



THE HUTT VALLEY ANGLER

Newsletter of the Hutt Valley Angling Club Inc

Issue No 405 : October 2015 Contents

New season equipment checklist

Pahiatua Report

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Editorial

This month, our newsletter is packed full of interesting and practical articles, thanks to the contributions of club members, willing to share their expertise and stories. Sharing information then getting out there and experimenting is the key to getting the most out of your angling. All the best for the new fishing season!

Chris Kuchel

President's Piece

It was great to see so many members and a host of new faces at our September club night. The club is buzzing along with the prospect of a good start to the season on the 1st October. The weather has turned a bit cold currently, which hopefully means that it should come right for October.

Club night was interesting to observe with a lot of chat going on between members about recent successful fishing trips and plans for the upcoming season. One thing we discussed at the Committee meeting the following night is the need to ensure that we are catering not only for our established members but also for our new members and those coming along to see if the club is right for them. The Committee is keen to ensure that we welcome new members and give them the appropriate support they need to feel comfortable being part of our club. We can all remember the first time we went to the club or some other place with knowing too many people there. We are looking into a few ideas and would be grateful if new members would contact those of us on the committee with their thoughts and feedback on how the club made you feel on your first night and what could we do to make it better.



October is not far away and this month's club activities will be dominated by the 40th Club Anniversary dinner. This will be a night to celebrate the success of the club and to give thanks to those who made it happen. It will be a chance to catch up with previous members who have moved away and will be returning with new yarns to tell us and to recall those wonderful fishing stories of the past. A lot of work is being put into the organising of the night to make it a success so please purchase your tickets and bring along your partners expecting to have an enjoyable night out.

I hope your plans are proceeding well for the upcoming season and if there is something we can help you with, please get in contact with one of us on the Committee and we will help you out where we can. I receive about 5 phone calls a month from persons thinking of joining the club and this is a result of the excellent web site we have that was put together by Steve and regularly updated.

The first 3 months of being President of the club has being an enjoyable experience and that is because of the good people we have on the Committee and the support that I have received from club members.

Thank you

Ross Goodman

October Activities

- 10th Gibbs Shield competition — Hutt River
- 12th Club Meeting — King Lion hall 7.30pm
- 18th Casting Clinic — Belmont Domain 9.30am
- 20th Committee meeting — Community House 7.30pm
- 25th Copy deadline for November newsletter
- 26th Fly Tying Competition — Kapiti Freshwaters Anglers Club 7.30pm
- 28th Fly tying – Community House 7.30pm

Club News

Gibbs Shield — Hutt River Competition Saturday 10 October

Note new date for this competition. Please REGISTER ON THE WEBSITE to take part. The beats and meeting place will be determined by the number of competitors taking part. Based on recent catches made in the Hutt River it should be a successful competition. The competition will be a fly only competition and will be held over 2 sessions of 2 hours each.

Anyone requiring more information can contact John Millar.



Club Night — Monday 12 October at 7.30pm in King Lion Hall, King Street, Upper Hutt. This month's club meeting will be a film evening followed by discussion on relevant fishing techniques

Casting Clinic — Sunday 18 October weather permitting. Arrive from 9.00am ready for a 9.30 start.

The coordinator is Ian Lawson. Please register on the clipboard at our monthly meeting on the website. This allows us to have instructors available for all attendees and who we contact if there is any change in meeting arrangements.

Fly Tying Meeting – Wednesday 28 October at 7.30pm. Upper Hutt Community Meeting House off Logan Street beside Upper Hutt Medical Centre.

This month, we will see a demonstration tie of the Royal Humpty which has been selected as a compulsory fly in this year's interclub fly tying competition and then we will tie as Catskill Style Dry Fly similar to the photo.



Fishscene Annual Interclub Fly Tying Competition

Monday 26 October at 7.30pm — hosted by the Kapiti Freshwater Angler's Club.

The Club has recently changed its venue to the Kapiti Sports Turf Pavilion, Scaife Drive, Paraparaumu. (As you enter the complex ignore the Gymnasium to the right and proceed to the rooms underneath the stadium which is attached to the playing fields).

The Hutt Valley Angling Club will be represented this year by Graham Odlum, Ajit Jogi and Ian Lawson. This is always an enjoyable and instructive competition to watch so come along and support our team.

Jeff Wood of Fishscene is the head Judge and sponsor of the competition.

Key Objectives for the competition

- Should be an enjoyable experience for all involved
- Judging should be focused on the finished fly and not on how the competitor tied the fly,
- A person should be allocated 15 minutes to tie a fly,
- This is an opportunity for club members to see different fly tying techniques being used to tie a fly.

Rules

1. The three competing clubs will each choose one of the compulsory flies to be copied in the competition and this will be done by rotation so that each club will select a different class of fly each year. For example club (A) will select a nymph in year one. They will select a dry fly pattern in year two and in the third year will select a lure pattern. The cycle will repeat after year three.
2. Each club must select their choice of fly and notify the 'host club' one month prior to the competition
3. Teams will comprise of three competitors. One of the competitors must not have appeared in the team at last year's competition.
4. The time limit for the competition is one hour.
5. During the competition each team will submit a total of 8 flies consisting of 2 compulsory flies for each of the 3 classes of fly plus 2 'Tier's Choice' flies.
6. Each competitor must tie 2 compulsory flies and these will be one fly each

- from two of the three classes. The classes are Dry Fly, Nymph and Lure.
7. Two team members must also tie one 'tier's Choice' fly.
 8. All of the compulsory flies are to be judge on the overall balance as outlined in the pattern description of the fly as demonstrated in the 'example professionally tied fly'.
 9. Judging will be carried out by a panel of judges consisting of one independent head judge and one judge appointed by each competing club making a panel of four judges.
 10. Each of the clubs appointed judge will NOT JUDGE their OWN CLUBS completed flies.
 11. Judge's Scores the total points awarded to each of the flies will consist of 50% of the head judge points and 50% of the combined total of the Clubs Judges points.
 12. Each team must present 2 flies for judging after 20 minutes followed by another 2 Flies after 40 minutes with the remaining four flies being completed within one hour.
 13. The host team will provide an adjudicator who will compute the scores as they become available. This person will liaise with the judges throughout the judging period.
 14. The host club will purchase four copies of each of the compulsory flies from a professional provider such as Rod and Reel, Feather Merchants or Hunting and Fishing.
 15. Flies will be displayed on the board in a "random" manner to facilitate judging.
 16. Materials the competition sponsor will supply the necessary materials and hooks to the host club one week prior to the competition. The organising club will be responsible for checking that hooks and materials are on hand to tie all flies. There will be sufficient extra materials for several attempts by every competitor.
 17. The host club will provide supper for those present.
 18. The host club will award a prize to the individual competitor with the highest total score.

HVAC 40th Anniversary Birthday Dinner Saturday 31st October at 7.00pm

Members are advised that we have a limit of 80 people set for the dinner.

Tickets are selling fast so get in quick or you may miss a great evening. As well as some toasts that will be made at the meal we are looking forward to items of musical entertainment. It promises to be an enjoyable evening for the ladies.

Tickets costing \$35 per person can be booked by paying direct credit to the HVAC bank account or can be collected at our club meeting in October by paying cash.

Our bank account number is HVAC 02-0528-0246578-00

Tickets have been allocated to those members who have already made payment. Contact John Millar for more information if required. Phone 5636491. Email john.millar@xtra.co.nz

Library News

The library is open from 7.00pm on Club nights. Thanks to all members who returned overdue books last month. Maureen has been swamped with a flood of returned books and the library cabinet is now bulging at the seams. Her request for books to be returned has obviously worked!

Last Month's Club Meeting

September's club night focused on preparing for the new season, with good discussion and practical demonstration of how to maintain equipment, select early season flies, tie useful knots and how to use the club's new walkie-talkies. Judging by the excellent turn out and enthusiastic discussion throughout the evening, the evening was a huge success.



Fish of the month

Congratulations to Mike Nansett for his fine effort in September with a prime 5lb Hutt River brown.

Raffle Winners in August

Congratulations to new member Peter Parker for winning the Green Trout Guiding entry.

Mike Nansett won the wading stick and Bill Bond took away the \$20 Hunting and Fishing voucher.

Monthly winners of the Green Trout Guiding raffle go into the annual draw for a fantastic trip with Jim Rainey. You've got to be in to win, so make sure you buy your ticket each month at club meetings.

Final Reminder to those who have still to Renew Their Subscription

Renewal fees are : Family: \$55 Senior: \$45 Super annuitant: \$35 Junior: \$10

Vote for Dan!

Senior HVAC club member Dan Waechter announced at last month's meeting that he will be putting his name forward for the up-coming Wellington Fish and Game Council elections. Anyone who knows Dan will attest to his long and tireless commitment to caring for the environment and improving the sustainability of our fishing waters. Members are encouraged to keep this in mind when voting. We wish Dan every success.

Up-coming trips

The HVAC Trip Calendar is from October 2015 to April 2016. All trips are weather dependent, with early bookings essential. Some venues do require a deposit, which should be paid by members directly to the hotel/BB/lodge to secure a bed.

Members will be given the opportunity to sign up for club trips at the monthly meetings. To confirm a place on a club trip, email Damian at c.bengree@paradise.net.nz not less than 3 weeks before the trip date. Damian will send accommodation details to participants as necessary.

2015 --2016	Destination	Degree of difficulty: high 5 - 1 easy	Dates
October	Kapiti & HVAC (day trip)	1 to 2 (Max of 8)	TBC
November	HVAC & Hastings Club	2 to 3 (Max of 8)	Fri 6 to Sun 8
December	Mohaka or Puketitiri river	4 to 5	Fri 4 to Sun 6
January	Wairarapa Camping	1 to 2	Sat 23rd
February	Rivers around Taihape	4	Fri 19 to Sun 21
March	Rivers around Pahiatua	2 to 3	Fri 11 to Sat 13
April	Tongariro river	3 to 4	Fri 15 to Sun 17
May	TBC		

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Fishing Successfully on the Hutt River

By Ross Goodman

Over the last month or so I have managed to land seven trout whilst fishing the Hutt River ranging in size from 2lb to 4.25lb all of which have been returned for another day.

So what's the big deal you may ask. Prior to this I would have caught about 6 fish in five years on this river that other fisherman rave about and post their successes on Utube. I had reached the point after so many unsuccessful trips over the Haywards that I had convinced myself that it wasn't worth the effort better off cutting the lawn. So what has changed?

Those of you on the club's Facebook page know the reason why others and I are succeeding. We post our success and advise what is working for others to share. Okay, what have I done that is working for me? I have stopped using the rig that works for rainbows on the Rangitikei and have listened and learnt from those at the club who have been willing to share their knowledge.

- To begin with I have been using a 6wt floating line with a 9 foot leader attached to a dry fly dropper rig with a couple of flies hanging below. I use a Parachute Adams size 10 dry fly that I have added some red yarn to, so that I can see it better.
- About 1.2m below this, I have a size 12 Pheasant Tail Flashback and about 15cm behind that I have tied an unweighted pheasant tail pattern that I purchased from Jeff Wood. This works best on sunny days. Small slim natural flies are working for me.

Where to fish is not a difficult choice.

I have been swinging this rig close to willows where the water depth is less than a metre which I learnt from Tim Trengrove. The change in my success came after listening to Tony Houpt speak at our club and putting that into practice.

To lessen the drag I use a reach cast that I learnt from Mike Nansett and the choice of rig and fly choice was something I picked up from John Olds.

Being on Facebook has really helped me out and I would certainly recommend it to other club members. With Spring on its way fishing the Hutt River will become even better and perhaps lighter lines and smaller flies will be required and I am planning to give dry flies a go that I purchased from Tim and patterns that I learnt to tie from John Millar.

What I am suggesting is that if you want to have success you need to learn from those that are already succeeding. I don't have a problem telling those of Facebook where in the Hutt River I am catching fish so join up and perhaps we can go out fishing together.

A Report on the Recent Pahiatua Trip

Club trips are always a great way to get to know other members better, fish new waters and learn new skills. This month, Thomas Fichtner and Mark Whitecliffe give their thoughts on last month's Pahiatua trip.

Thomas: My last trip to this destination wasn't very successful as I did not catch any fish at all! One could say that I had unfinished business there. This year's Pahiatua fishing trip was a bit more successful for me, as I caught 6 fish in one short afternoon session, plus another 4 fish the following morning, and it was a real pleasure to be there and meet other members of the club. The river conditions were good. NZ style Nymphing is a good way of fishing the Mangatainoka, but what really paid off on this trip were those soft hackle flies which I fished for the very first time.

Here is a photo of the SH fly I fished with and a list of materials. I would encourage other club members to give them a try!

Materials for the fly:

Thread: black 8/0 Veevus

Hook: Grab hook size #10, 12

Ribbing: gold tinsel or gold wire

Dubbing: possum fur natural

Hackle: partridge soft hackle



Mark: Mangatainoka Virgin! This year I had made a promise to myself that if I saw something I wanted to do, then I would. The September club trip was the first time I have fished this river and the second trip I have done this year.

After arriving on the Friday morning I took a mini tour around Pahiatua and beyond to get an idea of the river system and the various rivers that converge in the area. I ended up driving a large loop taking in the Mangatainoka, Makara and Manawatu Rivers. After that it was straight in to the Mangatainoka just downstream from the brewery. The water was pretty clear and the river has a nice feel to it. On the initial stretch there were some good pockets and nice sections to investigate. One thing I did notice was the bird life in the area. It felt like I was in a David Attenborough wildlife documentary.

Several hours of trying and tying got no reward but it did feel good to be standing in a river again. I headed back to the hotel to meet the rest of the group.

That night we worked out who was fishing with who and picked various sections of the river. Chris Kuchel and I headed off to our pieces of water with our first section



across farmland just out of Mangatainoka past the back of the brewery. Once again, the water and some sections looked really promising. I hooked up my one and only fish for the trip in a second stretch of water. The brown was somewhere between 3.5 – 4lb. I didn't take a net and Chris was in the section below me and too far away to assist. As I took a selfie of the trout I could see Chris wading across the section below me. Not an easy thing to do as the river seemed to be very slippery in places.

Chris had had little luck with a few takes and nothing more. We headed back into town to the bridge by the quarry. From the bridge we could see five or so trout doing their best to show us how clever they were and how useless we were. Another stint here saw us come up short. This could have had something to do with the fact that Damian, Dave, Trevor and Thomas had worked the area over before we did our thing.



I know they were fly fishing like us but I had visions of the four of them hauling a drag net along the banks of the river. OK – It was obviously dinner time. We headed back to the hotel for dinner and everyone told their fishy stories and sorted out what the plan was for Sunday.

I was keen to hit the quarry area again and headed off in that direction. I fished the two good stretches up from the quarry and to no avail. After crossing one section of the river I was casting in water just below knee level and slipped backwards. The pain shot through the back of my kneecap and I knew I had done some sort of damage. I hobbled back to the Patrol and headed for home.

Even though I only hooked the one fish I was still happy with the events of the trip. The guys were good company at dinner time and there was some laughs to be had. It was good to fish a place I had always just driven straight past. It was good to have kept my promise of doing stuff I had wanted to do. Owning and running my own Brand, Design and Web Development company has meant that too many times in my life I have said – I will do that one day... and never did.

There's something to be said for spending time doing things like trout fishing or hunting. What's that word they all use? Oh yeah – BALANCE!

My Equipment Checklist Before the Beginning of the New Season.

by Ian Lawson



- In September I like to strip, clean and lubricate my reels even if I have fished in the winter months. The lubricator I use is INOX tackle lube.
- I check for cracks in my lines and if necessary replace them; I clean my lines using GLIDE line dressing in conjunction with a UMPQUA line dressing box.
- I don't always replace my leaders as I only use part of a tapered leader cutting it off when it gets to a thickness of about 7 or 8 lbs then adding a micro ring, I then add tippet lengths as required.
- I must admit I don't tend to check my rods as they get a good going over when I put them away in their tubes but I do like to check that all the joints have an adequate covering of wax, either bees or candle.
- It's a good idea if you have one to check the accuracy of your weigh net and it's quite easy to do with a 2lbs bag of sugar or flour. Most weigh nets are adjustable.
- Check your fly box and replace missing or damaged flies and if you tie your own flies you should be doing that over the winter months.

That to me, are the major things to check. Of course there are a lot of other items like waders, wading boots, wading sticks, fly vests and jackets that shouldn't need much attention if stored correctly over the closed season.

So carry out the checks and have great season!

Meet the member – David Fricke

I'm new to NZ about 14 months having come here from Silver Spring, Maryland - a suburb of Washington, DC. I work at the US Embassy in Thorndon on the construction team performing a major renovation of the facility.

While I have thrown a fly rod for many years, time, work and children have afforded less time at the sport in recent years and I am thrilled to have the opportunity now to fish for NZ wild trout in wide open spaces.

My work over the years has afforded me the opportunity to fish in many different parts of the world but I have always wanted the opportunity to get to know the New Zealand rivers first hand which I must admit was part of the motivation in taking on this project.

The attached picture is on one of my favorite home waters, the West Branch of the Delaware River a few hours north of my home where we have prolific hatches and fish almost exclusively on the surface with small patterns. It is remarkable to see the similarity of the hatches here on the other side of the planet. Variations in size, slight color differences and of course they show up 6 months opposite what I would expect but many similarities just the same. I have learned much yet have more to learn of these clear waters and wild trout and look forward to getting to know and fishing with many of you during my time here. I am on a 4 year work visa or until our ploddingly slow project ends.



SIZE DOES MATTER



by John Olds

At the last club meeting in our group sessions I talked about “What Fly” as this is a question that many of our new members ask. I am certainly no expert in fly selection but have found that the tried and true patterns are hard to go past. And the important thing to remember about these patterns is that many of the so called new patterns are just variations of them. For example hare and coppers and pheasant tails can be dressed differently and have different coloured beads, wire, hackles etc. etc. Similarly there are many different variations of the woolly bugger streamer fly. One

thing I would say is that there is nothing like experimentation – what works on one river is not necessarily going to work on another. I fish the Hutt and the Rangitikei for instance and while there are some common flies to both there are certainly flies that work better on one fishery. It was interesting getting the views of some of our experienced anglers during my session and discovering that there are many different approaches which all catch fish. Another thing I would say for all those wanting to know more about fly selection is – use the internet. There is just so much valuable information available to the angler. And make sure you pick the brains of the more experienced anglers on club nights.

What I did get on to during my session was fly size and I discussed nymphs as these are the main source of food for trout in streams and rivers. I recently re-read an article by Rene Vaz which was published in the Fish and Game magazine some time ago entitled *“The importance of fly size”*. Rene has kindly given his permission for me to use sections from this article and ***I would like to acknowledge his company Manic Tackle Project and also Fish & Game magazine in this regard.***

Rene talked about fishing tiny flies - #16 down and opened the article by saying, *“The common Kiwi approach to fly selection is when a fish refuses your #12 hare and copper then it’s probably time to try a #12 pheasant tail. And why not; those are both great flies. But when you stop to think about it, you just changed your #12 brown thing to another #12 brown thing. And the result? You guessed it! The same”*.

He also says, *“When it comes to fly selection, there are an endless number of variables to think about, but none are more important than fly size”*.

Why fish tiny flies? – because that’s what the fish are feeding on. When you go to the river, turn over some rocks. I bet the majority of the nymphs you find are not #12. They are more likely to be much smaller and you may find that even a #16 is too big and many will be #18 to say #22 as the photograph illustrates.



Thanks to Jason of Troutnut.com for permission to use this photograph. By the way this is a site worth looking at.

If you are fishing a #14 and the insects are #16 your fly could be out by more than 50% depending on how it is tied. Try and tie flies #16 and smaller on either a short shank, or curved grub hook. You will get the maximum hook gape for the size of your finished fly. It also means the hook gape doesn't get obstructed by the fly's dressing which, regardless, should be kept as simple and sparse as possible. If nymphs are tied slim and dense they will sink quickly without having to add too much bulky weight. Beads can be used (I tend to use glass beads – see below) but again these need to be scaled down to suit the hook size.

So what else do you need to fish these flies?

- Low diameter tippets to allow the nymphs to sink properly. This means no heavier than 4lb test. Heavier tippets are generally hard to thread through the eye of small hooks anyway.
- A smooth action mid-flex rod. This type of rod will not cast an ultra-tight loop that goes for miles. But it will cushion the movements of a big fish when hooked on a tiny fly and light tippet and give you good line control when making those short and delicate casts that you need to make count. Fast action, wind cheating, fish slaying rods are nearly impossible to fish small flies and light tippets because you need to generate a lot of line speed to compensate for the short amount of flyline outside the rod tip. And a fast action rod does tend to pull hooks from fish more easily. A softer rod will load easily at short distances and its smoother action will cushion the fast movements of the fish, especially early in the fight.
- Apply sidestrain. We are told when we start fly fishing to keep the rod up and ensure there is a bend in it when we hook a fish. But we need to take this one step further when playing larger fish on a softer rod. To set a tiny hook the rod only needs to be lifted smoothly to tighten the line – these tiny hooks will easily penetrate the fish's skin. Firstly work at getting a deep bend in the rod and start with the rod high to clear any obstacles. As the fight progresses change the pressure to sidestrain. Here is a link on the importance of sidestrain:
<http://www.sexyloops.com/beginners/lesson3/fightingfish2.shtml>
- Drop down a line weight or two. Combined with a softer action, rods in 3 to 5 weight make it easier to land fish on small hooks and light tippets. Lighter lines also land more softly on the water's surface. On the Hutt I fish and four weight for dry fly fishing and a five weight for nymphing. Fish will rarely move a great distance to intercept smaller flies so lighter line weights will make it easier for you to make casts in front of the fish without spooking them. Lighter line weights also make it possible to reduce leader lengths which again aids in making accurate casts and with tiny flies helps to improve line control.
- Scale down the size of your indicator. Takes will be subtle with tiny flies so there is less resistance with a smaller indicator as opposed to a buoyant

piece of yarn.

Rene finishes his article by saying: *“As with everything in flyfishing, these are not hard and fast rules whereby fishing tiny flies will start to double your catch rate. This is simply a reminder that there is life below #14 and, if executed well by using these tiny patterns, numbers of previously uncatchable fish may start to become available. To summarise, **remember to tie them slim, fish them close, and take your time playing the fish** because you’ll surprise yourself with the size fish that will succumb to a tiny fly”.*

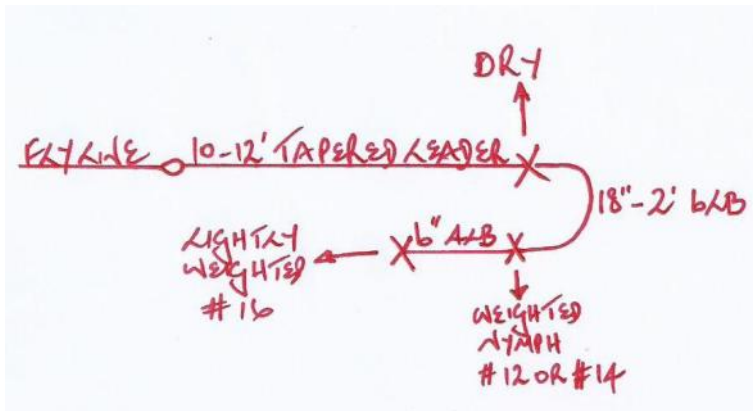
A Tip for Fishing Tiny Dry Flies

Use a larger dry or small indicator to help sight the tiny dry in the water as it is difficult to spot these on the water’s surface, especially if they are drifting down a feed line. It is important through to remember that even a small dry or indicator can cause the tiny fly to drag so make sure they are not too close and, when you are casting, ensure you are putting plenty of slack into the line so they can both drift independently. Another tip around dries is that sometimes fish are taking just under the surface. What worked for me last summer was a size #12 Royal Wulff with a #16 emerger (in one case I used an March Brown wet fly because that’s all I had) about 6” behind it. I also fished an unweighted #16 about a foot behind the dry in low water conditions. The point here is to be adaptable and experiment with different flies. And if you are sight fishing take time to watch a fish’s behaviour before launching a fly at it.

Rigs

I principally fish the Hutt, Ruamahunga and Rangitikei rivers. The rig below is the one I am currently using on the Hutt but which I also will also use on the Ruamahunga. At times I will fish a slightly “heavier” rig on the Rangitikei depending on the water but this dry dropper set-up works well there too. I am currently fishing a 9’ #5 mid flex rod with a Rio Grande line. These lines are a half weight heavier so the #5 is a 5.5. Some say that these lines should not be used for this type of fishing as they are not subtle enough but I find them fine especially when the gentle Wellington zephyr arrives! The tapered leader is generally a 4x or 5x. I use a hopper type dry with some colourful (green and red) poly yarn tied on top so my fading old eyes can see it. The size of this fly doesn’t seem to matter and it is good in fast water as it doesn’t get drowned. The 18” to 2’ section can be longer depending on the depth of the water you are fishing. It is 6lb fluorocarbon. I then attach a tungsten nymph (#12 or #14) to help get the unweighted fly down quickly and make this a bit flashy to act as an attractor. I had a fish take the Rainbow Warrior attractor fly the other day so go figure! I then have a piece of 4lb

fluorocarbon to an unweighted or lightly weighted #16 nymph. Watch the indicator like a hawk because as I've said above some of the takes are subtle. Don't die wondering. But don't rip the lips off the fish when striking – a smooth tighten is all that's generally needed. And don't subscribe to the fallacy that to fish rivers like the Tongariro you need 8 weight rods and big heavy bombs. Last October I fished several small runs with a 6 weight and a dry dropper rig. In one run I picked up 7 fish and landed 5 and in another 2 fish the biggest of which was 3lb. These were caught in water no more than 2.5 feet deep under some willows.



This is a selection of my tiny flies, size 16

Some of the flies above have glass beads. These came from my wife's collection (with permission). You can get glass beads at Pete's Emporium which has recently opened in Lower Hutt and is also in Porirua. In the haberdashery section they sell small tubes of beads for \$2.80. There are heaps in a tube. This is good value. Go

and have a look. Experiment with different flies. Green has worked well for me on the Hutt recently but orange bead flies also work at times.

To finish off, during my session I made reference to a comment Ian Lawson made at our August meeting during Tony Houpt's session when he commented that he had landed a 9.1lb brown trout using a four weight rod and a #16 barbless fly. Enough said!

Coachman

by Tim Trengrove

Royal Wulff? It seems everyone's heard of that one.

Royal Coachman? Not so many.

Coachman? No. What is a Coachman anyway?

While searching online for information on the fly, I found this, said to be taken from Ian Whitelaw's book *"The history of fly-fishing in fifty flies."*

"In its original form the Coachman was created in England in the 1830s by one Tom Bosworth, a keen and accomplished angler and the carriage driver to a succession of British monarchs from King George IV, through William IV to Queen Victoria. The first of these was on the throne when Tom first wound a body of peacock herl, wrapped a brown hackle and tied on two backward-slanting slips of white wing pinion for wings. He intended this wet fly for night fishing but it proved equally effective in the daytime, and Tom later added a grey-winged version called the Leadwing Coachman, using grey mallard slips for wings and looking somewhat like a grey caddisfly. Both these flies made their way across the Atlantic, where they became extremely popular—ridiculously so."

John Hughes was another coachman who may lay claim to tying the first Coachman pattern. This is discussed in A. Courtney Williams' 1949 *A Dictionary of Trout Flies*, What we do know is that the Coachman started a string of very popular flies and there are now reputed to be 14 variations of the original, including the Royal Wulff. Referring to later variations of the Coachman as ridiculously popular is not overstating the case. Recommending the fly for night fishing does understate its worth – hopelessly so. The Coachman is much more special than that!

The tying materials read like a dream.

Hook. Wet fly/nymph 10 - 12

Thread. Black

Hackle. Dark red hen

Tag. Gold tinsel

Body. Bronze peacock herl
Wing. White mallard.

You will notice that the main difference between this dressing and what you see on YouTube as the Leadwing Coachman is the wing colour. Not surprisingly, the Leadwing Coachman wing is a lead/slate grey colour. The Coachman is tied on a standard wet fly hook and being longer, is said to imitate a caddis. It may look like a drowned sedge but who cares so long as it takes fish. It does that very well!

The Coachman is tied variously with the hen hackle tied in-the-round under the wing, as a beard (as in the first photo) or with the hackle on the wing. Which way to tie the pattern comes down to personal preference. By taking care, the peacock herl can be tied with the flue curled to the rear. This won't impact on the fish catching ability but makes for a very smartly dressed fly.

It is time for the wings. Many tiers find wet wings difficult to tie in but I can assure you that with practice a reasonable result can be achieved. The pattern calls for white wings. Search through mallard primaries, near the bottom of the feathers to find the lighter colour. A left and a right feather must be chosen. This is easier said than done because many pairs of wings sold are not actually from the same bird! There is considerable value in harvesting your own feathers or in getting whole skins. That way you're assured of getting a matching pair. Having sorted your two feathers, try to select your wing slips from the bottom 1/3 of the feather. Spend time lining up the slips so they are the same length and width. Lower the matched slips onto the hook shank and check the length. Make that first pinch and loop firm but not so tight as to cut through the wings. My favoured method (at present) is to put three turns on top of one another, trim the butts then form the head and tie off.

The peacock herl body is beautiful and it is a shame to tie the wing so low as to cover it up.

Wings set low are a mark of a tier's skill. Satoshi Tanaka is one skilled wet fly tier who has mastered these low wings. Another expert contemporary wet fly tier is Don Bastian. The fly below is tied by my highly skilled friend, Paul Slaney. Seeing skills like this makes me wonder whether I should be including my flies at all!



Just to show Hutt Valley Angler's Club members that they should give the pattern a go, here are two Leadwing Coachman flies I tied.





Royal Coachman, a variant of the Coachman. Beautifully tied and photographed by Aiko Miettinen.

Final thoughts.

Watching fly tying videos is a great way to learn. The largest collection of quality tying videos on YouTube is by Davie McPhail. Even watching an expert like Davie can make tying seem bewildering. The trouble is he is SO proficient and uses different winging techniques throughout his videos. Starting with quality, matched wing slips makes the job a lot easier though Davie McPhail sometimes makes me believe that a silk purse can be created from a sow's ear. Don't be put off. Davie's videos are a delight and always worth watching. The one thing any tying video can't do for you is practise.

Chances are that you may tie a Royal Wulff one day. How about giving the original a go first? The Coachman is a lovely classic wet fly and well worth tying and fishing.

(My thanks to Paul Slaney and John Shaner for help in preparing this article).

Bent

by Tim Trengrove

The second most important book on fly fishing in New Zealand is *Trout with nymph* by Tony Orman. Read it at any stage and you're bound to learn something. Imagine though what it was like first reading the book in the early 1980s. Fishing with a

nymph was barely practised here when *Trout with nymph* was published in 1975. Soon though, everyone was using nymphs. The spread in popularity mirrored the uptake of catch and release. Both caught on in New Zealand like wildfire. *Trout with nymph* was the how-to manual for nymph fishing. It took the *most* important book on fly fishing in New Zealand, 8 years later, to point us to *Trout with nymph*. That book was *Trout stream insects in New Zealand. How to imitate and use them* by Norman Marsh.

Most important book? Didn't know about *Trout with nymph* until then? Well, that's how it seemed to one angler anyway. Let's not let any opinions get in the way of a good story. There was another major prod for New Zealand anglers to take up using nymphs and to get releasing fish. That was the appearance of *Flyfisher* magazine in 1983, the year *Trout stream insects* was first published. Why did we take so long to pick up on these important developments in fly fishing? G. E. M. Skues pioneered nymph fishing in England and covered the subject thoroughly in four books published between 1910 and 1939. In North America Lee Wulff was advocating catch and release with sports fish by 1936. We have been slow to take up some fly fishing ideas, but are keen advocates of them once adopted.

Norman Marsh noted that a whole chapter in *Trout with nymph* was devoted to the horn cased caddis. I did too. Why the horn cased caddis when there were lots of other caddis Tony Orman could have written about? That question alone is good reason to read the two books, which we have in our Hutt Valley Anglers Club library. Armed with a copy of *Trout stream insects* in one hand and a Petri dish in the other, containing the stomach contents of your river caught trout, you will soon be making the acquaintance of the horn cased caddis. They can be very numerous. So can sandy cased caddis. Both Tony Orman and Norman Marsh saw hundreds of cased caddis in trout autopsies so a whole chapter on the horn cased caddis was well deserved. The bit that stuck in my mind after first reading the book was that Tony Orman suggested tying an imitation around the bend of the hook. Believe me, that was VERY good advice. Cased caddis can be straight like sticks but sticks aren't normally bent like caddis. That bent shape is a big trigger to trout.

By the mid-1980s I was experimenting with caddis imitations in our local Waihao River. In a flow no bigger than the Wainuiomata in summer time, trout would saunter over to inspect my straight caddis imitations. Then saunter back again. Nothing, not a take. Then I read Tony's book and started winding some goose quill along the hook shank and around the bend. The response was immediate and 3 takes followed in quick succession. Nothing landed, mind you but at last I was on the right

trail. For many years after that, I tied flies on a grub hook. The Tiemco 2457 was my favourite, very strong and reliable. Both mayfly and caddis larvae, it didn't matter. The curved body was instantly recognisable as food by trout and taken with confidence. There you have it. That's what Bent is all about.

If it is so good though, why not use it all the time? I notice some club members using the grub hook widely. In my opinion a caddis larva imitation tied on a grub hook is one of the most deadly nymphs. It was my mainstay for 20 years and I know it will work as well today as it did in the 1980s. The Tiemco 2457 is still a very good hook, unless you prefer barbless. Using #18s I failed to convert a lot of takes in to hook-ups. #16s and #14s were fine in that regard. It is with some amusement that I remember using a #10 Tiemco 2457 caddis imitation when I came up to Wellington 13 years ago. One stationary fish shot three metres to grab this nymph. It had the pulling power all right, but I have moved away from using it in the last 10 years. Tying with other hooks and using other imitations has been my focus, particularly old patterns.

At some stage in your fly tying, it is well worth tying nymphs around the bend of the hook. Barbless or not, keep the hook bend as clear as possible to aid good hook-ups. Create the suggestion of a curve and I guarantee trout will go for it. And don't forget to read those two books!

Wading safely

With the start of the new season, our thoughts naturally turn to the exciting aspects of fishing....new waters to explore, new techniques to try out, new gear to test etc. But amid all the excitement, pay a thought to the sobering aspect of fishing; safety. When we think of drownings, our thoughts often jump to images of young foolhardy teenagers being rescued from dangerous rips by the surf patrol at Piha beach. However, the official figures released by Watersafety NZ paint a different picture. Adult men make up 76% of the fatalities, with twice as many deaths occurring in rivers as at the beach. New Zealand is one of the 3 worst countries in the world for drownings. Sobering statistics indeed and all the more reason for fly fishermen to take this issue seriously.

The following information was provided by DOC and published in their excellent 2005 pamphlet "Wading Safely". It has been reproduced here with their kind permission.

Losing your footing when wading can be potentially hazardous and anglers can get into situations where injury or even death is a very real outcome. All anglers should have a healthy respect for water and before heading out should tell someone where they intend to fish and how long they intend to be. It is not always necessary to wade in order to fish successfully. If you are unsure about your wading ability, and you lack confidence in the water, don't wade! Look for suitable pools to fish that can be reached from the riverbank or by using thigh waders to go into the water to knee-depth. Linking arms with a fellow angler to cross a river will give you added stability, but you should proceed with caution.

Before entering the water, consider what you are wearing



- Wear a wading belt. These can be bought from sports stores and are reasonably priced. Wearing a wading belt tightly around your midriff or chest helps to prevent water entering the lower half of waders and assists you to float.
- Waders should fit properly – the correct shoe size, not too long or short in the leg and the correct size around the torso.
- You need warm clothing to decrease the chance of exposure / hypothermia if completely wet. Fast drying polypropylene, polar fleece or merino wool thermals are recommended under waders during the winter.
- Wearing a jacket over waders also limits water entry.
- Take a wading stick. This could be as simple as a piece of wood found alongside the river, or a metal pole with a grip handle similar to a ski pole. Wading sticks provide stability when held upstream during river crossings.
- Wear polaroid glasses as they cut the glare and allow you to see obstacles below the water.
- Purpose-built fishing vests may have a ripcord which when pulled in an emergency, inflate the jacket to assist buoyancy.

Familiarise yourself with the surrounding area.

- Avoid crossing where you cannot see the bottom. What is the speed and depth of the water in the area? Can you safely wade there? What is the safest entry point? Can you cross back if necessary?
- Look at what is below the surface where you choose to enter. Identify downstream hazards such as trees, rocks, rapids, waterfalls. If you fall in and float downstream will you end up in a gentle pool or a rocky rapid? Sand on the bottom indicates areas of low water velocity and provides good footing. Large cobbles can provide good footing if scoured clean but will be treacherous if covered in algae. If the water is too deep you are likely to begin to float and lose your footing.



- Where is the nearest exit point if you get into trouble? When you exit, what are you then going to do? What is your rescue / emergency plan? When crossing it is best to cross diagonally downstream in shallow riffles. Keep your body side-on to the current to brace yourself and reduce water pressure.

If you do fall in the water

- Stay calm.
- Roll over onto your back.
- Keep your feet downstream of your body.
- Keep your toes out of the water. Don't risk breaking an ankle by getting it caught between large rocks.
- Use your arms in a manner that holds you in this position.
- Use your arms in a sculling motion and kick your feet to propel yourself towards the edge.
- Focus on an exit point.
- Avoid being swept into obstructions like trees where you risk being pinned underwater.
- Go with the flow until you come to a suitable place to get out.

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