



The Evening

# Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

April 2017

## Going Fishing Up North

By Staff Writer

“You never know what will happen in the Au Sable,” said Kelly Neuman, custom rod builder and fly fishing guide, MFFC’s April guest speaker. The Atlantic Salmon are a big hatchery fish placed into the Au Sable River which are mostly overlooked. Neuman advises using lots of streamers, baitfish, and shiner patterns. It’s all about swinging flies. In the lower Au Sable, Steelhead fishing runs from October to December, “just about the time the Atlantic [salmon] are coming back in,” said Neuman. When fishing Steelhead are running in December they will hit bait patterns.

In Lake Huron, the Chinooks are gone, but King Salmon can still be found in the Au Sable and their numbers are rebounding slowly. Spey casting with Gobie patterns works well, said Neuman.

Ocqueoc River is often an overlooked fishery, said Neuman. It is a smaller stream that is not heavily fished. The Ocqueoc runs from Lake Huron (west of Cheboygan), west to Lake Ocqueoc, then swings back east, turning southeast running along the west side of M-68, west of Rogers City.

Also less fished, is the section of the Rifle River by Homer, whereas the north section of the Rifle is heavily fished.

The lower portion of the Au Sable

River, below Foot Dam, is often overlooked as well. Atlantic going back to the Lake frequent here. It is not crowded and there is a huge Steelhead run. Most are fall and winter Steelhead, which are not present in the summer.



Below Mio, said Neuman, is a good place to find Trout in the fall. Post-spawning fish look for meals and are aggressive. There is not a huge number of fish, but the quality is fantastic. According to Neuman, this is because larger fish are looking for smaller Trout and baitfish to eat. Brown Trout key in on small (DNR) stocked Trout. When fishing the Au Sable River below Mio, avoid the summer season due to the canoes and low water. (Continued pg 2)

## MFFC Calendar



May 17, 2017

**MFFC Annual Banquet**  
**Speaker: Joe Humphreys**  
Italian American Center  
5 Mile Road, Livonia.

June 14, 2017

**Speaker Meeting**  
**Speaker: Nicole Watson**  
**Topic: Lake Erie DNR Biologist**  
Cotic Center  
Farmington Hills, 7:30 p.m.

July 12, 2017

**Speaker Meeting**  
**Speaker: TBD**  
Cotic Center  
Farmington Hills, 7:30 p.m.

August 23, 2017

**Speaker Meeting**  
**Speaker: James Frances**  
**Topic: The Lake Erie Watershed**  
Cotic Center  
Farmington Hills, 7:30 p.m.



## Fishing Preponderance ->



(Continued from pg 1) Water temperatures during that season are simply too hot for Trout.

Below Alcona Dam there are summer Smallmouth and the area is not crowded. Smallmouth in the Au Sable River are a really overlooked and under rated species. It does not have to be sunny and warm to successfully fish for Smallmouth here. There are few canoes, and it is not crowded. It is the perfect spot in July and August, said Neuman. In fall and winter the fishing is slow, but it is quality fish (big ones) that are caught. Neuman warned that bad weather means good fishing, and that Browns like mostly to bite during dark weather. Larger Trout caught in spring and fall, are not catchable in summer.

“Two handed rods are more popular,” said Neuman, as they make it easier to cast heavy sink tip line. They are very effective for nymphing and swinging flies, because lead is not needed.

Next he mentioned Gobe, which are a bottom dwelling, invasive species. Smallmouth, Walleye, and Lake Trout evolved to eat Gobe, so a Gobe pattern is effective for catching these species.

As for line, Neuman is really impressed by Streamer Max by Airflo because it has a short head. Streamer Max will easily cast big flies and a sink tip line on a 7-8 weight rod. He likes the line and suggests using it with Sculpin

and Gobe patterns.

Neuman predicts this year’s Hendrickson is going to be huge in the daytime. It will go for two to three weeks this April, and is coming early because spring is coming early. The early Hendrickson can be fished during the day. Neuman said do not wait until dusk or night to fish. Generally fishing the Au Sable in the mid-afternoon is not good, but the Hendrickson is an exception.

This is compared to the Brown Drake hatch, which does not start until dusk or dark. Most of the time it is a long wait until spinner fall before fishing is any good, so use streamers during the day and wait until dark. It is not the hatch, but the spinner fall that is best to fish. Sometimes during a cool June day or on rainy days, there will be a sporadic Brown Drake hatch, so watch for it.

When fishing the Hex in the middle of June, use the traditional Hex patterns for the Au Sable River. Neuman suggested fishing streamers during the day and waiting until night to fish dry Hex flies.

In the end, if the Au Sable is not working, there is always fishing in the Van Etten watershed (Pine River, Van Etten Lake, and Van Etten Creek) or the Tawas River.

Represent!

## FFF/GLC Fly Show Booth

A sun filled Friday afternoon was the setting as two long time MFFC members sped down I-96 to Grand Rapids to attend the inaugural FFF/GLC West Michigan Fly Show. Spencer Vanderhoof...affectionately known to his comrades as “The Dutchman” and his side kick Bill Shannon had committed to representing the Michigan Fly Fishing Club at the festivities. After rendezvousing for dinner with past MFFC Prez and Expo chair Joe Sprys we set forth to the hospitality suite sponsored by the FFF/GLC. After an hour or so socializing with our own Todd Schotts, and tying legend Jerry Regan, we hit the rack in anticipation of tomorrow’s show.

Saturday came soon and we were anxiously on our way to the show. The FFF/GLC folks generously supplied the presenters with coffee and donuts; the event started promptly at 9 am.

The FFF/GLC had contracted with approximately 40 vendors and 10 clubs to work the show. By noon, a nice flow of folks had stopped by the MFFC table where we championed the club and the upcoming Midwest Fly Fishing Expo. We mingled and shot the breeze with many vendors and guides, including Ed McCoy from Hawkins outfitters, Josh Greenberg from Gates Lodge, Dan the Egg-man, and many other attendees and presenters.

By 4 pm the crowd had dwindled and it was time to pack up and hit the road. The show was a success and as we sped back to the Detroit area, we both agreed to return next year and continue the tradition!





# MFFFC Business

*Continue that way ->*

## Minutes

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board Meeting  
Feb 8, 2017 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm

Board minutes are available in the printed copy of the Hatch distributed at club meetings.



### 2017 – 2018 Officers

#### President:

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# April Fly Of The Month

A Versatile Modern Fly

## Beels Bearded Wonder

By Todd A. Schotts

For this month's featured fly, we are not going too far back in history; we are stepping into the arena of modern day flies. With the scene of articulated, big, bulky flies that have filled many of our fly boxes, there is one that is just totally amazing. This fly has made Bass dance and has tantalized big Brown Trout; this pattern is "Beels Bearded Wonder," tied by none other than Paul Beel.

If you are not familiar with Paul, he has the blog website "Frankenfly," a site dedicated to the art of fly tying and materials. Paul was one of our guest tiers at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo the last few years. Paul's tying specializes in modern streamers and classic Michigan dry flies. Funny thing, about six or seven years ago, I got a call from the esteemed Jerry Regan, who mentioned a gentleman from Indiana was going to be calling me regarding tying questions.

Condensing the story, come to find out Jerry took Paul Beel under his wing to teach him about trout flies and for his first experience fishing the Au Sable in his Au Sable River Boat. So when Paul contacted me, he was interested in learning the techniques for some of my warm water flies. Then to my surprise, suddenly he asked me to check out his new blog and website. I was in total awe of what he was doing for the art of fly tying. Winding the clock back a few years, his passion of fishing was from watching his grandfather create homemade lures as a kid. When his grandfather passed away, he stepped out of the fishing arena for about 10 years. Once he

got back into it (about six or seven years ago), he felt he could continue in his grandfather's footsteps a fly tyer. I know from his tying, he has some amazing patterns out on the market and some cool names to go along with them. Like the Pumpkinseed of Doom, Grandpa's Rooster, and the best one? Mama's Cornbread. I asked him how he came up with Mama's Cornbread; he said he was tying flies while his wife made cornbread. You cannot get any simpler than that. Along with his fly tying, he has also got some pretty unique and amazing dubbing out on the market called Frankendub.

Once Orvis was interested in adding this amazing fly to their inventory the name was changed to what it is now, the Bearded Wonder. This fly is an articulated streamer with weighted dumbbell eyes, carrying two Partridge Universal Predator hooks in a size 1/0 and was originally designed for Largemouth Bass (bucket mouths) in the waters around his home. To his surprise, they also work great on huge Brown Trout! He mentioned a call he got one day from Josh at Gates Lodge to inform him how great this fly was working for big browns on the Au Sable. Unlike the tying of our other monthly flies, this one is a bit more time consuming and more advanced. With the articulated spine, it makes a life-like swimming motion, and being a layered body, it creates a nice profile and is very noisy in the water. If you want a step-by-step tutorial for tying this fly, check out "North 40 December 2016" issue of the online magazine. It will help assemble this multi-material fly as unfortunately there isn't enough room to explain the steps in this article.

Fishing this articulated, layered body fly, is actually pretty easy. With the weight of the dumbbell eyes, it has great jigging action in the water. You can fish it with a jigging style, or can strip it in at any pace.

So get your fly boxes ready for some big amazing flies "Beels Bearded Wonders!" Until next month, tight lines and snazzy flies.

## Beels Bearded Wonder



**HOOKS:** 2 Partridge Universal Predator 1/0

**THREAD:** 140 or 210 Denier Dark Brown

**HOOK CONNECTION:** Beadalon 19 Strand .018" Beadalon

**FRONT HOOK:**

- Dark Brown Alpaca fiber
- Peacock Herl
- Dark Brown Crosscut Rabbit Strip
- Golden Brown Deer Hair
- Dark Tan Senyo Laser Dub or Frankendub Monster Dub Tan
- Lead Dumbbell Eyes (White with black pupils)

**BACK HOOK:**

- Tail-White Bucktail with brown Bucktail on top
- Body-Dark Brown Crosscut Rabbit Strip, Golden Brown Deer Hair
- Legs-Hairline black Barred Orange Grizzly Flutter Legs



# April Tier Of The Month

Spencer Vanderhoof

## Roberts Yellow Drake

By Todd A. Schotts

For our April Featured Spotlight Tier, we have a first time tier! He will bring us a classic Au Sable dry fly that should be a staple in all of our fly boxes. Our tier is none other than the illustrious "Professor of Entomology," and our current Vice President, Spencer Vanderhoof. The classic Grayling pattern is the prestigious, multi-faceted workhorse, Roberts' Yellow Drake.

The fishing history for Spence is that he joined our club back in 1991 or '92 after a directive to visit the club by his fly fishing mentor Bill Monahan. Monahan thought Spencer could benefit by tying with our club members. When Spencer first started fly fishing and tying he was very lucky to have someone like Monahan walk him through fly-fishing 101. Monahan built rods for Spencer and tied flies for him. Monahan took Spence to Grayling and introduced him around, showing Spencer how to present a fly to a trout. They spent the winter months in Monahan's basement tying flies and watching hockey on a small TV. His mentor's mother made them homemade pierogis that they washed down with cold adult beverages, leaving fond memories.

Aside from tying and fishing, Spencer has served in many different positions on our Board including his current position of Vice President. He also assists with many of the outings and schools.

Spencer has fished his entire life, starting in Chesapeake Bay (and other nearby places) while living in Norfolk, VA as a youngster where his father was stationed as a career Navy man.

He remembers a couple trips from VA to MI to his great uncle's fruit orchard near Bear Lake, in the late 1950's and early 1960's. His uncle would take young Spender to the break walls at Frankfurt and Manistee where they caught buckets full of perch. This was just before the DNR introduced Salmon and Steelhead to the Great Lakes to deal with large alewives die-offs that were piling up on the beaches. In 1963 Spencer officially became a Michigander when his family moved here.

Spence chose to tie the famed Au Sable River fly from the days of yore, the Roberts' Yellow Drake. The original pattern was designed by Clarence Roberts, a former Michigan Conservation Officer who lived in Grayling. The pattern was created between 1957 and 1959 by Roberts for his fishing partner, George Griffith, to be an easily seen, highly visible fly because George was losing sight in one eye. This fly was thought to be a general purpose fly to be used throughout the season. Just to give you heads up, if you look up in books or online for this fly, it goes by many names: Yellow Drake, Roberts' Drake, Golden Drake, Au Sable Hex, Au Sable Parachute Hex, and the Golden Drake.

The "Keeper of the Flame for Old Grayling Flies," Jerry Regan, introduced Spence to Jerry's fishing/tying friend Tim Neal (who grew up down the block from Clarence Roberts). In order to help Spencer, Tim actually sent Spencer some sample flies - all tied in Roberts' Drake Style. There was the traditional Roberts' Drake, a couple tied to imitate the Isonichia (Mahogany Duns), and a White Fly (Ephoron), down to a size 18. Tim later sent Spencer another box of flies tied to show Spencer step by step directions for the Roberts' Drake. (There is a hook with just the tail, a hook with tail and body, then tail, body, post, and finally one with the completed parachute hackle attached.) With all this awesome information from Tim, Spence plans to add a slightly different spin in terms of its origin and maybe what the fly represents. For one thing, you can

## Roberts Yellow Drake



**HOOK:** Size 10 1x or 2x long Mustad 9671 & 9672

**THREAD:** 3/0 Mono for large flies in yellow 6/0 Denier for smaller sizes

**TAIL:** Pheasant Tail Fibers

**BODY:** Deer Hair tied parallel to the hook shank

**PARACHUTE POST:** White Deer Belly Hair, Hi-Viz, Antron, Turkey Flats, or EP Fibers

**HACKLE:** Brown Dry Fly Hackle

change the material colors and hook sizes to pretty much cover any Mayfly Hatch. Using darker deer hair for the body and maroon thread, you have a nice Isonychia imitation. The standard pattern can cover March Browns and Brown Drakes; this is a very multi-faceted fly.

Two names Spence wants members to keep in mind while tying this pattern are Earl Madsen and Clarence Roberts. Earl was thought to be the first tier in Michigan to tie deer hair parallel to the hook shank. Clarence, as mentioned above, created this fly pattern and attached his name to Roberts' Yellow Drake.

So, if you are interested in tying a fly pattern that has great historical importance in Grayling Fly Fishing and is loved by fish, bring your tying tools, vise, and something to take notes while you tie alongside our esteemed "Professor of Entomology." Until next month, tight lines and snazzy flies.



# Meanderings of a Fly Fishing Phenomenon

Al The Hackleman

## Almost Opening Day- HOORAY

Where does the time go? It seems like it was just a few days ago that I looked at the calendar and thought about the upcoming opening day, then about 65 days away. Now the count down is at less than three weeks, and moving fast.

It was just Expo weekend. Then some fly tying shared with friends. Fished a few times. Shoveled snow. Snow melted and now is gone. And now its time to prepare for the Michigan Fly Fishing Club annual fun morning of Opening Day.

We are all so very lucky to live in a state that has some trout streams open all year for fishing. Joyce and I fished every month last year and every month so far this year. I must say that being able to run out on a nice day during the winter and throw a fly around a bit is really a nice thing. Now really most times in the winter there are no fish hurt or even touched. But the opportunity to try is really special and makes me feel very fortunate. In a few days we can fish every trout stream in the state. All those hidden gems that we sort of keep quiet about. The smaller streams that don't really get a lot of pressure and occasionally give up the fish of the season will be open again to explore and enjoy. I guess that while it's wonderful to have streams that are open for fishing all year, it's still very nice to have those little

streams open for the Trout Season and be able to fish and enjoy them again.

Of course the traditional Opening Day celebration for MFFC members and friends adds to the fun of that day. As in years past we will meet in the Board Room of Gates AuSable Lodge for shared laughter, shared tears, shared memories, and maybe some shared beverages. The yearly celebration starts about 9:00 am on Opening Day, April 29, 2017. I promise that things will be friendly and open to all. We can all share some fishing memories, plan some new places to visit, maybe even find a new fishing buddy and toast to the members we will remember that day. This will be the 17<sup>th</sup> time we have shared our Opening Day morning with friends, and I am truly looking forward to it. Please remember the only rule, we cannot park in the Gates AuSable Lodge parking lot. Please park at the Stephan Bridge access site and walk over to the Lodge from there.

There are many great, fun activities this Opening Day. MFFC always starts the weekend with lunch on Friday at Old AuSable Fly Shop. We already have reservations at Spikes for dinner that evening, starting at about 5:00 pm. Then after our morning celebration, there is an Art Neumann Memorial Dedication in Lovells at the Township Historical Society.

Later that day, many of us will be sharing time at the Anglers Of The AuSable banquet in Gaylord. This year is the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the Anglers and it's more important than ever to support them in their battle against folks that would ruin our rivers and streams. We cannot take the rivers we love for granted. There are many forces that feel clean pure streams

are wasted places and that someone should be making lots of money from those pure waters. Tickets are available from Gates AuSable Lodge. Please contact them if you are interested. I hope to see many of you at that banquet. We need to resist the fish farm and its promised pollution.

This year, like other years, it will be a wonderful time to be in Michigan and be a member of The Michigan Fly Fishing Club. I look forward to seeing all the smiles on Opening Day.

### In Memoriam

## Al Bullock





# Michigan Fly Fishing Club

## Club Events

2016-2017

### Conservation Committee Report

This year nine Requests for Conservation Funds were submitted for discussion by the Conservation Committee composed of Alan Haxton, Chris Hunter, Kevin Lipp, Joe Sprys and Eric Center. The Conservation budget, set in 2016, was \$18,660, which included additional donations by members to the Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF). Requests totaled \$24,300. The committee reviewed, deliberated and recommended the following amounts for Board approval.

1. Clinton River Watershed Council – Gallagher Creek data collection, monitoring and restoration to allow for the return of Brook Trout and its natural habitat - \$1,700
2. Upper Black River Council – In-stream habitat enhancement project for the Upper Black River created by installing large woody debris and stream bank stabilization - \$2,200
3. Au Sable River Property Owners Association – To plant Cedar trees to help with stabilization of the riverbank and to provide needed shade for the fish environment - \$1,000
4. Upper Manistee River Association – Repairing, creating and maintaining woody debris structures in the river and along with bank stabilization in the tree farm area of the Upper Manistee - \$4,472
5. Anglers of the Au Sable – Analysis of insects at six sites on the North Branch for

Coming In Summer

### Woman's Outing

Linda Bocks is organizing the first annual women's outing from June 29 to July 2, in Grayling, Michigan. The accommodations are a nice cabin on Big Creek between Grayling and Lovells that sleeps eight and is located directly across from the North Branch AuSable river and close to the mainstream and South branch. Three nights four days, with a guided float trip included for one of the days, is \$200 per person. To sign-up, contact Linda Bocks at loopster4@yahoo.com.

a baseline data of the macro invertebrate population - \$1,900

6. Conservation Resource Alliance – Mitigate bank erosion and the placement of large woody debris in the Pine River near the Silver Creek Pathway in Lake County - \$3,844
7. Mason-Griffith Founders Chapter of TU – To pay for analysis of the water above and below the Grayling fish farm for total phosphorus and suspended solids - \$1,600
8. Vanguard Chapter TU – To build a stairway at the Gallagher Road Bridge parking lot from the lot to the usual high water mark of Paint Creek - \$800
9. Coldwater River Watershed Council – Planting of shade trees and the placement of seed buffer strips for erosion control along with the placement of woody debris into the Coldwater River to improve fish habitat - \$1,144

Welcome

### New Members

Welcome! We look forward to seeing you at club events!

- Chase Abel; Kari Atkins; Gordon Baarson; Brian Bailie; Joseph Bezel; Seth Blumberg; Scott Brill; Larry Burrell; Raymond Champine; Tom Coleman; Timothy Cox; Mark Delaney; James Disney; Linda Doss; Belinda Friis; George Gish; Tom Grant; Edward Hardy; Donald Johnson; Michael Johnson; Bernie Kairunas; Rodney Kitchen; Paul Kelly; Joseph Kinzie; Frank Klimko; Nancy Klimko; Brian Kurtz; William Largent; Daniel Mangino; Ryan Martin; Dean Masser; Karen Masser; Charles McKittrick; Robert Mifsud; Don Mills; Vince Ottoboni; Dennis Poter; Brian Pitser; Sandy Reeber; Jeff Rodenberg; Robert Schultz; Frederic Sejalon; and Michael Smith.

Upcoming

### May Outings

- Youth School*, May 6 - Contact Len Dixon lendixon@comcast.net  
***Dick Shott New Member Outing***, May 10-13 - Contact Steve Selinger sselinger@twmi.rr.com  
*MFFC Banquet*, May 17 - Contact Jim Aitken dznvnm@comcast.net  
*Smallmouth Outing*, May 19-21 - Contact Todd Schotts dragoneyeflyz05@yahoo.com