

The American Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing

SUMMER 1998

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 3



Changing of the guard: John Price, our new art director, and Randall Perkins at the Manchester dinner/auction.

A Century of Salt

IN HIS 1908 BOOK, *Florida Enchantments*, A. W. Dimock writes of saltwater fly fishing, “[I]t seemed immoral to attempt [fly fishing] in the bays, rivers, and passes of the south. Before I could really essay it, I had to retire to my room and read aloud the Declaration of Independence. I rejoice now in my victory over superstition, for I find myself a missionary in a benighted land.”

Although its history is somewhat difficult to pin down, saltwater fly fishing has been a topic for fishing writers for more than 100 years. In this summer issue, we try to present a little bit of history from every decade since 1895, when a chapter in the book *Sea Fishing*—“Fly Fishing in the Sea”—addressed catching species from salmon to saltwater bass in Scotland. A. W. Dimock and his photographer son Julian A. Dimock collaborated to produce *Florida Enchantments* in 1908 and included a chapter called “Saltwater Fly Fishing,” which freely offered advice concerning the catching of various species off the Florida coast. In 1929, for *The Sportsman* magazine, George D. B. Bonbright wrote specifically of taking tarpon with a fly. And in 1948, in his book *Salt Water Fishing Tackle*, Harlan Major used his chapter on fly casting to appeal to freshwater snobs to take “the cure” of trying salt water just once. “Unless the patient has been unusually nasty in his remarks, I advise him to bring along only his oldest and most battered rods,” he says, then waxes eloquent about tarpon and striped bass.

Keith Fulsher is the creator of the Thunder Creek series of flies. In 1973, he included a brief chapter on saltwater fly fishing in his book, *Tying and Fishing the Thunder Creek Series*. Little did he realize the explosive growth that would

occur in the sport in the 1980s and 1990s. He has since added to his patterns tied to represent saltwater baitfish. The original chapter with an update—along with six patterns and their recipes—begins on page 2.

In his soon-to-be-released book, *Innovative Saltwater Flies*, Bob Veverka notes significant saltwater fly tyers from the 1920s to the present day in his introductory chapter about the history of the sport. The excerpt, which gives a good overview, begins on page 16.

And Trustee Pamela Bates Richards—who provided invaluable help with this issue—shares some photographs from her own collection with us, including some vintage images of Lefty Kreh, Stu Apte, Joe Brooks, Jimmie Albright, Larry Green, and Joe Bates Jr. You can find these on pages 26–27.

Besides dreaming of braving the waves or wading the flats, the staff of the Museum has been busy this spring with dinner/auctions, spring shows, and our annual festival weekend (see our photo spread on pages 28–29 and Museum News). And there’s big news on *The American Fly Fisher* front—we have a new art director. After nearly ten years of so beautifully producing this journal, art director Randall Perkins has decided to move on. She’s started her own publishing company, Gallery Press, here in Manchester. We will miss her. Our new art director, John Price, joined us in May. We’re very excited about the skills and enthusiasm that he brings to the Museum. For more about him, see Museum News.

KATHLEEN ACHOR, EDITOR



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ON THE COVER: *Success on the shallows. From the collected production papers of Joseph D. Bates Jr.*

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Saltwater Thoughts Revisited

by Keith Fulsher

WHEN KEITH FULSHER included a brief chapter on saltwater fly fishing in his book, Tying and Fishing the Thunder Creek Series (Rockville Center, New York: Freshet Press, 1973), it summed up his thoughts on saltwater flies at the time. We'd like to share that original chapter with you, followed by an update by Mr. Fulsher—and recipes for his salt patterns as well.

—EDITOR

Saltwater Thoughts

SALTWATER FLY FISHING has gained an enthusiastic group of followers in recent years. It's not known exactly when fly fishing in the salt got started, and what is known about the few experiments that took place during the nineteenth century is quite vague, but it seems clear from the evidence that freshwater fly fishing predates the saltwater variety by a good many centuries. Yet today a great number of fly fishermen have taken to salt water as the last frontier where they can expect to hook big, powerful fish with any kind of regularity. What's more, saltwater flymen have proved beyond all doubt that a great variety of ocean fish will take the fly.

The waters around Florida provide many exotic species of game for the fly-rodder, but some very fine fishing is also to be had all along the east and west coasts. Some of the species that have been taken successfully with the fly rod are, in no particular order, striped bass, bluefish, weakfish, mackerel, silver salmon, chinooks, bonefish, tarpon, snook, channel bass, barracuda, jacks, pompano, permit, dolphin, ladyfish, sharks, pollock, bonito, yellowtail, albacore, flounder, and for the real experts, billfish. This surely provides a

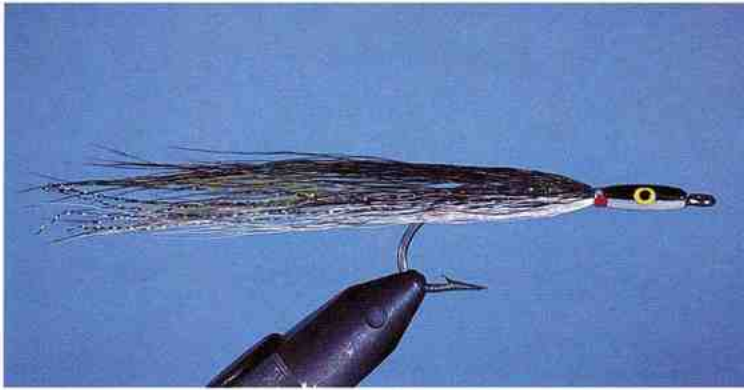


Charles F. Orvis flies tied for the Standart Bros. Ltd. of Detroit, Michigan, and mounted on a special card. The two Scarlet Ibis patterns and the Claret Montreal are tied with a reversed wing. This is exactly as they appear in Mary Orvis Marbury's 1892 book Favorite Flies and Their Histories. The tying date of these flies is believed to be early 1900s.

wide choice, and it's not even a complete list. Increasing numbers of fly fishermen who recognize the potential of salt water are willing to travel great distances to try their luck in the sea. Many anglers are even substituting trips to the seashore for those once-a-year or once-in-a-lifetime trips that they used to take to wilderness areas. This is particularly true of those who yearn to fish Florida waters. A winter vacation in Florida can be combined with some of the greatest saltwater fly fishing and some of the most beautiful scenery to be found anywhere.

The great size and fighting ability of saltwater game fish are their principal attractions for fly fishermen. Another

attraction is the fact that these fish are ravenous in their pursuit of food and feed heavily on smaller fish. Most species when on a feeding spree will hit anything that moves, especially if it looks or acts like a baitfish. Consequently, most saltwater flies are baitfish imitations, if not in actual design, at least in general action in the water. Because saltwater fish are so voracious in their feeding habits, these flies have not been refined nearly as much as their freshwater counterparts but are rather simply and sturdily constructed. Those used along the northeastern Atlantic and the Pacific coasts tend to follow conventional freshwater streamers and bucktails in style. The saltwater flies used in southeastern coastal waters



◀ SAND EEL (*Ammodytes americanus*)

- Flank:* Olive or blue bucktail and strands of silver krystal flash
Top of head and back: Black bucktail
Bottom of head and belly: White bucktail

This fly should have a very slim appearance.

▶ SAWBELLY (*Alosa pseudoharengus*)

- Flank:* Yellow bucktail and strands of yellow krystal flash
Top of head and back: Brown part of a green dyed bucktail
Bottom of head and belly: White bucktail

The back and belly material is shorter in length than the flank material to give the fly a deep body shape.



have been given a style of their own. Generally they are made with bodies of chenille, long wings of bucktail or saddle hackle, and collars of wound hackle in a color contrasting to that of the wings. Most of these flies are brightly colored with red, yellow, white, and blue predominating. However, there have been some very successful flies designed after shrimp, eels, and other sea life. Certain of the shrimp and eel patterns look and perform like streamers and bucktails and may, at times, be mistaken for baitfish by game fish. But even taking these refinements into account, the fact remains that the possibilities of exact imitation in saltwater flies have only begun to be explored.

It was with this thought in mind that several of the freshwater Thunder Creek patterns were first put to use in salt water. Although these patterns, the Smelt and the Silver Shiner, proved successful, it seems to me desirable that a few patterns be worked out specifically for use in the sea. Several of my friends have experimented with a striped-bass fly tied in the Thunder Creek style. It has accounted for a good number of stripers. The pattern, which has not yet been named, is as follows: hook-shank covering, silver tinsel (or even better, silver Mylar tubing with the core removed); lateral stripe, bright-green dyed bucktail; top of the head and back, white bucktail dyed medium blue; bottom of the head and belly, white bucktail; the eye, which is in the usual spot, is the usual yellow lacquer with black-lacquer pupil. The tying process is

exactly the same as for freshwater patterns, but the hook should be of a noncorroding type designed especially for saltwater use.

It appears from my observations that flies with silver hook-shank coverings, backs in various shades of blue, blue-green, and brown, and white underparts would come closest to successfully imitating the bright, small baitfish that abound in the ocean coastal areas. Possibly a couple of barred feathers worked into the patterns, as is done in the freshwater Swamp Darter pattern, would give the mottled effect that's sometimes needed. It also seems desirable to coat the heads of saltwater flies with a finish more durable than lacquer. A clear epoxy glue or some other tough finish would give the flies a longer life and protect them from the teeth of saltwater game fish.

It is not my intention to go into explanations of saltwater fly-fishing tackle, methods of fishing the salt, and ways of seeking out saltwater fish. There are angler-authors who have done a much better job of this than I could hope to do. But I have learned one thing, and learned it the hard way—a short wire leader is a very desirable item. Saltwater game fish have sharp teeth and powerful jaws. Otherwise, the chances are good that if you are not already a saltwater fly fisherman, your heaviest freshwater equipment will be adequate to do the job in the salt.

Give it a try. You won't be sorry.

SILVERSIDES (*Menidia menidia*)



Flank: Light green bucktail and strands of silver krystal flash with two strands of black krystal flash on each side

Top of head and back: Olive bucktail

Bottom of head and belly: White bucktail



SMELT (*Osmerus mordax*)



Flank: Lavender bucktail with strands of krystal flash of similar color

Top of head and back: Brown bucktail

Bottom of head and belly: White bucktail

Revisited

SALTWATER FLY FISHING was starting to grow in popularity in 1956. John W. Randolph, who had just taken over the “Wood, Field and Stream” column for the *New York Times*, commented on that increased interest in his 21 February 1956 column. Writing about the New York City Sports, Travel, and Vacation Show, he noted that I was tying flies at an exhibit there doing mostly salt patterns, something that had scarcely been heard of three or four years earlier.

There were few established patterns in those days. The popular ones were tarpon splayed-wing flies with large split-brass bead heads and some of the Rhode’s bonefish and snook patterns. The Gibbs striper bucktail and a grass shrimp pattern were favorites used for striped bass along the eastern Atlantic coast. They were usually made on heavy Mustad-Z nickel hooks or a tinned hook to avoid corrosion. My tying included many saltwater flies in those days, but my main interest was in freshwater streamers and bucktails as they related to the exact-imitation concept. Saltwater flies seemed to need a lot of refinement to imitate the types of food that saltwater fish were interested in. Although some progress had been made between the 1950s and 1970s, there was still a challenge for fly tyers to create more exact patterns.

Little did I realize in 1973 what explosive growth there would be in saltwater fly fishing during the 1980s and 1990s—growth that resulted in the development of much new equipment with advancing technology and many new fly patterns designed along exact-imitation lines to make fly fishing in the salt easier and more productive. I, too, added to the volume of patterns tied to represent specific species of saltwater baitfish. There are six of them tied in the Thunder Creek style. They are always subject to change as new materials for tying come on the market and as thoughts change about coloring. They range in length from 2 to 6 inches.

I’m often asked about the origin of the reversed head tying method used to tie the Thunder Creek patterns. Although the technique has never been fully researched, it goes back more than a century. I was exposed to fly fishing at a tender age in the 1920s by an uncle in my northern Wisconsin hometown. Among his snelled trout wet flies were patterns tied with a reversed head, which are now in my collection. They appear to be made this way to add strength to the fly rather than for style. Threads used for fly tying in those days were not very strong, so the wing on some flies was tied on pointing forward, then pulled back and tied down again. This formed a bulky head the same color as the wing with a small thread collar at the base. Some of the patterns in Mary Orvis Marbury’s book *Favorite Flies and Their Histories* are tied in this same fash-



◀ TINKER MACKEREL (*Scomber scombrus*)

Flank: Grizzly saddle hackles with strands of silver krystal flash on each side

Top of head and back: Olive or blue bucktail
Bottom of head and belly: White bucktail

BUNKER (*Brevoortia tyrannus*) ▶

Flank: Yellow bucktail and strands of silver krystal flash

Top of head and back: Medium to dark blue bucktail

Bottom of head and belly: Pale yellow bucktail



An old snelled Coachman pattern, clearly showing the reversed-wing (head) technique. This fly is also believed to be from the turn of the century, possibly the early 1900s.

ion. This takes the reversed-head technique back to 1892, but exactly when the procedure originated or who developed it remains a mystery.

It seems fairly clear, though, that Carrie Stevens of Upper Dam, Maine, was the first to apply the technique to hair in the late 1920s or 1930s. The pattern she designed, interestingly enough, was for use in salt water, and she used all white bucktail to form the head. She felt, as suggested with the reversed-head wet flies, that the reversing technique

made a stronger fly. Joe Bates publicized the Stevens fly in *Streamer Fly Fishing in Fresh and Salt Water* (first released in 1950 and reissued in revised form as *Streamer Fly Tying and Fishing* in 1966, and again by his daughter, Pam Richards, in 1995). Joe's 1950 book seems to be the first documentation of the reversed-wing procedure using hair.

When I first tied my Thunder Creek patterns in 1962, I drew on both the old wet-fly style and the Stevens fly for background. There are really few new procedures in fly tying, only new applications of old techniques and new materials. The evolution of the reversed-wing tying technique is an example of that.

On the pages here are pattern details for the six Thunder Creek saltwater flies. They have been given common names used by anglers, but scientific names are also included for better identification. All are tied on Mustad stainless steel hooks No. 34011 in sizes 2 to 3/0, and there is no dressing running up the hook shank. The flank dressing on all patterns is put on in normal down-wing style. The back and belly material is tied on forward over the hook eye, then reversed to also form the head. A very thin coat of epoxy is put on the head, and when dry, lacquer eyes and gills are added. When those additions are dry, a second thin coat of epoxy goes over the head to make the eyes and gills more durable. These patterns also represent other species of baitfish that are similar to the design species in shape and color. ~



Fly Fishing in the Sea

Edited by His Grace the Duke of Beaufort, K.G.

Assisted by Alfred E. T. Watson

From Sea Fishing ~ The Badminton Library of Sports and Pastimes, 1895

FLY FISHING in the sea is a lottery. There is more of it than most people suppose, but there is no kind of sea fishing more uncertain. Occasionally, takes are reported which would fill the salmon or sea-trout fisher with wonderment; but the blank days are enough to make angels weep.

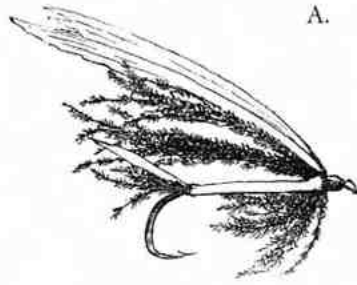
We need not concern ourselves to consider in what light a sea fish regards an artificial fly or the thing that we call a fly. From the ordinary trout fisher's point of view there is no fly fishing in the sea, for there are, generally speaking, no natural flies to be imitated, except, perhaps, on some almost landlocked waters. The sea fly is the same sort of thing as the salmon fly, which is to say, a representation of some marine insect or

small fish, usually the latter. The most plentiful fish of our seas is, I imagine, the herring; and it is when the surface-swimming fish are feeding on the herring or sprat fry—whitebait, sire, or britt, as they are variously termed—that the fly fisher has his chance.

The fly with which I have done most execution is an imitation of the young herring, which, according to Dr. Meyer's observations, measures about an inch and a half when about five months old. I will venture to call it the "whitebait" fly. Its most usual size and form are shown in the accompanying illustration (Figure A, page 8). The overwing is a strip of white feather from a swan's quill, the underwing being some strands of peacock harl. The hackle is of the

same material, and the body, which is well padded, is covered with broad, flat, real silver tinsel. A few strands of harl form the tail. When the wing of this fly is nicely curved, the lure drawn rapidly through the water is a very fair resemblance of a bright shining whitebait, the silver tinsel representing its bright sides, and the green glistening harl its greenish back. What the white feather is for, I confess I don't know; but it is added because white flies appear to have a special attraction for many kinds of sea fish.

To still more accurately represent the herring fry I have had some of these flies dressed with the white wing underneath. We then have the white swan's wing, representing the belly, the sides of silver,



'WHITEBAIT' FLY. NO. 1

and the green back. The first-mentioned fly, however, seems to kill as well as the newer pattern. Where there is a breeze, the size shown in the illustration is most useful for bass, coalfish, mackerel, and small pollack; but on a calm, bright day when the water is clear, smaller flies are often more killing. In fact, the trout or salmon fisher can exercise just the same discretion in the sea with regard to the size of his fly as he does in fresh water, using a very large one on rough, dark days.

In whitebait fly No. 2 (Figure B) it will be noticed that I have tied the back and belly together, which renders it a closer imitation of the fry, but I doubt if its killing powers are in the least increased.

The term "whitebait fly" is scientifically correct; because it was established beyond a question by Dr. Day that the admirable little fish which are caught at the mouth of the Thames and elsewhere, and are held in particular veneration at Greenwich, are the young of both sprats and herrings.

Fly fishing has special advantages over all other branches of angling. In the first place, it is deliciously clean. Second, it is simple, requiring nothing more than a fly and length of gut, in addition to the rod and running tackle. Third, from its simplicity it is an inconspicuous tackle, there being no leads, swivels, float, nor spreaders to frighten the fish; and the bait can be cast lightly on the water without the disturbance of a boat passing over or near the fish, which cannot be avoided when certain other methods are practiced.

Generally speaking, all surface-swimming fish take the fly when, as I have said, they are feeding on the young herrings or sprats. Occasionally salmon, frequently sea trout in many districts, and still more often pollack, bass, and coalfish may be caught by the fly fisher. Herrings are not at all adverse to a white fly, and gray mullet may some-

times be caught in this way. There is a popular belief that an artificial fly is the best bait for mackerel, and every "boy's mackerel line" sold at a seaside toy shop is decorated with three or four iron hooks, the shanks of which are covered with red or white worsted with a strand or two from a swan's-wing feather roughly tied on. No doubt mackerel will occasionally take these flies; but it is not very often one can keep for any length of time near these fish when they are shoaling and breaking the surface. They appear for six or seven seconds, perhaps, and the angler may get a couple of casts into them and probably catch a fish; then down they go, to reappear a hundred yards away. Long before the boat can reach the spot they are away again, to break in quite another direc-



'WHITEBAIT' FLY. NO. 2

tion. If they can be lighted upon while shoaling in this way in any very small bay, then the fly fisher can whip them out one after the other and have grand sport. Sometimes a fly or two may be fixed on the ordinary whiffing line, in addition to the strip of mackerel skin, which is by far the best bait for the tail hook. Flies so placed catch a few fish during the day, but not many, and I have long written them down a fraud.

In addition to the fish I have mentioned, most of the bottom feeders—that is to say those of them which are in the habit of feeding on the whitebait—will take this fly if it is sunk low enough. I have occasionally caught cod, gurnard, haddock, and whiting on a white fly, but that has been when I have been trailing or whiffing with it behind a boat for other fish, and for some reason or other have allowed the tackle to sink almost or quite to the bottom.

In 1893, the capture of a cod in Loch Nevis on a fly was reported in the *Fishing Gazette*, and numerous other instances of sea fish taking salmon or other artificial flies of considerable size have been recorded from time to time in *Field*, *Land and Water*, *Rod and Gun*, the *Angler*, and other sporting papers. I may mention in particular a cod of 12 pounds caught by a friend of mine, the

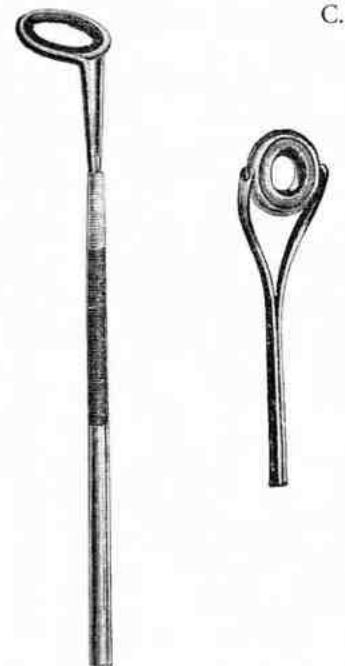
lure being a sole-skin fly fished at a depth of a foot or so. There is not much doubt that at times cod come close to the surface to feed on the whitebait fry.

Though fly fishing for bass and coalfish has been carried on for a good many years by a few people, not a great deal is really known about this branch of angling. I hope, however, that the rapidly increasing popularity of the sport will bring about such an accession of experience, that before long our knowledge on the subject may be very greatly increased.

FLY FISHING SALTWATER TACKLE

Before dealing with what I may call the fly-taking sea fish, a word or two as to tackle may be necessary. The salmon fisher needs no teaching on this point, beyond perhaps a reminder that if he is casting for cuddies or small fish which weigh at the outside a pound, he need not use an 18-foot rod, nor a cast suitable for a 15-pound salmon. Coarse tackle has prevailed for so many centuries in the sea that immediately a man gets on salt water he seems to regard tackle which would be laughed at on river or lake as being quite suitable and proper for very small sea fish.

For those, then, who are not already fly fishers, a few remarks on rod, reel,



and line. The best general fly rod is made of greenheart and should be about 15 or 16 feet long. That is, a weapon to be used with two hands. For single-handed use for small fish, 11 feet or 11 feet, 6 inches is a good length. The rod should be fitted with snake rings made of phosphor bronze or hardened German silver (on no account have steel rings bronzed over; they invariably rust sooner or later), and for the top ring I like nothing better than my own little invention which is fitted with an inner revolving ring of phosphor bronze (Figure C).

The rod should be fitted with suction ferrules that should be kept Vaseline'd or oiled to prevent them sticking. The Weger and Warner winch fittings are about the best. The reel should be large in the barrel and free from any steel works or screws. For bass and other large fish, it must hold at least 150 yards of line; for smaller fish, a hundred yards of line is sufficient—less will suffice in harbors. Of lines there is a great variety. The cheapest serviceable line is of eight-plait hemp or linen, tanned. We can have much the same thing made in silk, or an eight-plait silk line with the usual waterproof oil dressing.

The cast should consist, for bass, of two and a half or three yards of the strongest salmon gut, or, failing that, treble-twisted medium gut.

A gaff or landing net must be used according to the size of the fish; anything over 5 or 6 pounds being best landed with the former instrument. The best gaffs for all kinds of purposes are not those screwed into sticks, but lashed on to a handle similar to the one shown in the illustration (Figure D). When the gaff, which should be of steel (and not of iron, like one which was sold me last summer, and bent out nearly straight with the weight of a 10-pound fish), gets a little rusty, give it a coat or two of varnish. The varnish will sink into the rust and make a very good protecting surface.

SALMON IN SALT WATER

Not many people are aware that salmon have been caught in salt water on the fly. There are only a few places, so far as I know, where this has been done; but in these places salmon are fished for regularly in this way. But then, of course, the sea is a big place, and the number of inlets, sea-lochs,

estuaries, and the like, to which salmon resort in very large numbers, is limited. One of the smallest but most prolific salmon rivers in the United Kingdom is the Grimersta, which flows into Loch Roag, Island of Lewis. The fish are small, but more numerous than sea trout in many a fairly good sea-trout river. When the water in the river is low they collect in large numbers at and below its mouth.

On the 28th of July, 1888, Sir John H. Morris, to whom I am indebted for these particulars, caught five salmon with the fly in this sea-loch. The water in which the fish were caught was absolutely salt, not merely brackish, and as far distant as half a mile from the mouth of the river. The loch is shallow, from six to twelve feet in depth. The weather was cloudy; there was a good breeze, and the tide was flowing into the loch; later on, however, the fish were also taken on an ebbing tide with very little wind. They rose best on the flood with a good stiff breeze.

The fly used on the 28th of July was a black and yellow (the Wasp) on a No. 5 hook, and was worked rather deeply in

D.



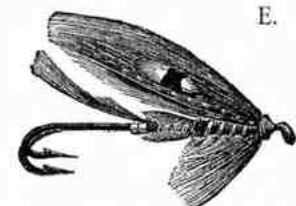
the water; but other and larger flies were used with equal success. It is a curious fact that the fish had been waiting in the loch for ten days or a fortnight before they showed any inclination to take the fly. They continued to rise well for a week, and some sixty fresh fish were taken by five rods—sixty salmon in a week! But they ceased to rise on the 4th of August.

Salmon had never been known to be caught on the fly in the bay before, and Sir John Morris attributed their rising during that week to the fact that they had been confined and kept in the sea loch long beyond their usual time for going up the river. But from a letter I have received from him recently it appears that a good many fish have been taken in the same way since that year. It is quite a common thing to catch sea trout in Loch Roag with the fly, and it was owing to the salmon rising to sea-trout flies that they were specially fished for. . . .

THE SEA TROUT AND THE FLY

That sea trout may be caught in various ways by fair angling in salt water is well known to men who have visited the north of Scotland and the outlying islands. A great deal of fly fishing is carried on for them in the brackish water of the estuaries of most rivers which they frequent. Sea trout in fresh water are uncertain fish; they will suddenly begin rising with the greatest vigor, and as suddenly cease; and after they have been in the river a few days they have the unhappy knack, from our point of view, of rising extremely short. In tidal pools they often rise very well.

I may refer here to a double hook which I designed for some short-rising salmon and sea trout. How I came to require its use is described under the heading "Salmo Irritans" in a collection of sketches of life in the Hebrides called

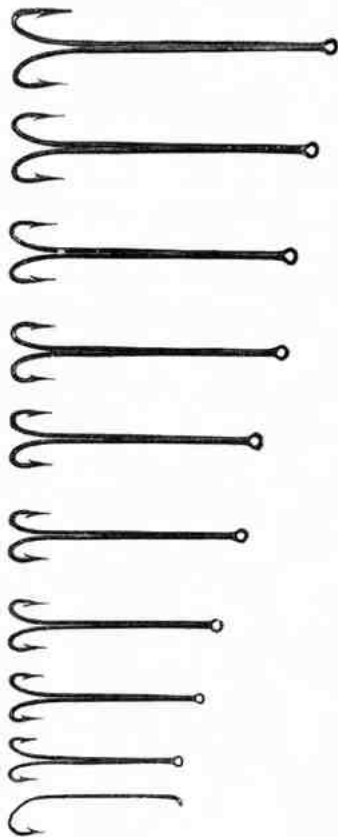


SEA-TROUT FLY ON 'SALMO IRRITANS' HOOK

Days in Thule. Suffice it here to say that, finding many fish plucked at ordinary flies and yet were not hooked, I conceived the idea of lengthening the shank without enlarging the bend; for it has always seemed to me that after the bend has been increased up to a certain size, further enlargement is not required. A longer shank is, of course, necessary for a larger fly, but it is not requisite to enlarge the bend (Figure E, page 9).

Messrs. Warner & Sons, the firm of Redditch hookmakers, carried out this idea extremely well for me, and made a whole scale of double hooks on this system. I have not had an opportunity of trying the largest hooks of the scale, but the smaller ones answer excellently. I have caught many a salmon and sea trout through their instrumentality. The scale of these hooks and also a fly tied on them are illustrated (Figure F) The proportion shown between body, wings, tail, and hooks should be carefully followed when flies are being dressed on this system.

I have sometimes seen sea trout follow the fly, making pecks at it like a bird making bad shots at a worm; but it was rare indeed that they actually touched



E.

the hook without being caught. I mention these hooks here because they are well suited for sea trout fishing in the sea. I imagine other anglers are beginning to overcome their prejudice to the novel shape, for I see the hooks at Farlow's and other tacklemakers....

Mr. Moodie-Heddle, of Orkney, tells me that ... in Orkney, the only killing fly for sea trout is one dressed with a fiery brown cock's hackle tied Palmer fashion to imitate a sand-hopper, and either with or without wings of speckled gray feather of some kind. The brightly colored sea-trout flies used farther south have not proved killing.

Another bait used with much success and cast like a fly in that part of the world is a mouse's tail (Figure G), which is baited in the following manner: the gut on a common round-bend worm hook (without eye or flattened end) is softened and threaded on a needle which is entered three-quarters of an inch from the end of the tail and brought out at the thick end. The hook-shank is then pulled up through the point of entry, and the thick end of the tail firmly bound round with crimson silk above the end of the hook shank to prevent it slipping. I have little doubt that the trout look upon this bait as a very small eel or worm of some kind.

A capital artificial sand-eel, which can be cast with the fly rod, can be made in the following manner: get a piece of copper bell wire or thick brass wire, 2¾ inches or 3 inches long; tie a hook (No. 12 or 13) firmly to one end; slip the other end through a piece of grayish-white rubber tubing, such as is used for feeding-bottles, which can be bought cheaply by the yard. The tail end should be cut sloping, and sliced at side of tail so as to make it vibrate; the end of wire coming out at mouth should be attached to a small phosphor bronze, brass, or German silver swivel. The back should be colored with two coats of Stephens's blueblack ink, the first coat being brought one-third of the way down the side also; then varnish the inked part, which makes it olive green. The belly can have a line of silver paint or strip of foil. The sides should be left white, and if they get discolored, scraping with a penknife will freshen them up. Two pink beads, with a black circle round each drawn on the India rubber in ink, represent eyes. The neck should be tied in with greenish silk. One hook



G.

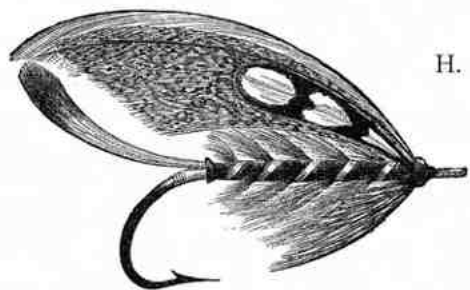
MOUSETAIL.

is better than two in clear water and near weeds; and if an occasional fish may miss it, the consolation is that fewer rises are obtained with more complicated tackle. . . .

The four flies on which I should be inclined to pin my faith for sea trout in the sea and estuaries are a Blue or Silver Doctor, Thunder and Lightning (Figure H), Jock Scott (Figure I), Durham Ranger (Figure J, page 12), and the Alexandra. It is very important, however, not to have these too large, and Mr. Moodie-Heddle's recommendation of more sober-colored flies for the Orkneys should be borne in mind. . . .

The chief points in connection with sea-trout fishing in the sea are that the fish are not less shy than in fresh water, and, like brown trout in rivers, lie close to the shore; as we approach the river, we find them on the edge of the stream.

There is a fish which is a sort of missing link between sea trout and our good friend Fario. It has been named *Salmo estuarius*, and in the estuary of the Shannon is known as the slob trout. "Slob," a novel word which recently puzzled and amused the House of Commons, is the local name for the vast banks of mud that are disclosed at low water in the estuary, many thousand acres of which have been lately reclaimed. There is not much doubt



THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

that the slob trout is the ordinary brown trout which, on account of the scarcity of food in his own larder, pays visits to his marine friends. When there comes a spate he will be found rushing up his native stream to feed on whatever the flood may bring down. I once caught a slob trout of a pound which, when knocked on the head, proceeded to evolve a half-digested shrew mouse.

This variety of fish is to all intents and purposes a brown trout, with a silver sheen over his speckled sides, brought about by residence in brackish or salt water. He takes the fly readily enough in the estuary, but, having a knowledge of natural winged and other insects, shows a preference for ordinary brown trout flies rather than Blue Doctors and other gaudy lures favored by the real original sea trout.

SALTWATER BASS

Bass, which in the spring and summer are found in the sea, but push up into estuaries in the autumn, take the fly best when feeding on the herring fry. Here the tiro may naturally say, "Yes, it is all very well to tell me that; but when are they feeding on the herring fry? How am I to find that out?"

Imagine a large rocky island standing a furlong and a half from the mainland. In the little channel intervening, runs at times a tremendous tidal current. The tide has turned an hour or two past, but has not yet begun to make with any speed; running quietly, perhaps a couple of knots or so. On the cliffs are hundreds of sea gulls, apparently asleep. By degrees the tide runs faster and faster, there are swirls and eddies on the surface, and presently we find ourselves in a miniature maelstrom. The birds begin to wake up, and feathered scouts take short flights over the sea, returning to the cliff. Presently all the gulls set up harsh cries, launch themselves into the

H.

air, and, hovering over the most troublous of the water, dip and dip and dip again in their endeavors to pick something off the surface. Just beneath them there is a splash, and then another, and another. A few seconds later the surface is broken in a fresh place by the hungry fish, and away hurry the gulls to share in the banquet.

There can be no possible mistake about the bass being on the feed; you can even see them. They have hunted the herring fry to the surface and are attacking them below, while the gulls are worrying them from above. Go, cast a whitebait fly over those fish, and see if you cannot avenge the death of many a hundred poor baby herring, sprat, and mackerel. These will not be big fish, mind, but what are called "school bass"; anything from 2 to 5 or 6 pounds. They must make up in numbers for lack of size. They are the fellows the fly fisher should look after; the monster bass, weighing maybe 15 pounds, which we see basking in the sunshine off the rocks or round about the harbor, are, as a rule, too stately to worry themselves over such inconsiderable trifles as baby herrings or whitebait flies. They like something larger and more tasty. Sometimes, however, a really splendid fish is found among the school bass.

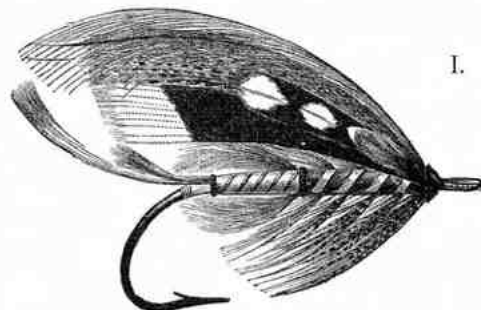
One great difficulty is to hold the boat in such a place as I have described. When you get to know the spot you will very likely find that during certain tides the bass feed like this for a half hour or more, and more or less at fixed times. The sea gulls know it far better than you do, and while apparently asleep on their cliff perches, are patiently waiting the advent of the bass.

It may not be herring fry the bass are feeding on. Their quarry may be sand-eels; in which case an artificial sand-eel of the kind being good for sea trout should be tried. I have often intended to make up a combination whitebait fly; a union of the real and the artificial. It could be done, I think, thus: whip on to the shank of hook three or four bristles with points projecting. There may be a little

peacock harl with a double strip of white swan's quill feather in the place of a wing. Cut a thin strip of gurnard and twist it round the shank of the hook. Tightly fasten down each end with waxed silk; of course, any tough, bright fish skin will do. For bristles, by the way, it is not necessary to go to a hog, a hairbrush will suffice. I have often rigged up rather novel spinning baits in some such way as this, twisting strips of fish skin over an arrangement of hooks, and have caught bass with them too.

The flies which Mr. J. C. Wilcocks recommends for these fish are any of the smaller salmon flies, and in particular the Shaldon Shiner, which was used with great success by the late Mr. J. C. Hale, near the village of Shaldon, on the west side of the estuary of the Teign. It is a kind of imitation dragonfly; the body very thin, of flattened silver wire; a small brush of scarlet feather for the tail; a little green, blue, and red dubbing out of an old Turkey carpet for the shoulders; and bright blue wings, to which are added half a dozen fibers of goose feather. It should be made about the size of a medium-sized salmon fly. Nowadays, however, many bass fishermen prefer the fish-skin flies to any made of feather and tinsel. The dogfish-tail fly should be killing. I have not had an opportunity of trying it. One very important thing in fly fishing for bass is to work the fly in rapid jerks, and, of course, the man who can cast well will catch many more fish than he who is inexpert at this most delightful branch of angling.

It is very desirable not to allow the boat to go over bass; and in the strong tidal currents which are chiefly frequented by these fish it is often necessary to have two men, or even three, to row the boat. If you can reach the fish from the shore, as from rocky points, so



JOCK SCOTT

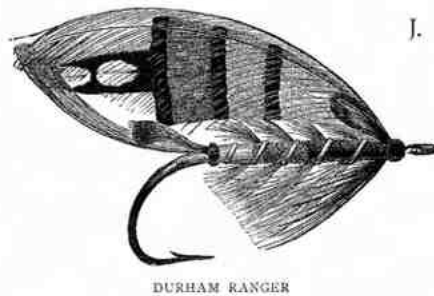
I.

much the better; but where there is a sound between an island and the mainland, such as I have described, the fish will as likely as not be feeding out in the center of the current.

Of course there is no reason to be idle while waiting about for the fish to begin feeding on the surface. A little railing may be done; and pollack, bass, or mackerel will very likely be taken in that way. But, I repeat, above all things do not let the boat go just over the bass ground, nor, when the bass are feeding, allow your men to take you too near them. The longer the line can be cast, the better.

Very few salmon fishers are able to get out a long line cleanly and well unless they are casting downstream and the line is extended by the water at the end of each cast. If they were to cast upstream, the flowing water would bring the fly back to them, and it would be a difficult thing to pick the line off the surface and make the proper backward cast previous to the forward cast which sends the fly in the desired direction. Dry-fly fishermen in Hampshire, who fish mostly upstream, usually grease their lines to make them float. The line can then be picked off the water even when it is not extended; but in sea or salmon fishing the line is sunk, and long casts cannot well be made unless the fly is fished downstream. At any rate, the beginner should keep the boat placed at one side and rather above the shoal of fish. When I say "above," I mean regarding the tidal current as if it were a river. Cast across the current at an angle of about forty-five degrees, letting the fly fall a yard or two in front of the fish; then work it in rapid jerks with the point of the rod, allowing the tide to carry it among the shoal. Be particularly careful not to cast beyond the fish, for if you are using a thick line the fish will see the line before they see the fly, which is obviously undesirable.

Bass very often take the fly under water; so, especially when there is much ripple, it is better to watch the line rather than the fly. From the point of the rod to where it touches the water, the line takes a gentle curve. Watch that curve, and immediately you see it straighten, strike; and then look out for squalls. In playing the fish, keep the bend of the rod well up; hold the rod at an angle of about forty-five degrees. If the fish makes a determined run let him have line, checking it, if needs be, a little



with one of your fingers on the rim of the reel; but never allow the rod to be pulled down towards the water. Always keep the rod up at an angle of about forty-five degrees. If the bass is pulled kicking and plunging upstream among the shoal, his struggles will be so evident to his brothers that he alone of the shoal will be landed. The wiser plan, which, however, involves a considerable amount of labor, is, immediately a fish is hooked, to draw it across the current towards the boat away from the shoal, and then drop down with the tide below the other fish, who, having their tails pointing that way, see nothing of what takes place. It is a comparatively easy thing to pull a bass or trout or salmon downstream. It should always be done when possible. After the fish is landed, the men should again row the boat by the side of, but not too near, the shoal, until they place one within casting distance, when with good luck another fish may be hooked and played in the same way.

Beginners have a habit, when a fish is exhausted, of reeling in too much line. If your rod is 15 feet and you reel up until only 10 feet of line remain below the rod point, it is obvious that the fish can never be brought close to the boat. To decide exactly how much line to reel in requires some judgment, but a word of warning on the point is advisable.

When playing a fish from the shore and you are about to land him, reel up until he is within 20 feet of the point of the rod, let us say; and then, if the ground will permit it, walk slowly backwards. Your attendant should be stooping down, gaff in hand, and you must try to bring the fish to his feet. If you are alone you must, of course, do the best you can. Get the fish well played out, and just a proper length of line reeled up, so that when the rod is nearly perpendicular the fish can be brought to the desired spot. Then, with the gaff in

the right hand, and the little finger of the left hand pressing on the rim of the reel to prevent it revolving, use the gaff with the right hand.

A word as to the manner of gaffing. I have a lively recollection of an old Norwegian farmer whose services I solicited in the matter of landing a 13-pound sea trout. He had never used a gaff before, and knelt down and began stroking the back of the fish with it. The best place to gaff a fish is the best place you can. If the line is in the way take him under the belly, but give the preference to the back. If he affords you a fair chance, lay the hook neatly over him, and then give a pull towards you, sharp and sudden, such as would bring a horse on to his haunches. If the hook takes hold, at once turn the handle of the gaff into a perpendicular position, which will help to prevent the fish kicking off and the stick from breaking. The power of fish lies almost entirely in their tails; so that if you gaff a large fish in the middle of the back or shoulder, he may work his natural propeller so vigorously as to smash the gaff or break away from the hook. With large fish, therefore, the best plan is, if possible, to get the gaff well in near the tail. The big creature is then helpless. If you have any reason to think your gaff is not strong enough to lift him out, walk backwards, draw him tail foremost on shore, and knock him on the head as quickly as possible. When in a boat, a gaffer may be obliged to lay hold of the fish with middle finger and thumb of left hand across the back of the neck, in addition to lifting him in with the gaff stuck in near the tail and held in the right hand.

It is worth bearing in mind that, however strong one's tackle, very large fish cannot be lifted safely in by means of the fishhook; not that the tackle will necessarily break, but the fish's flesh may give way if the creature is very heavy. In anglers' language, the hook will tear out or break away.

For small fish—anything under 5 pounds—a large landing net is certainly preferable to a gaff; but if neither landing net nor proper gaff is forthcoming, a large hake hook with the barb filed or hammered down, lashed on the first available stick, is a very excellent substitute. A steel meat-hook makes a very fair gaff. These remarks on landing big fish apply perhaps more to pollack than bass, for the largest bass are not commonly caught by the fly fisher. ~



Saltwater Fly Fishing

by A. W. and Julian A. Dimock

From *Florida Enchantments* ~ New York: *The Outing Publishing Company*, 1908

IT IS A CARDINAL PRINCIPLE with the angler that a fish must be buncoed. If you keep faith with him by delivering a real fly instead of a counterfeit, you are disgraced. You are quite on the level of the lad with the bare feet, who sits on a log by the stream with a pole, a string, and a can full of bait and yanks in the fish that had scorned the orthodox flies you so skillfully tendered them.

Fly fishing had linked itself with the mountain torrents, swift rivers and rockbound lakes of mine own North Country by ties so sacred that it seemed immoral to attempt it in the bays, rivers, and passes of the south. Before I could really essay it I had to retire to my room and read aloud the Declaration of Independence. I rejoice now in my victory

over superstition, for I find myself a missionary in a benighted land.

Such ignorance among fish I never before encountered. I tried them with a split-bamboo rod, an expensive reel, and a cleverly constructed fly. I had tied bits of bright worsted on the line to mark distances for the cameraman, who was keeping in focus for possible jumps. The fish ignored the fly but ate up the worsted and sections of the line with it. Then I tried old flies that had been chewed by salmon and eaten by moths, and found the fish rather prejudiced in their favor. In general, if they got the colors they wanted, the form in which they came was immaterial. Sometimes I tried the light silver-and-vermilion casting spoons of the shops, with indifferent success. The lure that was irresistible, which channel bass, cavalries, Spanish mackerel, ladyfish, and a dozen others varieties seized with avidity, was a bit of

bright tin about two inches long something like the shape of a fish. Then with a tiny swivel in the mouth, a hook in the tail, and a slight twist to give the thing a wiggly motion, it becomes a great and successful deluder of the fish. Yet there are times when nothing will secure his attention. Dangle your fly before him, trail it on both sides, and drag it over his back. If it hits him, he will knock it in the air with his tail and close one eye gently as he turns slowly away. Then you lay down your rod and walk along the beach until you find a sand crab scooting for his hole. Catch him before he gets there, or if you fail, put your finger in the hole, wait until he takes hold of it with his biggest claw, and pull him out. That's the way I did the first time, but since then I've let my boatman catch the crabs. Then borrow a plain hook from some fisherman who isn't an angler and catch the fish that derided you.

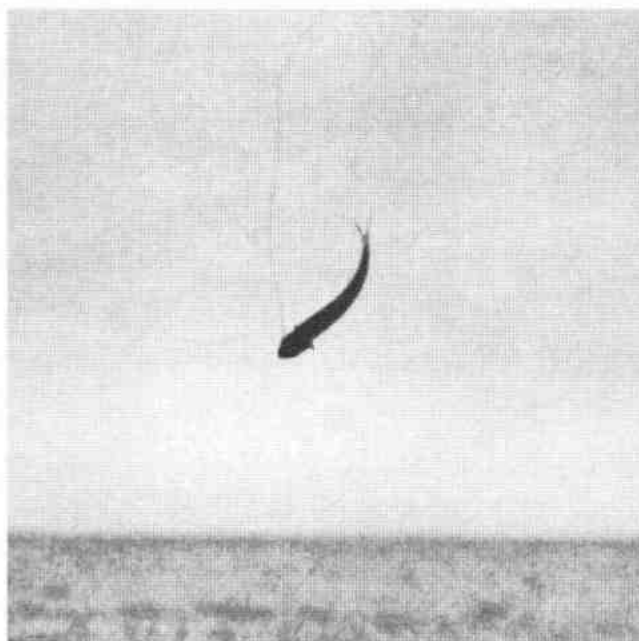
Photography by Julian A. Dimock, from *Florida Enchantments*. New York: The Outing Publishing Company, 1908.

In such an emergency all anglers fall from grace; the worm will turn. I once knew the dean of anglers in this country to tie a mouse to a hook and let him swim across a pool past the lair of a big trout who feared not God nor regarded man.

Of course any fisherman on the coast will tell the angler the best time and place to catch fish, only no two of them will agree, and when one finds out for himself he will have to learn over again the next day. My latest theory is that the best time to catch fish is when they bite, but that view is subject to change.

The passes leading to the harbors of the west coast of Florida are popular with fish of many species. Instead of wading in ice-cold streams you walk out in the warm surf and cast among the breakers, or stroll inside the pass, on the shore of the bay. In quiet water choose from the gliding forms the biggest channel bass and coax, tempt, and badger him with a fly, thrown before, behind, all around, and straight at him, until you rouse him to languid attention, growing interest, earnest desire, and furious determination. This will end in a wild rush for the fly whenever and wherever it touches the water, and your fish is hooked. You must mind your eye as the rod bends double; it isn't a brook trout or a black bass that you have on your line, but a powerful creature that may wear you out before you land him.

Your line is steadily running seaward and your patience with it, but nothing can be done beyond keeping all the strain you dare on the rod. Perhaps when 250 feet of line are out and only fifty left, just when you are losing hope, the fish turns and makes for the shore. Then you must run up the beach like a scared rabbit, wind in line as fast as you get a chance, letting it out only when



you must. Always supplement the action of your rod with your legs and if, in an hour, or two, or three, the fish gives out first, you can decide in accordance with commissariat requirements whether your 15- or 20-pound captive is to be netted or released on parole.

Sometimes a school of mackerel swims past, tossing the water into little cascades as they break up an assemblage of minnows and devour them in detail, and you toss any old fly you have among them, assured that three or four will jump at it at once and you will have broiled Spanish mackerel for supper—provided, however, that their sharp teeth don't sever your line. If a 2-pound ladyfish, sometimes appositely called skipjack, strikes, you will have attained the *Ultima Thule* of fishing with a fly rod and light tackle. No other fish jumps so quickly, so often, nor so high in proportion to his size, nor does any other make so brilliant a defense. Compared with it even the tarpon is sluggish, and trout, bass, and salmon little livelier than mud puppies. Your reel will buzz an octave higher than you ever heard it, and your fingers will be blistered wherever they touched the line, while playing this splendid fighter who so richly earns the liberty you will surely restore it at the close of the performance. It is quite too bony for your

alimentary canal and has already fed your mind, heart, and muscle.

Now cast your line far out to where that tarpon rolled. Perhaps he will take the fly, and then you will barter fly and line for one beautiful leap, the sight of which will be well worth all it costs, for your reel holds less line than will be called for by the rush of the "silver king."

No use to cast for that flying beauty with the big wings and a back spotted

like a leopard. He is a whip ray and lives on mollusks whose shells his quartz-crusher jaws pulverize without effort.

That ugly fish with the big fin and the cruel mouth would never find it out if you chanced to hook him. He is called the tiger of the seas, but is really a low-down, cowardly brute.

The great splashing around that bunch of little fish is made by cavalries. One of them will take your hook with anything you choose to put on it and you will get it back with the fish, after strenuous effort that may consume hours. From the back of the cavalry, at the base of the dorsal fin, you may cut the curious "lucky bone" and insure your own good fortune, at the cost of his, while from the flesh of this dark-meated fish you may cut steaks that will remind you of tender beef.

Sometimes I take a light Canadian canoe and with my boatman paddle out through the pass to fish in the surf, hoping thus to keep dry. It doesn't always work that way. The boatman has learned to sit low in the canoe and exert himself mightily to keep it at right angles to breaking waves, and I have been taught to choose weather that is fair for tempting the surf with so frolicsome a craft. When a wave really catches a canoe broadside on, however, and breaks over it, it bumps it heavily on the

sand, rolls it over, with its passengers inside, and fills both full of sand in a negligible fraction of a second.

Most fish on the Florida coast will rise to a fly. I have taken from one to a dozen varieties at every pass between Cedar Keys and Cape Sable. Some can be caught at any season, but number and variety are greatest late in the spring. Yet all are subject to moods, the secret of which I have not fathomed. At times they require more coaxing than a balky horse, at others you can't keep them away with a club. There are mackerel days, sea-trout days, and ladies' days. On one of the latter, at Little Gasparilla Pass, my score was two channel bass, four cavalries, one sea trout, and thirty-nine ladyfish. The mackerel were kept for the table and the rest turned loose as they were caught. On the following day at the same place not a fish could be coaxed to rise. I have seen Mr. Herbert Johnston and the late Dr. Trowbridge catch 5- to 8-pound channel bass by the light of the moon at Sarasota Pass. In the bay of the same name the latter captured from his light canoe, handled by himself, a 22-pound channel bass and a 16-pound cavalry, all on light fly rods. The late Dr. Ferber, dean of fly fishermen on the Florida coast, coaxed to his rod every species of fish to be found in the Homosassa River, from the so-called freshwater trout, or big-mouthed black bass, down to the worthless gar and tiny needlefish. His record as a fisherman was handicapped by his conscience, for he habitually carried a tape.

Ladyfish, or skipjacks, keep where the water is swiftest and if it is their hour for feeding will often meet the fly before it touches the water. Mangrove snappers collect under wooded banks in deep water and hide in hollow sunken logs, but when the spirit moves, show greediness in their dash for the fly.

The cavalry may be traced by the trouble he makes in schools of smaller fish and is then pretty sure to take any-

thing in the likeness of a fly that is cast within his reach.

The sluggish sheepshead rarely comes out from under his old wreck unless something more seductive than a bunch of feathers is tendered him, yet he has occasionally been taken on a fly.

Mullet can be taken on a fly rod only by snagging them, after which they display a spirit worthy of a game fish. At Little Sarasota Pass, where a school of mullet with their little sucker mouths lifted to the surface of the water were absorbing some floating scum, I caught eleven of them by casting flies at their mouths until the hooks caught in their lips.

Bluefish are commonly found just outside the passes. They are usually small and fall easy victims to a satisfactory fly.

Ravallia lurk in the shadow of the grass in shallow bays and streams. They take the fly well and are strong fighters.

Shark and jewfish can only be reached by the fly through an intermediary. In Estero Bay, a small red shark swallowed a cavalry that I was playing and then gave me an acrobatic exhibition by leaping like a tarpon several feet out of the water many times.

The ladyfish and tarpon always jump out of the water while being played; the kingfish usually jumps as he strikes, but not afterward; the Spanish mackerel rarely leaps above the surface. Excepting a few unimportant small fish, I remember no other fly-taking acrobats among the many gamy fish of the coast.

The fly rod for saltwater fishing should weigh at least 8 ounces and be very stiff. A multiplying reel, carrying one hundred yards of heavy line, is not too large. Many of the fish could be captured with a 4-ounce rod, but the process would be a dreary one, lacking the excitement of a well-proportioned contest. The latter would require the more powerful weapon.

Poetic friends have deplored my fancied loss of sentiment for the brooks

and the mountains, as if appreciation of the beauty of the one and the grandeur of the other could be lessened because for a time I revel in the quiet beauty of the open sea and take present delight in a broader horizon and the changing glory of storm and clouds.

On a certain day, which, as I learned later, was the one following the great cyclone that swept the Gulf Coast and devastated Mobile and Pensacola, the beach at Gasparilla Pass was alternately dazzling in the sun, and dark in the shadow of the blackest of clouds. As I walked along the beach, flocks of hundreds of gulls and white and brown pelicans rose and flew around me, seemingly stopping to pose when the background of clouds was most effective. Atmospheric brilliancy went to the brain of the cameraman and in his craze for "human interest" in his pictures, he interfered with my fishing by embarrassing requests. "A few feet farther forward, please," and I stepped off a bank up to my waist in water, and as the next roller lifted me from my feet I inquired if there existed any artistic objection to my swimming occasionally, if the water got above my nose.

The clouds over the Gulf grew thicker, darker, and massed themselves into a black, whirling column that promised a coming waterspout, when through haste in changing holders, a plate broke loose inside the camera, choking its machinery, to the despair of the cameraman who had watched many days for the effect he was now losing, with a dozen fresh plates in his hands all aching to be exposed. He sat down in the wet sand and worked nervously until a solid wall of approaching rain threatened to flood his camera and drown him. As we fled to the shelter of our cruising boat he expressed himself in language which, although perhaps adequate to the occasion, seemed to me unbecoming in an artist and a fisherman.





1. Early epoxy fly found by Ken Vanderlaske; 2. Cockroach, tied by Lefty Kreh;
3. Janssen's Half Beak, tied by Hal Janssen; 4. White Deceiver, tied by Lefty
Kreh; 5. Janssen's Striper Fly, tied by Hal Janssen.

Innovative Saltwater Flies: A History

by Bob Veverka

IN JANUARY 1999, Stackpole Books will release Innovative Saltwater Flies, a new book by Bob Veverka, renowned fly tyer and fly fisher. The book is a collection of flies organized by tyer, with background information on each tyer's saltwater fishing experience and the development of his or her favorite patterns. To set the scene, Veverka included a chapter dealing with the history of the sport. We'd like to share that chapter with you in this issue.

—EDITOR

SALTWATER FLY FISHING dates back to the late 1800s. At that time, anglers were fishing with large Atlantic salmon flies because no saltwater flies were available. The earliest saltwater patterns can be traced back to striped bass in the Northeast, bonefish and tarpon in Florida, and Pacific salmon in the Northwest.

Two of the earliest patterns on record are the Loving's Bass Fly, tied by Tom Loving in the 1920s especially for striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay, and the Bonbright Tarpon Fly, designed by Howard Bonbright and sold by Abercrombie & Fitch in the early 1920s.

An outstanding pioneer saltwater fly caster and early experimenter was Homer Rhode. Rhode tells of taking his first bonefish and permit on regulation fly tackle in 1930. An Everglades naturalist, Rhode roamed the Florida backcountry canals and boated and waded the shallow waters of Florida Bay, often for months at a time. He originated the Homer Rhode Jr. Tarpon Streamer. In his book *Streamers and Bucktails*, Joe Bates states, "This was the first established type of pattern and the forerunner of all tarpon streamers." With long

hackles tied in at the hook point, it proved to be less apt to foul, and its palmered hackle caused the fly to land light and sink slow, the hallmark of a shallow-water tarpon fly. Rhode also experimented with long shank hooks. By putting in two forty-five-degree angle bends, he found that the hook would fish inverted and thus not snag on the bottom. This is what we know today as the keel fly hook. He also originated the Homer Rhode loop knot.

Harold Gibbs of Rhode Island tied one of the first saltwater flies to actually imitate a specific baitfish. Harold and his brother Frank fished in Canada for Atlantic salmon, but during World War II, gas was so scarce they had to find fishing closer to home. Harold tied a bucktail wing streamer that imitated a silverside, a baitfish found on the East Coast. It was an instant success, and the fly we know today as the Gibbs Striper Fly was born. Gibbs promoted the sport of striped bass fishing and personally pioneered fly fishing for this game fish. He also popularized the Magog Smelt as a striped bass fly. Originated by Frier Gulline of Fin, Fur and Feather in Montreal, this fly was used for landlocked

salmon in Lake Memphremagog on the Quebec/Vermont border; it represented a smelt, a common baitfish found in that lake.

This is purely speculation on my part, but perhaps here was the idea that gave Gibbs the foundation for his pattern. Gibbs fished in Canada and was familiar with the Magog Smelt, which looks remarkably similar to the Gibbs Striper Fly. Gibbs tied his fly in a few different versions. Some of the similarities to Gulline's fly are three bunches of bucktail in the wing, teal cheeks, and a red throat. When Gibbs fished in the salt, he drew on his vast knowledge of salmon and trout fishing to successfully fly fish for striped bass. Gibbs originated his fly in the early 1940s, whereas Gulline tied his flies as far back as the 1930s.

Harold's brother Frank also tied flies and originated the Bluefish Bucktail. Also at this time, Edward Materne originated the Pig Tails, and Harvey Flint originated the Palmer Diller.

As far back as 1936 on the West Coast, Letcher Lambuth was experimenting with imitations of specific baitfish for Pacific salmon in Puget



1. Pink Shrimp, tied by Jimmie Albright; 2. Frankee-Belle, tied by Jimmie Albright; 3. Magog Smelt, tied by Mike Martinek; 4. Gibbs Striper Fly, tied by Mike Martinek; 5. Bluefish Fly, tied by Peter Sang; 6. Sandeel, tied by Don Brown; 7. Silverside, tied by Don Brown; 8. Horror, tied by Pete Perinchief.

Sound. He began to study what fish actually feed on by viewing baitfish in glass tanks. When he held the baitfish in his hand, he noticed that their colors were different than when hit by light in the water. He found herring to have an opalescent quality he could only capture with blended polar bear hair over silver tinsel bodies. It is likely that he was the angler/tyer who led the move to more realistic polar bear streamers. He would observe live candlefish and herring in his tanks while drawing streamer flies through it and try to match the baitfish's color. His candlefish and herring patterns became standards and are used widely today.

Saltwater fly casting for Pacific salmon enjoyed perhaps its widest popularity and greatest number of practitioners in the mid-1930s. But World War II came along, and when it was over, the interest was never quite the same.

After World War II, Joe Brooks became a leader in saltwater flies and fishing. Joe started fishing in the salt in the 1920s, but it wasn't until after the war that it really caught on. In *Salt Water Fly Fishing* magazine, Charlie Waterman writes, "Joe Brooks never invented saltwater fly fishing, but he made it move." In 1946, Brooks, fishing with guide Jimmie Albright, made the first attempt to catch a bonefish on a fly. They succeeded and became instant experts. Albright strongly influenced the development of bonefish flies. According to Brooks, Albright's Frankee-Belle "was one of the earliest patterns tied for bonefish," and it remains popular today.

Who actually tied the first bonefish fly is not clear. According to Dick Brown in *Flyfishing for Bonefish*, not until Captain Bill Smith plucked the hackle off the back end of an Islamorada chicken, tied it to a hook, and took his now-famous 1939 bonefish, had anyone designed a pattern for bonefish.

Brooks also tied flies, but most of his ideas were incorporated into flies by other tyers. His most popular flies were the Blonde series. The first two Blonde patterns, the Platinum and Honey Blonde, were originated by Joe and Tom Cooney. Another tyer who did a lot of work with Brooks, and tied many of his flies, was Bill Gallasch of Skipping Bug fame. Bill was a freshwater tyer until he met Joe. In 1948, Brooks caught a West Coast striper weighing 29 pounds, 10 ounces at Coos Bay, Oregon, on a popping bug, a world record at the time.

One of Joe Brooks's favorite bonefish

flies was the Pink Shrimp tied by George Phillips. Phillips varied the amounts of bucktail and dressed the fly on different size hooks to control the sink rate. Its one drawback was that it snagged on the bottom. Phillips tried to correct this and make it weedproof by palmering the body with stiff hackle. This problem wouldn't be corrected until Pete Perinchief, while fishing with Brooks, became so frustrated with his flies snagging on the bottom that he developed a most important feature. Taking an idea from a weedless freshwater fly, he originated the Horror, a fly with the wing on the reverse side which, when dropped in the water, flips on its back with the hook pointing up. The wing works like a rudder, turning the fly over and also serving as a weed guard. His design is now standard on bonefish flies and his original pattern is still a popular fly.

The second most important development in the design of the bonefish fly came with Bob Nauheim's Crazy Charlie, created in the Bahamas in the late 1970s. Drawing from his steelhead fly-tying experience, Nauheim tied a pair of metal bead-chain eyes on a hook, which enabled the fly to sink to the bottom fast. The eyes also helped flip the fly so the hook rode point up, making it snagproof, and added an up-and-down action, making it sink naturally and quickly to the fish's level. The Crazy Charlie was the prototype for many variations of bead-chain-eyes bonefish flies tied today.

Nat Ragland also contributed to the development of bonefish flies when he created Puff, using chenille in the head and body to cushion its landing so it's less likely to spook fish. This was one of the first patterns tied for permit. These features—sink rate, action, snagproofing, and a quiet landing—are all key attributes of what we now know as a bonefish fly.

Joe Brooks's articles in fishing magazines had an enormous effect on saltwater fly fishing. He influenced two other early saltwater fly fishers and tyers—Lefty Kreh and Stu Apte. Lefty Kreh, an avid smallmouth bass fisherman from Maryland, recalls that one of his most important moments was when he met Joe Brooks. When Lefty began fishing in the salt water around the Chesapeake Bay in the 1950s, he wanted a fly shaped like a baitfish that swam well and cast with little wind resistance. In the early 1960s, he originated the Lefty's Deceiver, probably the most popular saltwater fly.

Stu Apte was another who fished

with Joe Brooks and looked to him as a mentor. During high school and college, Stu tied simple bucktails and, to earn money for fishing gear, sold them as bonefish flies. He started guiding in the Florida Keys in the late 1950s, just as the modern era of saltwater fly fishing was becoming popular. Apte has fished widely and holds many records. He changed the design of Keys-style flies, tying them less than 3 inches long. His Stu Apte Tarpon Fly, originated in 1969, was considered one of the best at the time and is still widely used. Tied with red and yellow, it resembles the tarpon's favorite food, the Palolo worm.

Woody Sexton guided in the Florida Keys from 1959 to 1988. He and Jim Adams headed out of California for Florida with a small aluminum boat filled with fishing gear. When they arrived, they saw hundreds of schools of tarpon. Flies were very primitive at the time. They used simple bucktails, and because almost anything worked, there was no need to develop more elaborate patterns. The tackle back then was also rather crude, and the tarpon were very docile, not the spooky, skitterish creatures they have become. According to Woody, one of the best tarpon flies at that time was the High Tie originated by Bart Foth. It cast well, landed lightly, and had a very seductive action.

During the early 1960s, Dr. Webster Robinson and his wife Helen, guided by Lefty Reagan, aimed to perfect the method for taking a billfish on a fly by using teaser bait to lure the fish to the artificial fly. Robinson wasn't successful until 1962 in Pinas Bay, Panama, where he landed the first Pacific sailfish on a fly—it weighed 74½ pounds. Robinson used a homemade Styrofoam combination popper-streamer built around a 7/0 hook with white saddle hackles about 4 inches long and a white Styrofoam head about 1 inch long, chopped off square to ensure popping action. This type of fly is widely used today. Others who successfully incorporated Robinson's method for teasing billfish include Stu Apte and Billy Pate. In 1964 off Islamorada, Florida, Lee Cuddy landed the first Atlantic sailfish on a fly. It weighed 47 pounds.

During the early 1960s, many tyers started tying saltwater flies. One pioneer was Bill Catherwood of Tewksbury, Massachusetts, originator of the Giant Killer series. Catherwood's flies initiated the shift from attractors to imitators. He used spun deerhair heads to give his baitfish patterns a three-dimensional shape. He studied colors of baitfish and



1. Silversides, tied by Joseph D. Bates; 2. Tinker Mackerel, tied by Bill Catherwood; 3. Golden Prince, tied by Joseph D. Bates; 4. Needlefish, tied by Bill Catherwood.

used dyed materials to achieve the realistic look of squid, shrimp, and crabs. Dan Blanton was another fly originator during the 1960s who created the Whistler series in 1964 for striped bass in the San Francisco Bay area. He incorporated bead-chain eyes to give the fly a bucktail jig action.

Hal Janssen, a brilliant tyer and an artist when it comes to saltwater flies, originated the Janssen Striper Fly and the Half Beak, which imitates a balao. Bob Edgely and Dan Blanton originated the Sea Arrow Squid. Larry Green, a leading angler and writer, originated the Bonito Bandit and beer-belly-fashioned flies for bonito off the California coast. Another pioneer, Harry Kime, created the Tutti-Fruitti, a squid pattern used to tease billfish, and numerous patterns for Costa Rican tarpon and offshore fish in Baja. Bob Nauheim modeled his West Coast striper flies Bay Tern and Sea Tern after the Gibbs Striper Fly. The Winston Billfish Fly by Winston Moore has taken numerous marlin and sailfish. Moore says in Deke Meyer's *Saltwater Flies*, "It is not a work of art but it certainly is effective." Moore also developed the Agent Orange, which he claims is one of his best bonefish flies. In 1966, Russell Chatham broke the world record for striped bass with a 36-pound, 6-ounce fish from San Francisco Bay using an 8-inch black streamer. Ned Gray developed the Streaker, the first fly to incorporate a pair of peacock sword feathers for the wing, for fishing in Baja, Mexico, where he caught a 50-pound roost-erfish on it. East Coast tyers of this era include Al Brewster, one of Harold Gibbs's fishing cronies; Paul Kukonen, who fished early shrimp patterns in Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island, for weakfish; Joe Bates, who fished extensively and promoted spincasting when it was first introduced and authored many books on all types of fishing; and Elmwood "Cap" Colvin, who operated a tackle shop along the New Jersey coast, encouraged many to try saltwater fly fishing, and developed the Kaboom-boom poppers, named after the sound they make.

Frank Woolner was the editor of *Salt Water Sportsman* magazine and very knowledgeable about northeastern fly fishing. Fishing mostly on Cape Cod, he originated Woolner's Sandeel, which features neck hackles with the tip removed and inserted into Mylar piping as a tail. Many tyers now incorporate this feature in their baitfish patterns. One of Woolner's fishing partners, Hal

Lyman, another editor of *Salt Water Sportsman*, originated Lyman's Terror. In 1970, George X. Sand published *Saltwater Fly Fishing*, one of the first books to deal strictly with the sport. Two years later, Kenneth E. Bay's *Salt Water Flies* became the first to deal strictly with saltwater flies and how to tie them. During the 1970s, Peter B. Sang of Percy Tackle Company in Portland, Maine, also developed a sandeel pattern, the Percy Sandeel, while Don Brown of Massachusetts originated his Silversides and Brown Sandeel.

Around the same time, George "Chappie" Chapman enlarged his smallmouth bass poppers, added pearlescent tape, and began using them for striped bass. The first time he saw Mylar piping, he knew exactly how he was going to use it. Chapman's Mylar-Covered Poppers have taken numerous offshore and inshore species.

Another true saltwater fly innovator is Bob Popovics, who started tying saltwater flies in 1971. Striving to make a fly durable enough for toothy bluefish, he originated a style of flies with the heads and bodies covered with epoxy. Not only did the epoxy make the fly more durable, it also allowed tyers to set the shape of any baitfish they wished to duplicate. He originated the Surf Candies, Bob's Bangers, and his most recent, the Spread Flies, which have the silhouette of large-bodied baitfish. Another tyer to experiment with epoxy is Harry Spear, a flats guide in the Florida Keys. His Mother of Epoxy was the first epoxy fly to draw the attention of bonefish anglers.

During the late 1980s, saltwater tying innovation really took off. In his 1987 *Book of Fly Patterns*, Eric Leiser writes, "The saltwater category of flies is still a wide open area with many new opportunities for pioneering." Some of the true innovators of this time were Matty Vinciguerra, who developed the Salty Beady Eye, and Larry Dahlberg, whose revolutionary Dahlberg Diver dives, swims, and resurfaces like a spinning lure. Dahlberg learned much about fly design by studying the attracting and triggering attributes of artificial lures.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, many Western trout fly tyers took off to fish the bonefish flats in the winter. Mike Wolverton created his Flats Master, and Craig Mathews developed new patterns while chasing bonefish and permit in Belize and the Bahamas, including Pop's Bonefish Bitters and the Turneffe Crab.

Many tyers tried to devise crab pat-

terns to catch the elusive permit. Dave Whitlock developed the clipped Deer-Hair Crab. George Anderson, with the help of John Barr and Jim Brungardt, designed one of the first flies to take permit consistently, the McCrab. Del Brown used rug yarn for the body of his Merkin. It isn't a realistic pattern, but it looks enough like a crab and is effective because of the way it dives to the bottom. Many Florida Keys guides use it, and Del's permit count certainly confirms that it works. Tied in small sizes, it is also a good bonefish fly. Other successful crab patterns include Phil Chapman's Hair-Ball and Infuraytor. Tied with rabbit fur, they hang suspended in the water with lots of action. Bill Catherwood has a unique crab pattern. Tied articulated, it takes on a defensive stance when at rest on the bottom. Another novel crab pattern is Krohel's Permit Krab by Ken Krohel, which he creates using hot glue, shaped cork, rubber bands, a diving fin, and an outer shell of leather. Tim Borski ties his Chernobyl Crab with long, soft, tan hackle much like a spey fly. He likes the action of the long hackle and uses it in many of his patterns. Carl Richards has taken crab patterns to the extreme. These truly artistic flies look as if they could crawl off the tying bench.

In 1992, Randall Kaufmann published *Bonefishing with a Fly*. Having fished from Venezuela to Christmas Island, Kaufmann claims to have studied, collected, dissected, designed, redesigned, ordered, sold, explained, demonstrated, and dreamed flies for thirty years, a mania that has led to better and more efficient fishing and tying. His patterns include Pink Sands and Marabou Shrimp. Other bonefish patterns include Jim McVay's Gotcha, a standard on Bahama bonefish flats; Jim Orthwein's Jim's Golden Eye Shrimp, which accounted for three bonefish fly records; and Barry and Cathy Beck's Silli-Legs. One of the most versatile, popular, and effective saltwater patterns is the Clouser Minnow, developed by Bob Clouser for smallmouth bass. According to Bob, "An effective smallmouth bass fly should have a darting motion and must sink as the fly is dead-drifted or between strips."

The Clouser Minnow mimics this fleeting trait—the fly never stops. ~

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Taking Tarpon With a Fly

by George D. B. Bonbright

From *The Sportsman*, September 1929

FLY FISHING for tarpon is not a new idea. It has been known for many years that, under certain conditions, tarpon, especially the smaller ones, can be taken in this way. I can remember reading several interesting articles telling of the great sport to be had in Panama fishing for small tarpon, and in *The Book of the Tarpon*, Mr. Dimock tells thrilling tales of big and little fish taken on the fly.

Being an ardent fly fisherman for salmon and trout, I was tremendously interested in everything I could learn on this subject; but, as a matter of fact, I could find very little definite information from sources I had available. However, on numerous fishing trips to Florida during the last few years, I have gathered considerable data pertaining

to the details and tackle best suited for the taking of these wonderful fish on the fly, and I am tempted to set these down in the hope that fellow fishermen and friends may, perhaps, more easily find success, and enjoy the great thrill and sport which has come to me in my last two trips to the east coast of Florida.

First of all, as to the fish itself: a tarpon has always thrilled me, even from my first attempts at still fishing on the west coast more than thirty years ago. To me, there is something about the wild, unbridled leap of the tarpon when first hooked that, as a sporting experience, puts it in a class by itself. Many a day I have started out to fish for sailfish, or perhaps planned a day for bonefish, but the chance sight of a rolling tarpon has changed it all for me and, if I had any choice in the matter, tarpon fishing I would go.

I first hooked a tarpon on a fly on one of the upper reaches of St. Lucie River. There was one spot there called Tarpon Pool where a few fish seemed to stay all through the winter months. I just lived with those fish, trying every

bait I ever heard of to get one to bite, but without success, until one day I took out a heavy trout rod, and with a large fly began casting for snook, a number of which I had seen break water near by. I got no snook, but I did have a 50-pound tarpon do his best to get the fly. He startled me so that I pulled it away, and he would not come again. However, I did hook two tarpon that season up around Tarpon Pool. One bit the heavy gut leader in two, and the second disappeared in the depths just as we were attempting to gaff him, the leader having pulled off the end of the casting line. I made up my mind then and there to go after tarpon in earnest with a fly at the first opportunity, and began planning flies and tackle that I thought might prove suitable for the work.

My most recent trip was in the latter part of May of this year. We were met at Long Key by Captain Walter Starck and his comfortable cruising house boat, *Norma II*, and we enjoyed ten wonderful days. Our party of four, using live bait and artificial shrimp, landed sixty big tarpon, the average weight probably

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Photography by Julian A. Dimock, from *Florida
Enchantments*. New York: The Outing Publishing
Company, 1908.

being close to 100 pounds, and the largest tipping the scales at 160 pounds. In addition, I landed sixty-two fish, all on a fly, the average weight of these being about 20 pounds. The big fish usually stay in the large, deeper passes, and for that reason are not so easily taken on a fly. They will come after it if they can see it, but they are hard to get to the surface. Except for a few fish, kept for mounting and photographing, all were released to live and bite another day. The best places in Florida to catch tarpon on a fly are the smaller passes both above and below Long Key. The fish hang quite close to the openings in the trestle of the Florida East Coast Railway, each opening forming a pool in itself and holding generally from one to a dozen fish that have taken their position to feed on the luckless small fry coming through with the tide. With clear water and a bright day, one can see these fish. It is an interesting fact that tarpon are easily frightened, and it is not often that one can hook more than one or two from a single arch. A jumping fish seems to act as a warning to the others that all is not well, and they will not bite again until rested. In this connection, we have found that, even in somewhat larger passes, we seldom get good tarpon fishing two days in succession. The only exception to this appears to be in the Bahia Honda, where the taking of any number of fish seems to make no difference in their biting on the next tide. Of course, the Bahia Honda is an extremely wide, deep pass, and there are times when, on windy days, it gets much too rough for canoe fishing. Fishing must then be done from launches, although this method is not as satisfactory.

The equipment for fly-fishing must be carefully chosen if one is to have any success at all. A few trout may be taken on almost any kind of tackle, but this cannot be done with tarpon. First of all, one should have a short, stiff rod, 9 feet to 9 feet, 3 inches, weighing 10 to 11 ounces, preferably with two joints, although three will answer the purpose. The rod should have a small handle below the reel seat. One might land a 20-pound tarpon on a 4-ounce trout rod, but the rod would not stand many encores; and if

you should happen, as I did this last spring, to hook an occasional 85-pounder, you would find the 11-ounce rod quite small enough. The first of these big fish was on for about fifteen minutes, jumped seven times, and finally threw the hook out. This fish went where he pleased, and we had very little control over him. The second, hooked in a small pass and in fairly shallow water, seemed exhausted after fifteen minutes of wild running and jumping. We had worked our canoe close to the shore, and my boatman had jumped overboard to take hold of the wire leader with the idea of beaching him, when the hook tore out and the fish slowly swam away. We could have gaffed this last fish if we had wished to. A salmon rod, or a long rod of any kind, is not good in a canoe; it is hard to handle and you cannot get near your fish or get hold of your leader. For a reel, we use Edward Vom Hofe Tobique 2/0 with forty yards of heavy, level, size D, waterproof line, and lots of backing. The leader should be of fine wire with a very small swivel on the end of the wire to which the line is attached.

The fly is the most important item of the equipment. There may be, and is, a great difference of opinion as to why a salmon takes a fly, but there can be no doubt that a tarpon takes it because he thinks it is something good to eat. Inasmuch as he feeds largely on shrimp and minnows, it is necessary to approach in appearance one or both of these as near as possible. For the same reason, any fly for tarpon should be fished rather deep with a shrimplike movement and not drawn on the surface. The fly that I have named Tarpon White seems to meet all requirements and, I think, will raise fish if anything will. This fly is the result of much experimenting and many changes. It is a wonderfully showy

fly in the water, with silver body and flexible white wings, a strip of golden pheasant crest on each side to add glint and reflect light, then a red feather for the gills and jungle cock for the eye, and, last of all, a touch of red in the tail to suggest blood on a wounded minnow.

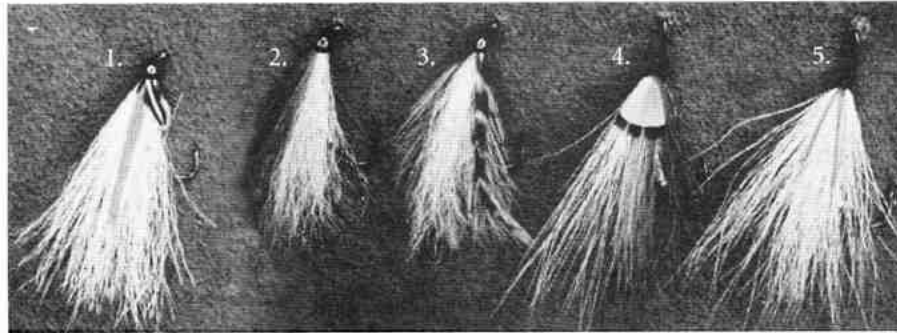
The Lady Amherst, a fly which has proved a great success for salmon on the Grand Cascapedia River, has also been found very successful with tarpon. These patterns were tied for me by Messrs. Forest & Sons of Kelsoe, Scotland, and are tied on a long-shanked hook 2¹¹/₁₆ and 3¹/₄ inches in length, with a 5/0 bend of hook. This gives a long, showy fly with the advantage of reasonably small wire that penetrates easily. The ordinary hook of this length would be an 8/0 or a 9/0.

In playing the fish, it will be found advisable to wear a glove on the left hand, so that you can hold the line without its cutting your fingers as it slips through. Even the heavy brake on these reels is, at times, not sufficient pressure to stop a tarpon. Other fish take the fly as well as tarpon and there will be times when it will be necessary to hold the line and let something break. A case of this kind happened to me this spring. I had just hooked a snapper about 4 pounds in weight, when there was a tremendous swirl in the water and the fin of a large shark appeared. There was not much argument as to who got the snapper, for that shark weighed 500 pounds, if he weighed an ounce. He must have been surprised at the strength of the snapper when it took a forty-pound pull on my part to break him loose.

It is an interesting fact that tarpon will leap to almost unbelievable heights. The opening in the trestle is fully fifteen feet high, and there are times when the fish seem to go up level with the top of these openings.

When fishing with a fly, the number of tarpon landed compared to the number of strikes is small, but to me the thrill of seeing the silver kings take the fly and the realization that the fight is a more evenly balanced one more than compensates for the weight of the larger fish, and I heartily recommend this type of fishing to any fellow sportsman. ~





1-3: Harvey Flint Striped Bass Flies. 4, 5: Sure Strike Striped Bass Flies.

Fly Casting

by Harlan Major

From *Salt Water Fishing Tackle* ~ New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1948

FOR TOO LONG has the fly rod been considered the exclusive tool of the freshwater fisherman. It is true that when casting a fly into salt water, the consideration of flies which are hatching at that time is not involved. Nor is this always true of the freshwater angler. Often he takes his trout or bass with flies or gadgets that resemble nothing of the fish's natural diet. It is this undefined interest in small bits of color, reflections, or intriguing activity which can be used to tempt many of the surface-feeding salt-water fish as well as their freshwater cousins. Our thousands of miles of coastline with their bays and inlets furnish unlimited opportunity for the lover of the fly rod. Many of the close-in feeders have the reputation of not being gamy, but this is because we have seen these fish captured by those whose main interest was pounds of fish instead of sport. With the tackle they use, a trout would show about as much activity as a dishrag.

I realize that, to a freshwater purist, belittling the fighting ability of a trout

is like waving a red rag before a bull, and I wish to make clear that I too have great respect for the trout and many of his freshwater neighbors. For those who believe that gameness is found only in lakes and streams, however, I would advise that as a part of their education they take the following cure. I have administered this cure to many who formerly would respect nothing taken from salt water. My saltwater leanings have made my salty finned friends the subject of many disrespectful gibes.

The cure consists of an invitation to fish for almost any of the small varieties found along our coasts. Mackerel or bluefish are both good medicine. Unless the patient has been unusually nasty in his remarks, I advise him to bring along only his oldest and most battered fly rods. We fish from a dock, float, rowboat, or go offshore, depending on what fish we wish to meet. The lures may consist of flies or fly-rod spinners or plugs. I try to find fish of about the same size as those he is accustomed to taking. The fish on

which he is about to demonstrate are not aided in their struggles by convenient rocks and logs to snag the line. The current of the water seldom is strong enough to accelerate their speed. These fish will gain their freedom or room in the fish box only by their own ability. The routine is about the same with most patients. The health certificate is earned about the time of the first signs of sunburn, the capture of the second or third fish, and the breaking of one rod. The cure is acknowledged by the patient with complete apologies for all his belittling remarks.

Small tarpon have furnished the fly-rod enthusiast with the nearest to freshwater conditions. The rods used are similar in some ways to the salmon rod, but are shorter and stiffer. Nine and a half feet long, weighing about 9 ounces, they are double gripped and are mounted with agate guides. Heavy, multiple-action salmon reels are used, but these should be equipped with a nickel-silver spool instead of the regular aluminum one. Thirty yards of level B enamel silk line should be backed



*Harold Gibbs, George Heinold, and Harvey Flint with a striped bass caught at Mt. Hope Bay, Rhode Island.
From the collected production papers of Joseph D. Bates Jr.*

with 100 to 150 yards of thread linen line. The three-foot leader can be of very fine wire, nylon, or a combination of both. The Bonbright Tarpon Fly seems to be the most popular for this fishing. White streamer wings, jungle-cock shoulders, and silver body are tied with wire to O'Shaughnessy hooks in 4/0, 5/0, 6/0 and 7/0.

No sooner had the tarpon shown their liking for the artificial fly than striped bass demonstrated that they also were susceptible to its charms. Maximillian Foster unlimbered a heavy fly rod and was successful in taking several striped bass near Montauk Point. Other fishermen on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts were enthusiastic over the idea and managed to take some of these fish, but the catches were too few to keep the sport alive. Then Harold and Frank Gibbs of Rhode Island got interested in the idea and this time the striped bass met their match. The first year resulted in the taking of nearly 800 striped bass in the Gibbs's spare time. They were all taken with fly rods and fortunately for the

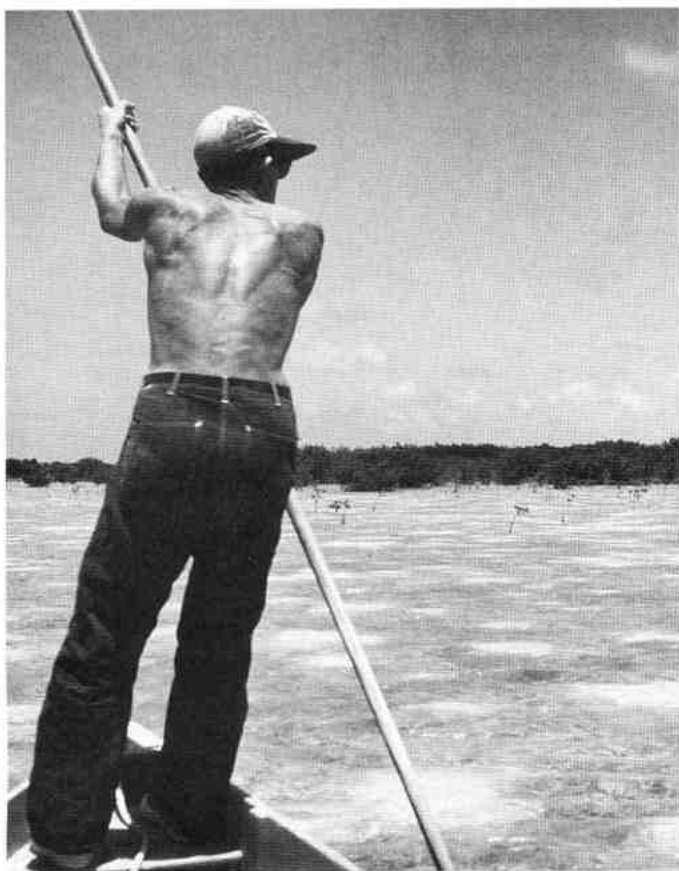
next generation of bass, most of these fish were returned to the water. The neighborhood fishermen were also fortunate because the Gibbs brothers were good sports about passing that valuable know-how along to anyone interested and Harvey Flint soon joined them.

The fact that these boys are taking so many striped bass does not mean that a greenhorn can go right out and make a killing. He must be a fisherman to keep pace with those Izaak Waltons and he must know his fish. There are no mysteries about the procedure, however. A stout 9-foot fly rod weighing about 6 ounces is just right. The rod action should be fast. The guides should be large enough for long casts and rust-proof. A single-action fly reel large enough to hold nearly a hundred yards of nine-thread linen line will be needed when a large striper is hooked. Be sure the reel will resist the action of salt water. A twelve-pound nylon leader slightly shorter than the rod completes this part of the tackle. The most productive flies should imitate whatever small fish the stripers are feeding on.

Needless to say, these will usually be light in color, tied long with a touch of blue. The hooks are medium-long shank No. 2 Sproat.

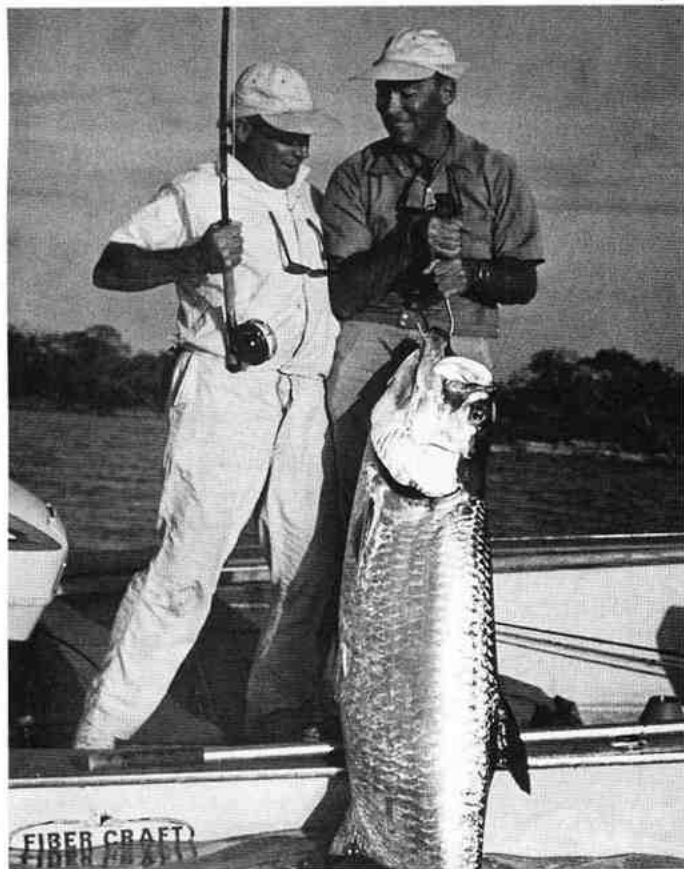
Striped bass seem to take the fly best along the edge of fast-moving tidal water. This can be in inlets or rivers, around projections of land, near bridge or pier pilings, any place where the flow of the water makes an active rip. The daytime Rhode Island fishing is good during the early part of the season, but from then on night fishing—that is, from a half hour before sunset until a half hour after sunrise—is best. The cast should be slightly downstream. The retrieve is fast during daylight, but after dark it should be very slow.

The followers of the saltwater fly rod need not limit their activities to the heavier type. There are scores of fish that are able to satisfy the most ardent light-tackle enthusiast. He should, however, avoid reels or rod mountings such as snake guides and aluminum reels, which cannot get along with salt water. ~



Poling the flats.

Stu Apte



Stu Apte lip-gaffs a tarpon for Lefty Kreh. The two are among the early innovative saltwater fly fishers and tyers. The fish was released.

Fishing Salt Water: A Midcentury Montage

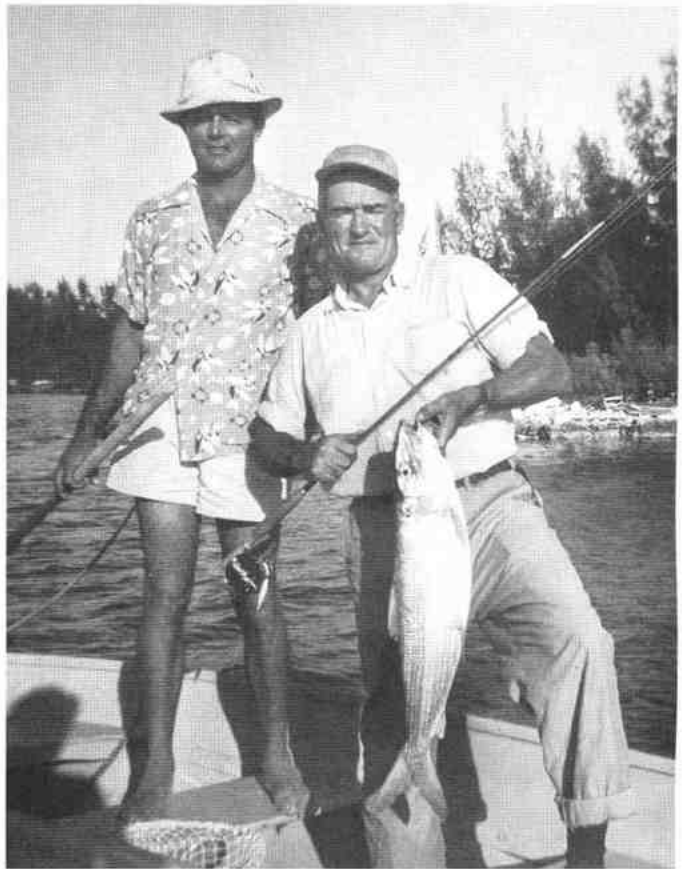


Joe Brooks's 1948 record striped bass—29 pounds, 10 ounces with a white streamer on an 8-ounce fly rod with a 12-pound line. Don Harger, Chandler Brown, and James Christensen.

These images come from the collected production papers of Joseph D. Bates Jr., recently donated to the Museum by his daughter, Trustee Pamela Bates Richards. Most of the photographs are not dated, but the ones shown here were taken during the middle decades of this century.



Striper taken in Coos Bay, Oregon. Brooks used a small popping bug with a test leader. Admiring the striper are Joe Bates Jr., Joe Brooks, and the pilot of the boat from which the striper was landed.



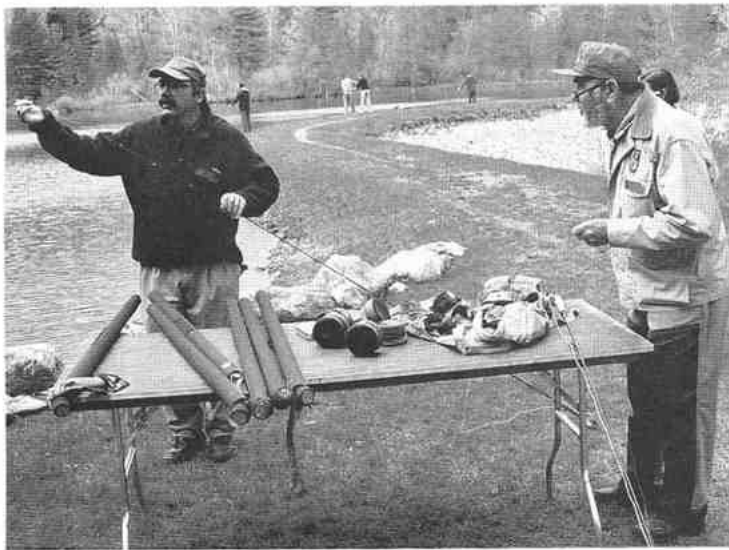
Joe Brooks and Jimmie Albright with bonefish. Brooks, fishing with Albright, caught the first bonefish on a fly in 1946.



Larry Green, western angler and writer, with flounder.



Alex Tisch, son of Board of Trustees President Richard Tisch and Wendy Tisch, was in charge of the leg band raffle.



Trustee Jamie Woods and Angus Black gear up at Equinox Pond.

Festival Weekend

THE MUSEUM'S ANNUAL festival weekend and open house was held May 8 and 9, beginning with a welcoming reception on Friday evening.

Saturday was filled with events that have become tradition at our yearly gathering: an open house featuring fly tyers Dick Lyons, Rich Norman, Peter Burton, Gene Liebhaber, and George Butts; bamboo rod-builder F. D. Kretchman; woodcarver Kurt Vitch; and artist Thomas Aquinas Daly, promoting his soon-to-be-released book, *The Art of Thomas Aquinas Daly: The Painting Season*. Trustee Jamie Woods and Angus Black were on hand for casting lessons at Equinox Pond. This year also featured a sporting collectibles show at the Equinox Hotel.

Saturday night's annual dinner/auction was held at the Equinox Hotel. This year's committee—Jim Lepage, Jean and Angus Black, Bill Bullock, Ted Ferree, G. Dick Finlay, Richard and Sabina LaTour, Joe McCusker, and Dawn Murray—brought us yet another successful event. Executive Director Gary Tanner acted as auctioneer for the live auction and was ably assisted by Sara Wilcox, Shane Sweet, Danny Welch, Paula Welch, Marsha Newsom-Byrne, and John Price. Karen Crafts, Dawn Murray, Ginny Newman, Alex Tisch, and Marianne Kennedy sold raffle tickets.

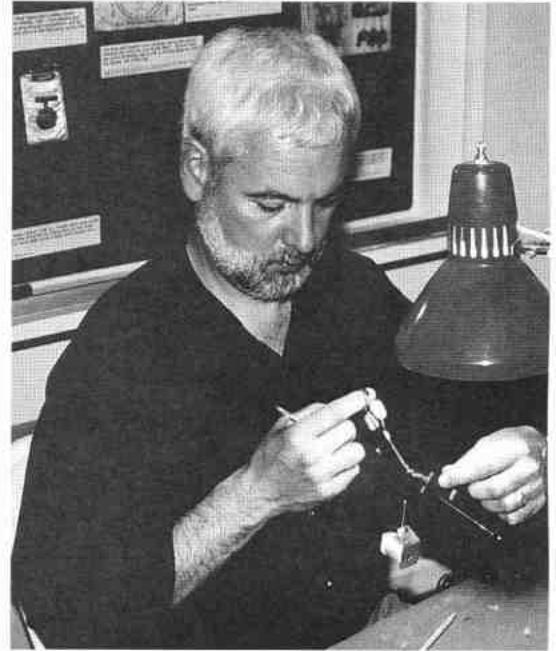
Time was set aside at the dinner to announce two awards. The 1997 Joe A. Pisarro Award was presented to Marsha Newsom-Byrne, and the 1997 Austin Hogan Award was presented to Frederick Buller (see Museum News).



Former Trustees Romi and Leigh Perkins at the silent auction.



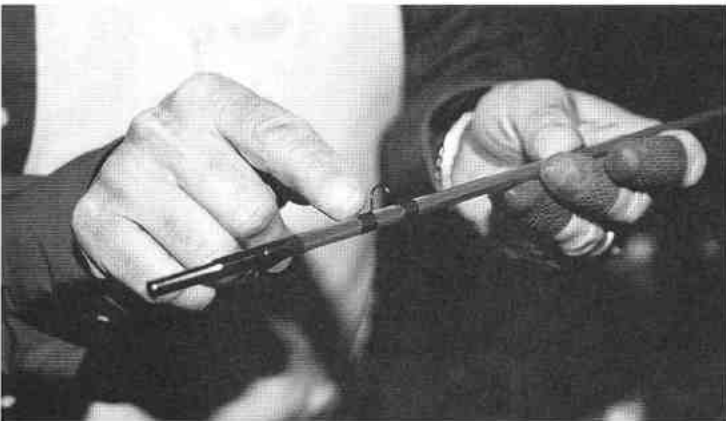
Auctioneer Gary Tanner digs deep to announce winners in the bucket raffle. His wife, Martha Tanner, assisted.



Fly tyer Rich Norman of Cambridge, New York, demonstrated his art at this year's open house.



The art of woodcarver Kurt Vitch.



Rodmaker Fred Kretchman points out some of the fine details of building a bamboo rod.



Carmine Lisella of Jordan-Mills Rod Company was among the vendors at the sporting collectibles show.

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As an independent, nonprofit institution, the American Museum of Fly Fishing relies on the generosity of public-spirited individuals for substantial support. We ask that you give our museum serious consideration when planning for gifts and bequests.

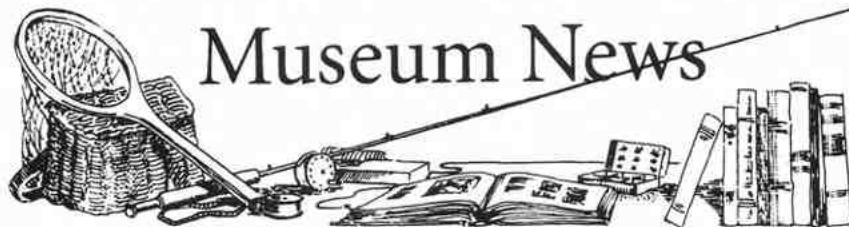
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- Volume 21, Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4
- Volume 22, Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4
- Volume 23, Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4
- Volume 24, Numbers 1, 2



Cheryl Wilcox



Sara Wilcox with Cinder.

New Staff

Sara Wilcox has joined the Museum staff as special projects coordinator. She began working one day a week in October and was brought on full time in March. A 1993 graduate of Smith College with a degree in English language and literature, Sara worked for almost five years at Northshire Bookstore here in Manchester before joining the Museum.

As special projects coordinator, Sara played a large role in planning the Museum's festival weekend, including coordination of its collectibles show.

In May, John Price became the Museum's new art director. In this position, John will take over the design and production of *The American Fly Fisher*. He brings years of experience in design, production, and printing, including time with *American Angler* magazine and the Orvis Company. John will help launch new Museum publications both in print and on the web. He will also be the contact person for advertising in this journal.

John steps in to replace Randall Perkins, who was with the Museum as designer of this journal for almost ten years. Randall has started her own publishing company, Gallery Press, which will specialize in design, production, and publishing in the fine arts.

Awards Presented

Two special awards were presented May 9 at the Museum's annual Manchester dinner/auction.

The 1997 Austin Hogan Award was awarded to Frederick Buller of Buckinghamshire, England. The award was established in 1985 to honor the memory of Austin Hogan, who founded the Museum's journal, *The American Fly Fisher*, in 1974. This year, the award honors contributions made by Buller to the journal since 1993. These include "The Earliest English Illustrations of an Angler" (Summer 1993), "Origin of the Reel" (Fall 1995), "The Macedonian Fly" (Fall 1996), and "The Earliest Fishing Reel: A New Perspective" (Summer 1997). The Spring 1998 issue featured his most recent contribution, "A Fourth-Century European Illustration of a Salmon Angler."

Frederick Buller is one of England's finest all-around anglers and is the author of several books, including the highly acclaimed *Pike*, and coauthor (with Hugh Falkus) of *Falkus & Buller's Freshwater Fishing*. He founded the gunmaking and fishing tackle company of Chubbs in London, and is now the managing director of the famous London gunmaking firm of Charles Hellis, Frederick Beesley and Watson Bros. Buller is happiest when fishing for trout and sea trout in the Irish loughs of Mayo and Galway.

The 1997 Joe A. Pizarro Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Marsha Newsom-Byrne of Manchester, Vermont. This award, which was named for the Museum's foremost volunteer and friend, was established in 1990 to recognize the time and effort of our volunteers, our most valuable resource.

Marsha Newsom-Byrne moved from Suffield, Connecticut, to Manchester in 1996 and began volunteering three days a week at the Museum in May 1997, staffing our gift shop and greeting visitors. She has found this a great way to meet people and be involved in the community. Marsha holds a degree in psychology and neuroscience from Trinity College and worked as a lab

instructor in those subjects there. She has a son and a daughter, now both in their twenties.

Spring Dinner/Auctions

Key Largo. The third Key Largo dinner/auction was held at the Ocean Reef Club on March 10. More than 150 guests attended the event, which was cosponsored by the Conservation Projects Committee of the Ocean Reef Rod & Gun Club. Committee chairman for this occasion was Trustee Tom Davidson. Other committee members included Jack Curlett, Bruce Miller, Henry Peddle, Joel Shepherd, and Bill Willson.

Whereas we are often fortunate to have one original painting for auction, here we were lucky enough to offer originals by C. D. Clarke, Peter Corbin, Thomas Aquinas Daly, M. P. Elliott, Luther K. Hall, Brett Smith, Mike Stidham, John Swan, George Van Hook, and Millard Wells. Fabulous trips to Chile, Christmas Island, and Africa were also offered, along with exquisite sculptures by Trustee Walt Matia and

Keys artist Kendall Vansant. It was certainly our most successful effort in Key Largo, and plans are already taking shape for a repeat performance.

Special thanks to Bob Ecuyer of the Ocean Reef Club and his superb staff for making this event not only a culinary delight, but also almost effortless for the Museum staff. Many thanks also to Mr. Davidson's assistant, Rose Michno, who spent countless hours coordinating this event in Florida.

New York. The Museum held its annual New York dinner/auction at the Anglers' Club of New York on March 25. Ian Mackay chaired the event, and Mary O'Malley and her staff once again outdid themselves, from mouthwatering *pâté hors d'oeuvres* to a poached salmon entree. Her Irish presence throughout the evening was pure delight.

The deluxe silent auction proved once again that our friends in the New York area are generous in their support of the Museum and its work. All in all, the intimacy of the club and the enthusiasm of the staff and guests made for a great evening. Everyone

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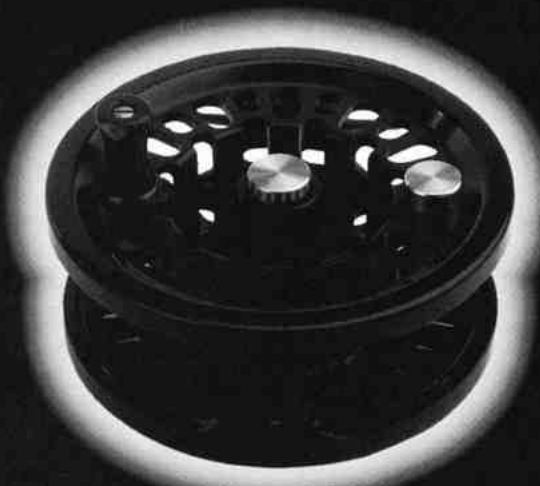
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This gallery, newly redecorated, hosts several new and related exhibits. Panels describing aspects of fish biology that make flies effective lures adorn the walls, along with framings of the flies discussed. The center case holds a century of fly-fishing history on our home river, the Battenkill. The wall case hosts a mini-exhibit on the history of the Hendrickson dry fly.

said goodnight having had a pleasant evening among friends, both old and new.

Cleveland. Our Cleveland dinner/auction was scheduled a few weeks early this year—April 2—in order to dovetail with the fly-tying symposium being held at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. The dinner kicked off the fishing-related weekend, and by working together to promote attendance, both organizations reaped the benefits.

Chair and Trustee Woods King III, as always, packed the room at the Country Club in Pepper Pike, Ohio, with a lively crowd of generous bidders. Director Gary Tanner was the auctioneer and remarked that he had never seen such an enthusiastic group. There was a great deal of laughter and banter throughout the evening, and everyone left with a positive, upbeat view of the Museum and the event.

Special thanks not only to Woods, but to Julie Anderson, who orchestrated the evening at the Country Club, and club-staffer Roe who single-handedly made the raffle a huge success.

Westford. The Museum's Boston and central Massachusetts events were combined this year, and on April 24, the dinner/auction was held at the Westford Regency, northwest of Boston. This

dinner is unique in that local conservation groups also participate with displays and literature to add interest to the evening. In fact, cocktails and appetizers were enjoyed to the background "music" of Ned Newton's exotic birds! Ned does a great deal of aviary conservation through the New England Aviculture Society. Larry Craig of the New England Saltwater Flyrodders also provided a wonderful display of their ongoing saltwater conservation efforts.

Special thanks to Trustee Pam Richards and active area member Bob Blain for their help with this successful event.

Back in Philadelphia

After a one-year hiatus, the Museum will resume its dinner/auction program in the Philadelphia area this October 1 with a gala event at the Merion Cricket Club. Former longtime dinner committee chairman and former Trustee Curt Hill of the Anglers' Club of Philadelphia and Eleanor Peterson of the Delaware Valley Women's Fly Fishing Association have joined forces with their respective club members to sponsor this event. Their combined talents and enthusiasm virtually guarantee that this dinner/auction will be the event of the fall season.

Invitations for this exciting evening will be in the mail by mid-August. If for any reason you do not receive an invitation and would like to join in the fun, please contact Paula Welch at the Museum. All are welcome.

Dinner/Auction Events

OCTOBER 1

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Merion Cricket Club

OCTOBER 17

Manchester, Vermont
Trustee's Meeting
The Equinox Hotel

OCTOBER 24

Napa Valley, California
Berringer's Winery

NOVEMBER 5

Hartford, Connecticut
Farmington Marriott

Spring Shows

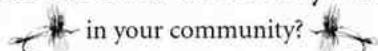
Thanks particularly to the efforts of Trustee Pam Richards and volunteers Peter Castagnetti and Martin Park, the Museum had a strong presence at the



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The Walton Fishing Club of Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut, made a permanent loan to the Museum of its Shang Wheeler landlocked salmon carving. It is unique in that it is a full-body carving (Wheeler usually did half mounts), and it is mounted on an original painting by Wheeler depicting a lake scene, where the fish it is modeled after was taken. Trustees Allan Poole and Michael Osborne, as well as Walton Club President Richard Bell, were instrumental in obtaining this loan for the Museum, which is currently on exhibit. Pictured with the carving, left to right, are Allan Poole, Richard Bell, Executive Director Gary Tanner, and Michael Osborne.

World Fly Fishing Expo in Wilmington, Massachusetts, in March and the National Fly Fishing Show in Providence, Rhode Island, in April. Executive Director Gary Tanner covered the Northeast Fly Fishing and Wing Shooting Show in Edison, New Jersey, in March. Equipped with a new backdrop to enhance our display and draw attention to our exhibit, we signed up a number of new Museum members. We are very grateful to the organizers of these shows for providing free space for our exhibit. These shows provide unique opportunities to interact with people who were previously unaware of the Museum and its treasures.

In the Library

Thanks to the following publishers for their donations of recent titles that have become a part of our collection:

Stackpole Books sent us *Limestone*

Legends: The Papers and Recollections of the Fly Fisher's Club of Harrisburg, 1947-1997, compiled by Norm Shires and Jim Gilford; Ann McIntosh's *Mid-Atlantic Budget Angler: Fly Fishing for Trout in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia*; Dan Heiner's *Fly-Fishing Alaska's Wild Rivers*; and Phil Genova's *First Cast: Teaching Kids to Fly-Fish*.

Lyons Press sent us Ivan L. Mahoney and Veva Crozer's *Trout Flies and Flowers*; An *Honest Angler: The Best of Sparse Grey Hackle*, edited Patricia Miller Sherwood; Craig Mathews's *Western Fly-Fishing Strategies*; and *In Praise of Wild Trout: On the Pleasure, Biology, and Preservation of Wild Trout*, edited by Nick Lyons.

Abenaki Publishers, Inc. sent us Terry Mort's *The Reasonable Art of Fly Fishing*. Specialized Marketing Agency sent us John A. Merry's *200 Best Fly-Fishing Web Sites*.

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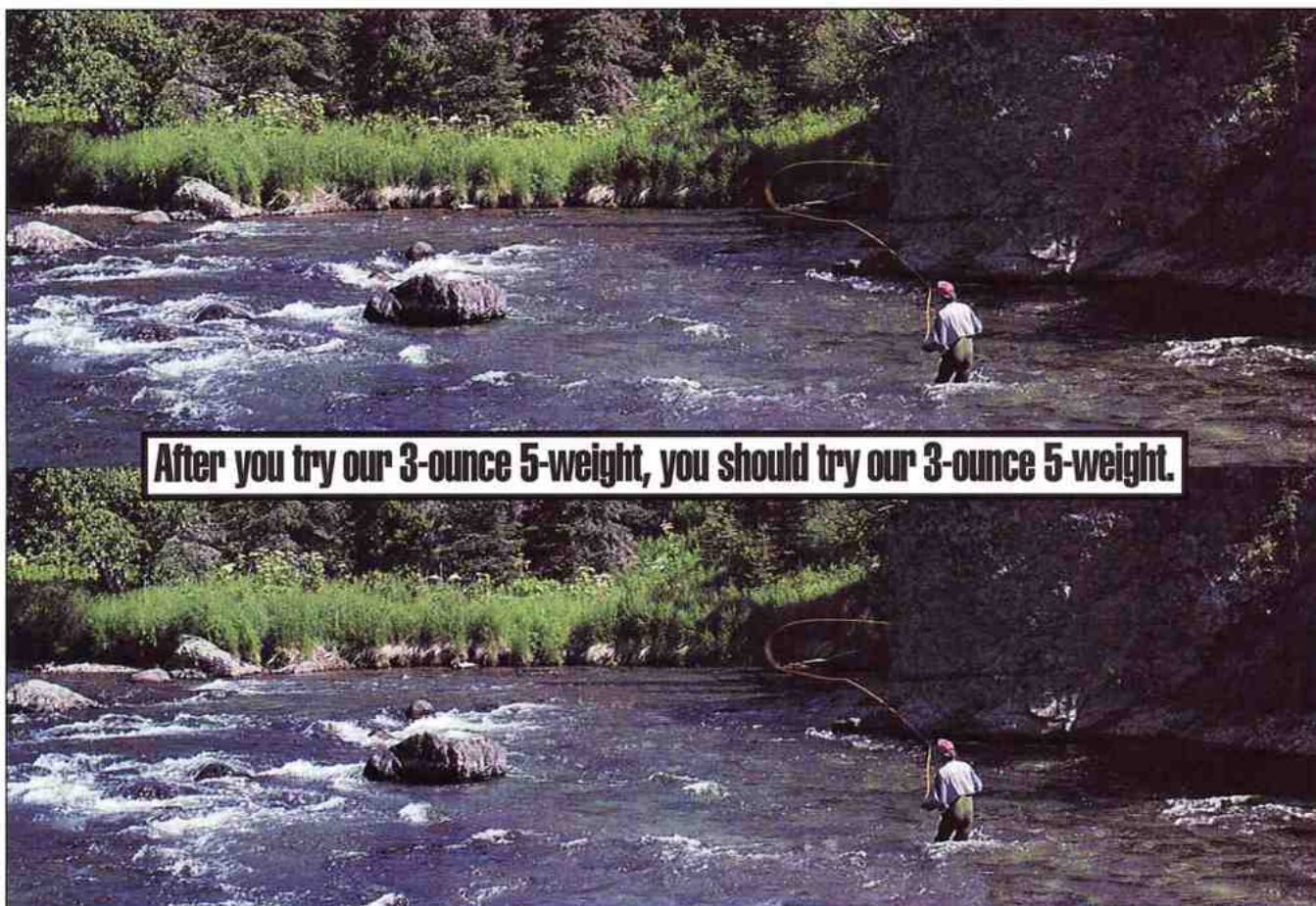
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Gilley Museum Features Cushner Collection

The Wendell Gilley Museum in Southwest Harbor, Maine, houses the collection of bird carvings by Wendell Gilley, a pioneer in the art of decorative bird carving. Examples of work from his fifty-two-year career are on display here, as well as the carver's original patterns, tools, and workbenches.

But the Gilley Museum is also known for the wildlife art and nature-oriented exhibitions that have been featured over the years. One of the most popular of these was the 1989 collaboration with the American Museum of Fly Fishing, "Doctors, Ghosts, and Nymphs: The Art of Fly Fishing." This summer the Gilley features "Beautiful Streamers: The Alluring Arts of Fly Fishing." The exhibition, which includes two dozen pieces from our Museum's Cushner collection, will be on display from June through September. Be sure to stop by on your travels.

Recent Donations

Richard S. Dennison Jr.—in memory of his father, **Richard S. Dennison**—sent us the Boy Scout Professional Type Fly Tying Kit that his father gave him "many years ago." It comes to us complete with its original price tag of \$2.85!

Author and fly originator **Gary LaFontaine** donated the flies he tied as a featured tyer during the Fly Fishing and Wing Shooting Show in March. **George Angstadt**, a long-standing Philadelphia dinner/auction committee member, sent many of his exceptional flies to be used to help raise the very important funds those events generate. Longtime Museum supporter and contributor **Ray Salminen** of Acton, Massachusetts, gave us nineteen fishing tackle catalogs. The oldest is a Hardy Anglers Guide dated 1938.

Mrs. W. C. Burnett of Thomasville, Georgia, sent us her late husband's copy of Preston Jennings's *A Book of Trout Flies*. Former Trustee Romi Perkins suggested to Mrs. Burnett that the Museum

would be the place for the book to be—and it went on display the day it came in as part of our mini-exhibit on the development and differences in styles of tying the Hendrickson dry fly.

Trustee Emeritus **G. Dick Finlay** of Manchester, Vermont, gave us the original watercolor by John Betts, *The Bubble*. The Museum reproduced the painting in two limited editions as part of its thirtieth-anniversary commemorations.

Trustee **James C. Woods** of Cambridge, New York, broadened our library holdings by giving us copies of *Spring-Tide; or, The Angler and His Friends* by John Yonge Akerman; *Catching Trout*, by T. H. Barnes; *Modern Improvements in Fishing Tackle* by H. Cholmondeley-Pennell; *Bibliotheca Piscatoria* by T. Westwood and T. Satchell; and *The River as Looking Glass and The Fly Fisherman's Streamside Handbook*, both by his brother Craig Woods.

Richard C. Hoffmann of North York, Ontario, sent us a copy of his article that appeared in the February 1998 *In-Fisherman*, "The Antiquities of Angling."

CONTRIBUTORS



Keith Fulsher is a well-rounded fly tyer and often gives demonstrations on the different aspects of tying. His specialties are bucktails, streamers, and various styles of salmon flies. In 1962, he developed an innovative and very successful series of bucktails—the Thunder Creek series—which now consists of twenty-one individual patterns designed after specific freshwater baitfish. He has also designed six saltwater baitfish patterns in the Thunder Creek style. In 1973 he authored a book on these special flies titled *Tying and Fishing the Thunder Creek Series*.

Fulsher is also coauthor (with Charles Krom) of the 1981 book *Hair-Wing Atlantic Salmon Flies*. His work has been published in *American Angler*, *Atlantic Salmon Journal*, *Field & Stream*, *Flyfishing*, *Fly Tyer*, and other sporting periodicals.

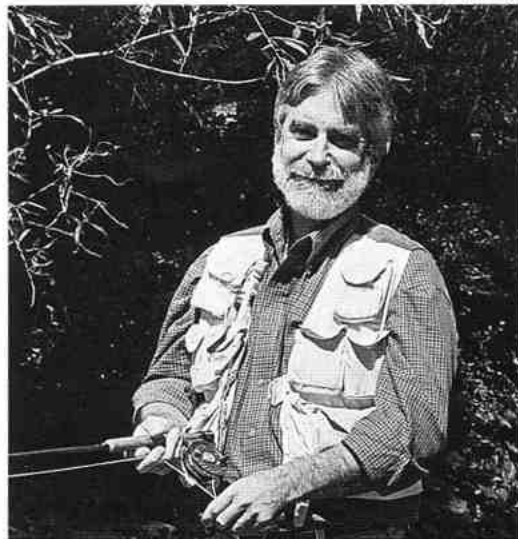
Fulsher has extensive fly-fishing experience, both in the United States and abroad. Long interested in conservation movements, Fulsher served as one of the founding directors of the Theodore Gordon Flyfishers. He is a member of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, Miramichi Salmon Association, Trout Unlimited, the Catskill Fly Fishing Center, the American Museum of Fly Fishing, and other conservation organizations. In 1986 he took early retirement from his position as executive vice president of a major commercial bank to further pursue his interest in fly fishing, fly tying, and outdoor photography. Fulsher lives in Eastchester, New York.

Bob Veverka has spent most of his life fishing and tying flies. He has a passion for collecting and pursuing the history of all types of flies and the people who tie them. Among those he has studied are the Darbees, the Dettes, and Art Flick of the Catskills; Carrie Stevens; and many tyers of the Victorian era. Veverka moved to Vermont in 1980 and fished for landlocked salmon. He then began dabbling in Atlantic salmon and steelhead flies, from hairwings to full-dress classics; this interest has grown to the point of obsession.

Veverka now spends most of his time fishing and tying flies for salt water and developing patterns for striped bass fishing in the Northeast, for bonefish and tarpon in the Florida Keys, and for tuna and marlin in Baja, Mexico. His book, *Innovative Saltwater Flies*, will be published by Stackpole Books in January 1999. Veverka lives in Underhill, Vermont.



Margot Page



Casting

FISHING WITH MY WIFE Martha is one of my favorite pastimes; I always learn something from her in spite of my best efforts to be ever the instructor. One evening several years ago, we were casting from our little boat toward a shoreline inhabited by not a few anglers sending their lines back in our direction, all of us pursuing a variety of warm-water species. As I reminded her (again) about the importance of landing her fly on the very margin of shore and lake, Martha made a very interesting observation. She found it most intriguing that one group of anglers (the shore-bound) heaves with all their might to cast their lure as far out into the lake as possible, while another group (the boatbound) casts for all they're worth to get inshore as far as possible, all in pursuit of exactly the same fish. Notwithstanding the inevitable questions concerning the intellectual tools of those of us that chase, fairly often, warm-water species (okay, bass and bluegill), there are metaphors here instructive to all of us who strive to work with others to accomplish our goals: 1) there are almost always at least two ways to do things, and 2) it's important to adapt your strategy to your situation.

During the thirty years of this Museum's existence, the methods and strategies employed to make it the successful and enjoyable institution it is today have varied with the inevitable changes in trustees, volunteers, and staff. Most often, it seems to me, we have cast broadly from the shoreline, hoping to land whatever swam by, acquisition-wise. That this has been a very effective technique is indisputable—witness the size, breadth, and importance of our collections as they stand today. But as the Museum and its collections mature, there comes a need to examine closely what we have in order to bring focus to what we need. In the coming months, we will be calling on friends both old and new to help us evaluate our collections—to identify what we are lacking and what needs attention. We'll work together to develop our strategy and explore opportunities.

Like casting to a specific, rising fish on the shoreline, we need to “cast” to specific acquisitions that we have identified as critical to accomplishing our goal of preserving and interpreting the history of fly fishing. We have grown to the point which makes this change in strategy a necessary and good thing. I look forward to being a part of the process and hope that if you have the interest, you will, too.

GARY TANNER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF FLY FISHING, a nationally accredited, nonprofit, educational institution dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of fly fishing, was founded in Manchester, Vermont, in 1968. The Museum serves as a repository for, and conservator to, the world's largest collection of angling and angling-related objects. The Museum's collections and exhibits provide the public with thorough documentation of the evolution of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft, and industry in the United States and abroad from the sixteenth century to the present. Rods, reels, and flies, as well as tackle, art, books, manuscripts, and photographs form the major components of the Museum's collections.

The Museum has gained recognition as a unique educational institution. It supports a publications program through which its national quarterly journal, *The American Fly Fisher*, and books, art prints, and catalogs are regularly offered to the public. The Museum's traveling exhibits program has made it possible for educational exhibits to be viewed across the United States and abroad. The Museum also provides in-house exhibits, related interpretive programming, and research services for members, visiting scholars, authors, and students.

The Museum is an active, member-oriented nonprofit institution. For information please contact: The American Museum of Fly Fishing, P. O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254, 802-362-3300.

