



*The Evening*

# Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

July/August 2016

## How I Joined The Madness

*By Dave Begley*

Many years ago in a galaxy far, far away I fished with the tools of the devil. I fished with a small group; we would do a Canadian fly-in and would open and close the trout season in Michigan. They were fun trips and these folks were serious fisherman. We would all use ultra-light spinning rods and fish the Pigeon River area, as well as the Tahquamenon River, at locations which will remain unknown.

On one weekend we were stationed in the Tahquamenon River above the lower falls and we were not catching anything even as we threw everything including garden hackle. Two elderly gents walked in below us and asked if we minded if they could join us at a discreet distance. We obliged and they ensued to light it up on about every other cast. We watched with increasing frustration, and when they began to leave, we hustled over to inquire what they were using. After they left I told my colleagues that there must be something more to this fly-fishing thing. I came home, bought a Cabela's Fish Eagle 2 and joined the MFFC.

I did not attend a single meeting for the next two years; yet I occasionally used the fly rod in the fishy confines of my backyard.



Everything changed dramatically when my wife's brother invited us to spend ten days in Big Sky Montana at a time-share. It was a beautiful condo right at the lodge on the lake. You could literally fish in the front yard in a lake stocked with Rainbows. I brought my still brand new fly rod, and we hired a guide to fish on the Gallatin River. It is still a day that I will never forget. An incredible place for a first fly-fishing trip, and of course I was, pun intended, hooked. My biggest allure, besides the fishing, was best said by Robert Traver when he said "I love to fish, and I love the environs in which they are found." Thus began the journey into countless hours of challenge, adventure, friendship, and fun.

That is my story and I am sticking to it. I urge others share their experience with this sport we all love.

*Take The Dave Begley Challenge! Send submissions to [evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com](mailto:evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com)*

## MFFC Calendar



**August 10, 2016**

**Speaker Meeting**

**Speaker:** Anthony Mule

**Topic:** Fishing Lake St. Clair

William M. Costic Center  
Farmington, 7:30 p.m.

**September 14, 2016**

**Speaker Meeting**

**Speaker:** Dirk Fishback

**Topic:** Fly Fishing for Smallmouth

Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

**September 28, 2016**

**Activities Meeting**

Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

**October 12, 2016**

**Speaker Meeting**

**Speaker:** Jerry Regan

**Topic:** Classic AuSable Flies

Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.



## Volunteer Involvement

# Sterling Heights

*Submitted by Spencer Vanderhoof*

Last fall sometime my nephew and I were attending a Detroit Audubon Young Birders Club meeting at the Sterling Heights Nature Center. The Naturalist there, Brenda Suchenek, found out I was a fly fisherman and asked if I would like to do something on June 11th at their center for Free Fishing Weekend.

I gathered up Randy Park, Jim Holly, and myself; we grabbed the club's vises and some materials to set up shop to spend the day tying with folks visiting the center. We also took a few attendees out onto the lawn to cast a fly rod.

Everyone had a great time!

Thank you to Brenda for the invite, and to Randy and Jim for backing me up out there. I would also like to thank Brenda's staff, Ann Marie and Shannon. The Sterling Heights Nature Center is a wonderful place on the banks of the Clinton River. If you find yourself out that way it is certainly worth a visit.



Speaker Meeting - Dirk Fishback, Sept 14, 2016

## Members On The Fly

# Fly



*Bruce Strachan with a Slough Creek Cutthroat*



*Spence and Craig Matthews at Blue Ribbon Flies*



*MFFC Montana Trippers visiting Cooke City, MT*



# MFFC Business

*Catching Fish & Catching Hearts*

In Memory of

## Katie Haxton

*By Sybil Hunter*

Katie fished with the big dogs. She rode shot-gun in the canoe and inspected the catch with her nose. She loved to smell the fish.

Katie was the greeting committee. Diligently attending the Montana prep meetings, welcoming visitors, setting a good example. Opening Day at Dam 4 was her day.

Katie lived on the water. Al & Joyce had their own personal fishing guide by their sides at all times. Four solid paws held their ground - land or sea.

Katie was busy. Running, playing, welcoming, fishing, swimming, sniffing, traveling, visiting. Katie was always present with her Golden Lean.

Now Katie is gone. And there is a hole in all of our hearts. We miss you Katie.



2015 – 2016 Officers

**President:**

Scott Freeburg  
[MFFCClub@gmail.com](mailto:MFFCClub@gmail.com)

**Vice President:**

Spencer Vanderhoof  
[svanderhoof@mi.rr.com](mailto:svanderhoof@mi.rr.com)

**Corresponding Secretary:**

Steve Bocks  
[MFFCClub@gmail.com](mailto:MFFCClub@gmail.com)

**Recording Secretary:**

John Bada  
[johnbada@hotmail.com](mailto:johnbada@hotmail.com)

**Treasurer:**

Kathy Oehring  
[MFFCClub@gmail.com](mailto:MFFCClub@gmail.com)

**Membership:**

Dave Nowicki  
[mffc.membership@gmail.com](mailto:mffc.membership@gmail.com)

**Immediate Past President:**

Dan Finstad  
[finsmich@yahoo.com](mailto:finsmich@yahoo.com)

**At-Large Directors:**

Steve Selinger  
[aquilasailboat@gmail.com](mailto:aquilasailboat@gmail.com)

Bruce Strachan  
[brucedcs0402@gmail.com](mailto:brucedcs0402@gmail.com)

Jim Telinda  
[jtelinda@aol.com](mailto:jtelinda@aol.com)

**Hatch Editor:**

Sybil Hunter  
[evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com](mailto:evening.hatch.mffc@gmail.com)

**Webmaster:**

Harry Briggs  
[hbriggs@gmail.com](mailto:hbriggs@gmail.com)



# July Fly Of The Month

Swedish

## Calcasieu Pig Boat

By Todd A. Schotts

Tis' the season for pig roasts, bonfires, and extremely hot, steamy temperatures...so why not tie a July fly that is equally hot, and tasty as pig roast for the Bass - the "Calcasieu Pig Boat," by Tom Nixon!

If you are not familiar with Tom Nixon, he wrote *Fly Tying and Fly Fishing for Bass and Panfish*. The first edition was published in 1968. In the early 1960's, when he was teaching some Boy Scouts what started out as a 6 week class but ended up in a 20 week class, he recorded all the various aspects of warm water. He then noticed there were no warm water fly fishing flies available. Everything he could find was dedicated to cold-water Trout. And that is how the Bible for fishing Bass and Panfish was born. Some of his other, now well known flies, include the: Cajun Coachman, 56%er, Sowela, Louisiana Mickey Finn, YBP2, and Tom Nixon Spinner (not the type of spinner we are used to). For the fly tying purist reading this I will give you a warning. If you look up his patterns in his book you may see: propellers, spinning blades, and other hardware on most of his flies. Unfortunately, for the Cajun warm water guru his wise and knowledge was silenced as he passed away in spring of 2003. His legacy is carried on by the Contraband Fly Casters Club of Lake Charles Louisiana, aptly named "the Tom Nixon Chapter." What a great honor for the pioneer of fly

fishing and fly tying for Bass and panfish.

Tom Nixon's "Calcasieu Pig Boat" was a break through for Bass fly fishing... period. The name "Calcasieu" was named after the Calcasieu River in Southwest Louisiana and "Pig Boat" was what German WWII Submarines were called. The latter moniker because they were feared, deadly, and had stealthy qualities - the same qualities as this pattern. Tom mentioned in an article that as a lad growing up in the Atchafalaya Basin, it wasn't uncommon to catch a few dozen Bass on a fly rod using poppers, if the conditions were right. Otherwise you just didn't fly fish for Bass, as submergent flies for Bass weren't popular back then. That all changed when he created his masterpiece in the early 1950's. This fly imitates the Hawaiian Wiggler (a conventional fishing lure), a hot Bass producer in those days. Hence, the first fly resembling a Bass angler's jig was born.

The length of this fly pattern is 2 1/2" to 3" long. (The original was done in all black, but I know for fact that browns, olives, and purple's work best.) Also, make sure not to use any lighter thread than mentioned in the recipe. Use a lot of torque when tying in the rubber legs; stronger wraps help shape the head faster. Speaking of legs, medium round rubber works best for the skirt. Usually 4 bunches of legs are tied in on the near side, top side, far side, and bottom of the hook in 4 separate steps. Each bundle consists of 14 strands of rubber legs. Tie the round rubber legs in at the 1/2 way mark on the stand of legs. Then you will flip the front excess over to the back and secure them down. (It sounds confusing, but once you see it, it will make sense.) The original pattern had painted eyes, but with modern day materials you can use any type of molded eyes. The last step is

## Calcasieu Pig Boat



*(Recipe for original pattern)*

**HOOK:** Mustad 3366 Size 1 - 2/0  
**THREAD:** Size 210 or 280 color to match body material  
**BODY:** Chenille - Large Chartreuse  
**HACKLE:** Saddle Hackle - Chartreuse  
**SKIRT:** Medium Round Rubber Legs - Black

to secure all the material in front with Epoxy, Sally Hansen's, Cure Goo Glue, or Lacquer.

When fishing this fly, I strongly suggest a 6-wieght or heavier fly rod, with weight forward floating line. Depending on where you are fishing, you may want to consider using an intermediate or sink tip fly line. When stripping the fly, best results are produced with a strip/pause retrieve. Water temperature should determine how fast you strip the fly.

This fly not only entices bass, but is equally deadly on brown trout, walleye, and pike. So until next month... "Tight Lines & Snazzy



# August Fly Of The Month

Swedish

## Double Legs

By Todd A. Schotts

For our August Featured Fly pattern, we will be going across the big pond, to the land of the Ascomanni, or ashmen (otherwise known as the Vikings) to the country of Sweden for the “Double Legs,” by Erik Andreasson.

Erik is a nuclear engineer who lives near Lake Malaren, which is located in the middle of Sweden, with his family where he fishes primarily for perch, pike, zander (relative to walleye), and eel. When fishing south Sweden he will occasionally go after sea run trout. He is a self-taught avid fly tier and fly fisher since 1994. Here are a few of his other patterns: Glassbead M.O.E., Glass Head Bugger, Flat Streamer, Skunk Tail, Double Legs (alternative) and the Mara-Blonde.

This month’s fly pattern resembles the traditional style of Scandinavian fly

pattern in construction and appearance, like the Omoe Brush and many others featuring triple and double hackles. A major point with this fly is the fore and aft hackle creating great movement within the water. Combine the addition of a bead head and the pattern has even more movement when you strip it in.

Another great feature of this fly is the fluorescent green tag. The color is common amongst the non-cased Caddises, and even the egg laying adults. Like most fly patterns, variation in tying materials can create the pattern in a different format or strength.

Materials like peacock dubbing instead of peacock herl, hackle color, or tie the pattern on a 60 degree jig hook with a slotted bead, are just a few of the different changes that can be used effectively.

Whether you fish for cold water or warm water species, give this pattern a try. If you are signed up for the first ever “Muskegon River Trip,” tying this fly down to a size 14, 16, or smaller will give you a good chance at tight lines if you are into using emerger’s or nymphs. Until next month...Tight Lines and Snazzy Flies.



**HOOK:** TMC 200 size 10 (original pattern) Wet fly hooks like Mustad 3906, 3906B, and smaller

**HEAD:** Bead (brass, gold, black or copper) OPTIONAL

**THREAD:** Black

**TAG:** Fluorescent green thread or Floss

**HACKLE:** India Hen, black (original) or Hungarian partridge

**RIB:** Extra fine green copper wire.

**BODY:** Peacock herl (original) or hares ear dubbing blend



New Member Welcome

## Robert

Robert joined the MFFC as a new member just a couple weeks ago, with a guest membership from Kathy Oehring. (Note the awesome hat.) Don Oehring took Robert to learn to fly fish with Chuck Scribner on the Manistee. Look what he caught on his first trip out! He is very proud of this fish. Kathy reports Robert is “hooked for life.”



# Writings of a Fly Fishing Editor

## Fly Fish

# Flint River

“I’m a teacher. I’m a coach. I’m a licensed guide in Michigan,” said Kevin Breen at the MFFC June summer meeting. “This thing with guiding is almost second nature to me.” Breen grew up in Colton Bay where he worked from 2003 to 2008. Earning his FFF Certification, he was a three time Ultimate Fishing Show main stage speaker; now he is the head guide for The Painted Trout in Dexter, MI and Red Fox Outfitters in Fenton, MI.

“The Flint River access is a good place to catch a few Smallmouth Bass... and by ‘a few’ I mean 20 to 30,” said Breen. He suggested this river as a trade off for when the Huron River “canoe hatch” gets unbearable.

Water fluctuations of the Flint River are significant, warned Breen. “Avoid it after heavy rains due to runoff. It becomes chocolate milk. Runoff is pretty heavy. The water is flashy, it rises really quickly.” For example, the Huron River gets these phantom spikes; it takes time going down,” said Breen. “The Flint River spikes, then drops off alot the next day....then drops off quickly.”

“In low water the fish are concentrated into small pools. There are not too many pull offs if you are fishing by boat,” Breen pointed out. “Then as soon as the water really heats up, July maybe...there are grass lumps in the river.”

“Riverview Park is a great access point. You’ve all heard the news on The Flint River, but it’s actually cleaner then

it’s been in years,” said Breen. “Riverview Park is a good starting point...it’s wadable, there are sections of the Flint River that are not wadable. You have to get out and in. It’s not a clean river, it is always silty...so you have to be careful.”

Flushing County Park is another



suggested access point. “At the Mount Morris bridge, you can park on the bridge. There is very nice water, it’s very wadable, especially down river from the bridge - a very good section for good sized Bass.”

The Dodge Road Access ends at the Flint River. “My only word of caution is the land owners are not very agreeable. It is fishable water with outside bends,” said Breen, adding, “The islands are good to fish around.”

Where to Find Fish: “Look for deeper sections of the water in an area. “Cast to cover...trees, rocks...tires if your in the Flint River...current seams,” said Breen. “Slow water next to fast water is like a food conveyer belt. Don’t rule out finding a 16 to 18 inch fish out there.”

Food Source suggestions: 1. Crayfish is a huge food source. Said Breen, “All of the fish were puking up crayfish parts.” 2. Blacknose Dace. 3. Creek Chub. 4. Emerald Shiner. 5. Gizzard Shad.

Gear suggestions: 6 to 8 wts. “I don’t want my clients using equipment that’s

gonna tire them out. When I fish, I want something comfortable. It doesn’t have to be a \$700 rod, but you want something comfortable. I use Galvin fly reels alot of the time. They have smooth drag and an affordable price. My leader system is three to four feet...short...intermediate line with sink tip or something that’s gonna get the flies down into the feeding zone,” said Breen. “I like fast sinking lines. I want something that when it hits the water I can start stripping. The shorter the leader, the faster the fly goes into the fishable zone. Breen showed less than an arm’s length as his go-to length, adding “The Flint River



fish are not that spooky. You need a longer leader in the Huron River because of cleaner water.”

Breen makes his own leaders using Maxima Ultragreen or Flourocarbon. He provided easy to use suggested leader lengths, leader loop, and knot diagrams.

“Practice your cast. The longer cast, the more water you can cover. Practice in your yard,” said Breen.

“I take all anglers of all abilities,” said Breen. “We catch big fish out there. I take a picture of the first fish always...because you never know if you’re gonna catch another fish.”

“You can email me if you have any questions, you can call me, text me...for those of you into social media, I’m on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.”



# More Writings of a Fly Fishing Editor

Fish Of The

## Rouge River

“We spend a lot of time in the Rouge (River) sampling fish,” said July MFFC summer speaker Bob Muller, Friends Of The Rouge past intern, “I can wear a pair of waders and boots out in a year.” Muller showed pictures displaying the process of how the fish are netted, dumped in buckets, tagged, measured, then returned to the river.

“Gobys are not returned to the river. They fertilize my back yard,” said Muller. Gobys are an invasive fish. “They are actually a pretty fish...their pelvic fins are fused together into a suction cup, enabling them to scale high dams.”

“Minnows are the most prolific fish,” said Muller, “they got here way before the dinosaurs, yet unlike Gobys, Shiner Minnows are an intolerant fish, greatly subject to the river water quality.”

There are multiple beautifully colored Minnow varieties like Chubs, Shiners, Stonerollers, Fallfish, and Dace. “All Minnows must have a forked tail,” Muller said. He provided slides of their many engaging incarnations.

“Males (shiners) get all rosy. They swim with speed. You can’t believe how fast they go. Spotfin Shiners are known as the fish that spawn in trees. When males get yellow fins, they are ‘all dressed up for the ladies.’”

“The minnows with a red stripe down the middle are Rosy Face Shiners. They show up in trout streams and use others’ nests. They are ‘nest associates.’” Rainbow Trout and Stone Rollers are nest builders. “It’s a symbiotic relationship.”

“Longnose Dace and Red Belly Dace are found in the Rouge and Clinton Rivers, and



the Huron River North all the way up to Hudson Bay.” However, there are no Red Belly Dace in Pennsylvania nor Ohio.

“Redside Dace are an endangered species. “Redsides are the only minnows that go airborne for flies. They have very small scales, move a million miles an hour, and both males and females color up for mating.”

Minnows are prolific, but there are many other fish in the Rouge.

Suckers. “Suckers evolved in southeast Asia. All suckers went extinct in the Old World, but stayed here,” said Muller. “White suckers can live anywhere; many are in the Rouge. The Golden Rednose and Spotted Suckers are intolerant fish. They need high levels of oxygen, much like trout.”

“All suckers have bumps on their lips. He’s feeling the whole world with his mouth,” Muller said showing a sucker on the screen. “We were finding suckers with lesions on their sides. The DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) looks at these guys...suckers filter stuff off the bottom.”

Catfish - Madtoms. “Catfish are a really neat group of fish of the North America. These little Madtoms (a species of Catfish) take it a step further. They are about the size of your thumb and have venom,” said Muller. “They love beer cans. This guy uses the old Budweiser cans to lay eggs!”

Killfish. “Kill means ‘ditch’ in Dutch,” explained Muller. “They cruise up at the surface. Killfish are found around the world, but the name comes from North America.”

Sculpins. “They take the barbed mouse pattern and take off like a bat out of Hell.”

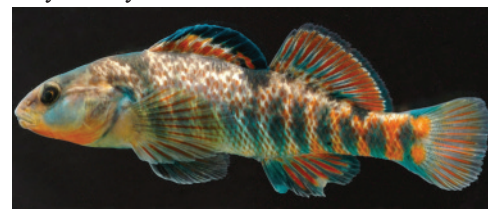
Grass Pickerel. “They have a wide line down their side, that differentiates them from Pike, and are only 14 inches long.”

Mud Minnows. “These are not minnows. They stay in muddy areas because there is no competition. They can bury themselves in the mud in the fall and still come out alive in the spring,” said Muller. “They hover like a helicopter and are sprinters.”

Sticklebacks. “They have spines. They are the meanest fish and tend to live in the teeniest spots.”

Sunfish. “Sunfish are in the same family as Bass, are found only in North America, east of the Rockies. Orange spotted Sunfish are only found up to the Raisin River. These are *our* fish.”

Darters. 250 species. North American only. “They are some of the most colorful



fish in North America, and are found in the Clinton, Rouge and Huron rivers. The Orangethroat Darter is only found in the Raisin River,” Muller said.

“Dusky Darters are found in the Maumee River,” Muller said. “It’s a half mile from Michigan! The guys at Ohio State were sampling these since 1998....hmmm...why are they *not* telling us?”

“Darter males guard eggs and keeps them safe,” said Muller. “They attract the ladies, who lay eggs on the ceiling of the cave. Fantailed Darters have egg falsies. Males grow false egg pods to put on the cave ceiling to convince the ladies he’s a good guarder.”

“If all these guys are here, it’s a healthy environment, if not, we got some problems.”