

Tying With Ken Harfoot

I am taking a step back in time for this tying session. I was inspired by an article in the Flyfisher magazine 2012 publication. The authors Terry and Roxanne Wilson pulled four patterns from the "Book of the Black Bass," (1881) by Dr. James A. Henshall. The most iconic figure in the uniquely American sport of bass fishing is Dr. James A. Henshall. A physician and author of the "Book of the Black Bass" (1881) and other works, the good doctor abandoned his medical practice at the age of 49 to pursue his passion for the piscatorial sciences.

Here are the patterns we will tie as time permits.

Henshall

Wing: light drab (dove)

Hackle: white

Body: peacock herl, gold tip

Tail: peacock sword

Polka

Wing: guinea

Hackle: scarlet

Body: scarlet floss, gold rib

Tail: brown and white fibers (goose wing)

Oconomowoc

Wing: cinnamon woodcock

Hackle: white

Body: cream floss, gold rib

Tail: brown deer tail

Oriole

Wing: yellow goose

Hackle: black

Body: black floss, gold rib and tip

Tail: black and white



I was drawn to the poetic writings from a time all but forgotten. This was the closing epilogue:

But there are flies, and enough, to suit those of every taste, even should the angler be so fastidious and dainty as "Ye Sunberry Fisher," as described by Punch:

*"Ye Sunberry fisher has flies of all feathers,
For all sorts of seasons, in all sorts of weathers.
Flies when ye Springtide is blustrie and showerie,
Flies when ye Summer is grassie and bowerie,
Flies when ye Autumn is golden and grainie,
For hot weather, cold weather, mistie, or rainie.
Red-spinner, palmer, black peacock and gray,
Yellow dun, golden dun, March brown, and May,
Sand-fly and stone-fly, and alder and gnat,
Black midge and marlow bug-all round his hat."*

This is the link for my research on the "Book of the Black Bass" by Dr. James A. Henshall:
<https://archive.org/details/bookofblackbass1889hens>