



The Evening

Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

March 2021

What A Steelhead Sees



Food & movement catches the eye of a steelhead

By Sybil Hunter

Captain Jon Ray of The Mangled Fly located in Interlochen, MI, was welcomed as the MFFC February speaker. He spoke about "Great Lakes Steelhead: What do they see?" We were all pretty surprised.

"If I understand UV factors in the water, that dictates the color," said Ray. "Steelhead are attracted to color. In their line of sight, they fish the color line. Science has proven fish react to UV colors."

"If you fish for steelhead, which is a six-month process, when you are fishing in October, how come pink doesn't work?" Ray asked. "Steelhead will feed on their favorite food, an egg fly. Colors change with eggs too. They are so addicted

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Michigan Fly Fishing Club

Calendar

3/3/21 Speaker: Jeff McGowan, Grayling After Dark

3/10/21 Board

3/13-14/21 MFFC Expo cancelled until March 12-13, 2022

3/17/21 Speaker: Capt. Chuck Hawkins, Simplifying Your Fly Box

3/31/21 MFFC officer Nominations due

4/4/21 MFFC ballot open from April 4 to April 7

4/7/20 MFFC Elections / Speaker: Roger Greil of Lake Superior State

4/14/21 Board / MFFC election results announced

4/21/21 Activity TBD

5/5/21 Activity TBD

5/12/21 Board

5/19/21 Banquet cancelled until May 18, 2022

6/9/21 Speaker TBA

7/14/21 Speaker TBA

8/25/21 Speaker TBA

Steelheading : Fishing to the Whims of the Seasons

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to that food source that they will not eat other things. Temperature will play a role in what fish can see. Steelhead are (also) attracted to movement. The eye of the steelhead changes.”

So what do you do? Hot spotting. “How do you hotspot your fly? Movement. Flash. Marabou,” said Ray. “Hot spotting for me is using materials like ice dub or laser dub. What are my lights? What are the fish seeing? Some days you need the brightest fly in your box.”

“If there is much sun, then you need to use something dead - possum or straight marabou,” said Ray, but “notice that those cloudy conditions are when we want to run bright florescent flies. I put my UV light on orange, guess what color it is. Chartreuse,” whereas orange and blues deaden things out. “Limit the amount of flame that you have unless you have dirty water.” Remember to take your UV light with you fly shopping.

Early season, go heavy on coppers and greens. Mid-season, it gets cold - purple is king. First, snow, when the water gets colder, means blue flies. “The predominant factor is flash,” said Ray. Then, “In late season, use baitfish patterns. A must-have book is Kevin Feenstra’s Matching Baitfish. Go to your fly shop and get it.”

Beading is a game-changer, said Ray. “The fish spit up blood with yarn flies. If you are a responsible angler, you don’t want to do that.” Use size 6 mm to 20 mm. “I always lean towards big.” If you are fishing Tippy Dam, use 6 mm because there’s pressure,” said Ray. “On the Manistee, I can fish more productive water on the float.”

“Fish your first fly hot,” said Ray. “Cloudy days will be heavy doses of UV. On sunny days, I’m using heavy, heavy, dead beads. Stuff that’s not attracting them that much. They will always see your fly. If you are fishing behind other people, use smaller beads,” and bigger water means brighter beads.

“Hot spotting your bigger nymphs is a fun way to fish,” said Ray. He also suggested this technique with jig fishing. “Blend in the chartreuse that is a hotspot. Put it in, so it’s not the whole bait, but it’s part of the bait tied into



DNR Outdoor Skills Academy Goes Steelheading

The DNR Outdoor Skills Academy offers in-depth, expert instruction, gear and hands-on learning for a range of outdoor activities. Classes range from walleye fishing and whitetail habitat management to fly fishing for beginners and morel mushroom hunting. But in March the academy focuses on steelheading.

On March 20-21 a steelhead clinic will be staged at the Carl T. Johnson Hunting and Fishing Center in Cadillac. On Saturday participants will learn various strategies and techniques while on Sunday morning they will hit the water on the Manistee River. Cost for the class is \$25, which includes lunch Saturday.

On March 27, the Outdoor Skills Academy staff will present a one-day steelhead seminar fishing, focusing on techniques for chasing Michigan’s “chrome torpedoes.” The cost for this class is \$25, which includes lunch.

The cost of each class is \$25. To register for this class, go to Michigan.gov/DNRLicenses and click on the “Purchase a license” button. Sign in (using either a username and password), and find the class under the Outdoor Skills Academy tab. For detailed descriptions, visit Michigan.gov/OutdoorSkills.

the fly.”

“Tie the same flies in different colors,” said Ray. “Use a clip system and change them out during the day. They (shops) have them prebuilt for you.”

Bobber Fishing. “A Loafer is the thinnest float, giving me the opportunity to move my fly up and down,” said Ray. “The Big Water Float will be easier on you to see. The combo of the two is called the Plunger.” His UTube channel talks about markers and how he uses the markers for Muskie.

Know that marker colors will change the fly color. “If a fly is too hot,

then use a marker to deaden the color a bit. Or reverse, take a white base and add a hot color marker,” said Ray.

Other fish that play the UV game include Muskies (use pink streamers), Smallmouth Bass, and Pike (use chartreuse). “Brown trout, Dorado and wall-eye have the same eye for color,” said Ray. “Brown Trout don’t like it when I add the UV. Brown Trout and Dorado are both low light feeders.”

Got questions? Captain Jon Ray can be found at jray@mangledfly.com and as part of the Mangled Fly staff at www.mangledfly.com.



Michigan Fly Fishing Club

Business

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting February 17, 2021

Roll Call

Meeting called to order 7:40 p.m.

Present: Strachan; Hunter; Oehring; Fischer; Niemi; Bada; Mayes; Sejalon; Green; Nowicki

Visitors: Kevin Lipp; Craig Summers

Approval of Agenda - Agenda accepted with additions.

Approval of Minutes - Minutes accepted for 1/20/21 with amended membership number of 323.

Officers Reports

President: Strachan

- Fiscal Planning FY 2020-2021 to assure 2022 solvency. Event chairpersons to be contacted to submit their budget proposals by March 1. Some events need chairpersons, if no name, no budget assigned. Mayes and Summers to investigate Expo expenses.
- 2021 In-Person Meeting Plan, based on MDHHS regulations. In-person meetings are a discretionary expense including providing PPE devices. Adopted Three Month Planning Window. Mayes to summarize VFW Hall availability but not until May, or as cleared by state guidelines. Correspondence to Club members regarding when they feel comfortable.

Vice President: Hunter

- Questions fielded regarding Club website and G-Suite For Non Profits email provider. Concerns about delineating shared drive space allowances between personal and mffc.org Google drives.

Treasurer: Oehring

- January Treasurer's Report accepted.
- Proposed Budget Revision. If it is not a self-supporting event and is not required to operate the Club sufficiently, the event will not be budgeted for at this time to lessen operating costs.
- FFI Insurance has been paid. July first coverage is for \$112.50 for quarterly (gap) coverage.

Corresponding Secretary: Fischer

- Three Month Planning Window as discussed in President Report. Next three months will have a status of meetings (in-person venue or Zoom). Need to survey members regarding who will be attending potential venue events.
- Email blasts: 2 meeting reminders (388 emails distributed with 46.6% open rate); Hatch availability reminder (390 emails distributed with 66% open rate); current Constant Contact distribution list is 309.
- VisTaTech Summer Meeting Venue requires limited seating occupancy of 19 people with

2019 - 2020 Officers

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Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting February 17, 2021

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6-foot restrictions in place.
Motion made to request refund
from VisTaTech.

- IF4 Film Festival. Club will request refund and cancel this event at this time.

Membership: Niemi

- Current paid members: 334.
- Finalizing membership directory by March to make it available in a secured location for member distribution.
- Database recently purged of non-paying members.

Events & outings

- There were no events or outings addressed.

New Business

- 2021 MFFC Banquet will be postponed. \$1,000 deposit will be held by venue. 2022 banquet date is 5/18/22. Raffle prizes retain for 2022 banquet.

Old Business

- There was no old business.

Visitor Comments

- Visitor's comments were made during Treasurer's report.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Capt. Hawkins to Speak at MFFC Meeting

On March 17th at 7:30 pm. Capt Chuck Hawkins will be providing some guidance on how to simplify your fly box using some of his favorite and most productive flies for Michigan waters.

Chuck Hawkins has been fly fishing for almost 50 years and guiding for more than half that. He and his wife, Cherie, live in Traverse City. Twenty-seven years ago they decided to form Hawkins Outfitters with the goal of providing the finest fly fishing guide service in northern Michigan.

Passion, attention to detail, hiring the best guides available and requiring cooperation and communication between the guides has accomplished that goal. Hawkins Outfitters was named the 2010 Orvis Endorsed Guide Service of the year.

Chuck's favorite rivers are the Manistee, Pere Marquette, and Au Sable chasing steelhead and resident trout. But is quite often found on the flats in Belize or many different rivers in Argentina.

As an Orvis fly designer, Chuck has numerous flies available in the Orvis catalog including the Triple Double, Hat Trick, Nutcracker, and Little Rascal streamers.

Chuck is a FFF Certified Fly Casting Instructor and a US Coast Guard Captain. For more on Chuck and his activities checkout the Hawkins Outfitters website at <https://hawkinsoutfitters.com/>



Seen on the Ice

MFFC member Pat Breen doesn't quit fishing once winter arrives. Here he is displaying a 20-inch large-mouth bass that he hooked through the ice in mid-December. Picture courtesy of Spencer Vanderhoof

Adobe Illustrator Talent Needed!

The MFFC Striper Outing is seeking a talented owner and user of Adobe Illustrator (or comparable software) to render vector artwork from a hand drawn image that will grace shirts for this year's Striper Outing.

If you have this program and talent and wish to help out please contact Bruce Strachan at 248-346-6391 or Bruced0402@gmail.com.

In related news, a striper outing waitlist has been set up and is now open. The MFFC Striper Outing is fully booked but who knows, a spot could open between now and September.

The outing dates are Sept. 26 to Oct. 1, 2021.

For information and a waitlist spot, please contact: Bruce Strachan (248-346-6391) or email him at BRUCEDS0402@GMAIL.COM.





Midwest Fly Fishing Expo

The Greatest Weekend of the Year will Return

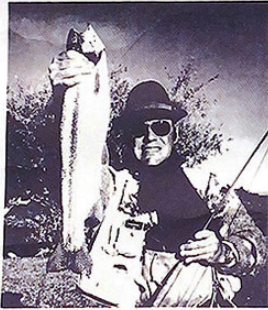
MICHIGAN
FLY FISHING CLUB'S
**MIDWEST
FLY FISHING
EXPOSITION**

THE ONLY ANNUAL EVENT OF
ITS KIND IN NORTH AMERICA
DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO FLY FISHING
AT THE SOUTHFIELD CIVIC CENTER
SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN

March 27-28 1982

ADMISSION: Adult - \$3.00, Children - \$1.00

Show Hours:
Saturday, March 27 - 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday, March 28 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Featuring Ernest Schieberr who has traveled over most of the fly fishing world with his trout tackle & paint boxes, pursuing and recording both fish and flyhatches of the sport he has enjoyed since boyhood summers in Michigan.

48 exhibitors representing manufacturers, distributors, and importers of bamboo, glass & graphite fly rods, fly reels, fly lines, flies, fly tying supplies and related equipment, collectors and dealers of antique rods, rod builders, fly fishing clubs and conservation organizations.



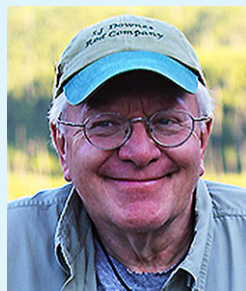
Above: the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo's traditional opening, a round of Scottish bag pipers. Below a few of the many vendors who packed the show.



My beloved MFFC Expo; Good Fellowship, Great Fishing Tips, a Lot of New Gear

I am sitting and starting our 2020 Taxes and sort of reviewing some of the paperwork that I look at each year. I noted on my annual statement for my credit card that the spending in March was greatly reduced from previous years, so I looked further into the situation. I honestly figured something was wrong and needed to be figured out. I went through all the purchases, then compared the statement to the 'more normal' March statement from previous years.

There it was, jumping out at me like a scary gorilla, no Midwest Fly Fishing Expo purchases for last year. I will tell you right now that brought back the



*The Hackleman
Al Haxton*

sad feeling about our show's cancellation. How depressing it was to realize that we would repeat that sad situation again this year.

No packing our clothes and club shirts for the greatest weekend of the year. No traveling to the venue, no seeing so many good friends, and of course no walking around the venue during set up and noting some new vendors, items we needed to investigate further. Not to mention just being there enjoying the shared excitement and anticipation of the fun filled weekend before us.

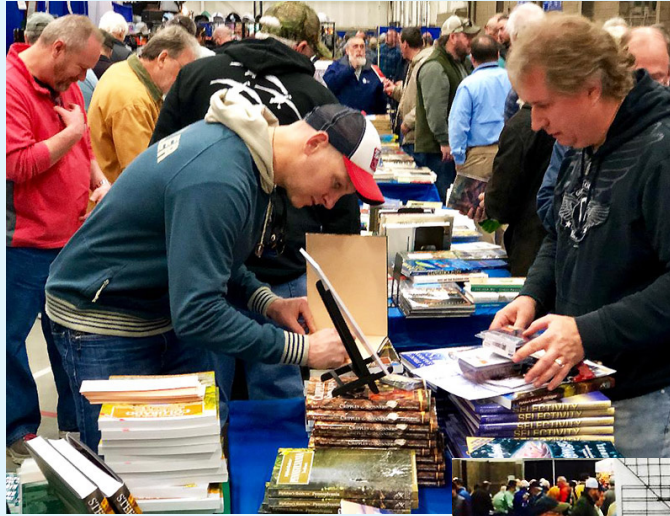
No shared dinners, and laughter during our after-show banquet each evening. No fun of walking around and watching the line develop on Saturday and Sunday mornings before the opening time. No shaking hands with our longtime vendors and sharing those smiles of anticipation.

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Midwest Fly Fishing Expo



Above: Peter Albertson teaching a young caster at the Kidz Korner. Right: Fishing books and fly fishing authors are a staple at the MFFC Expo.



Above: Terry Herron working with a young fly tyer. Below: Need a driftboat? You'll find one for sale at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo.



Above: Oscar Filieau, a Club favorite, giving a seminar at the 2015 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo. At the Expo's after party, Oscar pulled out his ukulele and convinced former MFFC president Chris Hunter to sing "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" with him. It was the highpoint of the evening. Oscar Filieau passed away after his last visit to the Expo. Right: It's not all hooks and feathers at the Expo, the artwork is always impressive.



Best Damn Fly Fishing Expo in the Country

Right: Noted fly fishing author Joe Humphreys speaks to club members after receiving an award at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo. Below Left: Club member Bob Jacklin talks fly fishing with an attendee at the 2015 Expo. Below Right: For many club members, the Expo is a busy weekend of volunteering for MFFC's most important event that ends with an after-party banquet.



Al Haxton: Fond Memories from Years of the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo

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No driving home afterward with some new stuff in the back of the car and talking about how I feel sorry for children this weekend, because they get one day of Christmas and we get two days of our show.

A lot of missed memories.

But then I sat longer and thought about all the wonderful memories of past shows that I enjoy savoring during the cold winter months. Please let me share some of those memories with you, and hopefully make you remember some of your own memories of past shows, so we can all think about future memories we will get from future shows.

Back in the late 1980's and into the early 1990's, there was a vendor named Freeland Outfitters. Owner Mike Freeland had his business in Waterford. I was on the road a lot for business with a few customers out that way, so I stopped into his shop about once every other week and we developed a nice friendship.

Mike loved to tie flies and it seemed to me that he was always looking for new stuff to use, and new patterns to tie. One day he showed me his newly developed pattern, the ACE. This was the Attitude Correct Emerger. I was into tying emergers so I was hooked right away.

He took a dry fly hook and bent it down with pliers about 25% of the way back behind the hook eye. He then took some small yarn and made a 'shuck' at the bend. A dubbed body was next, with a parachute post tied at the bend, hackle around the post, and it was all done. I have tied many of these in different colors for different hatches for year. Then a few years ago a guy named Klinkhamer did it, so now you can actually buy hooks bent for his patterns. Funny how things change and become new.

I fondly remember introducing Gary Borger, our premier guest speaker one year. During his free time, I asked him what his favorite rod was. He explained to me that it was a 9-foot, 3-weight rod. I frankly had never ever thought of such a rod, so I asked why that was his favorite.

First off, a 3-weight rod has a soft tip so that you can fight a fish nicely once it's hooked. He had also done some research into the rod length. It seems that he checked out the butt section and found that the 9-foot 3-weight has the same butt section as an 8-foot, 6-weight rod. So when you really get a good fish that bends that rod down to the butt, you are now fishing with a 6-weight rod and have a lot of control to put a lot of pressure on the fish.

That all made sense to me. So a few weeks later I purchased a 9-foot, 3-weight rod blank and learned how to build a rod at our club meetings. That was the first rod I built, but not the last.

That conversation with Gary provided me new thoughts on fishing rods and the fun experience of building my own rods. You know the saying, there is no fish quite as good as a fish you catch on a fly you tied? Well, in my opinion, there is no fish quite as big as a fish you catch on a rod you built.

These are just a couple of my memories about our fly fishing show. There are really too many to share, including some about secret spots and such. So think about what we will miss again this March.

But also think about what we have all shared at past shows. The fun, the laughter, the drinks and smiles. Also make a plan for the next show, to enjoy it even more...and to make your credit card statement proof of the fun.

Tight lines.



Conservation Corner

Peter Albertson's

Conservation Corner



First, let me thank those who have chosen to participate in the Michigan Fly Fishing Club's Conservation Corner (MFFC CC). Your time and interest in bringing forth conservation issues is very important to our Club, our fly fishing environment, and our State recreational opportunities. If you have an Action Item for the MFFC CC to follow, please bring it to my attention and be willing to be the topic lead contact.

Tom Doyle, thanks for your MFFC CC communication this month regarding bottled water usage. Information below is based upon recent sources I have received.

Action Items

Pipe Line 5: Canada's National Observer, Jan. 21, 2021: www.nationalobserver.com/2021/01/29/news/heres-what-you-need-know-about-line-5-latest-pipeline-fight. Latest information: www.facebook.com/288880781263855/posts/1866960486789202/. Michigan.gov: www.michigan.gov/line5/. EGLE Line 5 Decision documents listing: www.michigan.gov/line5/0,9833,7-413-100616-550690--,00.html

Johnson Creek Land Fill Discharge: Oct 9 2020: www.twp.northville.mi.us/get_connected/news/press_releases/e_g_l_e_protects_johnson_creek; Township Fights Landfill Discharge Permit www.twp.northville.mi.us/get_connected/news/press_releases/township_fights_landfill_discharge_permit, . References: Conservancy Initiative conservancyinitiative.org/; for history and latest information: Friends of the Rouge (friends@therouge.org), RE: Johnson Creek- Arbor Hills Landfill NPDES Permits. Discharge monitoring in progress.

Environmental Items of Interest

MUCC: Should MI hunt wolves, cranes, moose? www.bridgemi.com/michiganenvironment-watch/should-michigan-hunt-wolves-cranes-moose-republican-lawmakers-think-so

Fishing Hemingway's Last Good Country In MI: www.thewadinglist.com/fishinghemingway/

Nestle's Water Draw Leaving Nothing For MI Trout: returntonow.net/2019/06/13/nestles-ice-mountain-bottled-water-is-leaving-nothing-for-michiganstrout/

How MI Is On Thin Ice, Bridge: bridgemi.us19.list-manage.com/track/click?u=dc0580ddb0e80e7779bcf533a&id=981e23f981&e=9027a0171e

How we know Michigan will lose lake ice if we don't change our ways, Bridge: bridgemi.us19.list-manage.com/track/click?u=dc0580ddb0e80e7779bcf533a&id=7ccc7e37bf&e=9027a0171e

Do You Drink Bottled Water? The Guardian: apple.news/Ai9S1hmlXSeavpOdm3DY_Mw.

Consider contacting your US and MI Senator and/or Representative to share your thoughts on the above item(s): MI-house.mi.gov, senate.michigan.gov; US- senate.gov, house.gov. Please direct comments to Peter Albertson at: palbertsontsp@icloud.com

Grayling After Dark *(The River, Not The Town)*

By Sybil Hunter

Our March Activities Night was spent with Jeff McGowan, Club member, guide and tyer; he presented Grayling After Dark.

Why fish after dark, he asked?

- It's easier to cast. "Nobody sees your mistakes. You are always the best caster. Even a tailing loop will catch a Brown. You need just enough line to get it out there."
- No one can see what you are wearing. "You might as well just let it all hang out."
- You make new friends. "Not being able to see people in the dark is kinda a nice thing," said McGowan. "So if you are dressed like a pirate and decide to ram your friends...nobody knows who you are." (It's all fun and games until someone turns on a flashlight.)
- It is just plain fun. "I always make fun of presenters that show guys with fish. Here's a guy with a fish. This is me with a fish. Here's another guy with a fish," said McGowan, just before he showed his guys with fish.

McGowan showed a slide of Earl Madsen. "Earl is given credit as the first



Michigan May Fly

Hook: Mustad 9672, size 6

Thread: yellow

Tail: pheasant tail

Body: natural deer hair

Hackle: brown saddle hackle

Wings: white hen neck

to tie deer hair along the shank of a hook. Earl created this fly..." Up popped the Michigan May Fly. "Another variation on a theme is the White Palmered Hex. Regan describes this fly as a go-to fly. "If you have any Hex pattern, tie it in white, and it gives you an edge in a blanket hatch...so will making a larger fly," said McGowan.

The next slide displayed Regan's Hex Spinner. "This is my first fly I tied commercially," said McGowan. John Beuter goaded him into tying a dozen for his shop. "When John's shop moved out of Novi, I quit tying that fly," said McGowan.

"This is how your boat should look at the end of the night," said McGowan showing a boat floor littered with dead spinners. "Whether you caught fish or not, it means you had a good time."

McGowan followed up the presentation with a fly demo, starting with the Michigan May Fly. Tie in the deer hair with one little soft loop, then one to flair the hair. Tie to the back of the shank using loose wraps. Tighten the wraps at the tail, then take loose wraps back to the front, giving the body a segmented look.

"When I was tying this fly commercially, I always bought the Chinese

hackle...some of it was sold by the pound," said McGowan. "If you tie the hackle in first, you don't mess up the wings tying in the hackle."

Put the two hackle tips back to back. Tie them in with a soft loop, so the wings don't spin around. Then slowly tighten to hold them down. Splay the wings. Wrap in a figure-eight. "I try to make it as symmetrical as I can. Next, bring the hackle up, finish the fly, and tie off.

"This is my so-called signature fly," said McGowan moving on to tie Regan's Fly. "How'd ya get your signature on it?" One of the attendees asked. (Gary Borger's fine tip signature pen was McGowan's final answer.)

"This fly starts pretty much the same way," said McGowan. Tie on. Tie in pheasant tail. "Your tail should be as long as your fly, or even longer. If you are using really sparse materials, you want to leave it longer." Use scissors as a dubbing comb before tying in the deer hair at the front. Tie in the body with loose wraps. Slowly work the thread back. Tie it in at the back. Work the thread forward again. "Normally, you cut off all this extra deer hair," Mc-

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Regan's Hex Spinner

Hook: Mustad 9672, size 8 or 6

Thread: yellow

Tail: pheasant tail

Body: natural deer hair

Hackle: brown saddle hackle

Wings: dun hen neck



White Palmered Hex

Hook: Mustad 9672, size 6

Thread: white

Tail: pheasant tail

Body: white deer hair

Palmer: white saddle hackle

Wings: white hen neck

Hackle: white saddle hackle

Special Flies to Fish a Special Time in Grayling

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Gowan said, "but in Jerry's fly, you post it up."

Next, tie in two hen hackles, tips together. "Everything I know I ripped off from guys like Jerry Regan," McGowan said, winding in the hackle above the wings, expressly without hackle pliers. "It's a little bit complicated, but it's a fun fly." Give the parachute post a haircut, then tie off. Regan's Hex Spinner is tied on a size six hook. McGowan said it could go up to a size four. One size up is what is typically advised to catch the fish's eye during a blanket hatch.

"We can really have some fun here," said McGowan tying on to start the Houghton Lake Special (which ironically is generally fished on the Au Sable). Tie on to a 4x long streamer hook. Tie in red wool yard at the back. Tie in silver tinsel at the back. Tie in black chenille, wrap it to the front. Tie off the chenille. Bring the tinsel forward; tie it

off. Tie in the ducktail. "I tie this in in stages," said McGowan. Angle the cut, layer each clump of bucktail just back from the one in front of it. (There will be three, two white on bottom, one brown on top.) The third batch of bucktail is brown. While tying, McGowan referenced "a ton of glue."

Next, tie in the hackle. "Use the biggest, baddest saddle hackle you can find," McGowan said. Tie in three feathers. "You want this to be bushy too." Take a few tight wraps to anchor it. Divide out a section of the brown bucktail to spin forward to make a collar. Whip finish or half hitch. "You can tie this a lot bigger and a lot hairier," said McGowan. "The more you put on it, the better. You really want that thing to float." Tie this fly in a size two or one. "This is not a finesse fly," said McGowan. "This is a big mousing fly."

Tight Lines MFFC!



Houghton Lake Special

Hook: Mustad 79580, size 2 or 4

Thread: black

Tail: red wool yarn

Body: black chenille with silver tinsel rib

Wing: bucktail, one third white with two thirds brown on top

Hackle: brown, tied full



Todd Schotts always tying

In Special Recognition

Schotts to Give Up Fly of the Month Column

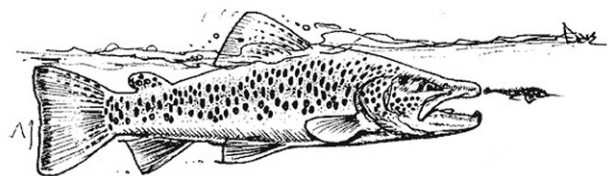
From Sybil Hunter

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Todd Schotts, Fly Of The Month columnist for his long standing dedication to MFFC's own The Evening Hatch newsletter. Month after month, year after year, Todd has unfailingly educated us on old, new, and unique flies.

The fishing report on Schotts is that he started regularly writing the Fly Of The Month column in September of 2014, before that he was writing other articles for The Evening Hatch when Mike Matuszewski was editor.

According to Schotts, he started writing for Matuszewski back in 2005, or even earlier. His records show that September 1995 was his inaugural The Evening Hatch submission. It was all about a group of MFFC club members who fly fished their way through the Smokies.

In true Todd send off... Tight lines and schnazzy flies.



A Cicada Summer *It's Already Started in New Zealand*

Editor's Note: Cicadas. They're one of the loudest bugs in existence, they're big, and they're coming by the billions this summer across the Midwest, including to a handful of counties in western Michigan. The noisy insects are expected to surge due to the emergence of Brood-X, a periodical group of cicadas that emerges from the ground once every 17 years.

In the land of Downunder, anglers are in the middle of their cicada summer. So we checked in with New Zealand Fish & Game to see how it was going and they passed onto us this report.

By Hugh Creasy
New Zealand Fish & Game

In the heat of the day, the road surface glistens black with melting tar, and the roadside broom crackles with ripening seed pods bursting and brittle. The track to the river is dry – even the roadside drainage ditches are parched.

Summer storms have given way to sunshine, still days and balmy nights. Tree trunks are lined with the shells of hatched cicadas and the adults keep up a rising chorus as the day grows hotter. In the short grass of a paddock grazed by sheep, grasshoppers leap at every footfall.

A bouldery track leads to the water at the tail of a run. The only clear water is at the downstream side of large boulders that in spring were the best of holding waters for larger fish.

In mid-summer, the reach is green with algae.

In the shallows fluffy brown growth coats the stones. It is going to be a slippery trial in wading and casting.

To fish a wet fly would be impossible. Every cast would gather weed on the retrieve, and nymphing would require pin-point accuracy in casting if you were to avoid the same fate. A dry fly, though, would, in theory, bob along the surface, minimizing risk.

I have found that the Western fly patterns from the United States have far more in common with New Zealand fauna than fly patterns from England or Europe.

Grasshopper imitations are rarely used here but fished at



A fly fisherman hunts for trophy browns in New Zealand. The country is currently in the middle of its cicada summer that is expected to arrive in the Midwest by June.

pool edges where hoppers are disturbed by wind or passing stock they can pull a fish from the deep.

They can be fiddly flies to tie especially if you go to the trouble of knotting herl to imitate legs and trimming deer hair bodies. The thought of losing such careful creations can be daunting, but have the courage and cast the little precious, it might just pay off.

Then, there's the Humpy, an all-purpose deer hair fly that imitates most terrestrial creatures when tied in various sizes. From blowflies to bumblebees, the Humpy can copy them all – it just takes some minor alteration in colour and weight.

Tie on a wing and it's a cicada. Though it floats, it is quite weighty and makes a hearty splash when it hits the water.

The splash will either frighten a fish or attract one. In the deep south, the nights get chilly in late summer, and cicadas grow dozy as the night wears on. In the early hours, they drop off the willows and become trout tucker.

By sunrise, trout have become used to their splashes and go on the hunt whenever they hear one. By mid-morning the natural fall is over and trout are once more suspicious.

Near still water, there may be a hatch of large dragonflies. They flap around like miniature helicopters, and when the females lay their eggs through the surface tension of the water, they become vulnerable to the snapping jaws of a rising fish.

On a windy day, a Muddler Minnow with a deer hair hackle fished with the rod held high will dot the surface from

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Thinking or dreaming of a fly fishing trip to New Zealand? Keep it on your bucket list and when we get through this pandemic and international travel resumes, start planning it early. One of the first resources to turn to is the New Zealand Fish & Game website.

Sections on the site include Fishing Resources, Where to Fish, Getting Started and a special section for Overseas Visitors. There are also weekly fishing reports, videos and a newsletter you can sign up for. The website is <https://fishandgame.org.nz/>

Noisy Cicadas & Trophy Trout in the Land of Downunder

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wavelet to wavelet -- a pretty good imitation of the real thing.

This is where a lightweight rod comes in handy.

A stiff tailwind will keep the line in the air, and by lowering and raising the rod tip you can copy the action of a dipping dragonfly quite successfully. It's great fun when a shadow from the deep rises and snatches a fly, sometimes when it's well out of the water.

These are all the possibilities when I reach the river.

But it's weedy appearance is not in any way encouraging. It seems lifeless. No insects are rising and no breeze ruffles the surface.

There is a line of current through the water free of weed. It's only a metre or so wide at its widest point and runs for 50 metres or so before it reaches the tail of the pool. To cast a fly along its length would require wading across slime-encrusted stones.



A brown trout caught in the North Canterbury region of the South Island in New Zealand. Photos courtesy of New Zealand Fish & Game.

There is a gravelly track to a good casting position near the tail of the pool. Gravel is much easier to negotiate than slimy boulders and stones. But if I caught a fish there would be a hard exit

to the shore.

Oh, well, the sun is going down and the fish must come out to feed at some stage, so I will tie on a brown beetle and wait for twilight.



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