



*The Evening*

# Hatch

The newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

August 2012

## Ode to the bronzeback: Club member DiStefanis talks fly fishing for smallies

"Smallies will always give you a challenge. Pound for pound, they're one of the best freshwater gamefish available." So began author and MFFC member Jim DiStefanis's July 11 presentation, based on his book "That's Mr. Smallmouth to You."



*Jim DiStefanis opens his presentation at the July 11 meeting.*

A dedicated angler, DiStefanis said his urge to fish "comes up more often than I can get away Up North to fish for trout." So the native Pennsylvanian focuses on other species. "When I first got into fly fishing in western Pennsylvania, I fished for trout exclusively," he said. "We're spoiled in Michigan with a wealth of species and I fish for them all."

But he has a special affinity for smallmouth bass, in early writings referred to as "black bass." "The history of the black bass is a storied one," he said. "They're native to North America, so they are a true American fish. They're very adaptable. That's why I refer to them as an urban fish. They're able to exist around people quite well, and availability creates popularity."

He continued, "We have an incredible fishery here in southeast Michigan." He favors the Huron and Raisin rivers. "I can get to either in 20 minutes," he said. The fish in the Raisin are more aggressive, he said. "They're big, strong and plentiful." So why don't more fly anglers fish the Raisin? Unlike the Huron, which has many stretches offering relatively easy wading, "the Raisin is difficult to wade because of all the ledges," DiStefanis said. Nevertheless, he did point club members to three access points – Veterans Park just west of Telegraph Road, where Ida-Maybe Road crosses the river, and the library across from the Monroe County Fairgrounds.

In terms of flies, he said damselfly patterns are among the first out of his fly box. "Damsels are always coming off the water," eh said. Otherwise, try matching the hatch. "If a fish is refusing your fly, there's something not quite right about it. Try making some subtle changes before you switch patterns. Shorten the body. Add some weight. Take off some weight. If you're fishing a popper, try changing the cadence (of the retrieve). If you're fishing a crayfish pattern, try hopping it down on the retrieve."

He offered a number of other tidbits. He typically doesn't fish a tippet longer than two feet – 3X for streamers and 4X for flies size 14. His final bit of advice: "If you're intent on catching a trophy smallmouth, fall is the time to do it. I fish through October."

## UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

**August 4, Annual Picnic**  
Multi-Lakes Conservation Assn.  
Commerce Township  
Noon-5 p.m.  
Contact: Mike Doyle



**August 8,  
Speaker  
Meeting**  
**Speaker:**  
**Dick Pobst**  
Costick  
Center, 28600  
11 Mile Rd.,  
Farmington Hills, 7:30 p.m.

**September 5, Speaker Meeting**  
**Speaker: Kevin Feenstra**  
Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.



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## Edwardsburg Conservation Club salutes MFFC

We've long known it to be true, the Michigan Fly Fishing Club has a reputation as a club dedicated to fly angling and youth education from one end of the state to the other. It's certainly true going from south to north. Now it's also true going east to west.

At the July 11 meeting, long-time club member Art Mikkola transferred to the club a very special "thank you" gift from the Edwardsburg Conservation Club – a framed collection of photos from that club's youth education day. Why? Mikkola and fellow club member Jack Lotz participated in the event helping kids learn to tie flies.

So what's the connection to Edwardsburg, a suburb of Niles in the southwest corner of the state?

Mikkola explained: "Friends who live in Niles got me into a deer camp in the U.P. and members of this hunt club belong to the Edwardsburg Conservation Club.

Three years ago, they organized their first Youth Day. I was asked if I'd like to teach a fly-tying class. Not that I'm much of a fly tier, but I agreed. After tying for Rick (Gokenbach) and Art (Dittmar) at the Ultimate Fishing Show and Outdoorama, I figured I'd give it my best. I asked the (MFFC) Board if I could borrow the club's tying kits and it was approved." The rest is history.

Lotz and members of the Edwardsburg club helped out.

Look for this newest acquisition to join the display at the Club Booth at the 2013 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo next March.

## Youth day

### Event promotes safety outdoors



Art Mikkola of the Michigan Fly Fishing Association, left, teaches Tom Mackling, 11, of Edwardsburg, how to tie flies for fly fishing Saturday at Youth Outdoor Day at the Edwardsburg Conservation Club.

Children learn about safety in outdoor recreation at Edwardsburg Conservation Club.

By SHERRY VAN ARSDALL  
Times Staff Writer

EDWARDSBURG — Liam Clark learned about safety in outdoor recreation during a youth day event Saturday at Edwardsburg.

The 11-year-old stood outside listening to Michigan Department of Natural Resources officers Jeff Robinson and Andy Bauer.

"You might be busting down guys who are not hunting during hunting season," Liam answered to a question as to what DNR officers do as part of their jobs.



Art Mikkola, right, teaches William Graham, 10, of Oranger, the art of tying flies Saturday during Youth Outdoor Day.

"The life jackets should be readily accessible on board, and it's really important to have the correct size for those on board," Bauer said. "If you are fishing, what do we look for?"  
A fishing license, Liam said, and Bauer added that anyone 17 and older in the state of Michigan needs to have a license.  
And what three things does the DNR check for in the fish? Length, quantity and the seasons.  
"It's all about the reproduction of fish and their ecosystems," Bauer said.  
The boys were in one of 13 groups that went to stations highlighting outdoor activities such as archery, hand calling, trap shooting, fly tying, muzzleloading or rifle shooting.  
"I've learned a lot of stuff. My parents sent me here to have fun and that's what I've been doing, having fun," said Liam, smiling.  
Hadya considers himself an outdoorsman, he said, and especially



Art Mikkola (left) presents MFFC President Chris Hunter with a special "thank you" from a sister organization in southwest Michigan.

# Welcome to the amusing, bizarre world of weird fly names

by Todd A. Schotts

What do you get when you have a “Mattress Thrasher,” a “Stacked Blonde” and a “Quigley Cripple”? If you guessed something X-rated, sorry WRONG answer. If you guessed flies that work on the Au Sable, well that would be a good answer and also correct. But I was actually looking for the response “weird fly names.”

As a fly tier, I always like seeing the interesting names that tiers have attached to the flies they designed or enhanced. For those names, tiers sometimes turn to movies, TV shows, cartoons, family members, pets, songs, their own names or the names of fishing buddies.

Our fly tying craft goes back many hundreds of years, with one reference dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century and Roman Claudius Aelianus describing the practice of Macedonian anglers on the Astraeus River: “They fasten red wool ... round a hook, and fit on to the wool two feathers which grow under a cock’s wattles, and which in color are like wax. Their rod is six feet long and their line is the same length. Then they throw their snare, and the fish, attracted and maddened by the color, comes straight at it, thinking from the pretty sight to gain a dainty mouthful; when, however, it opens its jaws, it is caught by the hook.”

I wonder what they called that fly: the “Wattles Fly,” or maybe the “Mad Fish

Fly,” “Wax Fly,” “CW Fly,” “Mouthful Fly”?

Many of our everyday, go-to flies don’t have names that will shock -- Elk Hair Caddis, Adams, Borchers Special, Muddler Minnow, Clouser Minnow, Mickey Finn, Woolly Bugger, Copper John, Bi-Visible, Prince Nymph, the Wulff family of flies, Hendrickson, Bunyan Bug, and Quigley Cripple. Many incorporate the name of the fly’s designer – Clouser, Wulff, Hendrickson and Quigley, for example.

Then you not-so-daintily step into the arena of “weird fly names.” Where oh where and how oh how did the following acquire their monikers: Thunder Chicken, Molechunkemunk, Mooselucmaguntic, Pazooka, Headlight, Bloody Mary, Pot Scrubbing Nymph, Doctor Mummy, Sofa Pillow, Belly Dancer Clown, Pixie Dust, Bozo,

Cuss, Cow Killer, Cigar Butt, and Red Butt Skunk.

They are curious compared to these. (Fair warning ... Remember if you decide to Google the names that follow, you may have some explaining to do with your spouse or significant other.) Okay ... here we go: Bubble Smut, Puffy Nymph, Olive 2 Way, Nite Snooker, Lucky Lisa, Flasher, Laced Lady, Madam X, Tail Bone, Whipped Cream & Jello, Striptease, Hair Bare, Humpy, Hot Lips, Barely Legal, Sex Dungeon, Booby, Fleshing, Mattress Thrasher, Butt Monkey, Meat Whistle, and Stacked Blonde.

If you’re wondering, as a fly tier do I have any “weird fly names” for flies I’ve designed, the answer is “yes.” Here’s a sampling: “JS Bulldog,” after my dad Jerry Schotts; “CT Minnow,” after my grandfather, Cecil Tonkin; and

“Ella Hopper,” after my grandmother, Ella Tonkin; the “Mr Fabulous Bead Head Nymph” and “Joliet Jake Black Caddis,” both inspired by the Blues Brothers; the “Darth Vader Cricket,” “Star Wars,” of course; “Thumper Minnow,” inspired by a character in the Walt Disney movie “Bambi”; “Mr. Magoo Foam Poppers & Divers,” based on the sight-deficient cartoon character; the “Shake & Bake Hex Emerger,” inspired by the Talladega Nights movie; “Nerdy Hillbilly Streamer,” from a quote from “The Hangover” movie; “Double Secret Probation Crawfish,” inspired by the movie “Animal House”; and the “High Plains Drifter Caddis,” inspired by the

Clint Eastwood movie. As you can see, I take inspiration from all quarters. I also admit that an adult beverage or two may have helped.



Clockwise from top left: Doctor Mummy, Pole Dancer, Bloody Mary, Bubble Smut, Mattress Thrasher and Stacked Blonde.

Buzzula, Cardiac Kiwi, Espresso & Mint, Flopper, The Gramper, Mixed Drink, Drunken Sailor, Red Butt Big Eye, Root Beer Float, Toker, Cow Dung, Tom Tickler, Green Ass McGee, Roadside Diner, Pole Dancer, Squirrely

## Plan on a fun-filled Saturday, August 4, at the Club's 2012 picnic

Hear ye! Hear ye! The 2012 picnic will be held on Saturday, August 4, 2012 at the Multi-Lakes Conservation Association.

All members and their guests are invited to participate in this fun-filled event!

There is no cost for the picnic but members are asked to bring a dish to pass and your own beverage(s).

The picnic will officially start at noon and end at 5 p.m. However everyone is welcome to come earlier and stay later! A picnic lunch of freshly prepared pulled pork, smoked turkey, fried chicken, corn on the cob, and much, much more will be served at 2 p.m.

Members and their guests are welcome to fish off the Multi-Lakes dock.

Adult games include a sporting flies casting contest, blind-folded fly tying,



*Mike Doyle (upper left) promises fun for the young and young at heart at the 2012 edition of the Club's picnic.*

and bocce ball. Prizes will be awarded to the winner(s) of each event.

There will be traditional children games and prizes will be awarded to all participants.

Multi-Lakes Conservation Association is located at 3860 Newton Road, Commerce Township. Directions are on our web site.



You can also sign up to participate in the baked bean cook off that will be judged by our board of directors.

Contact Mike Doyle at 248-202-5681 or via email at [miketheflyguy@gmail.com](mailto:miketheflyguy@gmail.com) with any questions, concerns, or to sign up for the cook off.