



The American Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing

WINTER 2001

VOLUME 27 NUMBER 1

The Winter Welcome



Illustration by Beckwith & Topham from The Angler's Souvenir, by P. Fisher, Esq.

“Winter is icumen in, Lhude sing Goddamm . . .” That’s it. That’s all the philosophizing I’m going to do, and I had to quote Ezra Pound at that. It’s the end of November, it’s gray, and I likely won’t be fishing for a long time. I got my swan-song trip in over Thanksgiving, heading south and fishing the Little Juniata one day, scraping ice from my guides fairly regularly. Between the four of us anglers, we caught and released about twenty browns. I won’t tell you how many of those fish were mine, but I can tell you my stamina for icy waters isn’t as great as I would like it to be.

But onto the issue, and what’s in it, because that’s what you’re here for.

In 200 A.D., Claudius Aelianus penned the first known written description of an artificial fly, which he had heard was being fished in Macedonia. It was tied to mimic an insect called the Hippouros fly, and there has subsequently been much speculation about what that fly might have been. Andrew Herd, through his friend Goran Grubic, stumbled across “a fly that is as close to a Hippouros fly as a modern fly can be . . .” tied by an angler in Macedonia. This fly led Herd to pay more attention to the fly-fishing techniques of the area, which may provide a clue as to what fly fishing was like in the days of Aelianus. Herd’s article, “The Macedonian Fly Revisited,” begins on page 7.

On the catching side of the equation, Frederick Buller sus-

pects that the landing net has enjoyed an unbroken history of use, even if there are gaps in the historical record. Until the early twentieth century, most historians imagined that the landing net was a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century European invention. In 1934, however, Alfred Joshua Butler published an article for *The Illustrated London News*. The article reported on a North African ecological dig that uncovered a nearly 2,000-year-old mosaic—which included the image of a landing net. Additionally, Butler discovered a textual reference to and line drawing of a net dating from 2600 to 2750 B.C. Buller’s account, “A History of the Landing Net,” begins on page 2.

We are always happy to bring you photos of and information about parts of our collection. In an extended Gallery-type piece, we share with you a fly box that was donated to the Museum by Ernest Schwiebert. We’ve photographed the flies and included his commentary on each. When I was first reviewing his notes, I was surprised to find that the only fishing companion mentioned was a name I happen to know: David Rose. Dr. Rose, president of the Henryville Flyfishers, was the obstetrician who delivered me. I haven’t run into him since, but it’s nice to know he’s getting in some fishing. “A Schwiebert Fly Box” begins on page 12.

Welcome to winter.

KATHLEEN ACHOR
EDITOR



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ON THE COVER: Illustration from Frederick Buller's "A History of the Landing Net." This landing net is from a woodcut in *Die kunst wie man fisch*, published in the 1530s or 1540s. Reproduced by kind permission of *Bienecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University* (ref. Uzn 25 508b).

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A History of the Landing Net

by Frederick Buller



Figure 1. This portion of a mosaic from the first or second century A.D., one of many revealed by Italian excavations, was found in a Roman seaside villa called the Villa del Nilo. The Roman net depicted is similar to modern landing nets. Reproduction by permission of the Illustrated London News Picture Library.

Early students of angling history would probably have imagined that the landing net was a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century European invention. That was until Alfred Joshua Butler, author of *Sport in Classic Times* (1930),¹ wrote an article, "Roman Fishing Methods Revealed in Mosaics," for *The Illustrated London News*. Butler's information, published in September 1934, was gleaned from an account written by Professor Guidi and published in *Africa Italiana* (January–July 1933). The account described a dig in North Africa on the site of Leptis Magna, in a former Roman colony that is now Tripoli.

The discovery at Leptis Magna by Italian archaeologists of a mosaic depicting an angling scene indicates that landing nets were used in antiquity. The mosaic portrays two Roman anglers, one of whom is baiting his hook while the other is landing a fish (Figure 1). The latter holds an approximately 7-foot rod high above his shoulder with his left hand while drawing the fish toward the landing net with his right hand.

The knowledge that a modern-type triangular landing net

was used by Romans nearly 2,000 years ago is extraordinary enough, but Butler also came across a reference to an even earlier triangular, albeit handleless, landing net of Egyptian origin. It was a detail shown in a fishing scene in bas-relief on stone carved some 5,000 years ago. He found it, or rather a line drawing of it (Figure 2), in J. J. M. de Morgan's *Recherches sur les origines de l'Egypte*.² The bas-relief had been discovered in the tomb of Mera, at Saqqarah, and dates from 2600 to 2750 B.C.

The inference we draw from Butler's article is that the Roman triangular net found by the Italian archaeologists at the site of Leptis Magna is a modified example or a development of an earlier Egyptian landing net.³ Incidentally, Butler corresponded with the historian William Radcliffe following his discoveries, and Radcliffe admitted that he had no knowledge of either of these ancient landing nets.

After the Romans, we enter a dark age. There is no mention of hand-held nets until Walter Skeat, a Cambridge University-based historian and etymologist, translated a late tenth- or early eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon list of fish names that included a reference to a *boga net*, which he translated into modern English as a bow net.⁴

A Scottish reference to the landing net appears in *Wallace*,⁵

This article originally appeared in *Classic Angling*, Number 3, December 1999 (Cambridgeshire, England).

a fifteenth-century text described by medieval historian Richard C. Hoffmann as “a quasihistorical Scots epic.”⁶ Wallace, “probably written in 1476–78, depicts the career of the first hero of Scottish resistance, William Wallace (c. 1270–1305).”⁷ The young Wallace, later to become Sir William Wallace, was fishing the River Irvine in Ayrshire in southwest Scotland and had landed five fish,⁸ when along came a band of Lord Percy’s men. (Percy was the governor or captain of the English military occupation.) They demanded the total catch for their lord. A fight ensued at a ford crossing at Puddlie-deidlie.⁹ Wallace had left his sword at home and so defended himself with his poutstaff¹⁰ or landing-net handle. Having clouted his first opponent on the cheek and taken his sword, Wallace proceeded (as a hero would) to kill three of Percy’s men, or “Southroners” as the Scots called them, before putting the others to flight.¹¹

The next mention of the landing net, together with an illustration, appeared in *Dyalogus Creaturarum Optime Moralizatus*, a Latin work published in 1480.¹² This woodcut of a man using a landing net (Figure 3) is not strictly illustrative of an angling situation, although other woodcuts in the book

are. Among these is the earliest known illustration of an angler using a float.¹³

From a whole raft of papers and drawings reproduced and kindly handed over to me by Richard C. Hoffmann, it would appear that we must look to the literature of other countries in Europe for evidence of widespread use of the landing net during the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. Indeed, in the frontispiece of Hoffmann’s latest book, *Fisher’s Craft and Lettered Art* (University of Toronto Press, 1997), is a reproduction of a woodcut depicting two fishermen, one of whom is wielding a huge bow net (Figure 4). The illustration came from a booklet, *Die kunst wie man fisch und vögel fahren soll*, which Hoffmann estimates was published (based on the style of the woodcut) sometime during the 1530s or 1540s. If the net handle was detachable, and had such a handle been available to Wallace, it is easy to imagine its utility as a weapon.

From the extensive material on landing nets that Hoffmann gave me, it is obvious that a comprehensive trawl through the records of all the European countries would take many years. Accordingly, I have picked out two landing nets in illustration to represent the fifteenth to sixteenth-century period (Figures

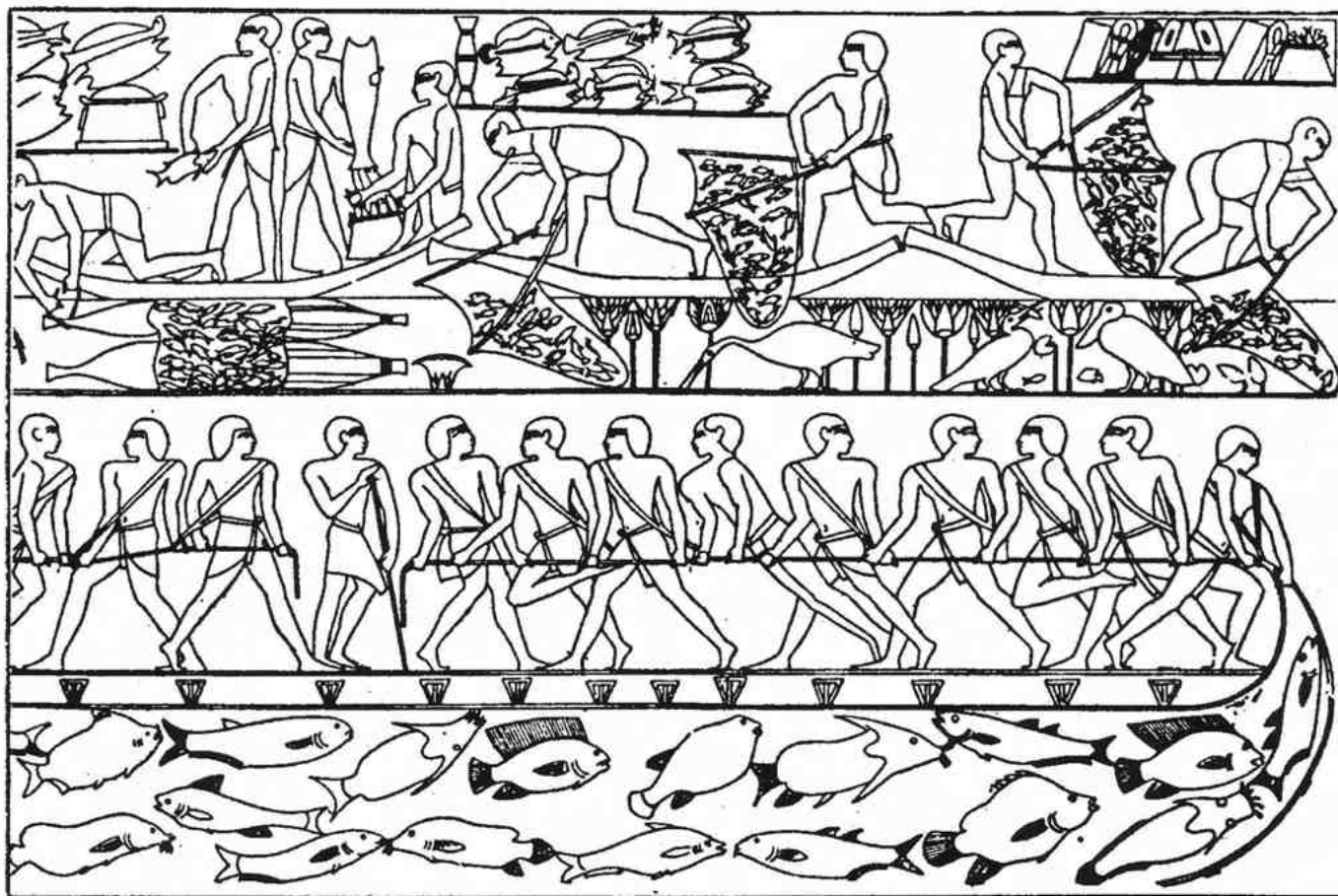


Figure 2. Four examples of a handleless triangular-type landing net can be seen in the upper frame of this Egyptian fishing scene, which dates from c. 2600 to 2750 B.C. Reproduced by permission of the Illustrated London News Picture Library.



Figure 3. This woodcut from *Dyalogus Creaturarum Optime Moralizatus* is not strictly illustrative of angling, but it shows the clear use of a net to land fish. Reproduced by permission of the Bodleian Library.



Figure 4. Landing net from a woodcut in *Die kunst wie man fisch*, published in the 1530s or 1540s. Illustration reproduced by kind permission of Bienecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University (ref. Uzn 25 508b).

5 and 6). After inspecting all the material, I am persuaded there were probably parallel advances made in tackle and fishing/angling methods in most countries where travelers were constantly exchanging ideas.

Hints at the existence of a landing net are to be found in one of the earliest fishing books printed in the English language, *The Arte of Angling* (1577), attributed to William Samuel. In this didactic volume, which was probably the model for Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*, published seventy-six years later, Piscator (the experienced angler) is teaching Viator (the pupil) the ways of fish and the ploys of fishermen. Piscator hooks a good perch and, after playing it out, tells Viator to lie down on his belly, hold the bank with one hand, and take the fish with the other by putting his forefinger into the gills and the thumb into its mouth.

As soon as the perch is landed, Viator, aglow with sudden and unexpected justification for his presence, asks: "How would you have done it if I had not been here?" In a lengthy reply, Piscator tells his pupil that it had been his intention to fish the swim for roach, and, in accordance with that intention, had brought only roach gear with him. He finished thus: "I . . . left one of my tooles at home for hast, whiche if I had brought, I could have landed him without your help."¹⁴ From this, it is evident that a landing net of some kind was implied.

In *The Secrets of Angling* (1613), John Dennys starts what he calls his first book (that is, first chapter) by describing the basic tools (tackle) needed by an angler: rod, line, float, and hooks. He then lists the essential supplementary angling tools, including a linewinder, plummet, bait box, creel, and finally a landing net:

A little Net that on a Pole shall stand,
The mighty Pike or heavy Carpe to Land.¹⁵

Dennys then describes how a powerful carp is dealt with:

Loe how he leads and guides him with his hands,
Least that his line should breake or Angle rend,
Then with a Net see how at last he lands,
A mighty Carpe and has him in the end.¹⁶

The next important illustration of a landing net appears in Frère François Fortin's French angling classic, *Les ruses innocentes* (1660), shown in Figure 7. Fortin's book is full of splendid diagrams illustrating most of the known methods for taking all kinds of wild animals with hook, net, trap, and snare. John Waller Hills, in *A History of Fly Fishing for Trout* (1921), indicated that much of Fortin's work was original, including the first illustration of both the eyed hook and the triangular landing net. With the discovery of the depictions of Roman and Egyptian triangular landing nets, we can see that the normally reliable Hills was wrong about the dates of that first illustration.

Another of our treasured angling historians, W. J. Turrell, having read Richard Blome's *The Gentleman's Recreation* (1686), was mistaken when he observed in *Ancient Angling Authors* (1910) that "the only new method described in the angling portion is the following elaborate and ingenious method of carp fishing."¹⁷ Well, Blome's method of carp fishing was a straight lift from Fortin's book, as was his description of the trian-



Figure 5. A woodcut showing fish being caught by net, spear, rod, and trap. From Petrus de Crescentiis' *Weydtwergk* (1530).



Figure 6. A woodcut showing fishermen using seine, bow, and dip nets. From *Versch Arten des Fischfangs* (1583).

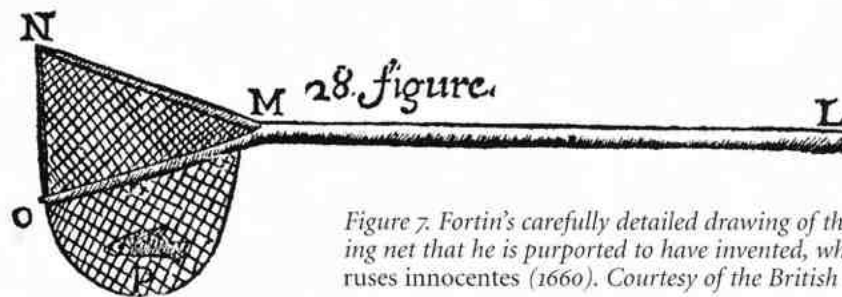


Figure 7. Fortin's carefully detailed drawing of the triangular landing net that he is purported to have invented, which appeared in *Les ruses innocentes* (1660). Courtesy of the British Library.

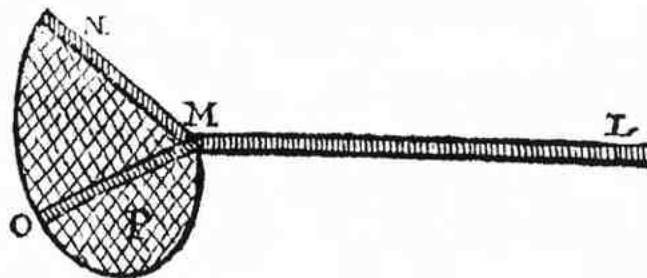


Figure 8. Blome's poor copy of Fortin's drawing. Courtesy of the British Library.

gular landing net—the only difference being that in copying Fortin's diagram of the latter (Figure 8), he (or his artist) couldn't accurately visualize the pattern that a hanging net would make.

Thomas Best, in the fourth edition of *A Concise Treatise on the Art of Angling* (1798), in a list of items "most necessary for an angler to have with him," includes "a landing net, to land large fish with, and which are made with joints to fold up in a small compass [Is this the first mention of a triangular net that folds down or, as the author puts it, "with joints to fold up," like modern nets?]."¹⁸

In recent years, it is becoming more evident that many tackle items—such as the reel (and ipso facto rod rings), the jointed rod, the eyed hook, the spade end hook, and the landing net—are not modern inventions. For reasons unknown, earlier versions were lost to mankind for long periods before being reinvented during the modern era. I suspect, however, that some—like the landing net—have in reality enjoyed an unbroken history of use, even if the historical record has been lost.

ENDNOTES

1. Alfred Joshua Butler, *Sport in Classic Times* (London: Ernest Benn, 1930); reprinted with a foreword by Roderick Haig-Brown (Los Altos, Calif.: William Kaufmann, 1975).

2. J. J. M. de Morgan, *Recherches sur les origines de l'Egypte* (Paris: 1897). British Library shelfmark 7701662.

3. Butler noted that "the Italian archeologists at Leptis, with all their zeal and learning, seem totally unaware of the absorbing interest of their discovery to the angling world."

4. Walter Skeat, "Anglo-Saxon Fish-Names" *The Angler's Note-Book and Naturalist's Record*, vol. 11, (15 June 1880), pp. 168–70.

5. Attributed to Blind Harry (or Hary the Minstrel). Excerpted from Richard Hoffmann, "Fishing for Sport in Medieval Europe: New Evidence," *Speculum*, vol. 60, no. 4 (1985), p. 884.

6. Richard Hoffmann, "Fishing for Sport in Medieval Europe: New Evidence," *Speculum*, vol. 60, no. 4 (1985), p. 885.

7. Hoffmann, "Fishing for Sport," p. 886.

8. Because the word *fish* appears six times in the text, and knowing that in Scotland, the word is synonymous with salmon, we must assume that he had netted five salmon. That a Scottish hero should fish for anything other than salmon is unlikely in the extreme. Besides the dubiousness of a hero fighting for the sake of a few small fish, the only prospect when you push or draw a net along the bottom is to catch small fish, as only small ones can be overtaken by the net's thrust. The fish may have been taken in a trap or by an earlier version of the Scottish haaf-net. Haaf-netting is still practiced on the Solway Firth, where a net some 18 feet wide is held by a fisherman who faces the incoming tide. Migrating salmon running up the tidal reaches of a river swim up the shallower sides to avoid the faster flow of the center. The moment a fish hits the net, the haaf-netter raises his net to encircle it, clubs it with his priest while it is still enmeshed, and then pokes it into his shoulder bag.

Irvine's custom records (1519–1522) reveal that salmon and herrings were exported and that "ther is plenty of salmons takin in this river" (John Strawhorn's *The History of Irvine*, [Edinburgh: John Donald, Ltd., 1986], p. 12).

9. The curious name of the crossing may be a corruption of *pas de dieu* (the holy steps); that is, the stepping stones used by the Carmelite friars on their way to church.

10. A poutnet, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is "a small conical net with a semicircular mouth, the flat end of which is pushed or drawn along the bottom of a stream by means of a long pole or staff, the poutstaff, a net not unlike the Anglo-Saxon bow-net," and it is probably an earlier version or variation of the Scottish haaf-net. (The poutnet surely developed from the Anglo-Saxon bow net.) Alternatively, a poutnet could have been used to remove salmon from a trap.

11. A full account of this incident can be found in Robert Blakley's *Historical Sketches* (London: 1856), pp. 39–42.

12. An English translation, *The Dialogue of Creatures Moralyzed*, a copy of which is in the British Museum, was assigned a conjectural date of 1520. The image of an angler float fishing was taken from a copy from the Bodleian Library, catalogued Douce C271 and dated 1530.

13. The Bodleian Library at Oxford, Ref: Douce C271. *The Dialogues of Creatures Moralyzed*, 1530. Woodcut on sig. Oliv verso of angling.

14. William Samuel, *The Arte of Angling* (1577) (facsimile edition) (Ashburton, Devon: The Flyfisher's Classic Library, 2000), pp. 25–27.

15. John Denny, *The Secrets of Angling* (1613), quoted from reprint edition (London: W. Satchell & Co., 1883), p. 30.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

17. W. J. Turrell, *Ancient Angling Authors* (London: Gurney & Jackson, 1910), p. 143.

18. Thomas Best, *A Concise Treatise on the Art of Angling*, 4th ed. (London: B. Crosby, 1798), p. 15.

The Macedonian Fly Revisited

by Andrew Herd



Dusan Pendzerkovski of Bitola, Macedonia, sent this fly and the one on the following page to Goran Grubic.



They fasten red (crimson red) wool around a hook, and fix onto the wool two feathers which grow under a cock's wattles, and which in colour are like wax.

—Claudius Ælianus, quoted in William Radcliffe,
Fishing from the Earliest Times
(London: John Murray, 1921), page 188

Claudius Ælianus (170–230 A.D.) was a teacher of literature, a Roman who wrote only in Greek and drew on a huge range of works, the majority of which did not survive the Dark Ages. He has held a fascination for angling historians out of all proportion to the length of the few lines he penned on the subject of fly fishing in 200 A.D., because he described the first artificial fly, which he had heard was being fished in Macedonia. Since then, much has changed, but much has remained the same.

The Macedonia that Ælianus knew is changed out of recognition, divided as it is between Greece, Bulgaria, and the present-day Republic of Macedonia. But the river he knew as the Astræus is probably today's Strumica, identifiable because it flows by a town with the same name, known to the Romans as

Astræum. The country was ravaged by war then, as now. A Roman army first entered Macedonia in the winter of 200–199 B.C., and the unfortunate country was annexed as a province by the senate only a few decades later. Ælianus may have heard of the fly fishers from a soldier. The present-day Macedonians are Slavs, who speak a language that is very similar to Bulgarian and Serbian. Their religion is Orthodox Christian and, apart from a wonderful folk music tradition, they preserve many old customs that were lost to their neighbors. As for the fish, the only speckled freshwater fish species found there is the trout, of which *Salmo trutta macedonicus* Karaman is the only species seen in the Strumica. This particular subspecies differs from other Balkan trout in that (at least today) the majority of its spots are black, with red being almost entirely absent.

It is traditional to leave the ancient Macedonian fishermen frozen in iconic solitude, such is the gap in time between them

Photographs by Andrew Herd

and the next record of fly fishing, but the burning question that this classic passage raises is: what was it like to fly fish in Ælian's day? Here we have our first detailed description of fly fishing, and yet it leaves no clue about how near the origin of the sport it places us. Was Ælian lucky enough to hear of a technique that was in its infancy, or was it yet another example of his famously lax research (along the lines of his belief in dragons) at a time when fly fishermen could be found all over the world? Were these men innovators, or were they fishing the way their fathers and their grandfathers had? Sadly, the echoes have spent themselves in the long halls of time and we shouldn't expect to hear an answer, so we have to read between the lines of history to learn any more.

There has been much speculation about what the Macedonian fly looked like and about which insect the word *Hippouros* (the creature the fly counterfeited) might be. Ælian doesn't help much because his description of the fly is brief.

Fred Buller published his own speculations in *The American Fly Fisher* a few years ago, which repays a careful read.¹ It is extremely difficult to look back two millennia and imagine what fishermen might have imitated then, but after extensive research, Buller decided that it was possible that the artificial represents either a horsefly, *Theriopectes tricolor* Kirchbergi, or a drone fly, *Episyrphus balteatus* De geer. The article gives a couple of speculative dressings for the fly, tied respectively by David Beazley and Kenneth Robson of the Flyfisher's Club. The patterns are fascinating, but as Buller points out, it is anybody's guess whether a Macedonian fisherman from two thousand years ago would recognize them.

In support of this theory, both horse and drone fly naturals are used by contemporary Macedonian fishermen as live bait for summer chub fishing, although drone flies are not very much favored. The only problem is that horse and drone flies are robust creatures, and Ælian implied an insubstantial insect when he wrote "if a man's hand touch them, they lose their natural colour, their wings wither, and they become unfit food for the fish." This doesn't sound much like a horsefly, given that they are so tough it is difficult to kill them without an exceptionally well-aimed, brisk swat. The fact that horseflies are skilled flyers and rarely fall on the water might tip the balance toward the large and delicate *Siphonurus* species of mayfly seen in southern European summers, the subimago of which has a rather appealing cherry-red body. But this is truly the fine print of history and such fertile ground for many hours of entertaining and fruitless speculation that I had better move on quickly. Dr. Goran Grubic, a professor of agriculture at the University of Zemun in the former Yugoslavia, claims that his father, Aleksandar Grubic, a geologist, made an expedition to Macedonia many years ago, where he spent time watching a friend fly fishing in a style that was literally as old as the hills. This friend subsequently sent the two flies he considered the best trout takers to Dr. Grubic, and this is where our Macedonian story starts.



This fly is one that could well be a Hippouros imitation.

Several years ago I received as a gift a fly that is as close to Hippouros fly as a modern fly can be: body is gold ribbed crimson red floss, hackle is drab brown-red cock, hook size is 12. Please note: natural beeswax color of hackles is not exactly blue dun, it is actually brownish. This fly was tied by late Mr. Dusan Pendzervovski of Bitola, Macedonia. My father made him company while he was fishing rivers in southeastern part of what is today known as Republic of Macedonia, some ten years ago. He was also using the Ælian method: he used to cut his hazel rod on the river bank, attach some 10 feet of mono to the tip, and one or two flies on the end of the line. He was a very successful fisherman. Unfortunately I had no opportunity to meet him. As far as I know there are no such "old time masters" in Macedonia anymore. Spinning tackle is now widely used to catch trout there.²

It is too much to hope that this might be the original Hippouros fly pattern, handed down by word of mouth, although my heart would like to believe otherwise. For a start, Ælian makes no mention of a rib, gold or otherwise. But this fly might be something else. I doubt that the fauna of Macedonia has changed so much over the last two millennia, and Mr. Pendzervovski's pattern, while modern, might just be the spirit of an ancient fly calling down to us across the centuries.

The use of a red-bodied fly may not be so remarkable, but it is interesting to report that there are anglers in southeastern Serbia, about thirty miles from the city of Pirot, who fish with a technique that Ælian's anglers might recognize, were they still alive to see it. The location where Dr. Grubic witnessed the method is in the Stara Planina (which can be translated as



The Stara Planina region of Serbia is truly the land that time forgot; take away the few power lines and you would have trouble guessing which century you were in over about a 500-year span. This photo was taken near the village of Dojkinici, and it shows an elderly couple shoveling manure onto a homemade cart pulled by their cows. According to the author, "They do not have the luxury of an old-age pension and they will probably work until they die, but they were some of the happiest people I have ever met."

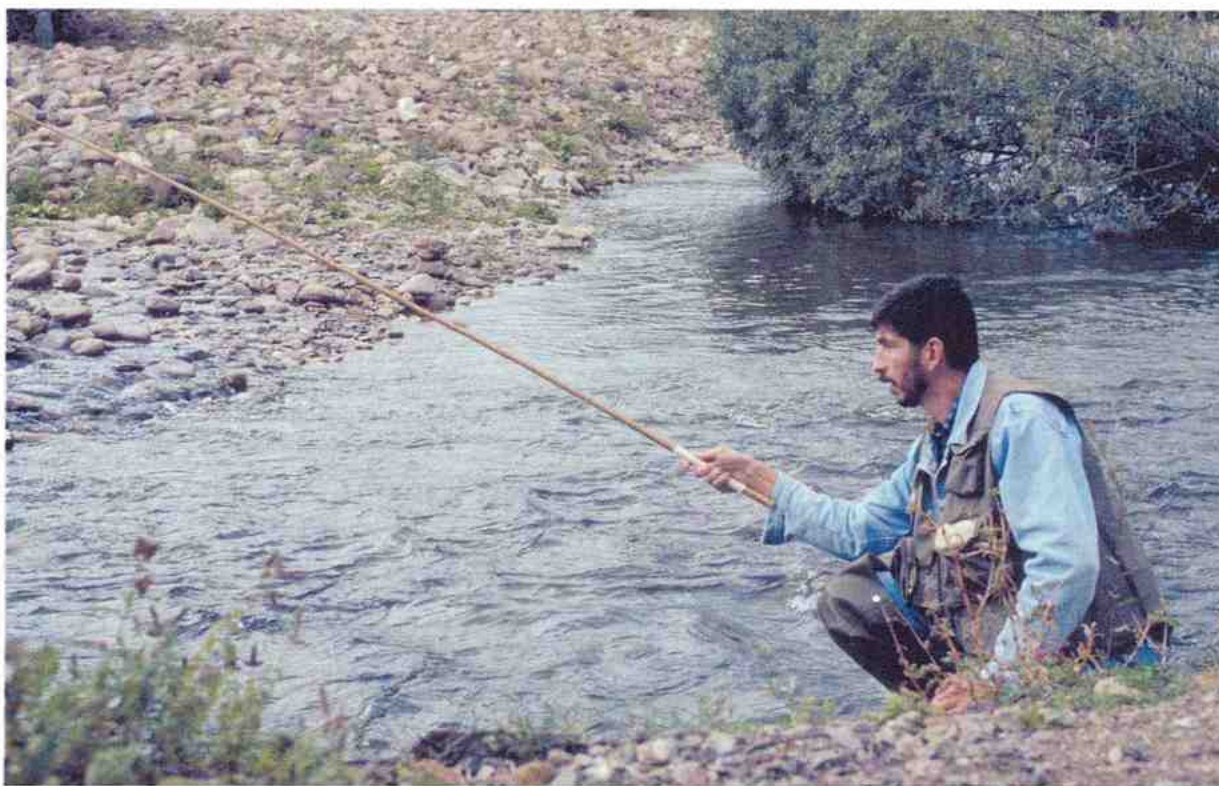
"Old Mountain") area of Serbia, in the heart of the Balkan peninsula in the high tributaries of the Visocica River, near the villages of Dojkinici and Topli Do, and only 150 miles from the river Strumica. Peasants from these villages are famous for their fly-making skills, but it has always been a neglected corner of the country, which is why, perhaps, such an old method has survived. According to Dr. Grubic:

During my fly fishing expeditions I discovered that this ancient form of fly fishing still exists in some places in Yugoslavia, Macedonia, and Bosnia (former Yugoslav republics, now independent states). Possibly it is practiced in Bulgaria, Greece, and Rumania, but I'm not aware of that. It is usually practiced by sheep keepers in faraway mountain regions. Today most of them use nylon mono instead of horsehair and cheap 10-foot-long carbon rods (I believe that in England you call them "roach poles"). But the technique is still the same and their selection of flies is usually small: two to three proven patterns are used throughout the season. Flies are of the spider type: usually black, yellow, and red in sizes 12 and 14.

I observed these men carefully and can tell you that what they lack in equipment they compensate with their skill. They are by no means inferior to modern fly fishermen, particularly on their river. This is first-class fly fishing, and I do not think that the fact that I use modern fly tackle makes me a better sportsman in any way. I know several exponents of this ancient art who are capable of catching over a hundred trout on a good day. It is important to note that this form of fishing remained in high mountain areas on small (less than 7 to 8 yards wide) and fast-flowing rivers.³

Anglers could have fished a fly the same way since time immemorial, but why have such archaic methods survived? At first glance, it seems surprising that anyone should persist in fishing with fixed lines on crude rods into modern times when we all take carbon rods and aluminum alloy reels for granted, but all of the above are extremely effective techniques. Dr. Grubic gives an explanation that makes it clear not only how his anglers fished, but why they persisted in using such an ancient method: it is uniquely adapted to the rivers they know.

First I must stress that these fishermen fish on rapid streams with numerous riffles and pockets behind boulders and very few large pools. Also these rivers have large populations of native brown trout. They usually have two flies: one on the end of the line and the other on a short dropper two feet from it. Flies are tied with cock's hackles, but are not fished on the surface on purpose (as a normal dry fly). Today they prefer strong and heavy Mustad hooks. One fly is always black and the other is yellow, red, or sometimes brown or gray. Bodies of flies are made from ordinary sewing thread and wool. They fish both upstream and downstream as their position and water dictates. It is clear that they do not fish "across and downstream" or "upstream wet fly" specifically. This method obviously precedes those clearly defined approaches. Mostly they cast slightly upstream and then drift flies into a likely place (a pocket or run). Sometimes they even dap flies on the surface (and this is the closest they get to the dry fly). The important role in their approach is hiding from the fish, and they do all they can to hide successfully. They rarely wade—only when they have to cross the stream. They cast very often and very precisely. Average



Well-known fisherman Alexander Panic of Pirot, Yugoslavia, fishes with a hazel rod with a fixed black horsehair line, made to the same general specification as the rods used by the traditional fishermen seen in the Stara Planina. He was taught how to use it by his grandfather. A traditional fisherman using a short rod holds the rod tip quite high and “hangs” the fly only a few inches under the water, casting up and across into broken water and then sweeping the rod down and across to follow the fly. Alexander wets the rod tip by dipping it in the river to make it more flexible before he uses it; apparently everyone who fishes this way does the same thing.

drift of their flies is maybe a yard or two. In this fast water, flies never have a chance to sink deeply. So they usually see the fish attacking the fly in the clear water. Their line is always stretched tight so they also feel the fish as it hits. When a fish hits they strike in the wrist.⁴

The fascinating thing about these fishermen is that they are not alone in using a method that has ancient roots. Not only are there examples in the literature of fishermen using similar methods, but there are other groups who fish similar styles today. By learning about the way these anglers fish, we stand to learn a great deal about how our ancestors might have caught trout five hundred, or even two thousand, years ago.

The first—and perhaps the most famous—description of “vernacular” fly fishing was written by G. E. M. Skues when he pushed off on a fishing holiday in Bosnia in September 1897.⁵ While he was there, he saw fishermen using gear that must have been well past its sell-by date, even then. Skues wrote that they used rods about 8 or 9 feet long with a horsehair line. The cast carried four silk-bodied soft-hackled flies, winged with soft hackle from wild goose, attached to lines that were a little longer than the rod, which the fishermen cast with great accuracy. When the fisher caught something, the fish was either flicked neatly out of the water and caught in the left hand, or it was hauled unceremoniously onto the bank. It sounds crude, but it wasn’t. Skues was impressed because the natives out-fished him with tackle that, compared with his own, should have given him several hundred years’ advantage—but it didn’t

impress him enough to make him give up on his beloved split-cane Leonard.

This technique can still be seen in the western part of Bosnia today, particularly on the Una, Sana, and Pliva rivers, and it seems to be quite distinct from the method used on faster-flowing mountain streams elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia, which is described later. The explanation may be that the Bosnian rivers are particularly clear, similar in many respects to the English chalk streams, and they have much larger trout. Present-day anglers using the traditional technique make their flies with floss, wool, or flax bodies, and use soft, mobile gamebird hackles, different patterns being used according to season. The patterns very much resemble traditional Spanish flies, with low wings and bodies that curve around the bend of the hook, giving them an appearance more like emergers than traditional wet or dry patterns; they are tied direct to nylon and generally fished in the low light of dawn or dusk using a downstream swing.

Charles de Massas wrote about a fishing method that he saw used on the River Ain, near Lyon, early in the nineteenth century. The fishermen on the Ain used casts of seven or eight flies called *mouchettes*, dressed on “needle hooks”—so called because they were made out of sewing-machine needles, bent to shape, and retempered. The anglers didn’t have reels, and they used rods about 19 or 20 feet long, with braided horsehair lines that were attached directly to the end of the rod.

The Ain fishermen were visited just after the beginning of

this century by another author who described the flies they used as being tied on finely wired eyeless hooks, in sizes 10 to 14. The hook was whipped to horsehair or Japanese gut, and the body was made of different colored silks, ribbed with tinsel, varnished, and finished with a few turns of soft hackle at the head. The flies were fished down and across, in the very uppermost layer of the water.⁶ This is strikingly similar to the Bosnian method, and furthermore, a fifteenth-century angler would have recognized every item of tackle they used.

Another example of fishing technique that is absolutely contemporary and has already been addressed at length in *The American Flyfisher*: the fishermen of Valsesia in Italy.⁷ The technique they use is almost completely undocumented other than in this journal, and one of the very few references of any description is found in a cadastral map of the lands in the vicinity of Valmuccia, dated 1775. The traditional rod for fishing *alla Valsesiana* is made from an Arundo reed, although modern versions are made of telescopic fiberglass. In days of yore, the rods were as long as 23 feet, but recently they have shrunk to a more manageable 12 or 14 feet. None of the fishermen use a reel, which is interesting in these days of disk drags with everything. The line is slightly longer than the rod, and they tie it to the top section. The most startling thing about the whole rig is that the line is traditionally made of horsehair taken from the tail of a white stallion, and lines like this can still be bought quite cheaply from local suppliers—in fact, I bought one in Milan a few years ago. The lines taper from twenty hairs thick at the rod end, down to four, three, or even single hairs at the business end. Many anglers use nylon for the last meter, but traditionalists insist on using horsehair because it falls more lightly; if a horsehair line is used, the line is encouraged to float by braiding the hairs loosely, with the knots slightly slack.

We have seen the floss-silk-bodied, soft-hackled flies that the Italian fishermen use. They are impressionistic patterns, reminiscent of English north country spiders and indeed of Skues's Bosnian flies, but they are tied with the hackle pushed slightly forward, to give it more "kick" in the water. A three-fly cast is *de rigueur*: the artificials are about a foot apart, and the line is flicked out with an action something like a Spey cast. Perhaps the most fascinating thing about the *Valsesiana* technique is the way the flies are fished, which gives a window into the techniques medieval anglers might have used. The length of the rod means that the fisherman can place his flies with absolute precision within the fixed radius of his cast, searching every lie. A skilled angler uses his wrist to "work" the flies to make them more attractive.

If this isn't enough, there is a traditional fishing movement in Spain, although the numbers of practitioners are getting smaller every year. A few fishermen in the Asturias region use a technique referred to as *pescar a la vara*, which, though it may sound romantic to English-speaking ears, literally means "fishing with a stick." Their rods are 6 meters long, and they use a tapered nylon line to fish a floating fly, giving them an effective reach of at least 9 meters; more than enough for Asturian waters. The line is usually fixed to the tip of the rod, although a few anglers use braided nylon for the upper part of the cast and a small reel, whereas the most skilled use several flies on the cast (occasionally combinations of floating and wet flies

are used). If the fly needs to be dried, the rod is whipped back and forth until the pattern floats again. The *punta de vara* method must reach back into the mists of time, because it involves using a short cane with a line as short as half a meter, which is poked through the bushes to dap a natural or an artificial fly in places that would otherwise be completely inaccessible.⁸

And then we have the Tenkara technique as practiced in Japan. The few remaining traditional Japanese fishermen use a 10-foot rod and a fixed line, which they hold so that the angle between the rod and the line is about ninety degrees, giving them a reach of about 22 feet. Many Tenkara flies are tied with forward-facing hackles (not unlike *Valsesiana* flies), and they are fished with a teasing sink-and-draw action that keeps the fly in the surface film.⁹

Even without the discovery of traditional anglers in former Yugoslavia, there is a surprising consistency between these accounts. The English anglers for whom the *Treatise* was written could have fished a fly the same way in the fifteenth century, and Mr. Pendzervski's hazel wand goes back much further than that. But why have such archaic methods survived? At first glance, it seems surprising that anyone should persist in fishing with fixed lines on long rods into modern times when we all take 9-foot rods and aluminum alloy reels for granted, but all of the above are extremely effective techniques, and they are considerably cheaper than going out and buying the latest high-modulus graphite fashion accessories we love so much. I guess that the final word belongs to Dr. Grubic.

There is a question that may arise: are these fellows just imitating modern fly fishers with less expensive tackle? I believe not. To the best of my knowledge, they are genuine. The skill of fly making was passed from generation to generation. There are no written documents because most of them are illiterate, but there are stories. One thing is sure, they had no chance to see anyone using modern fly fishing tackle until recently. . . . They don't want to waste money on tackle they don't need to catch trout.¹⁰

History is written on the water.

ENDNOTES

1. Frederick Buller, "The Macedonian Fly," *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 22, no. 4 (Fall 1996), pp. 2–9.
2. Personal correspondence from Goran Grubic, 19 February 2000.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Personal correspondence from Goran Grubic, 20 February 2000.
5. G. E. M. Skues, *The Field*, January 1898. See also *Side-lines, Side-lights & Reflections* by Skues (1932, p. 188).
6. Jean-Paul Pequegnot, *French Fishing Flies* (New York: Nick Lyons Books, 1987), p. 17.
7. Alvaro Masseini, "Fly Fishing in Valsesia, Italy: An Ancient Technique," *The American Fly Fisher*, vol. 24, no. 2 (Spring 1998), pp. 2–5.
8. Letter, Tino Corderas i Pol, 16 August 1998.
9. References to the method are scattered throughout the texts of the following books, which are the only known books on Tenkara: Hisao Ishigaki, *Kagaku suru kebari tsuri Tenkara* [Scientific Fly Fishing Tenkara] (Japan: Kosaido Co. Ltd., 1992). Eizaburo Kumagai, *Yamazuri no Rondeau* [Rondeau of Fishing in the Mountain Streams] (Japan: Yama-Kei Publishers Co., Ltd., 1985). Keigu Horie, *Jissen Tenkara Technique* [Practical Tenkara Technique] (Japan: Yama-Kei Publishers Co., Ltd., 1997). Soseki Yamamoto, *Nishi-Nihon no Yamazuri* [Mountain Fishing in West Japan] (Japan: Tsurinotomosha Co., Ltd., 1973).
10. Personal correspondence from Goran Grubic, 19 February 2000.

A Schwiebert Fly Box

*With notes
by Ernest Schwiebert
Photos by Larry Largay*



Ernest Schwiebert's fly box, inscribed (above) and open (right).



Ernest Schwiebert was still in his twenties when his *Matching the Hatch* (1955) was published. As Paul Schullery noted in *American Fly Fishing* (1987), "The book whose name became a common expression was most impressive for its breadth. . . . His book was the one book to have if you were a transcontinental fly fisher." *Matching the Hatch* and subsequent books—like *Nymphs*, *Remembrances of Rivers Past*, his monumental two-volume *Trout*, and the anthology called *Death of a Riverkeeper*—clearly establish Schwiebert as one of the twentieth century's most important fly-fishing authors.

We are pleased to present a view into one of Schwiebert's fly boxes, which contains flies he tied that are now among the Museum's treasured artifacts. Also included are his thoughts on each fly, comments that are as well now a part of the history we preserve. We hope in the future to present the work and thoughts of other important living fly fishers as their art and artifacts become part of the permanent collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

GARY TANNER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DRY FLIES



This Red Quill dry fly is dressed to the standard Preston Jennings pattern (often incorrectly attributed to his protégé Art Flick) with rather dark natural dun hackles. You will see that I use the rolled wood duck wings without dividing them, in the manner of Theodore Gordon and George Edward MacKenzie Skues, because mayflies ride with

their wings together, unless it is very cold or they are cripples. I prefer upeye hooks because the configuration was intended—when Henry Hall and Halford developed the eyed trout hook—to suggest the silhouette and position of mayfly eyes. My father also liked to purchase English flies from Ogden and Hardy (Hardy flies were sold at Dave Cook's Sporting Goods in Denver when I was a boy), and I grew up thinking they were the way a dry fly should look: both functional and a bit elegant and jaunty.



This is my local variation on the Gordon Quill. I prefer this name to the more popular term, Quill Gordon, which is not what Gordon called his pattern. He called it the Blue Quill Gordon, and we have drifted to a kind of stream-side shorthand. I like his word order better, since it is consistent with other patterns of the same general style, like the Olive Quill,

Ginger Quill, Blue Quill, Red Quill, or the little-known Cochy Quill (with brown furnace hackles) and Grieg's Quill, which used golden badger and was originated by Elizabeth Grieg. The subtle difference in this variation on the Gordon Quill is its use of bleached peacock quill dyed olive. The local Brodhead population of *Epeorus pleuralis*, the early mayfly species that is matched by this pattern, has a distinct olive cast. Its coloring is not quite like the specimens of the same species taken on the Beaverkill and Schoharie, and old-timers on the Brodhead called these flies the April Gray or the Yellow Quill. Entomology itself has changed since Jennings and Flick, who identified the Gordon Quill with the naturals they called *Epeorus pleuralis* and *Iron fraudator*, respectively. Both insects were still considered separate species when *Matching the Hatch* was published in 1955, and they were treated as such because of discrete color differences in my insect specimens. Taxonomists have since decided these insects are identical in their morphology and currently describe both as *Epeorus pleuralis*, despite such subtle differences in color. But stay tuned.



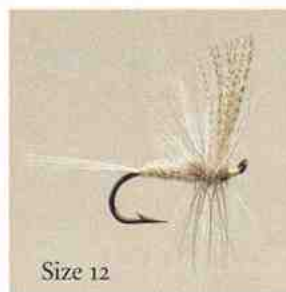
This is a nonstandard Catskill tie, rather like an olive-bodied Dark Hendrickson. It is also close to the Bergman pattern called the Bataviakill, which is found in *Just Fishing*. With these body and hackle colors, the pattern is adapted to the mayfly *Ephemera (Atenella) attenuata*, which should probably be called the Dark Blue Winged Olive.

These flies have all been dressed to imitate specific aquatic insects, and hook size is every bit as important as silhouette and color. In order to present them as clearly as possible, not all of the flies are pictured to scale. Therefore, hook size has been indicated with each fly photo.



Light Cahills are not an imitation of *Stenonema canadensis* as described in both Jennings and Flick. Their nomenclature involved a minor schoolboy error in Latin grammar, hence the designation *Stenonema canadense* in *Matching the Hatch*. However, none of our specimens was correctly identified in the first place, and the actual *Stenonema canadense* has primrose wings and a body that is bright yellow with an

orange cast to its last four body segments. These colors are quite evident in my Brodhead specimens. The true Light Cahill natural is probably the common species *Stenonema ithaca*, which also emerges over a much longer period of time. It can appear sporadically from early June to September.



This is a relatively standard Hendrickson, pretty much after the original Roy Steenrod dressing, except for the single rolled wing. Most commercial Hendricksons offer body colors that are dark muskrat gray and almost chalky white. The latter is almost useless, except on hatch-

ery trout, since it has no counterpart in nature. I think Bergman and the commercial tyer, Stan Cooper, are to blame for these white-bodied Hendricksons. My version is still a workable imitation of *Ephemerella subvaria*.



A favorite variation of mine on the popular Gray Fox imitates the late spring mayfly *Stenonema fuscum*. The Gray Fox is also wrongly attributed to Flick; it first appears in Jennings, twelve years before it was republished in *Streamside Guide*. My variation calls for rolled wood duck wings and a pale hackle quill body, and is simply called the Gray Fox Quill.



A personal variation on another Bergman pattern from *Just Fishing*, the Wallkill, features an olive body with a dull primrose rib, light blue dun hackles, and wood duck wings. The dressing here is an excellent imitation of *Ephemerella* (*Drunella*) *cornutella*, which is among the

several true Blue Winged Olives found on the Brodhead.



Yet another variation of mine on the pattern Jennings called the American March Brown is also falsely attributed to Flick, largely because surprising numbers of fishermen remember the Flick assortment marketed by Orvis when the second edition of *Streamside Guide* was published in 1969. Few have ever seen the

Jennings book, and surprising numbers of people still think the important fly hatches described in Flick are found (Verlyn Klinkenborg in print) west of the Mississippi. None are found as far west as the Rockies, and one of Flick's most important hatches, the Green Drake, called *Ephemerella guttulata*, is not found west of Pittsburgh and Erie. The March Brown imitates the hatch described by both Jennings and Flick, *Stenonema vicarium*, which is still found as far west as the Bois Brule and Saint Croix in Wisconsin. My variation has a subtle ribbing.



This is a slightly lighter version of the Wallkill, with a pale olive body ribbed with primrose and light dun hackles. Its colors imitate another true Blue Winged Olive found on the Brodhead, the species *Ephemerella* (*Drunella*) *cornuta*. I took a 23-inch brown with this pat-

tern in the past season at Henryville while fishing with the current president of the Henryville Flyfishers, Dr. David Rose, who witnessed the entire hundred-yard fight.



My variation on the so-called Light Hendrickson is tied to imitate the common mayfly species *Ephemerella invaria*, which is designated as the prototype for the Hendrickson in *A Book of Trout Flies*.



A yellow-bodied variation on the Light Cahill is a bit closer to the true *Stenonema canadense* species and the similar *Stenonema frontale* (which is not in fishing entomologies, although it emerges from June until late August). Not visible until these flies are wet and fishing is an

underbody of pale orange thread, which simulates the body color of segments six through twelve, showing through the yellow dubbing. Taxonomy has now replaced the old designation *Stenonema canadense* with the new Jensen classification *Stenacron canadense*.



A nonstandard pattern I simply call the Dark Rusty Dun has a body of dark rusty dubbing ribbed with primrose button thread (the filaments of mercerized cotton mingle with the dubbing) and dark natural dun hackle. In larger sizes 8 and 10, this is a workable imitation of

our Great Leadwinged Coachman, the early summer mayfly called *Isonychia sadleri*, which is the proper match for the Dun Variant correctly attributed to Flick. These three flies are slightly smaller and were intended to imitate our October hatch, *Isonychia harperi*. The pattern is also useful during our April activity of *Ephemerella subvaria* on the Brodhead, since its specimens of this mayfly species are rather darkly ringed, in some years, and the standard Hendrickson does not work well.

This concludes the dry flies included in the selection donated to the Museum and is typical of the order in my fly boxes before April. Finding things quickly is often critical in matching the hatch.

WET FLIES



This is a single Carpenter Ant dressed with a chocolate gaster and black furnace hackle. It imitates the common Brodhead ant species *Camponotus pennsylvanicus*.



This nymph, dressed to imitate *Isonychia harperi*, lacks a prominent dorsal stripe on its abdomen and wing case.



The larger *Isonychia bicolor* nymph has a pronounced dorsal stripe on its wing cases.



An imitation of the *Isonychia sadleri* nymph has a distinct dorsal stripe on both its abdomen and its wing cases.



This is a generic olive emerger tied in the style developed by Rene Harrop for the hyperselective fish on the Henry's Fork of the Snake. These patterns have fished well during

hatches of *Ephemerella* (*Dannella*) *coloradensis* in the Rocky Mountains, from the Frying Pan to the Musselshell and Judith. They are also workable imitations of the largest eastern Blue Winged Olive, the familiar *Ephemerella* (*Drunella*) *cornuta*.



This is a generic Hendrickson emerger dressed in the Harrop style.



A Light Hendrickson emerger is useful for imitating the hatching nymphs of *Ephemerella invaria* and *Ephemerella rotunda*, dressed on a size 12 French nymph hook. In sizes 14 and 16, the pattern works well for the Pale Sulphur called *Ephemerella septentrionalis*

and the Little Pale Sulphur called *Ephemerella dorothea*. It is a great mystery, to those of us who know these aquatic invertebrates well, what the popularly sold nymphs and emergers with pale yellow bodies (designed on the mistaken theory that their nymphs look like the dry-fly imitations, but with wing cases instead of wings) are intended to do. These actual nymphs are all medium to dark brown and rather heavily mottled, with only faint scatterings of yellow. Customers may take trout with such nymphs, but they cannot be imitating the insects most catalogue copy describes.



I use a nymphal imitation of the March Brown, because we have had heavy nymphal populations of *Stenonema vicarium* on the Brodhead in the past two seasons. The dorsal colors are dubbing spun on separate working thread of matching color, tapered as they

are spun, and secured in place under the primrose ribbing. Dubbing has softer edges than the strips of feather one sees in this role on commercial flies, and it can be teased laterally along its margins to soften this boundary in a meaningful way. It is a technique I have used for many years, and I believe it originated with me.



This is a conventional wet fly dressed in the Leisenring style, in honor of the old wet-fly wizard of the Brodhead, James Leisenring. It is a variation on the old Scottish pattern called the Woodcock & Green, with throat barbules of black grouse, and wood duck

instead of golden pheasant tippets. Leisenring did not include this pattern in *The Art of Tying the Wet Fly*, which is surprising, since the Brodhead has always sustained a large population of green-bodied *Rhyacophila* caddisflies, the reason for the birth of the popular green-bodied sedge pattern called the Henryville Special. Although few people are aware of such subsurface activity, many caddisflies and several mayfly species (the *Baetis* flies are a good example) go back under water to lay their eggs.



Also in the Leisenring style is this pretty variation on the old-time Grouse & Yellow, but it substitutes a throat of gray partridge and wood duck tails for the brown cock's hackle and golden pheasant tippets of the

old Scottish loch pattern. The old pattern seems to work when the fish are taking dark-winged *Stenonema* duns or the yellow-bodied sedges that are prolific on the Brodhead.



This is my variation on the true English wet fly called the Hare's Ear. Those of us who are familiar with this original pattern, which Skues believed was an emerging nymph, are a bit put off to find the present "Hare's Ear" nothing

more than a scruffy tinsel-wrapped nymph. The original had no throat hackle, except for the stiff guard hairs picked out from its thorax dubbing. The Gordon Quill is a mayfly that escapes its nymphal shuck under water and arrives at the surface with its wings and body furled in a hydrofuge of tiny bubbles. The glitter of the oval tinsel is intended to suggest these tiny pinpoints of light, and I have added brown partridge barbules to suggest the mottled legs of *Epeorus pleuralis*. The Hare's Ear can prove quite deadly on the Brodhead in April.



This Gray Partridge & Primrose soft hackle pattern is dressed to suggest the pupal stage of *Hydropsyche slossonae*, the plentiful Henryville caddis called the Little Spotted Sedge. Its hatching is relatively passive, and it should therefore be fished with a series of mends to keep the presentation dead drift.



I dress this Brown Partridge & Olive to imitate *Rhyacophila fuscula*, another small net-spinning sedge that does not build a protective case and is quite abundant on the upper reaches of the Brodhead. These pupae

swim toward the surface to hatch, and a teasing wet-fly swing is the ticket.



The Gray Partridge & Olive is another useful soft-hackle dressing suggestive of the *Rhyacophila* genus.



This is a soft-hackle pattern I call the Grouse & Black. It imitates the pupal form of *Dolophiodes distinctus*, which begins to hatch in late winter, and can prove important in the early weeks of the Pennsylvania season.



This Brown Partridge & Black soft hackle imitates the emerging pupae of *Chimarra atterima*, the prolific Little Black Caddis. These little sedges are relatively passive as they emerge, and this tiny soft hackle is best presented dead drift to a rising fish.

Their rise forms are quiet dimples and sips, since they know the pupae cannot escape, with none of the splashy rises that many anglers associate with the *Trichoptera*.



A slightly larger soft hackle is the Partridge & Brown, another productive early-season caddis imitation.



Another soft hackle is the little Black Grouse & Brown, which I carry to imitate the pupae of *Glossosoma nigrum*.



The last soft hackle is a variation of the Grouse & Green, an imitation of the pupal form of *Rhyacophila manistee*.

B & C Beck Photo



Dr. Ernest Schwiebert

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Museum News

Diana Siebold



Napa Valley dinner host Gary Andrus, owner of Pine Ridge Winery and passionate fly fisherman, casts as Dinner Chairman Roger Riccardi judges for the casting competition.

Fall Dinner/Auctions

Napa Valley. Our fourth annual event in the Napa Valley was held September 23 at Pine Ridge Winery on the Silverado Trail in Napa, California. Host Gary Andrus and his special events staff provided an evening of activities, including a fly-casting competition on the lawn, a barrel tasting, and a dinner experience second to none.

We arrived on a beautiful, sunny, and warm California day and were greeted by a vineyard ripe with grapes (the fragrance!), gorgeous roses, and a hand-blown, thirteen-foot glass sculpture glistening on the lawn. The sculpture was set in the middle of rows of cabernet grapes and consisted of three hundred individually made pieces. The artist, Dale Chihuly, also had some delicately crafted pieces set alight in the cabernet cave, where we dined. The Pine Ridge winery staff, led by Special Events Managers Tammy Walters and Gordon Larum, gave us an evening that went like clockwork. Wine Valley Catering served up a five-course meal, with mesquite-grilled Napa Valley rack of lamb as the

main course, nicely complemented by several reds from the Pine Ridge wine cellar.

Before the event, Museum Trustee and Dinner Chairman Roger Riccardi, along with Executive Director Gary Tanner, set up a fly-casting contest on the lawn, which attracted some of our best anglers. The grand prize of a Sage 8-foot, 3-weight rod went to Jack Parker, who won with an amazing score of fourteen casts on six stations! Rods from the Museum's hands-on collection were used in the event. After the competition, our host led us into the caves of the winery for a barrel tasting. Pine Ridge boasts one and a half miles of caves, lined with barrel after barrel of fermenting wines. Guests were enticed to taste various wines at various stages of completion, with the best of the best served at dinner.

We thought we might be camping out all evening, as it appeared none of our guests wanted to leave! Gary Andrus was the consummate host. Not only is his passion and knowledge of wine evident; he obviously passes his enthusiasm onto his staff. This goes for his love of fly fishing and skiing as well. "Everyone who



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Rob Fraser (left) and Dinner/Auction Chairman John Mundt at the Hartford dinner, discussing sleep deprivation since the recent arrival of their respective daughters, Jayne and Abigail.

works for me either skis or fly fishes," said Andrus. At the end of the evening, he sent us away with some hats and terrific denim shirts with his winery logo, which includes flies.

All in all, we had a wonderful evening filled with good company, exquisite wine, and a five-course dinner to complement both. Our special thanks to Roger Riccardi, who not only helped organize this event, but did a terrific job in coordinating the wine donations we have received from all over the Napa Valley to be used at our events throughout the year. We would also like to recognize Cheryl and Jack Hoey, the lucky recipients of the many boxes of items we shipped cross-country to offer for auction. They housed our items in a spare office next to Dr. Hoey's dental practice, and we retrieved them upon our (very late) arrival. Those of you who know Gary Tanner must ask him about our trip to Napa—possibly the longest trip in history! A sincere thanks to Gary Andrus and his able and friendly staff for making this event one to remember!

Philadelphia. On October 11, we headed to the City of Brotherly Love to hold our annual event at the Merion Cricket Club. Cochairs Lee Pierson and Lynn Claytor of the Delaware Valley Women's Fly Fishing Association (DVWFFA) gathered a crowd of seventy-five guests to support the Museum. The event was cosponsored by

the DVWFFA and the Anglers' Club of Philadelphia. Individual sponsors Beverly and Gerald Hayes Jr., Curtis Hill, and Tom Stoneback joined the club sponsors in supporting the event. A special thanks to the Anglers' Club for once again generously donating the evening's table wine.

The Cricket Club Catering Manager Caleb Tindall and his culinary staff did a terrific job of presenting the event. Executive Director Gary Tanner put on his auctioneer's cap for the evening, and our guests happily parted with some of their hard-earned dollars. A trip to Key Largo and Alberta, Canada, won top honors for a few of our guests, and some original artwork was bought at top dollar.

Our thanks to local auction donors George Angstadt, Ted McKenzie, and Ralph Megliola at Sky Top Lodge for offering some local day trips and fly-tying memorabilia for sale. Special thanks to volunteers Sue Echert and Erin Mooney for selling raffle tickets and assisting in the live auction, and once again to Lee Pierson and Lynn Claytor for their assistance in making this evening a success.

Hartford. The Annual Hartford Dinner and Sporting Auction was held November 1 at the Farmington Marriott. Dinner Chairman John Mundt and his committee (Bob Allaire, Ron Angelo, Jerry Bannock, Phil Castleman, Jack

Coyle, David Egan, David Foley, Joe Garman, Robert Hiler, Chris Hindman, Larry Johnson, Steve Lewis, John Marona, R. Tracy Page, Bill Pastore, Marie Pastore, Vincent Ringrose, Ed Ruestow, Michael Ryan, and Felix Trommer) did a terrific job in planning the event and soliciting donations. John warmly greeted our guests and assured an enjoyable evening for our supporters.

This year's event saw approximately ninety guests in attendance. A silent auction and a five-rod raffle proved a success for the Museum, and auctioneer Mike Tomasiewicz kept the live-auction items moving. Karen Walsh and her staff at the Marriott made sure that the evening ran smoothly.

The Museum wishes to acknowledge and thank the following auction donors: Phil Castleman, Peter Corbin, Thomas Aquinas Daly, David Foley, John Mundt, William Pastore, Vincent Ringrose, Jack Smola, and the Orvis Company. Individual donors were Appleton Seavern, Larry Richardson, and Ronald Rogers. A special thanks to our charming raffle ticket seller, Museum-newcomer Tess Sullivan from Bristol, who ably persuaded attendees to part with their money. And last, but certainly not least, to our live-auction volunteers Mike Ryan and Tony Smith—thank you!

"Anglers All" Reception at the Museum of the Rockies

On September 30, we cohosted a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception with the Museum of the Rockies in their "Anglers All" exhibition hall. It was a small gathering of new and old friends sharing the exhibit's warmth and enjoying the fine wines provided by Greg Messel of Three Forks, Montana, a strong supporter of both institutions. We are also appreciative of the efforts of Marilyn Wessel and Mary Peterson, director and development director of the Museum of the Rockies, for their help and support.

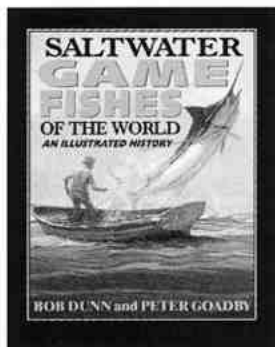
Hildene Farm, Food, and Folk Art Fair

The Hildene Farm, Food, and Folk Art Fair is an annual event held Columbus Day weekend at the scenic Hildene Meadowlands in Manchester Village. The event has won the distinction of being one of the "Top Ten Fall Events" by the state of Vermont for four years running. Crafters, artists, food enthusiasts, and an assortment of local nonprofits exhibit at the fair, and there are more tractors (and

New Books From Frank Amato Publications

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millennia. A 2000 year history of the early naturalists and fishes they first described. Illustrations are intensely evocative of the period and remind us of the skills of yesteryear, now largely lost. There is the never-told-before history of the ancient sport of sea fishing from its origins in the mists of antiquity to the present day. All color, 9.5 x 12.5 inches, 304 pages. Hardbound: \$89.95

HATCH GUIDE FOR NEW ENGLAND STREAMS

Thomas Ames, Jr.



New England's streams, and the insects and fish that inhabit them, have their own unique qualities. Their flowing waters support an amazing diversity of insect species from all of the major orders—in fact, at last count, Maine, alone, has 162 species of mayflies, the most of any state. Few, if any, books deal with the insects and life stages specific to New England, until now.

Hatch Guide to New England Streams, by professional photographer and "amateur entomology enthusiast" Thomas Ames, explores the insects of

New England. Ames covers: reading water; presentations for New England streams; tackle; night fishing; and more. The bulk of this book, however, deals with the insects and the best flies to imitate them. Similar in style to Jim Schollmeyer's successful "Hatch Guide" series, Ames discusses the natural and its behaviors on the left-hand page and the three best flies to imitate it on the right, including proper size and effective techniques. Tom's color photography of the naturals and their imitations is superb, making this book as beautiful as it is useful. A must for all New England fly-fishers! Full color. 4 1/8 x 6 1/8 inches, 272 pages; insect and fly plates.

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yes, tractor-pulling events) than any visitor or "local" can handle in one afternoon.

The Museum had a booth for the third year in a row with the goal of raising awareness of the Museum in our community. We actually sold some products and made a bit of money, despite this year's cold wet weather that kept staff bundled up. Art Director John Price was "priceless" in his purple felt hat, bright-yellow slicker, rain pants, and hiking boots (several of which were lined with Gore-Tex).

Recent Donations

Paul Schullery of Yellowstone, Wyoming, sent us a copy of *A Tradition of Excellence: The Adirondack Fishery Research Partnership of the Adirondack League Club and Cornell University, 1950-2000* (Adirondack League Club, 2000), which includes his article, "On the Shoals: Brilliant Wet Flies Cast from Elegant Boats." He also sent us a copy of "Cumberland Valley Mornings: George Gibson and the Dawn of American Spring Creek Fishing," which appeared in the Spring 1996 issue of *Pennsylvania Heritage* magazine (vol. 22, no. 2).

John M. Nemecek of Boxford, Massachusetts, gave us three flies that were tied by Hiram Brobst of Palmerton, Pennsylvania: No-Name, Burnt Orange, and Bregenzer.

David Zincavage of Newton, Connecticut, donated loose issues from his collection of *Salmon & Trout Magazine*, the journal of the Salmon and Trout Association in London. He previously donated the bound run of journals.

Charles T. Lee of Philadelphia donated books that he wishes us to use for auction and the collection. These include: *Fishing Memories*, first edition, by D. Arms (Macmillan, 1938); *New Angles for the Angler*, first edition, by B. Atkinson (Hart Publishing, 1966); *The Sweet of the Year*, first edition, by R. Palmer Baker (Morrow, 1965); *Spinning for American Game Fish*, first edition, by J. D. Bates Jr. (Little, Brown, 1947); *Trout Waters and How to Fish Them*, first edition, by J. D. Bates Jr. (Little, Brown, 1949); *Trout*, seventh printing, by Ray Bergman (Alfred A. Knopf, 1944); *Mulberry Trout*, by Ogden Bigelow (Tuttle, 1970); *The Philosophical Fisherman*, first edition, by H. Blaisdell (Houghton Mifflin, 1969); *Aged in the Woods*, second edition, by P. H. Bonner (Arno Press, Inc., 1967; reprint by Abercrombie & Fitch Library); *The Determined Angler and the Brook Trout*, first edition, by Charles Bradford

(Putnam, 1916); *Virgin Water*, first edition, by Leighton Brewer (Coward-McCann, 1941); *Trout Fishing*, first edition, by Joe Brooks (Harper & Row, 1972); *American Angler's Guide*, fifth edition, by J. J. Brown (Appleton, 1876); *The Complete American and Canadian Sports Encyclopedia*, revised edition, by Francis H. Buzzacott (Donahue, 1929); *The Fireside Book of Fishing*, first printing, by Raymond R. Camp (Simon & Schuster, 1959); *My Friend the Trout*, first edition, by E. V. Connett (Von Nostrand, 1961); *The Wonderful World of Trout*, number 410 of limited edition, by Charles K. Fox (Telegraph Press, 1963); *The Joys of Trout*, by Arnold Gingrich (Crown Publishers, 1973); *Complete Book of Bass Fishing*, first edition, by Grits Gresham (Harper & Row, 1966); *Complete Brown Trout*, first edition, by Cecil E. Heacox (Winchester Press, 1974); *Telling on the Trout*, first edition, by E. R. Hewitt (Scribners, 1926); *Secrets of the Salmon*, second edition, by E. R. Hewitt (Scribners, 1925); *Fresh Water Angling*, first edition, by John Alden Knight (Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., 1940); *The Dry Fly and Fast Water*, second printing, by G. M. F. LaBranche (Scribner, 1926); *McClane's Standard Fishing Encyclopedia*, first edition (two copies), by A. J. McClane (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965); *McClane's Standard Fishing Encyclopedia*, fifth printing, by A. J. McClane (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965); *Fishless Days, Angling Nights*, by Sparse Grey Hackle (Alfred Miller, [Crown Publishers, Inc., 1971]); *Izaak Walton: The Complete Angler and His Turbulent Times*, first edition (2,000 copies published) by J. Lawrence Pool and Angeline J. Pool (Stinehour Press, 1976); *Remembrances of Rivers Past*, first edition, second printing, by E. Schwiebert (Macmillan, 1972); *The Book of the Fly Rod*, first edition, by Hugh Sheringham and John C. Moore (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1931); *Gun, Rod, and Saddle*, first edition, by Ubique (Townsend and Adams, 1869); *A Creelful of Fishing Stories*, first edition, by Henry Van Dyke (Scribners, 1932); *The Travel Diary of an Angler*, one of a limited edition of 750, by Henry van Dyke (Derrydale Press, 1929); *Anglers Choice*, first edition, by H. T. Walden II (Macmillan, 1947); *Upstream and Down*, first trade edition, by H. T. Walden II (Macmillan, 1938); *The Contemplative Angler*, first edition, by Roy Wall (Putnam, 1948); *Fresh Waters*, first edition, by Edward Weeks (Little, Brown & Co., 1968); *Worming and Spinning for Trout*, first edition, by Jerry Wood (A. S. Barnes and Company, 1959); *Lee Wulff's*

Upcoming Events

January 6-7

The Fly Fishing Show
Denver, Colorado

January 19-21

The Fly Fishing Show
Marlborough, Massachusetts

January 26-28

The Fly Fishing Show
Somerset, New Jersey

March 3-4

Fly Fishing Fair
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

March 8

Dinner Auction
The Anglers' Club
New York, New York

(For more information about the Fly Fishing Show, call 1-800-420-7582 or visit their site on line at www.flyfishingshow.com.)

Handbook of Fresh Water Fishing, first edition, second printing, by Lee Wulff (Stokes, 1939); *Lee Wulff: Salmon on a Fly*, by Lee Wulff, edited by John Merwin (Simon and Schuster, 1992); *Making and Using the Fly and Leader*, second edition, by Paul H. Young (Paul Young, 1935); and *Fine Kettle of Fish Stories*, by Ed Zern (Winchester Press, 1972).

In the Library

Thanks to the following publishers for their donations of recent titles that have become part of our collection (all were published in 2000).

The Lyons Press sent us Darrel Martin's *The Fly Fisher's Illustrated Dictionary*; Ernest Hemingway's *Hemingway on Fishing*, edited by Nick Lyons; John Troy's *Lunkers!*; John Gierach's *Good Flies: Favorite Trout Patterns and How They Got Away*; and Lefty Kreh's *Solving Fly-Casting Problems and 101 Fly-Fishing Tips: Practical Advice from a Master Angler*.

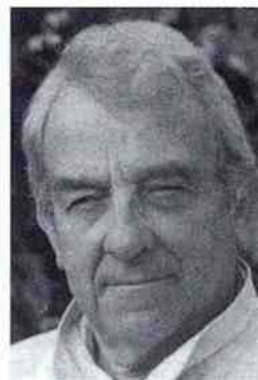
Frank Amato Publications, Inc. donated Allen Druke's *Fly & Bubble Fishing Techniques* and the Federation of Fly Fishers' *Fly Pattern Encyclopedia*, edited by Al and Gretchen Beatty. Stackpole Books sent William E. Schmidt's *Hooks for the Fly* and David A. Ross's *The Fisherman's Ocean*. Greycliff Publishing Company sent us Ken Hanley's *Fly Fishing the Pacific Inshore: Strategies for Estuaries, Bays, and Beaches*. 

CONTRIBUTORS



Andrew Herd was born in London and has lived in the north of England for many years, within a few miles of the Beck, on which Canon Greenwell learned to fish. He has had a lifelong interest in history, which has led him all over the world. His first book, a monograph on medieval fly fishing, was published by the Medlar Press in 1999, accompanying a facsimile of *The Treatyse of Fishing with an Angle*. He maintains a website devoted to the history of fly fishing (<http://www.flyfishinghistory.com>), and his second book, a history of fly fishing, will be published by the Medlar Press this winter, with an introduction by Fred Buller (<http://www.demon.co.uk/medlarpress/>). Dr. Herd fishes for almost anything, but trout and salmon are his main interests. He is a member of the Flyfisher's Club, London. His story, "The Tying of the Treatyse Flies," appeared in the Spring 1999 issue.

Frederick Buller, a London gunmaker, has spent most of his spare time during the last forty years researching angling history. He is the author of seven books, the most recent of which—*Angling, The Solitary Vice*—was published last fall in a limited edition by Coch-y-Bonddu Books. A limited edition reissue of the first edition of his 1971 book, *Pike*, was recently published by Robert Hale. His most recent contribution to this journal was "Sidelights and Reflections on William Samuel's *The Arte of Angling* (1577)," which appeared in the Fall 2000 issue.



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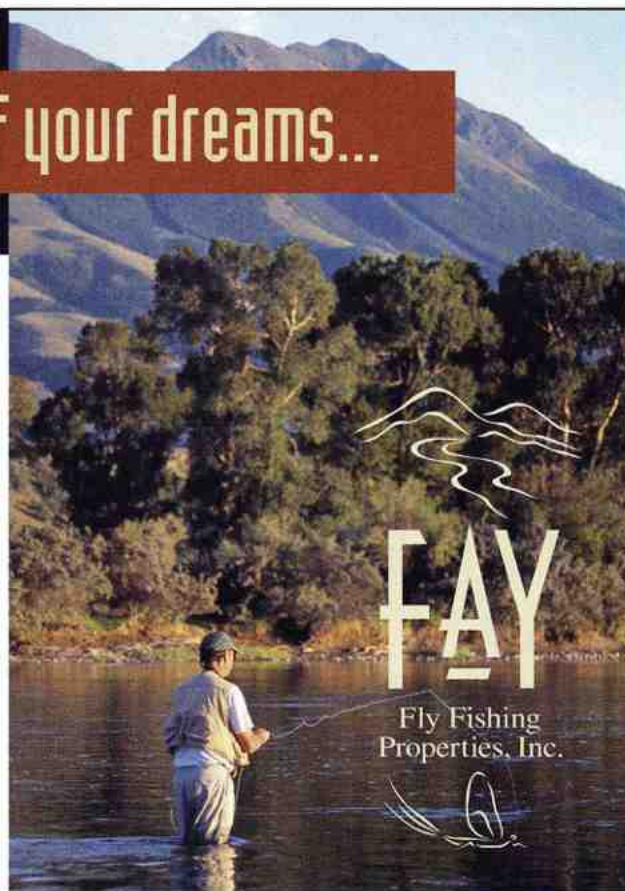
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A Toast to Our Supporters

Margot Page



Fund-raising is a constant challenge for nonprofits large and small, although from my admittedly narrow perspective on this issue, it's tougher for smaller institutions. We don't provide the exposure, necessarily, that sponsoring corporations seek. If you had no real soft spot in your heart for preserving the culture of fly fishing, where would you spend your sponsorship dollars: on an institution like ours that has 2,000 members or one with 200,000?

Fortunately for us, not every corporate entity looks solely at the numbers. Some look at the institution itself. As one gentleman recently said to me as he signed up as a new member, "The institutions a person supports reflects who he or

she is as a person." The same can be said, I feel, for corporate identity.

We have been blessed, for the last two years or so, with support from a group of California wineries, a very nontraditional source of funding for us. They have provided us with the wines that make up a "mini-wine cellar" that we use in our fund-raising auctions. Consisting of a dozen or so bottles of their fine wines, this grouping averages about \$700 at each auction. We host ten to twelve fund-raising auctions per year. I'll leave it to you to do the math, but obviously the wineries' contributions are very important to us.

Having said all that, we would like to thank the following California wineries for their continued support:

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Gallo of Sonoma, Healdsburg
Heitz Wine Cellars, St. Helena
Charles Krug Winery, St. Helena
Markham Vineyards, St. Helena
Miner Family Vineyards, Oakville
Monticello Vineyards, Napa
Pine Ridge Winery, Napa
Silver Oak Cellars, Geyserville
St. Clement Vineyards, St. Helena
Stone Fly Vineyards, Napa
Turnbull Wine Cellars, Oakville
von Strasser Winery, Calistoga

GARY TANNER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fly Fishing

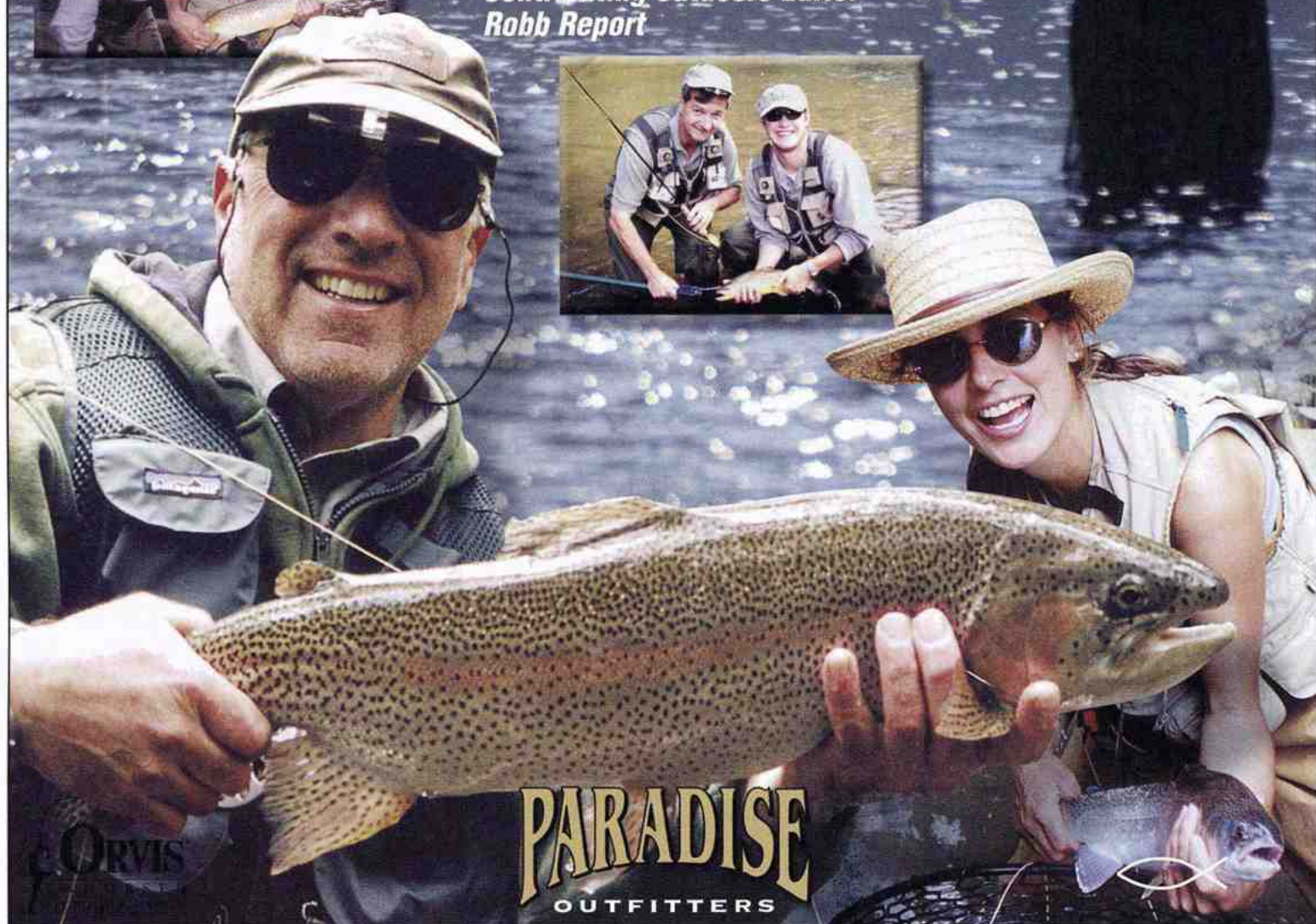
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THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF FLY FISHING, a nationally accredited, nonprofit, educational institution dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of fly fishing, was founded in Manchester, Vermont, in 1968. The Museum serves as a repository for, and conservator 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.

