



Editor's Eddy

As I sit here at my desk, the weather is at last befitting for the time of year: nearing the end of October with frost expected tonight and a couple of wet days just behind us. And wet is welcome. I recently read that this past summer was the driest in the last 50 years. The rivers were very low through the end of the trout season, and drought combined with the heat did not result in the best fishing conditions – *trout* fishing conditions, anyway. Many anglers rightly stayed away from the water. Even the warm-water folk were grumbling about the heat!

In addition to a scarcity of ideal angling days, work was holding me back this season. It seems that the older I get, the less time (or energy?) I have to fish (or otherwise recreate, for that matter), despite the fact that my offspring have fled. Something's not right in Mudville!

Being somewhat occupied with business matters has also cut into getting out issues of the *Single Haul* – a fact that you will have all too well noticed, and for which I do apologize. After almost 5½ years and 38 issues, including this one, I anticipate that this will be my last. In order for the club to have a regular newsletter to keep our membership informed of key events, *it is essential* that someone step forward to keep the issues coming (see page 2). It's definitely time for me to step aside to allow for fresh ideas and energy.

To all those members and others who have contributed articles, poems, fly patterns, photographs and artwork along the way: *Thanks!* I've really appreciated the input.

Bob Kuehnbaum, October 28, 2007

Quotable / Notable Quotes

Flyfishing is like sex, everyone thinks there is more than there is, and that everyone else is getting more than their share.

– Henry Kanemotto

If I'm not going to catch anything, then I'd rather not catch anything on flies.

– Bob Lawless

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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.

Club News & Events

Club Elections

The club elections were scheduled to be held on October 16, but were postponed until the next meeting, **November 6th**, because there were no nominations for the positions of President and Vice-President, and because turn-out was a bit low to have a meaningful result.

The current President will be stepping down on November 6. It is therefore imperative that interested members come forward and declare their interest for the positions, or have someone nominate them. Please contact Bob Kuehnbaum (see preceding box for information.)

Vacant Club Positions

We have been looking for replacements for the positions of Conservation Chair and *Single Haul* Editor for one and two years, respectively. It is time that we have volunteers for these important jobs, so please indicate your desire to do either.

Treasurer: About a year ago, Tim Brown, then a freshly minted member, came forward to offer his experience in banking. We thank Tim for his efforts, but he has unfortunately found himself far too busy with his business to continue.

Conservation Chair: Pat Kelly, our current Chair, wishes to retain responsibility for the

workdays and community event days. This will make the task considerably lighter for the new Chair who will be more involved in determining where to best use our ample conservation funds and attending committees to let our stance be known on a number of issues.

Single Haul Editor: If the task seems onerous, keep in mind that the newsletter can be designed to the editor's taste – even if it means merely getting out updates of events, past and upcoming, on a regular basis, and in a four-page, rather than eight-page format. Slightly advanced skills with document processing are needed, but nothing that can't be learned fairly quickly (the current Editor will provide advice). And there is a separate "mailing department".

Program Chair: After Christmas, Don Arthurs wishes to move on after several years arranging for guest speakers and tyers at our meetings.

If you think that you have the skills and /or would like to discuss any of the positions, please call Bob Kuehnbaum.

Meeting Schedule

Here is our meeting schedule for the 2007/2008 session. Updates on speakers and tyers will be spread through the *Single Haul*, but members should check the website regularly.

November 6th: Tying meeting: Sheldon Seale will demonstrate fly patterns for striped bass and bluefish.

November 20th: General Meeting

December 4th: Tying meeting

December 18th: General Meeting

Note: January meetings will be on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays.

January 8th: Tying meeting

January 22nd: General Meeting

February 5th: Tying Meeting

February 19th: General Meeting

March 4th: Tying Meeting

March 18th: General Meeting

April 1st: Tying Meeting

Note: April 16th is a Wednesday.

April 16th: General Meeting

May 6th: Tying meeting

Used Equipment Needed

Do you have a rod and/or reel that have been sitting ignored and unused in the basement or a closet for a number of years? IWFFC is in need of replacement equipment for casting instruction at the Forum and our regular club events, so please get in touch with the Editor at the numbers given in the box on page 1. And thank you in advance.

Vic Cairns Receives Award

Vic Cairns, a former (retired) fisheries biologist with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, is a co-recipient of Hamilton's Dr. Victor Ceciloni Award for Environmentalist of the Year. Vic and the other recipient, Murray Charlton, have been central figures in the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan. They were responsible for the Cootes Paradise Fishway, a carp barrier, and for the successful restoration of populations of aquatic plants, fish and wildlife such as bullfrogs and the spotted salamander. Their efforts are credited for the development of harbour trails and parks. Vic pioneered the harbour's fisheries management, now copied in other restoration projects, and developed programs to monitor the harbour's condition.

Oh, yes, and Vic is a long-time member of our Forum Committee where he has focussed on donations for the auctions and other prizes – just another example of his efforts for conservation.

Congratulations, Vic!

Forum Feedback

"We thoroughly enjoyed the show and Virginia always has a great time working registration with Pat and the other volunteers. We really appreciate you and the club inviting us up and always look forward to coming to the show.

"I have a feeling that the show was a big success. I hope that you reached all your goals and have continued growth in your fundraising. It seems like any projects are costly and require a lot of planning and work. Fortunately, the results in conversation are always worthwhile.

"It goes without saying we wish you all the best and hope that you enjoy good health and great fishing in the coming year!"

Harold and Virginia Williams

Kind words are always nice to hear. – Ed.

New Members

We'd like to welcome new members who joined the club at the Forum or in the subsequent months. Unfortunately, we usually don't keep separate lists in our database, so it's not possible to identify you individually. But we sincerely hope that you will regularly attend meetings and get to know some of our "old-timers". We usually look for new faces at meetings, but there's a lot going on so please make a point of identifying yourself to one of our executive members. Like anything, the more you put into our organization, the more you'll get out.

See you soon!

Fly Tying DVDs

Pat Kelly has been busy recording tying meetings – e.g. Henri Lemieux, Ken Collins, Sheldon Seale – and he has created a DVD for each of them. He has also gone through some of our old VHS (and other tape) recordings and created DVDs of Dave Whitlock at the Forum in 1981 and 1986, Chico Hernandez (saltwater flies) at the 1982 Forum, and others.

The DVDs are available at club meetings for \$10 apiece.

TUC Dinner

Trout Unlimited Canada's 21st Toronto National Conservation & Auction Fundraiser dinner is to be held on November 28th, 2007, at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. The dinner and live auction will follow a reception and silent auction. Tickets are \$200 apiece.

For further information or tickets, contact Kim Blain at kblain@tucanada.org or 905-333-3264.

Conservation Corner

Workday Schedule

The only remaining conservation-related workday until next spring will be **Sunday Nov. 4th**: Brook trout spawning survey from Erin. For further information, contact **Pat Kelly**, at conservation@iwffc.ca or 905-277-2505.

Invasive Species

It never ends!

Didymo, an invasive alga sometimes called "rock snot" has recently been discovered in several northeastern U.S. waterways, including the Upper Connecticut River in New Hampshire, Vermont's White River and the Batten Kill River. The alga, which thrives in clean, cold waters, attaches itself to the river bottom. When it blooms, it forms massive mats which create a barrier for native organisms and may result in their decline. Although not a health hazard to humans, the effect of this invasive alga on native insect and fish populations has been documented in drainages in Quebec, New Zealand and South Dakota. Studies suggest that wild trout populations could be severely affected.

As if that weren't enough! Around the same time, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources distributed a fact sheet concerning **viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS)** and methods to slow (it is noteworthy that they do not say "stop") its spread through our watercourses. VHS is a disease nasty to fish but non-threatening to humans (infected fish can be handled and eaten) that has been found in Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, and all the connecting waterways, including the St. Lawrence River. So far, it has infected mostly warm-water species, but has been found in Chinook salmon. VHS can be spread from one water body to another by any method involving the movement of fish, water, vessels or gear that has been in contact with the virus.

As announced in the summer 2007 edition of *Backcasts*, Newsletter of the North Eastern Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers, the FFF has joined with a number of U.S. national partners to announce a new program that targets anglers and boaters in the prevention of the spread of invasive species spread (<http://cleanangling.org>). They encourage anglers to take the following steps:

- Inspect your gear for any plants or dirt.
- Clean your gear with clean water.
- Thoroughly dry your gear.
- Never transport any fish, plants or animals from one body of water to another.
- Tell others to do the same!

The MNR created a list of recommended procedures, most of which have to do with use of bait fish, roe and live wells, and thus not pertaining to our membership. The other recommendations are in line with those above. **So take a good look at your wading gear, kayaks and float tubes!** In the

event that you may keep a fish, it is recommended that the leftovers (guts, scales etc.) be disposed of in the garbage and not put back into the waterways.

Tips and Trips

Up on that Nipigon

Steve Copeland

Orient Bay lies at the southeast corner of Nipigon Lake 8 miles by water from the inlet of the mighty Nipigon River. We've stayed there at the Royal Windsor Lodge on our last 2 summer trips. It was built in the early 1900s by the railway and back then hosted royalty and the wealthy that could afford to travel to the far north and enlist the aid of an entourage of guides to get them to the fabulous fishing of the Nipigon. This was before the three big hydro dams were built to harness the energy of this burly and mighty northern river.

The bay is quiet: no seadoos and not a lot of boat traffic. I was awakened by the loons calling a few times and a snowy owl hooting. We often spotted bald eagles while out in the boat.

On our last trip, Olga rented us a 16 foot Lund with a 9-horse on the back that would get us out to the big lake and around the point to the famous Nipigon River. The upper river has many islands with rocky shoals and deep boulder strewn drop offs. They beckon you! These crystalline waters are home to huge northern pike, lake trout, pickerel and, of course, the famous Nipigon strain of brook trout.

I was excited when we past the many bays and finally entered the main river. We began trolling big #2 streamers deep on a full sinking line – McNally smelts tied in traditional white, and customized yellow grizzly to mimic the perch and also in pearl grey as so many of our minnows appear. Betty hooked a good brookie and played him to the boat, but the hook came away, as her drag wasn't set right.

By the way the regulations on the Nipigon specify barbless hooks on all flies, hooks and lures and you must remove one treble if your lure (such as a Rapala) has two. Brook trout under 22 inches must be released.

Next, I hooked a brookie along a deep rock shelf. The take was abrupt and he hooked himself. I gave him line a couple of times as he came to the boat head shaking. We netted a fine deep Nipigon brookie about 17 inches. Nothing special for this

river, but I was beaming as we snapped some quick pictures. Nipigon trout are incredibly deep and well fed. I reckon he weighed about 4 pounds. The fly fell from his jaw in the net and we quickly slid him back in to swim to his boulder-strewn home.

It wasn't long before Betty nervously announced she was snagged, her rod bent in a big arc. I put the motor in reverse, but her rod started throbbing ... it was another fish! Her drag was wonky, so I coached as and she played the big fish up to the boat. Finally glimpsing him sulking deep beside the boat I thought it might be a lake trout. As he came in to view I saw it was a very large pike, with the oversized grey streamer tucked neatly in the corner of his mouth. Betty eventually coerced him into netting range and I lowered the net. Now staring at a 40" pike I realized that he would not fit in our net! Well, after getting some shade under the boat, mister pike, with a swoosh of his great tail, headed off for friendlier waters and snapped the line like a guitar string.

Landing at the old dam just upstream of Virgin Falls was an experience. The current is very strong and I had to jump in without hesitation to grab the boat and keep it off the rocks. There is a 15 foot section of the dam removed where folks can access the river, so the current funnels through fast and strong. You must be wary to protect the boat and, of course, the prop when you land.

These are deep rapids, 17 feet in places, not typical dry fly water. After fishing it with streamers we tried jigs of a similar pattern. As I was in the midst of unhooking a snag, Betty screamed that she had a fish on. I placed my rod so the current wouldn't take it, and went to help her. A big brookie was on the surface for an instant, and I figured him to be about 20 inches – almost a keeper for these waters. He broke her line in the heavy current. As we caught our breath, I tried to explain to Betty about getting side pressure on a fish in these fast waters. But we were both exited by seeing such a marvellous fish, if only for a few moments.

We cast around the rocky ledges downstream of the landing for a while, then cast off to head upstream. Trolling along small islands I noticed a 6 foot wide slick of giant drake bodies. What an evening hatch that must have been! The mosquitoes are very bad, however, after sunset for about an hour, and would take the fun out of fishing and running the boat. Betty hooked two more good-sized brookies on the way back, but landed neither. It looks like a trip to the shop for a new reel will be in order. I should mention here that using barbless size 2 hooks on these big brookies is a challenge,

you must try to keep even pressure on the fish, or the hook will slip out of their soft mouths.

We took a side-trip up highway #585 on the west side of the Nipigon. Not a bad road which reminded me somewhat of Forks of the Credit Road some years ago, with a stonechip surface. It leads north to the three big dams on the river. Unfortunately, it doesn't run that close to the river except at the dam accesses. I was disappointed not to find any wadeable reaches. The water downstream is deep and fast with not much shoreline. I will continue the search next trip and go on foot a little more.

We met a fellow at Cameron Dam that had caught a 4-foot sturgeon by fishing a big gob of worms. He said that it took close to an hour to land, and about 20 minutes to revive it before releasing it.

The falls and rapids at the dams are powerful and dramatic like the Niagara River, but much cleaner and colder. I found myself imagining what this mighty river must have looked like before the dams were built.

Back at camp, I looked at the map of the Nipigon watershed every day. What a watershed! Hundreds of small streams and lakes, many of them seldom fished. This is an ecosystem which is, for the most part, still in its prime – unlike our southern watersheds, many of which are on 'life support', with damaged or vanishing tributaries. It would take half a lifetime to explore the Nipigon. Hopefully I have a little more time for the next trip and the next ...

If you want to rent a cabin at Royal Windsor Lodge, you can contact Olga Jalkanen @ 807-885-5291, or royalw@tbaytel.net.

Fly Tying

The Soggy Bog

Silvia D'Amelio

Early last spring, Silvia, the Ontario Biologist for Trout Unlimited Canada, gave us an interesting talk on "Coaster" brook trout in the Lake Superior area. She returned for our last tying meeting in May to demonstrate this interesting – and successful! – pattern.

Hook: Kamasan B800 1x #2
 Thread: UNI- Thread 6/0 black
 Tail: Olive zonker strip tied in at head
 Body: Olive-brown trilobal dubbing*
 Lateral line: UV Krystal Flash

Throat: Orange marabou
 Collar: Trimmed deer hair
 Head: Bold cone head (1/4")

1. Pinch the barb and slide the cone head onto the hook.
2. Tie on a thread base from the cone head down the shank of the hook ending immediately above the barb of the hook.
3. Tie in copper wire extending out 3" from bend.
4. Dub the body from the bend to the cone head. The thread should end up inline with the base of the cone head. Brush dubbing with a stiff fiber brush and trim it to the width of the gape of the hook.
5. Cut a 2" piece of olive zonker strip and trim each end of the hide into a point at each end. Secure the strip into the cone head with fibers pointing towards the bend of the hook.



6. Wrap the wire through the zonker and dubbing spiralling towards the eye of the hook securing the zonker strip at the top of the hook. Tie in and cut excess.
7. Tie in a small clump of orange marabou on the bottom of the hook, in the cone head to form the throat.
8. Tie in three pieces of crystal flash on either side of the hook and trim to just beyond length of the dubbed body.
9. Cut a small bunch of deer hair from the hide and comb out the under fur. Even the tips using a hair stacker. Stack the hair onto the hook immediately below the cone head using three wraps of thread. The tops should extend no more than half the length of the hook from the head. Do not allow the deer hair to splay around the hook, it should remain on the top half of the fly. Pull the thread tight to ensure the deer hair will not spin.
10. Cut a second equally sized bunch of deer hair and brush out the under fur. Trip off the tips and stack these fibres on the underside of the hook

using three thread wraps. Pull the thread tight to ensure the deer hair does not spin.

11. Wrap the thread in front of the deer hair three times and then whip finish into the cone head.
 12. Tip the fly back in the vice so the cone head is facing up and drip thin head cement through the top if preferred.
 13. Shape the stacked deer hair to form the head leaving the natural tips as a collar.
- * Olive brown trilobal dubbing can be ordered from First Cast in Guelph (519-766-4665)

Ed.'s Notes: Antron is a readily available type of synthetic trilobal fibre.

For a Labrador brook trout excursion this summer, I tied smaller versions of this fly, using the deer hair wing but with a wool head; it still worked well in the water, although the brook trout were far more interested in #16 dries flies or lemmings!

The Vise Quad

Where members share favourite fly patterns

The Nymph Muncher

Ron Chandler

This pattern is based on Ian James' "Muncher Nymph", and was tied by Ron at the May 2, 2006 tying meeting.

Materials:

Hook: Mustad 3906B (wet fly), #16-12
 Bead Head: Optional
 Thread: "Club thread", coloured brown
 Rib: Fine copper or gold wire
 Body: Bass skirting, yellow or gold
 Dubbing: Seal hair, copper
 Legs: Thread, doubled, coloured & coated with Fleximent
 Wing case: Plastic raffia, copper

Tying Steps:

1. Debarb hook, mount bead head (optional), adjust hook gap (optional).
2. Tie on thread at 2/3 point of hook.
3. Tie in wire rib.
4. Tie in two lengths of bass skirting. More or less depending on body girth or hook size.
5. Parallel wrap skirting forward to a point allowing for wing case size. Tie off.

6. Counter-wrap wire rib. Tie off carefully.
7. Tie in copper raffia, around the upper side of the half-way point. Clip excess.
8. Tie in rear legs with figure 8 wraps.
9. Dub a wrap or two to cover rear leg mount.
10. Tie down raffia half-way to hook eye.
11. Tie raffia back part way to previous fold (for double layer wing case).
12. Tie in middle legs.
13. Add more dubbing.
14. Tie in front legs
15. Tie wing case forward to bead head or hook eye.
16. Shape legs with heated tweezers or bodkin for buggy look.

Notes: To simplify legging, pull out dubbing. Legs can also be represented by reverse partridge feather under wing case, or by coloured 6 to 8-lb mono.

Miscellany

A Place for Rod Making

Ron Barch

This evening there is a chill in the air, a quiet, clear, blue softness and Sandhill cranes offer their guttural call to the setting sun. Tonight I will clean the shop and begin to plane a bamboo fly rod.

If I had my way, the workshop would be set apart from the rest of the world, hidden somewhere away from highways, and tele-phones. It would be more than a shack but not quite a building, just a place for those who un-derstand the joy of making something for the simple pleasure of doing it. Rod making is one of those pleasures, and one's surroundings, if chosen properly, can enhance the experience.

My ideal workshop would rest on a hill overlooking a trout stream; if the site were on a bend in the river, all the better. A mixture of pines and poplars would encircle the clearing with hardwoods growing higher up the river valley. By early December, snow would already begin to bank against the shop walls, and winter nights would be as cold and crisp as the snap of a tippet saying goodbye to a hefty fish.

It goes without saying that my dream shop would be constructed of slab siding or better yet cedar logs. The walls would enclose one large room, with rafters open to the ridgepole, and I'd store cane up there, along with rod cases and maybe an old pair of skis. Over on the south wall, overlooking the

work-bench, there would be a good-sized window where the rod maker could look up now and then to watch the snowshoe gate of a winter grouse or the stretching of a deer reaching for higher browse. A single power line strung down a lane from the main house would provide electricity and in the corner hooked to a solid split stone chimney would be the woodstove, providing warmth and cheer and a place for the coffee pot.

For those times when I'm watching the percolator bubble or a friend stops by, I'd have a couple of seats, one for me and one for my guest. For my leisure I'd provide an ancient oak stool whose rungs are worn by years of work shoes pressed against them. For the occasional visitor a cast off kitchen chair, usually piled high with junk, would suffice. In this place comfort would come from companionship and conversation, not the furnishings.

Upon entering, one's first awareness is the aroma of cane shavings and oil from a whetstone blending with the smell of wood smoke and a damp wool coat. The light is a little dim, except over by the bench, but it's an easy place to get used to, a nice place to be. In this rod maker's haven one will find the time to dream and plan and craft things for next season, next year, and yes, even for the next generation.

Hatch Matching and Hatch Bashing

Dan Kennaley

There are probably as many schools of thought on fly design as there are trout anglers, but I'd like to explore two of the main viewpoints here. The matching the hatch school says that you need to fish imitations of insects that match the real insects precisely. The other school says that it's more important how you present the fly to the fish, and if you have a good presentation, you can use many different fly patterns and you'll still catch fish. For ease of reference, I'll call the first group the "hatch matchers" and the second group the "hatch bashers".

The hatch matchers are the amateur entomologists who can astound you with their knowledge of insects and their life cycles and impress you with their command of scientific names. The hatch bashers, on the other hand, figure that all that Latin is nonsense designed to impress the women, not the fish. They'll tell you: "Give me an Adams in three or four different sizes and I'll outfish those hatch-matching snobs two to one!" Some of the strongest evidence that the hatch bashers can

point to centres around several of the most famous fly patterns that do appear to imitate any particular insect, but which have, over a long period of time, proven themselves to be effective under a wide range of hatches and fishing conditions. Patterns like the Adams, or the even more outlandish Royal Coachman, fall into this category. While they may imitate mayflies in general sense, they represent no particular mayfly hatch. Or a fly like the Bivisible, which doesn't really match any particular insect even, yet it catches plenty of fish. And in the nymphing/wet fly context, the Woolly Worm is another generic "bug" that doesn't represent anything too closely.

The hatch matchers answer this skepticism by suggesting that, sure, the Royal Coachman caught those three trout in that pool, but those three were all under nine inches and if the angler had been using a more exact replica of the insects hatching at that time, he or she would have caught the 15 incher that, unseen, was lurking in that pool. As a hatch basher, how would you respond to that kind of logic? If you do catch a 15 incher on you Royal Coachman, the hatch matcher will claim that you didn't catch the 20 incher from the pool.

I think it is important to recognize that hatch matching and hatch bashing are on a continuum. The poles of the continuum are occupied by the real dyed-in-the-wool matchers and bashers. But the majority of relatively sane anglers (or is that an oxymoron?) fall somewhere between these two poles on the continuum. Some of us are more in the hatch matching camp, but would never give up our Woolly Worms or Royal Coachman. Others tend to be more aligned with hatch bashers, but, if we encounter a Green Drake hatch, we're not going to fish it with a Mickey Finn, no matter how good are presentation is.

I must admit to being more of a matcher than a basher. However, a few things have happened along the way that has resulted in my moving a few notches on the continuum toward the basher side. Increasingly, I tend to acknowledge that there are definitely limits to the usefulness of matching the hatch. If you get carried away with the notion, it can end up hurting your fishing rather than helping it.

The concept of matching the hatch has been around a long time now, dating back to the 17th century. However, the connection between entomology and fly fishing has become much stronger since Schwiebert published his book *Matching the Hatch* in 1955. Many other books that emphasized the entomological approach have helped make matching the hatch the most influential

concept in fly fishing today.

From the beginning of my fly fishing, the concept has had enormous appeal for me because it was just so damn logical. And it still appeals to me. Figure out what the fish are feeding on, tie on something that imitates that food and you're going to catch fish. Since you can predict, with the help of hatch charts, what is likely to be hatching at any given time, then you have a pretty good idea what flies to bring to the stream and even more precisely, what fly to tie on. I was intrigued by the logic of the concept and threw myself into learning more about it. I began recognizing hatches on the stream and found that I was armed and ready with pretty good imitations of the various hatching insects. Most importantly, I caught fish, lots of fish, using this information.

So what has got me re-thinking the omnipotence of the hatch-matching concept? Well I guess it began about ten years ago at the end of summer when I was fishing the Credit River during a good caddis hatch. I'd brought along a couple of caddis imitations, one very realistic, the other more impressionistic-and the impressionistic one easily outfished the realistic one.

Then, over the course of that next winter, I participated in an interesting discussion on a fly fishing chat list in which it was contended that many of the entomologically-based fly fishing books contained erroneous or suspect information, or at least suspect deductions not sufficiently supported by scientific observations. Does the Gary LaFontaine emerging caddis "bubble" really exist, for instance. LaFontaine's reporting of this bubble was central to his book, *Caddisflies*, but it may not, in fact, exist. And if it doesn't exist, what of his innovative Sparkle Caddis Emerger? Other discussions on the list questioned the importance of minor fly tying details such as tying on a dark wing pad on a Hendrickson nymph patter to imitate a colour transformation in the natural around the time it is hatching. Most tyers considered this detail to be unimportant in tying the Hendrickson pattern. And the same goes for other entomologically-based observations. As one list participant retorted, "if these details make such a big difference in the effectiveness of fly patterns then why doesn't the fact that all flies have this huge, curved chunk of metal hanging out their rear ends detract from the effectiveness of patterns?" Good point!

The upshot of all this is that my support for the absolute importance of an entomological approach to fly tying has been tempered. While I still believe matching the hatch is a very effective approach and one that I enjoy immensely, I think at

the same time that the hatch bashers are partly right, at least some of the time. Like when the fish are not being especially selective and any fly within reason, if presented reasonably well will catch fish. But there are other times when the fish are more selective and the artificial fly needs to more closely resemble the natural. I also think that a seemingly small detail can be an important trigger. If something they look for isn't there, they won't bite. The trick is in determining when these small details are important and when they merely represent someone's pet theory.

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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



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WILSON'S

Toronto's Fly Fishing Centre

www.wilsonstoronto.com

Jim Wilson
199 Queen Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M5A 1S2

Tel: 416-869-3474
Fax: 416-869-9395

wilsonstoronto@bellnet.ca