

Clearwater Fly Casters

October, 2002

Backcast

Well, well, well... this month's message is brought to you by none other than your illustrious editor! What? The editor is doing the Prez's message? Don't ask. I suppose this is just a warm up for my turn at the helm in the year 2005.

This month's meeting will be held in Moscow at the **Best Western - University Inn** in the Palouse and Empire Rooms. The Wet Fly Hour (Social) is from 6:00pm 7:00pm. Beverage service will be on a cash bar basis. Dinner will be served at 7:00pm with a choice of either Baked Steelhead or Teriyaki Chicken. Dinner (including tax and gratuity) is \$15/person and will be collected at the door of the meeting room. Unfortunately, the speaker is still a mystery.

A couple of the topics discussed at the last **Conservation Committee** meeting. Items touched on were:

- * Improving the fly raffle to attract more bidders. The club uses the proceeds of the raffle to pay for (lately, to supplement the cost of) the speaker and the editor's dinners. Shirley's idea was to give raffle tickets to fly tiers who donate their flies for the raffle to attract more tiers, raffle items and bidders.
- * Raising the annual dues. The dues have been \$20 for individuals, \$25 for family and \$10 for students for years.
- * Alspach Fund: should we keep spending it, add to it, give an award this year?
- * The **biennial auction** coming up in March 2003. This is a major source of funds for club operation and Alspach Scholarship Award.
- * Clay pit demise
- * Need for a budget to guide club expenditures
- * Matching funds donation to FFF Steelhead Committee
- * Collins/Allured award not given in 2002

The club **BBQ** was held in September with about 30-35 people attending. The food was great (catered by Porky's) and the lies, oops, I mean fishing reports were encouraging (or discouraging if you hadn't caught much this past summer). Rumors were that Bill Hendrix hit the St Joe for a 50+ fish day, all caught on flies no larger than a #20. Sign that guy up as next month's speaker. The only downside to having the BBQ in September was running out of day light before the casting games could commence. Something to think about for next year's event.

Raffle Rules. Starting this month you can get two additional raffle tickets by bringing in four (4) flies to be included in the raffle. That's right, one free raffle ticket per two (2), count them one, two flies! A total of two tickets per person will be allowed. Please attach a slip of paper or card to your flies with your name, fly name and pattern recipe. Start those vises and join in.

Kudos to Jim Palmersheim and Charlie Powel for helping Dave Engerbretson. Dave has been experiencing some set backs with his health (diabetes) that resulted in his spending time in a wheelchair at home. Both Jim and Charlie have given a lot of their time rearranging and modifying Dave's house to accommodate the wheelchair and in transporting Dave back and forth to his doctor's appointments. Way to go Dave and Charlie!

HOME WATERS

One of the joys that experienced fly fishermen seem to hold dear to their heart is a familiar pond, lake, bay or stretch of water that is their "home water." Home waters are usually near by. The fish are usually small. The scenery is familiar. The place is comfortable.

We typically go to our home water not to catch fish, but more to see an old friend. Like humans, home waters change over time. A new snag promises to hold larger than average bass. A recent flood washed out a deep hole where one had been fifteen years ago. A new gravel bar offers a great lunch site under a tall oak.

You know your home water like the back of your hand. You know what to expect. You know the moods of the water and the change of the seasons. You have probably gone fishless. And you have witnessed frenzies when any fly would work.

Home waters are important because they fill an emotional need. They give us a place to recharge and recover from the chaos of life. And they give us a place to build both our understanding of nature and our fishing skills. Our frequent visits builds understanding as we watch the water cycle through the seasons and mature over time. We build our skills as familiarity leads us to be more selective and thoughtful in our approach to fishing.

We know there are larger bass in the deep hole by the big elm, but small fish seem to be all we can catch. Stopping, sitting, watching, eating lunch, and more watching offers opportunities for insight into the activities of the pool. And, over time, we try different flies, different approaches, and possibly different lines, trying to unravel the code. And when we do, we have a new answer that may work elsewhere under similar conditions.

We also use home waters to build skills. Stretching our casting distance (even when we don't need to) in preparation for the day when a longer cast is necessary. Spotting fish and sight casting. Mending line. Hitting our target. Testing new flies and methods.

Home waters are like an old friend. Comfortable and familiar. A safe place to try new ideas. A home water can be as close as a neighborhood pond. A place to hone your skills. And as important as anywhere you ever fish.

by Jay Forrest of the Alamo Fly Fishers of San Antonio, Texas

- Courtesy of the FFF ClubWire

Blue Rat tying instructions continued from the back page...

5. It's hard to see in the picture, but there is a thin veil of blue floss over the body. Lay excess floss back over body and use a thread wrap or two to hold it there. Trim floss at about mid-tail and comb it out so it looks like a veil and not a rope. (This combing isn't necessary, but it looks nicer.)
6. Secure several peacock herls in front of floss body, twist herls and thread together, wrap forward to about one eye width from eye, secure and trim excess herl.
7. Cut a bunch of gray fox hair off hide and clean out under fur leaving only the guard hairs. Tie on wing so it extends to about the middle of the tail. Trim butts on an angle, and wind thread over them. (If you don't have fox you might be able to use squirrel tail without getting into too much trouble with the "keepers of purity." Also, the steelhead won't mind.)
8. Select a soft grizzly saddle hackle with fibers about 1-1/2 to 2 gap widths long and attach it in front of wing. Stroke fibers back as you wrap hackle two or three times around hook, secure and trim excess. Wind thread back over fibers a little to hold them backward.
9. Place a jungle cock feather on each side of wing. They should be toward the front of the wing. If you don't have jungle cock just skip the cheeks. Also the original pattern called for a veiling of blue king fisher over the cheeks, so if you don't have it consider it optional.
10. Whip finish with a nice head and coat with head cement.

A picture of a Blue Rat tied by Poul Jorgensen is on page 66 of *Flies for Atlantic Salmon*. It shows the blue veil over the body and the blue king fisher on the cheeks. Steelhead and salmon are attracted to pretty flies. So after tying a few Blue Rats, go out and feed them to some big fish.

From the Desk of Bruce Frazier...

I have recently become the curator of our video collection and am trying to determine what we actually have. Eventually I will publish a list in the Tippet so you can all know what is available to be checked out. First I need to update the 'checked out' list and retrieve those that are checked out, but are not being used, so we can put them back into circulation. I will list names that are not crossed off in our 'checked out' book and ask that those people return the videos if they are through with them. If you have videos, but your name is not on the list, return those as well, so we can get a fresh start. We have a list of video titles that are not here and are not checked out. If your name is on the list, but you don't have a video, let's get you crossed off the list.

Sean Shea	Fly Tying Basics, Casting Nymphs
Tom Anderson	NW Fly Tying Expo. 1991 vol. 2
D. Holland	Fly Fishing for Pacific Steelhead
John Toker	no video name ?
Aki Kayama	Fly Fishing Alberta's Chinook Country
James Foster	no video name ?
Don Shearer	2 Streams Video ?
Doug Young	Trout in Still Waters
Zac Sexton	Trout: Tying and Fishing ?

Upcoming Events

October 9, 2002 6:30pm Clearwater Fly Casters meeting at the Best Western - University Inn in Moscow, ID.

October 14, 2002 Robert L. Warner Retirement Celebration. Monday at the Lewis Alumni Centre on the WSU Campus, Pullman, WA. 4:00pm - 6:00pm. Program and roasting to begin at 4:30pm.

October 16, 2002 5:30pm Conservation/Executive meeting at Rico's in Pullman, WA.

Clearwater Fly Casters 2002

President	Jim Siebe	(jsiebe@moscow.com)	883-0622
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CFC membership dues are \$20/yr for individuals, \$25/yr for families, \$10/yr for students, \$50/yr sustaining and \$300/lifetime.

Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday, September through May at the Best Western - University Inn, 1516 Pullman Rd, Moscow, Idaho. Wet Fly time 6pm, dinner at 6:30pm and program at 8pm.

BLUE RAT

By Bob Bates

(from the FFF website at <http://www.fedflyfishers.org>)

The Blue Rat is a member of the Rat series of Atlantic-Salmon flies. According to Dick Stewart and Farrow Allen in *Flies for Atlantic Salmon*, the Rat series was introduced in 1911 by Roy Angus Thompson whose initials R.A.T. gives the series its odd name. Many people contributed to the Rat series, and in particular the Blue Rat was designed by Poul Jorgensen for fishing in Iceland. There it is said that "any fly will take salmon as long as it is blue." This fly is definitely blue.

Although it was tied for Icelandic salmon, the Blue Rat works for steelhead thousands of miles away.

1. Debarb hook before you start tying. Wild steelhead must be released unharmed.
2. Attach thread and tinsel about mid-shank. Wind tinsel to rear and stop before reaching point of hook, wrap tinsel forward making sure there are no gaps, secure at tie in point, but don't trim. Secure the tinsel on far side of hook so it will be out of your way for attaching tail and body materials.
3. Collect several peacock sword fibers and attach them at front of tag to make about a gap length tail.
4. Attach blue floss at front of tag, and wind thread forward smoothly over sword fibers and floss. Stop thread at about the one third to one quarter point, and trim excess sword fibers and floss. Wrap floss forward smoothly to tying thread, secure on top of hook but don't trim excess. Spiral tinsel forward in two or three turns, secure and trim excess.



Hook: Partridge CS10 or other salmon hook, 3/0-2

Thread: Red

Tag: Gold oval tinsel

Tail: Peacock sword feathers

Rib: Gold oval tinsel

Body: Rear blue floss, veiled on top with blue floss

Front: peacock herl

Wing: Gray fox guard hairs

Collar: Soft grizzly hackle

Checks: Jungle cock

Head: Red thread

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