaeus but nobody had bothered to notice, he gave fly fishing for the first time a systematic and scientific basis of distinguishing one fly from another."

Next, two more Britons, W.C. Stewart in his 1857 book *The Practical Angler* and Frederic M. Halford in his 1889 book *Dry-fly Fishing in Theory and Practice*, elevated the use of the dry fly to that of a social imperative. But not only were you suppose to use only a dry fly, almost religiously you were also suppose to use only the right fly, and the right fly was the one that matched the naturals on the water at the time. Wet flies had fallen into disfavour, and while they were later to recover a little, the dry fly continues to this day to be king.

Meanwhile, things were going a little differently in the United States. Paul Schullery reports in his 1987 book *American Fly Fishing: A History*, that fly anglers in the U.S. were slower to abandon the wet fly. He suggests several possible reasons for this. That it may have been that the more rollicking water of the New World was better suited to the wet fly compared to the dry, or that the chief quarry of the New World, the brook trout, was easier to catch than those Old World browns and took wet flies with gusto. Another intriguing possibility raised by Schullery was that the

Americans with their revolutionary background wanted to distinguish themselves from the Brits. In any event, in being slower to abandon the wet fly, the Americans also developed the wet fly more, particularly in terms of the number of fancy attractor patterns. This development reached its zenith with Ray Bergman's 1938 book *Trout with Coloured Plate* after coloured plate of beautiful American fancy wet flies.

At the same time as American anglers were developing all those ornamental, attractor wet flies, the more precise imitation/match the hatch school of fly fishing in the U.S. was recruiting students. First, there was Louis Rhead's *American Trout Stream Insects* in 1916. While Rhead's book was important in advocating more precise imitation of actual insects, it unfortunately did not have the influence it could have had because it failed to integrate scientific nomenclature. However, in 1935 Preston Jennings published his *A Book of Trout Flies* which provided the foundation for all the entomological based books that were to follow and which resulted in Jennings becoming known as the American Ronalds. That it took American fly fishing writers an extra hundred years to achieve the same sort of book as Ronalds' is testimony to the additional staying power of the wet fly in America.

As an aside, I continue to wonder about the extent to which the history of fly fishing, revealed to us primarily in books and magazine articles, is an accurate or complete history. Occasionally we see evidence that it may not be. For instance, Louis Rhead produced his *American Trout Stream Insects* in 1916. Although flawed, it is still regarded as a major triumph for the more precise imitation school in its battle with the attractor school of fly tying. Until at least that time, and probably until after 1935, more people were tying and fishing those fancy attractor wet flies than were trying to match the hatch. Yet we have this quote from Audrey Saunders' *Algonquin Story* about the famous Canadian painter Tom Thomson who died in Algonquin Park in 1917 and was an avid fly angler: "...he made his own flies and 'bugs', watching to see what insects made the fish rise, and painting his own imitations on the spot." I suspect that there has been a lot of experimentation being practiced by fly anglers all the time, but much of this experimentation hasn't necessarily made it into books or articles.

After Jennings, the conversion of the American angler to fly fishing seems to have happened relatively quickly. A large number of fly angler authors provided more and more information about what to imitate and how to imitate it. Most

notably, Ernest Schwiebert Jr. produced his *Matching the Hatch* in 1955 and gave the school of more precise imitation its new name. Next came Doug Swisher and Carl Richards' 1971 book *Selective Trout*, which was notable both for popularizing no hackle flies and for its large coloured photographs of the actual insects. Then came Al Caucci and Bob Nastasi with their 1975 book *Hatches* which focussed on mayfly hatches and which popularized the Comparadun style of no hackle dry fly, a style which had been borrowed from Adirondack fly tier Fran Betters. What Caucci and Nastasi did for mayfly hatches, Swisher, Richards and Fred Arbona did to some degree for stoneflies in their 1983 book *Stoneflies*. Also in 1983, Gary LaFontaine did the same thing for caddisflies in his book *Caddisflies*.

With the rise of the match the hatch school to new height after new height, the wonderful, fancy, attractor style of wet fly which was popular for so long in the U.S. was largely supplanted. Not all the flies associated with the match the hatch school were dry flies. Nymphs were increasingly part of the mix, but although fished subsurface, the nymph was not a wet fly.

The place of the old American wet flies today is, I suppose, epitomized by contemporary American author John Gierach's great line, "a twelve inch trout caught on a dry fly is four inches longer than a twelve inch trout caught on a nymph or streamer." Wet flies don't even merit a mention!

*Originally printed in November, 2003, in Patterns, the monthly newsletter of the K-W Flyfishers*

## Phil Kettle's Stream Diaries – Part II

*This is the second of three of Phil Kettle's articles reprinted from The Globe & Mail – a very good primer on the Hendrickson hatch.*

*Untitled (1981)*

Being able to fish with a dry fly on opening day of the trout season is a rare situation in Southern Ontario. Cold weather and roily water conditions usually prevent the emergence of the delicate mayfly that early in the season.

However, this year's early thaw and above-average April temperatures could result in a hatch

of Hendrickson mayflies, making the dreams of the dry-fly angler come true.

"If we get five days of temperatures in the mid-teens before opening day, we could have a hatch of Hendricksons," said Jack Imhof, the Ministry of Natural Resources biologist. "Blue-winged olives have been emerging for over a week."

Imhof, who is also an ardent fly fisherman, added, "The blue-winged olives are usually first, followed by a slate grey caddis. They hatch a week or so before the Hendrickson, but fail to excite the fish."

The Hendrickson is the first major mayfly hatch of the season. Its emergence signals the sequence of hatches that forms the fly-fishing season.

Hendrickson is the colloquial term for several species of mayfly of the *ephemerellidae* family. In 1916, Roy Steenrod of New York tied a fly to imitate an outstanding hatch of insects on the Beaverkill River. The fly proved deadly.

A few years later he named the fly after a fishing companion, A. E. Hendrickson. Since the scientific name *ephemerella subvaria* is difficult to remember, fly fishermen adopted the name of the imitation to identify this medium-sized mayfly.

The Hendrickson is a common early season mayfly in the northeastern United States and Eastern Canada. Its popularity stems from the profusion of insects that emerge during a hatch. The numbers of insects trigger a feeding frenzy by trout, providing the fly rodder with excellent fishing opportunities.

The emergence pattern of the insect provides the clue to its popularity. The mature nymphs become active an hour before the hatch begins, putting the trout on the alert.

During the hatch, the adults are vulnerable on the surface for several minutes as they struggle out of the nymphal skin. Trout rise steadily to feed on these hapless insects.

Within 24 hours the adults moult again to the spinner stage, mate and lay eggs. As they deposit their eggs, the spent spinners fall on the surface of the water creating another hatch.

Hendrickson nymphs are sprawlers. They live on the underside of rocks and debris in fast water sections of a river. Their general appearance is flat with a thin profile. When knocked free from a rock and allowed to drift in the current, they tend to glide rather than swim.

Anglers use a standard size 12 nymph pattern tied with an olive brown body, and a brown



partridge wing case. A brown partridge hackle feather provides the legs. Since the nymphs float just beneath the surface for some distance while hatching, a floating nymph can be deadly.

For a similar reason, the emerger pattern is deadly.

The emerger is a stage between the nymph and the adult. It is usually tied with a nymph body and thorax, a brown partridge feather hackle and a dark grey half opened wing to simulate this immature adult. Trout recognize the vulnerability of this stage as it struggles to fly free of the surface.

Male and female Hendricksons emerge from different sections of a river. The female is larger and paler in color than her mate, creating the need for a light and a dark Hendrickson pattern.

The traditional dry fly tied by Steenrod had tails of golden pheasant crest, wood duck wings, a body of tan fox fur and pale dun-colored hackle. The light Hendrickson has a body of cream fur.

A brown quill spinner, size 14, will take fish during the spinner fall. At this stage the insects are dead and lie flush on the surface.

If fish are rising to feed and there are no obvious insects, check the water surface for spinners. They may be a hidden hatch.

#### §

*The Hendricksons are now on the way (May 12, 1982)*

Fly fishermen look forward to the Hendrickson hatch, the first major appearance of mayflies each spring and the real beginning of dry-fly angling.

Hendricksons hatch when river water temperatures maintain a minimum of 13 C (55°F) for several days. Once under way, the hatch may last two or three weeks on any given stretch of river.

Unseasonably cold nights have slowed Hendrickson development this year. Peterborough angler Terry Ruttle recalls that, "In 1981, we were fishing Hendricksons on opening day. This year the hatch has only just begun on the Credit River east of Toronto.

"When there are no winged adults on the water, I start fishing a Hendrickson nymph. The nymphs become active as the water warms. They crawl over the rocky bottom. An hour before the hatch, they begin their slow drift to the surface."

Most Hendrickson nymph patterns imitate the female rather than the smaller male. The standard nymph pattern has a light olive abdomen,

a dark olive thorax and a dark brown wing case on a size 14 hook.

In early May, cold water usually results in an early afternoon hatch. In the pre-hatch morning hours, the fly rodder can fish a nymph through holding water. As the time of the hatch nears, switch to a floating nymph.

The nymph pattern should drift just beneath the surface. Grease the leader and tippet with floatant to within 10 centimetres (4 inches) of the hook to achieve the correct float. A strike indicator 30 cm (12 inches) above the nymph may be needed to see the fish take the fly.

Ruttle said most anglers switch to a dry fly as soon as they see mayflies on the water. "Actually the pre-emerger pattern may be the more deadly lure. It is simply a nymph pattern with a tuft of wing colored poly wool in place of the wing case. It simulates a half-opened wing. Grease the fly to float in the surface film."

The Hendrickson mayfly is a particularly good fly to match because it takes an extended period of time to emerge from the nymphal shuck. The insect may drift 20 metres (65 feet) before getting its wings fully upright for flight. Trout recognize the vulnerability of this stage of the hatch and select them to feed on.

Fly rodgers must watch the river surface for a change in the hatch cycle. By late afternoon, the Hendricksons of the previous day may have mated and will fall on the water as spinners. These spent insects lie flat on the surface, unable to escape. They make an easy meal for fish. Unless the angler is aware, he may be using a standard dry fly to rising trout, but take no fish. Trout may have switched to spinners.

Fish a Hendrickson spinner (size 12) on a 5x tippet, dead-drifting it in the current. The spinner has a dark brown body and tail with a few fibres of light grey-tan poly wool fibres for wings.

## Do You Have an Olfactory Handicap?

*Jim Abbs*

Up near the south shore of the Shining Big Sea Waters (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's name for Lake Superior) lives a psychiatrist by the name of Gregory Bambenek. Dr. Bambenek has some interesting ideas that not only have made him rich, but also are of importance to fly fishers.

Those who have read the *Guide to Aquatic Trout Foods* know that Dave Whitlock argues strongly that the chemical senses play an important role in fish feeding. For example, Whitlock notes

that "Trout rely heavily upon their sense of smell to confirm the edibility of a food object. The fly tier and fly fisher should give careful considerations to how his flies smell to a trout. For example, when I fish subsurface imitations of aquatic food forms, I will rub the fly with the bottom of a rock or a piece of vegetation taken from the stream. There is no doubt that a fly so treated performs better than one that carries human or chemical scents."

According to Dr. Bambenek's research, fish have one of the most sensitive olfactory systems in nature. A good hunting dog can smell about 1,000 times better than his master and a fish can smell 1,000 times better than a hunting dog. If you put one drop of something in Lake Erie, some fish are so sensitive they can smell it anywhere in the lake. As a fly angler, you should know that if your perspiration contains high levels of L-serine, a mammalian amino acid offensive to fish, your fishing success may be restricted.

On the other hand, fish find other scents attractive. There apparently are unique scents emitted by wounded minnows, insects and crustaceans going through metamorphic skin changes or freshly laid fish eggs. These scents announce that dinner is served to every fish around.

As fly anglers, we have elevated our fly designs to the highest level with respect to their visual properties. Perhaps it is time we realized that no natural organism relies on a single sense to the exclusion of all others.

The optimal and more realistic fly design would incorporate natural features of how a fly looks, feels (touch/texture) AND smells. Perhaps avoiding scents on flies is sort of like over-zealous adherence to fly fishing rules of 19th century England to only fish dry flies upstream – foolish and a little rigid.

*Courtesy of the FFF ClubWire Newswire service*

*Editor's Note: The addition of scent would likely be illegal in artificial-bait-only waters. If you're concerned about human scent, try the aquatic vegetation rub mentioned above.*

## **The I-Never-Knew-That! Department**

### **The Mystery of the "X" in Your Tippet**

*Jim Smoragiewicz, Black Hills Fly Fishers, SD*

It was a passing thought that I had many times over the years but never took the time to look into it. What does the "X" on the packages of tippet and leaders stand for? This was one of the things that I thought every fly fisher but I knew.

A little history on some of our first mass-produced tippet material: For some time early in the century, leaders were tied out of a silk strand that came from a caterpillar in Spain. The caterpillars were killed and then processed in chemicals to toughen their silk sacks. The silk sacks or "gut" were then removed from the caterpillar (usually two caterpillars). This packet of silk was then stretched out, usually reaching a length of 12 to 15 in. Lengths of silk longer than this were scarce, and brought a premium price.

The silk strands were uneven in diameter and needed to be uniform in diameter for use in building the leader. The way this evening process was accomplished was by using diamonds to cut one side to form a cutting edge on the hole. The silk strand was then soaked in a solution to soften it, and then drawn through the hole in the diamond with all excess silk being cut away.

This uniform piece of "silk cat gut" (gut from a caterpillar, and not a house cat) was considered to be 1X in size because it had been drawn through a diamond one time or 1X. Next, it was drawn through a diamond with a smaller hole to reduce the diameter even further. This piece of silk was now a 2X, or was drawn through diamonds 2 times. This was continued until a 5X tippet was reached, the smallest most fly fishers felt was usable at the time.

*Courtesy 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