

# STREAMSIDE

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 2

DAME JULIANA LEAGUE

SUMMER/FALL 2021

## Riffles & Runs



**By Brenna Dekorte**

Fly fishing isn't hard. It's as simple and basic as you can get. Through film and lore it has earned a reputation for being inaccessible without a mentor of Yoda-like skill and wisdom. Folks see fly fishing as hard to break into a community of dedicated anglers bordering on a cult, wildly-cost prohibitive, confusing and fraught with tweedy mystique. Don't get me wrong, it is absolutely all of those things. But hard, it is not. We can make it as hard or as easy as we choose. From a non-flyfishing perspective it is full of mystery and magic while being intimidatingly full of language and unspoken etiquette that make it seem just out of reach.

Embarking on a fly fishing journey can be life-changing and offer an excellent opportunity for personal growth as you overcome obstacles and keep going even though some days are rough. All it takes is that one great moment to keep you coming back; no ceiling on what you can learn about fishing and yourself. There's also a beauty in the practice. Stripped down to the basic elements it is about building on human ingenuity yet keeping the basics intact: a hook on a line to trick a fish, cover it in mallard flank and sparkle flash if you like, it's just icing on the cake. The sky is the limit. You can covet highly specialized gear and compose leader formulas with advanced algebraic equations for your exact purposes. Yet hand a child a simple fly rod setup on a hot summer day at a pond and boom! they catch a panfish without even understanding the life cycle of a mayfly or the mechanics of the double haul.

Fly fishing is deceptive in that it isn't really difficult if the conditions are just right, but paradoxically it gets harder the more you do it and realize that you have been cruelly tricked into thinking you are actually pretty good at it by those devious July pond bluegills. Who is being fooled? The fish or the fisher?

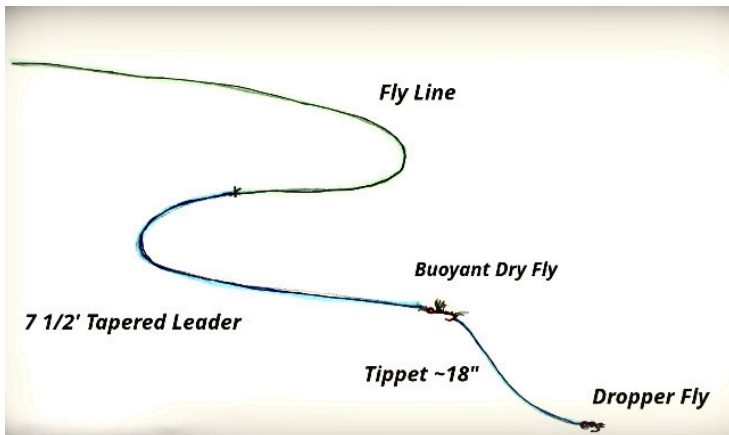
It takes someone either blissfully naive or a glutton for punishment to the up the sport. I am the former; if I had known at all what I was getting into... well then I'd definitely be the latter.

Brenna

# One Fly ... Why Not Two?

By Zachary Anderson

Tandem rigs are an important and fun way to increase your chance of a successful day on the water. Stack the odds in your favor by presenting multiple flies in ways that you can't accomplish with just a single fly offering. The benefits of dry dropper, double dries, multiple nymphs and multiple steamers are unparalleled in most river conditions.



## When Not To Use 'Em

Let's start with when tandem rigs are not the right choice. As the river gets lower and clearer dial back the use of gaudy multiple fly rigs. This especially applies to rising fish in slow water. Also beginners should mostly avoid multiple fly rigs because they are prone to tangle. It's wise to wait until you have established some line control before throwing multiple flies through the air.

## Dry Droppers

Dry dropper rigs are a fun way to fish. In the western states they can be big foam hoppers trailed by various nymphs. In the east it tends to be large mayflies or Caddis trailed by nymphs of various size. Use beadheads with tungsten for the best results. Attaching the nymph is easy, just tie a piece of tippet off the eye or bend of the hook and tie your nymph on. Use whatever your normal fishing knot is to attach it. The

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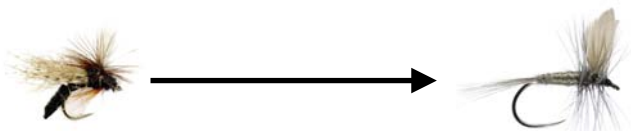


length between the two can be as short as a few inches or as far as thirty inches. Determine that by the depth of the water you are fishing.



Photo by Z. Anderson

**Double dry** is a good way to increase your odds while prospecting for trout. You can also use a larger dry to keep track of a small one. In riffles blind fishing big



bushy flies can produce explosive strikes. The benefit of the double dry in this situation is that you can cover two categories of bugs. Big stonefly dry followed by a mayfly or a mayfly followed by a caddis are some productive combinations. When having trouble seeing small dries try using a larger dry to keep track of it. Using a small parachute mayfly imitation is a great way to keep track of tiny ants, olives, tricos and midges. For the best results put the largest fly first and tie off the bend of the hook. Space the flies from eighteen to twenty four inches ap

## Nymph Tandems

Multiple nymph tandem rigs are a critical tool for putting more fish in the net. There are endless ways to set them up but here are a few of the most common. Heavy fly followed by a light fly. If done correctly this combination doesn't require spilt shot. It's best for active trout in slow to medium speed water. Another common set up is a light fly followed by a weighted fly. If done correctly this rig also doesn't require spilt shot.

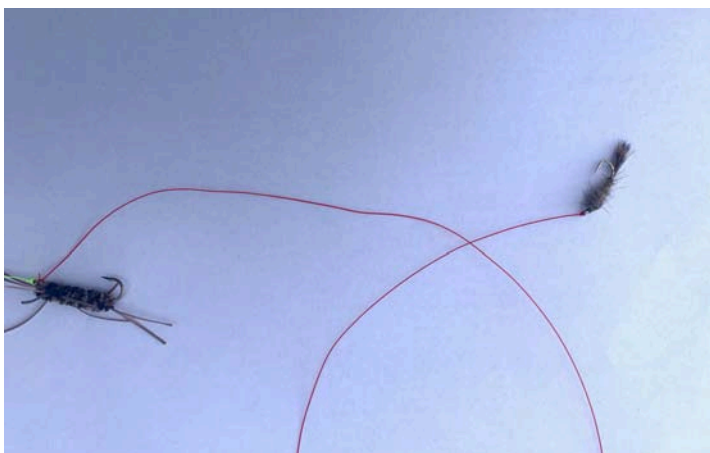


Photo By Z. Anderson

It's great for fishing heavy fast riffles when you need to

get down. It also shines when the water is cold, and the trout are inactive on the bottom. The most common way to fish tandem nymph rigs is with split shot. When using this technique place the shot no more than a foot above the first fly. If the shot slides tie a triple surgeons knot above the first fly at the appropriate distance. This rig can be adjusted to fit almost all river conditions. Unweighted flies will give you the best quality drifts and therefore more fish. Attaching tandem nymphs using the eye to eye technique seems to produce the least amount of tangles. When fishing heavy flies, tungsten beads and lead under bodies are a must and when fishing split shot avoid eared shot as it twists the line.

## What About A Tandem Streamer?

Multiple streamer rigs trigger vicious predatory strikes from large trout. A heavy streamer followed by a lighter streamer produces an erratic action that trout just can't resist. A tungsten woolly bugger followed by a muddler minnow is a great combination. This presentation is great for clear water and active trout. When the water is dirty, cold and the fish are deep, place the heavy fly last. This will get the rig deeper which is critical for lethargic trout. Attach flies eye to eye using heavy tippet.



Photo By Z. Anderson

# A Couple Of Stray Thoughts About Rig Design

## Tippet Rings:

Some fishers use a tippet ring when they're nymphing with an indicator or two-color sighter. Try a 7.5' 4x leader and cut about 2-3 feet of the tippet off the leader and tie the tippet ring into the leader with a basic clinch knot. Then take the tippet you cut off the leader and tie a clinch knot onto the tippet ring. There I will tie the upper fly and then tie a second on the back, just like a typical nymphing rig. (Some guides will just use old leaders about 5 feet in length and tie a tippet ring onto this. Then from here, you can put anywhere between 3-6 feet of tippet onto the end.) Utilizing this relatively new piece of terminal tackle can allow more productivity and flexibility in a rig.

Using tippet rings with pre-set rigs can greatly facilitate tandem fly and leader changes without tangles, excessive cutting and tying on. Try them, you'll like them.

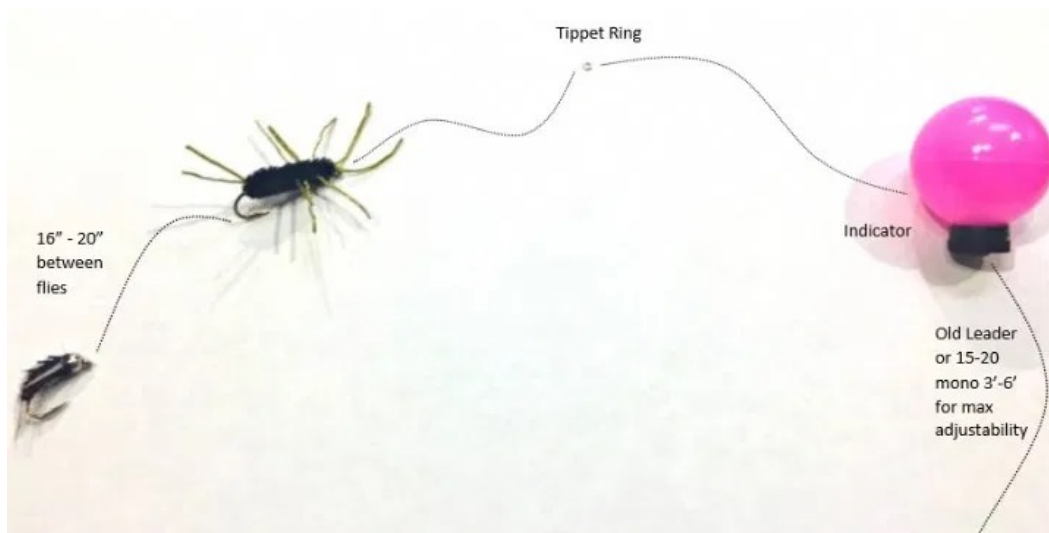
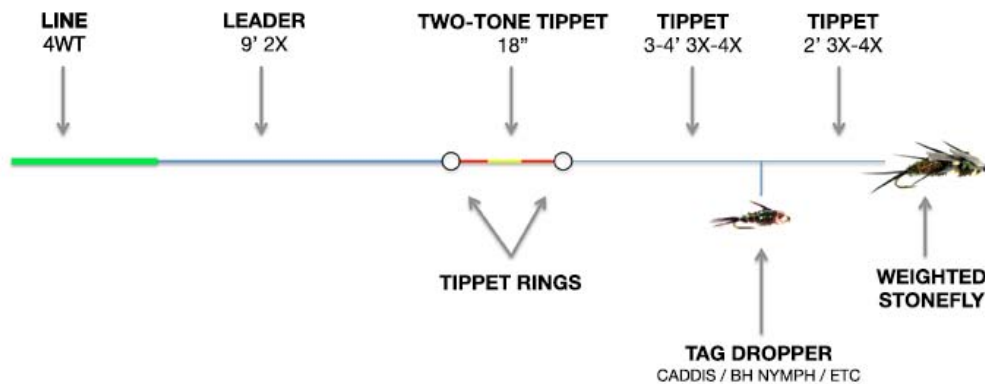


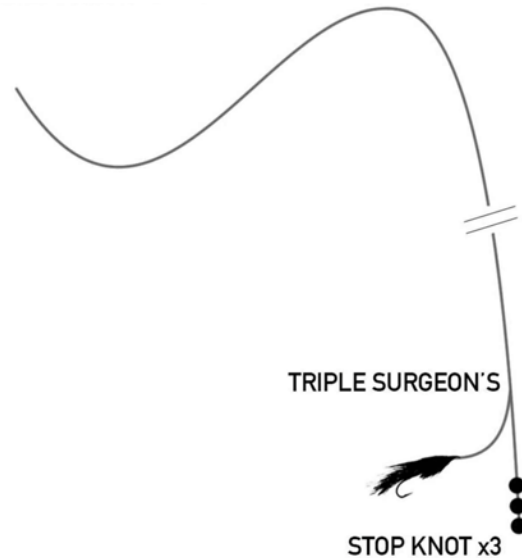
Photo Courtesy Of Vail Valley Anglers



## Drop Shot Rigs

A drop shot rig simply suspends your fly in the water column above a weight. This rig allows you to get deep quickly and fine-tune the depth of your fly until you start getting hits. Similar to various contact nymphing methods, feeling the weight bounce and drag on the bottom provides a constant point of reference and greatly increases strike detection. Often done with tandem fly rigs where the bottom (often heavier) fly is getting hung up constantly.

Kelly Galloup had written a mountain of material about variations of this rig. E.g., <https://youtu.be/8P0IKoE1QIU>



## Finally

Tandem rigs are a great way to increase your odds of a successful outing. If you're new to multiple fly rigs here is some advice. Stay patient; tangles can and will happen. When casting make deliberate open loops. Reduce false casting; this helps in the tangle department. Use the heaviest tippet the conditions will let you get away with; it's easier to untangle and you'll land more fish. Most importantly don't overthink it. There's a lot of food in most rivers. Chances are if you're using something reasonable and "buggy" it looks like something the trout are seeing regularly. Focus on presentation of flies as opposed to fly choice and you'll be rewarded with more fish.

## BIO



*Zachary Anderson is a guide for Cross Current Guide Service on the Upper Delaware River. (<http://crosscurrentguideservice.com>). He has been guiding the system full time for nine years. When he's not fishing Zach can be found thinking about fishing, dreaming about fishing, writing about fishing or talking about fishing.*

*If you have a question about tandem rigs email Zach at : [flyfishbackcountry@gmail.com](mailto:flyfishbackcountry@gmail.com)*

# Different Strokes

By Tim King

I've been painting and drawing steadily now since 2006. I don't remember exactly why I started then but it may have been due to the admiration I have for graphic designers with whom I interact as a website virtuoso. I've seen a lot of amazing art design cross my desk in 15 years. It never ceases to delight and inspire me.

Of all the mediums I've dabbled in, watercolor holds the greatest fascination. For those of you who haven't tried it, watercolor can be both nerve-wracking and sublime. I find a transparency and glow that you can achieve with watercolor that is not possible with other forms of art. Unfortunately, there can't be any hesitancy while you are painting. You have to decide where you will place each brushstroke of color and then let it do its magic. Watercolor is not a medium to be totally controlled and manipulated, and that becomes the quality that attracts us.

## Time and Timing

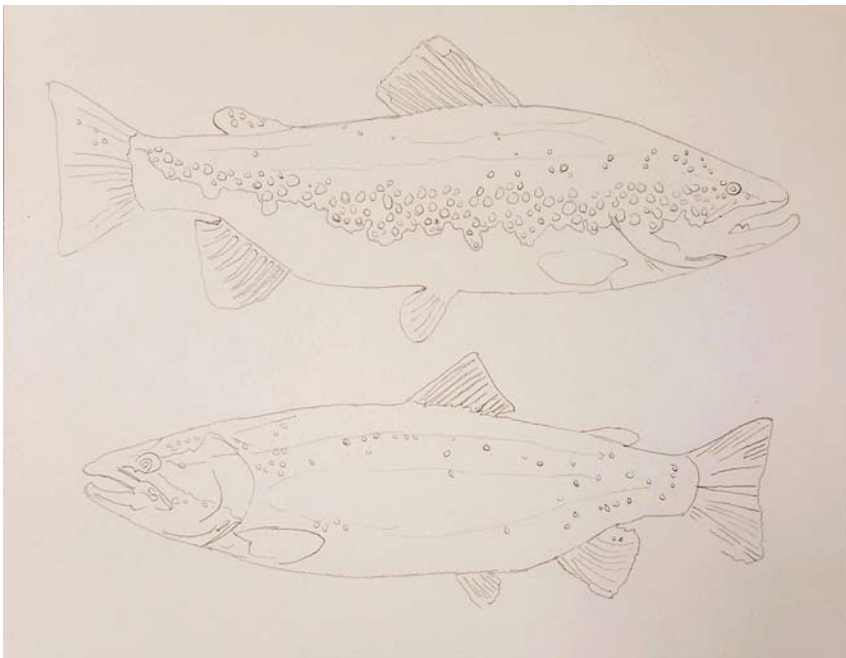
One of the key reasons I enjoy working in watercolor is that it is a good fit with my personality and my family/work circumstances.

I usually sketch then watercolor a painting in two or three sittings; sometimes just one. Not only do I tend to be impatient (I have a pile of scrapped paintings to attest to that) but with watercolor you only get one shot. Once you've laid down your paint (which dries quickly) you may overlay layers of color, but doing too much can muddy and darken your desired outcome. So planning is important. You must work light to dark. For example, painting yellow over dark blue becomes a blight on your conception. Paint the light areas first and let them dry. Then slowly build in the darker colors and shading.

Additionally, the quickness of watercolor fits with the on-again, off-again unpredictability of my work demands as an IT specialist. I confess after a 4-5 day layoff, in the middle of an unfinished painting, I feel less inspired than guilty to return to my work in progress. I've found that waiting for the "spirit moving to move me" to finish is not going to sustain artistic momentum. As Nike famously nags, "JUST DO IT!"

I put together a quick demo to show my process.

## Step 1



***Make your drawing. Don't labor over this. It's ok to trace or use a small projector (that I often use). Also don't worry about copying someone else's art as long as you don't sign it and sell it.***

## Step 2

*Lay in the light colors with thin washes diluted with water. Use scrap paper for testing colors. Pause to let dry.*



## Step 3

*Start to bring in the darker colors. If you leave a hard edge and you don't like it soften it with a wet brush*

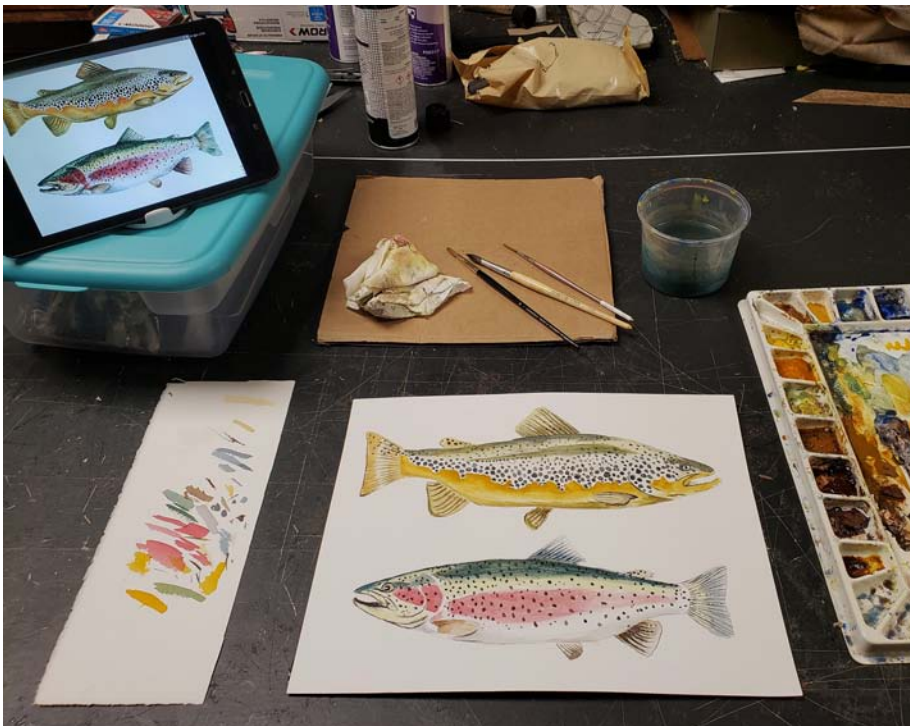


## Step 4



***Bring in the darks, don't be afraid to let the painting dry and only then lay in another coat of darks.***  
**Step 5**

***Paint the spots, fins, eyes, and other darker accents - done!***



If you're not pleased with the results toss it aside and start another one!

*Keep practicing!*





*Tim King lives in Limerick with his wife and son. He is a longtime member of the Dame Juliana League and besides working and painting he enjoys fishing on French Creek, the Schuylkill River, Marsh Creek Lake, Tangier Sound, the Jersey Shore and the Outer Banks, NC.*

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Articles, news, and fly tying tips are gratefully accepted and are due by October 15, February 15, May 15 and August 1. Please send them to: [mseymour1128@earthlink.net](mailto:mseymour1128@earthlink.net)

Dame Juliana Flyfishers is an affiliate member club of Fly Fishers International  
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# Fly Fishing with Bob

By Jeff Davis

Relationships between fathers and sons can be complicated, but for me and my dad, Bob, fly fishing seemed to un-complicate them a little. We enjoyed fly fishing together for over 25 years on some of Pennsylvania's most beautiful trout streams, and we occasionally caught some fish, too.

The odd thing about it was that, unlike the usual pattern where father teaches son, in our case it was reversed. My fly fishing obsession began while I was stationed in northern Michigan with the US Air Force back in the late 80s. One of the guys in the squadron was an avid fly fisherman, and we were located within walking distance of the Au Sable river, so I found myself learning in a target-rich environment. The browns, rainbows, steelhead and coho salmon were enough to get a beginner's interest percolating. As it happens, I also discovered on the same stream that my closest high school buddy was also a fly fisher. I've been lucky enough to fish with him for over 30 years as a consequence, and we still manage a trip or two each year.

Through a church friend of his, my father had access to a cabin on Penns Creek, and they would spin fish together on occasion during trout season. I got invited one spring to come along, so I brought my trusty L. L. Bean beginner 5-weight and with some rudimentary trout flies and began flailing away at the wily trout on Penns. The blue wing olives proved to be the thing that trip, and my father's count on the spinning gear was not too impressive. While still a fledgling fly flogger, I showed him the basics and soon, to wreck a phrase, he was hooked.



His style was a little unconventional, but when it worked, he would beam with pride, especially in the later years when, after having mastered the basics of fly tying, he would get one on a fly of his own design. He never was infected with the pretentiousness that sometimes comes to fly fishermen, and was always elated to enjoy the natural beauty around him. I always admired how much joy he got just from being in such a beautiful place. Perhaps that is part of what drove him to make the four-plus hour trip from home every year to a forlorn, rundown cabin.

Readers of Gordon MacQuarrie's "Stories of the Old Duck Hunters" would recognize "The Prez" and my father likened himself a little to that memorable character. He would begin organizing the details of the annual trip to Penns in late March, with a plan to be on the stream in late May, not to chase the Green Drake hatch, but usually just prior to it. He would gather a rogues gallery of fly fishing friends, some of

his and some of mine, and plan a week or so of camp style gourmet meals, complete with pies made in camp and ice cream from the Amish grocery. He found an Amish butcher to supply us with fresh steaks, so even if the fishing went south, dinner would raise one's spirits. What day was "Steak Night"? was always the first thing people wanted to know when planning to attend.

Since he had a bad back, Bob wouldn't travel the lengths and breadths of Penns. He had a spot picked out where year after year he could be found working dries and nymphs regardless of the water conditions. It was a manageable walk from the cabin, and did not require the treacherous wading like other sections of the famous stream. I would often stop and fish with him in his 'hole' on my way downstream or upstream depending on the time of day. He would often fish in the afternoon, having spent the morning with camp duties and the occasional shopping trip to work in a smoke while no one was looking. Since we were always in place to match a potential evening hatch, dinners were after dark. After dinner, we would relax with a beer or two, and his happiest evenings were spent



recalling some of his favorite poetry, including the works of Robert Service and Rudyard Kipling. Some of his friends knew them too, and often spirited corrections were offered during the recitations from memory.

After being diagnosed with lung cancer, my father's fishing activities were curtailed and the trip planning and execution fell to me. Having access to his endless spreadsheets of menus and shopping lists made it easy, and as time went on the fishers shrank in number. Although battling chemotherapy, he felt good enough to go his last year, and despite my mother's warnings, managed to get a little fishing in and a trip to his hole one last time. He slept most of that trip but he told me on the way home that he was grateful I had taken him, as after the cancer diagnosis, he feared he would never see his spot again.

The year following his passing, I felt an obligation to bring his rod along and managed a nice 15" brown on it in his memory. I can't set foot on Penn's without thinking of him, and the time we shared there. My brothers, neither of whom fishes, both hinted at their jealousy of the trips Bob and I made there together over the span of some 20 years. We lost access to the cabin a few years ago, which has forced me to focus my fishing time on other streams, but I stop and fish the same holes with reverence on the occasions I'm in the area.



## BIO

*A fly fisher for over thirty years, Jeff Davis lives with his wife Trish and their olden retriever, Miles. He is a former BSA Scoutmaster, retired USAF officer and airline captain. Jeff is a father of two. In addition to time with friends on the streams of his native Pennsylvania, he now enjoys composing and performing with local musical groups, including PHS Community Band and RSVP Brass quintet. He also enjoys model railroading, tinkering with classic cars, and an occasional single malt.*

# A Year in the Life Of the Black Rock Eagles

By Bob Bonney

I believe we've all picked up a camera at some point in our life. For me it started in my junior year of high school and I was immediately hooked. Fast forward to 1994 when my camera interests suddenly circled around my job as a conservation officer. Initially, I used it as a tool for capturing evidence, which I also used in my PowerPoints. However, as time went on, I quickly realized the incredible photographic opportunities my job presented. So I took advantage.

I began photographing eagles in 2013 when I was asked by my friend and brother officer, PA. Game Warden Scott Fredericks, to photograph the release of a rehabilitated bald eagle at Struble Lake, (of course you know I really had to think about it, right?). The eagle had nearly succumbed to a lung infection. It was cured by Honeybrook Veterinarian Dr. Frankel, then sent to a rehab facility in Port Matilda before being released at Struble Lake, where it was originally found. I made a three-minute video & slideshow of the release, which can be seen by Googling "*Bald Eagle Released at Struble Lake, Honeybrook, PA.*" (<https://vimeo.com/79097457>)



Adult bald eagles are 30 to 40 inches in length, weigh 8-14 pounds, with a wing span of six to eight feet. And as with most birds of prey the female is larger than the male. Eagles generally mate for life. If one dies the other will find a new mate fairly quickly. An eagle's nest is called an eyrie. They build their nests in large sturdy trees with a great view of the area. Their nests are built near lakes, rivers, reservoirs, and wetlands, too, if a large body of water is close by. The female typically lays two eggs (sometimes only one and, on rare occasions, three). The eggs begin to hatch after approximately 35 days. The young birds are called eaglets and have most of their feathers in three to four weeks and begin to fly around three months old. Eaglets have a mottled appearance and do not get their white head and tail until they mature into adults, which is typically around four to five years of age.

During the winter of 2020 a friend emailed me about an eagle's nest he had spotted on the Schuylkill River in Phoenixville. So, naturally I directed my patrols in that area (go figure). I found the nest and began photographing the activity there. My sister Nicki and I named the pair "Rocky & Yo Adrian."

One day early in April, my friend and partner, Officer Paul Marchese, and I were about to eat lunch near the eagle's nest when we observed the eagles being harassed by a brazen sharp-shinned hawk. We watched as the hawk flew approximately 100 feet above the nest, screeching loudly, then it "dive bombed" the nest with both eagles in it and flew off before the eagles could exact revenge. So, with Yo Adrian still sitting on the eggs Rocky flew to the opposite side of the river where he perched on a tree limb. Evidently that wasn't far enough away for the hawk, who obviously saw the eagles as intruders. I had already retrieved my camera from the truck and hurriedly began taking photos of Rocky as he sat sentry protecting the nest. The hawk, who was apparently still very much annoyed, decided to attack Rocky as he sat on the tree limb! And not once, but twice! Talk about being in the right place at the right time (I'd rather be lucky than good anytime). I was able to get several awesome action shots of the hawk harassing Rocky



Rocky and Yo Adrian

up close and personal! I couldn't believe my extremely good fortune! Unfortunately, in my haste to get "the shot," I neglected rule #1, which is to double check the settings on my camera prior to shooting. The exposure was off by a lot so my photos didn't turn out as well as I had hoped. The hawk decided its luck was running out and quickly vacated the area with Rocky still sitting on the tree limb completely unfazed. Paul and I still laugh about that one.



I posted a few of my eagle photos on the internet, which prompted Antony, a friend I made through my job many years ago, to contact me. Antony explained to me his 15-year-old daughter, Lauren, was interested in wildlife photography and asked if I would have time to give her some guidance. Of course, I said yes!

Lauren and I drove to the eagle's nest once or twice a week, set up our cameras on tripods (tripods and super-fast shutter speeds makes for a sharper image), then waited for the Rocky & Yo Adrian show to begin. From May through August, we spent dozens of hours photographing the eagles' daily routine. Lauren was an absolute pleasure to work with. She quickly became a student of photography and progressed nicely taking some awesome photographs of the eagles in and around their nest.

Rocky and the Hawk



Lauren Sets Up To Shoot

We explored underneath the nest one afternoon when the eagles were not around and found a couple of interesting things. Did you know that an eagle will capture and eat a turtle? Yep, it will and it did, as well as many other critters. For instance, during the spring and summer they dined on squirrel, snake and of course, fish (60 to 90 percent of an eagle's diet consists of fish). They will also "pirate" fish from other eagles or osprey. Definition of a pirating eagle: while in mid-flight an eagle will force another eagle, immature eagle, or osprey with a fish to drop it. Then the eagle will grab the fish in mid-air and fly away with it.

During the third week of April, the eaglets hatched and that's when "act two" began. Once again, we were fortunate to be in the right place at the right time to photograph Rocky bringing home a squirrel for lunch. It was educational and fun watching the show unfold right in front of us. And it was double the fun for me as I got to share this incredible experience with my young friend. We photographed mom and dad flying to and from the nest, mostly dad - he was typically the hunter while mom protected the nest (remember she's the larger of the two). Around the third week of May, as the eaglets were getting bigger, (they grow extremely fast),

lady luck smiled upon us once again when we photographed Rocky returning to the nest with a turtle! Shortly thereafter we captured some totally awesome photos of the eaglets being fed by both parents.



Tender, Loving Eaglet Care



Yo-Adrian Feeding Her Babies

Around the first week of June the eaglets were standing on the edge of their nest checking out the area around it. By the third week of June, they were standing on the edge of the nest jumping into the air and flapping their wings prepping for their first flight. The eaglets were fully grown by the first week of July, so we knew they would be fledging (leaving the nest) soon. It's now the fourth week of July. The eaglets are enjoying their newly found freedom, taking short flights to nearby trees at first, then up and down the river before returning to the nest to be fed, (they don't know how to hunt yet). Eaglets typically leave the nest in autumn; however, as long as they are in the nest the parents will continue to feed them. In late September we no longer saw the eaglets at the nest.



"Keep Feeding Us and We'll Stay!"

This past fall Paul and I were eating lunch at our favorite spot when we observed several hundred geese leave the field on the opposite side of the Schuylkill River a half mile away. We watched as they flew across then up our side of the river. The eagle's nest was now directly in their flight path. Rocky was perched in a tree approximately 50 yards from the nest. He saw the geese, left his perch and began flying in a circle high above their nest. Upon seeing Rocky the geese immediately exited "stage right." They crossed back over the river and continued in a big hurry to vacate the area. It was the most incredible thing to watch a lone eagle influence the travel path of several hundred geese. It's no small wonder the bald eagle is our national bird!

It's now April, 2021, and it's apparent that Rocky & Yo Adrian have been adding to their nest. Hopefully we will see another successful pair of eaglets raised again this year.

While this wasn't the first eagles' nest I have photographed, I must say it was the most enjoyable and rewarding one. I'm not certain who had the most fun, Lauren or me; what I do know is I learned a lot from not only the eagles, but

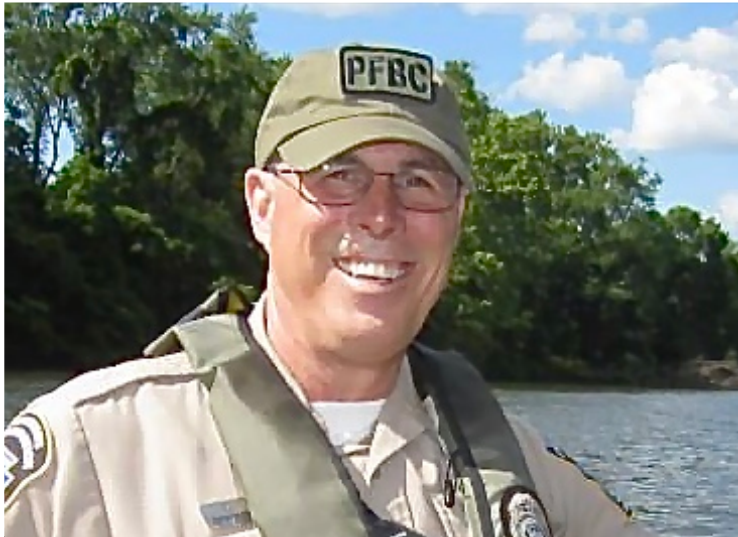


Yo-Adrian Near The River

also from introducing Lauren to the world of wildlife photography. When this began, I thought that it would be a great experience for both of us. In retrospect it was a totally awesome experience, one which I will always cherish. And I gained an incredibly gifted new friend in the process. All because of an interest I had in a camera in 1967, and a passion to photograph an amazing bird of prey, our National Bird. "It just doesn't get any better than that!"

## Bio

***Bob Bonney is Chester County's Waterways Conservation Office and a valued member of The Dame Juliana League, Valley Forge Trout Unlimited and Project Healing Waters. He also may be a poacher's worst nightmare.***



***Bob Bonney has, over the last three years, contributed more articles to STREAMSIDE than any other contributor - by far. There are reasons for that; he's interesting; he represents the core values of The Dame Juliana League; he's serious about protecting our Pennsylvania wildlife; he's in the field nearly every day; and he conveys his thoughts clearly.***

***We usually read about some stupefying encounters Bob has with a lawbreaker in the woods. In these Bob reveals his sense of humor and determination to enforce the law.***

***In this particular article Bob brings together two passions: wildlife photography and eagles. He "walks the walk" and enjoys it!***



# Killer Nymph

By Jim Clark

*(Chuck Kraft was a famous Virginia fisher and designer of atypical flies. He cared more that they worked than if they replicated bugs and baitfish. He came to national prominence from an article by Sam Slaymaker in the June 1971 issue of Field & Stream. One of his best known, most used flies, the CK Nymph has been Jim Clark's favorite for 20+ years.*

*The following is Jim's take on how to tie this classic from the 60s. Matt Seymour)*

1. **Materials for CK:** tail = wood duck flank, mallard dyed wood duck, or brown partridge. Hook 3XL, #12 shown.



2. **Gorilla Glue Gel**



3. Drop of super glue gel on top of shank, just ahead of hook point.



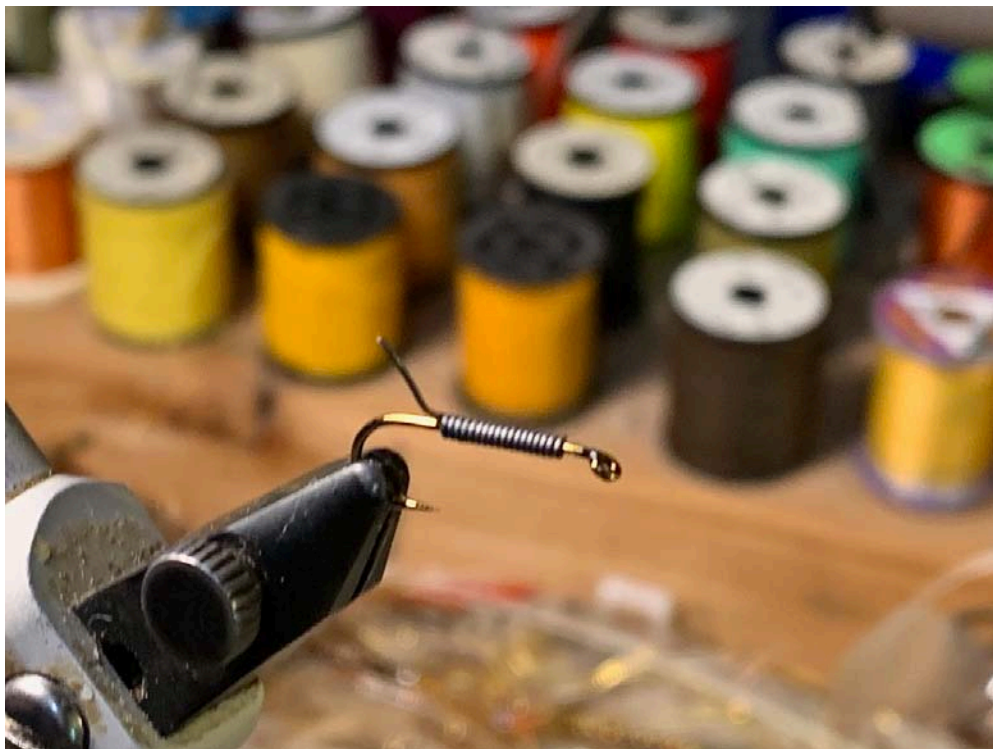
4. .015 lead wire.



5. Work lead wire from spool, start in back of glue drop



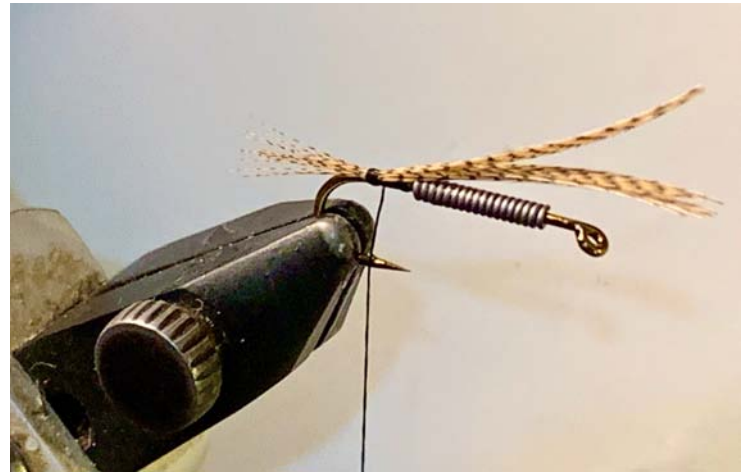
**6. Wind 18 turns of wire right next to each other, this pushes drop of glue ahead and binds wire to shank, and pinch off wire front and back. Attach 6/0 black thread in back of wire.**



7. Attach 6/0 black thread in back of wire.



8. Attach tail at bend (in this case dyed mallard flank).



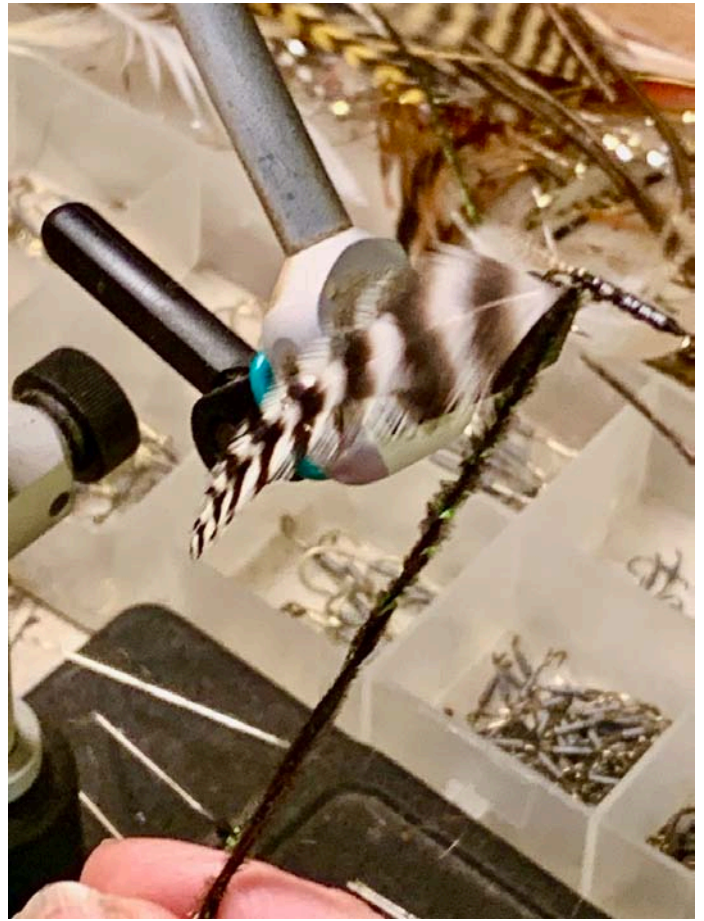
9. Strung peacock herl for body. Tie five or six strands of herl with tips trimmed off in front of the tail



10. Large grizzly neck hackle. Attach hackle a little ahead of herl, as you want a turn or two of body behind the grizzly hackle.



11. Take thread to front of wire and build up a taper. Then return thread back behind hackle to herl and twist herl around thread, forming a herl rope.



12. Wind herl to front of hook, twisting herl/thread rope about every two turns to make a nice even body



13. Wind about five spaced turns of hackle and tie off.



14. Whip finish.



15. Pull *down bottom half* (underside of hook) of hackle and trim to about hook gap length. Should look like this



16. Pull *top half* of hackle fiber up and trim to about hook gap length.





**17. Finished fly will look like this:**



**18. Feed to trout!**



19. When you're done with the dishes and sorting out your sock drawer, sit down and load up a bin with weighted hooks



## BIO



*Not only is Jim Clark a masterful fly tyer, he is an excellent tying teacher. Jim has taught dozens of disabled military veterans how to find relaxation at the tying bench. Jim's flies are available for sale and have made a prominent contribution to the Valley Forge Trout Unlimited Chapter for years.*

*His finished fly assortments are almost too pretty to get wet!*

# Trout Power

By Chris Murphy



I have long enjoyed the majesty of the brook trout; the beauty of the fish, the amazing places they can be caught, the dazzling flash of crimson you see just before your dry fly disappears. Brook trout are a true gem of nature, and big or small, they are my favorite fish to target on the fly.

Within the Northeast United States, we are lucky enough to have brook trout as one of our native char that can populate many brooks, streams, ponds and lakes. Over the years, brook trout have faced many challenges, and still do today. One of the major challenges is the introduction of foreign species, such as rainbow and brown trout. Stocking practices can negatively influence native populations, whether it be by watering down wild genetics through hybridization or increasing competition that can stress and

push out these native fish. Brook trout have also faced threats to their habitat, such as a changing climate or introduced environmental pollution like acid rain. Fortunately, brook trout are a resilient species. Trout Power has identified areas where fish were near absent 30 years ago, yet currently have rebounding populations due to environmental improvements, habitat restoration, and proper management practices. Despite the challenges faced, the resiliency of the brook trout has allowed it to survive and re-establish populations in many of the areas they have resided in since the last ice age. The questions are, where are these fish? and what can be done to protect them? That is where Trout Power comes in.

## What is Trout Power?

Trout Power is a nonprofit organization that enlists the power of anglers to protect, restore and enhance heritage brook trout populations and their habitats across their native range through citizen science, advocacy and stewardship. Trout Power's citizen science efforts seek to identify, map, monitor and advocate for protection of wild and genetically unique brook trout populations in the Adirondacks and wherever they are found throughout New York.



## What Are Genetically Unique Brook Trout?

New York has 7,600 lakes and ponds, and over 70,000 miles of streams and rivers. To fill these water bodies, the DEC in NY has actively stocked brook trout beginning in 1879-1880. Over the past 140 years continuous stocking has led to intraspecific breeding with native fish populations by



mixing the genetics and creating hybrids of stocked and native DNA. Within New York, there are a select few populations of genetically distinct brook trout that have not been influenced by stocking. These fish are titled "heritage strain brook trout." Each heritage strain is named according to the water body they were identified in and shows physical differences exemplifying the unique genetics of the native fish.

## What is Citizen Science?

Citizen science is the involvement of the public in a part of, or the entirety of, a scientific research process. Citizen science is a powerful and effective way to use amateur scientists to perform science that would be difficult to match in scale without volunteers. What is even better is

that Trout Power has found a fun and adventurous way to use citizen science to advocate for brook trout.

## How does Trout Power Use Citizen Science to Search for Genetically Unique Trout?

Trout Power uses citizen science combined with professional genetic analysis to search for genetically unique brook trout. Volunteer anglers conduct field research by going into designated areas selected by the science team at Trout Power. Our volunteers engage in citizen science by fishing for and catching wild brook trout with fly rod and reel using barbless hooks. When a brook trout is caught, anglers carefully handle the fish to remove a small tissue sample from the tip of the fish's tail using a sterile technique. The fish remains in the water, either in a gallon bag or a net that remains submerged while the sample is taken. Upon retrieval of the sample, the fish is carefully released. Collected samples are sent to Trout Power's geneticist who compares the samples to the stocked strains of New York State. To date, Trout Power has identified several previously unidentified genetically unique brook trout strains throughout the Adirondack Park.

## What is Trout Power Up To Now And In The Future?

Trout Power is currently surveying watersheds in the Adirondacks in search of more genetically unique strains of brook trout. In addition, Trout Power continues to monitor watersheds where unique strains have been identified. Ongoing monitoring includes continued research of fish genetics, water quality and water temperature. Most importantly, Trout Power continues to work to educate the public about the status and conservation of brook trout as a vulnerable and special resource.

## How Can You Help or Support Trout Power?

There are a few ways that you can support Trout Power if you feel so inclined. We sure do appreciate anyone who is willing to give their time or make a financial contribution.

Join us: Trout Power relies on volunteers to collect fin-clip samples, and we are always looking for anglers to join us at one of our missions in the spring or fall in search of fish. If you have interest in joining our team, email me at [president@troutpower.org](mailto:president@troutpower.org)! I will be happy to keep you in the loop about upcoming events so you can come, as we say, catch the power!

**Donate:** Trout Power is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that relies on funding from private donors, fundraising events, and sales of Trout Power merchandise. Genetic analysis is expensive, and Trout Power is continually stockpiling

samples to be analyzed by our geneticist. If you are interested in contributing to our cause, please visit our website ([troutpower.org](http://troutpower.org)) and click the donate tab to see the variety of ways to donate. Every dollar is extremely appreciated.

If you have interest in learning more about us, visit our website, follow us on instagram or find us on facebook. Catch the power!

## Bio



*Chris Murphy is the president of Trout Power and a high school science teacher in Northeast Vermont. He was born in Syracuse, NY, and grew up exploring and fishing the waters of upstate NY, specifically the Adirondack park. During his summers, Chris can be found fishing the very same waters as in his youth, enjoying the same crimson flash that has kept him chasing and dreaming of wild trout for all these years.*

## LAST CAST

**By President Brenna DeKorte**

We hope you have enjoyed all the fantastic contributions in this quarter's publication!

I love to delve into topics that I don't fully understand so that I can at least be informed even if unable to put new bits of knowledge into practice. A controversial topic that caught my notice lately is tailing gloves. I've never seen one in the wild but I have seen plenty in photos. Being naturally curious I ask the loaded question: Why?

Is getting a keepsake photo more important than learning how to properly hold a fish for three seconds? Does it matter if the fish also lives to tell the tale? "It swam away fine," isn't the most reassuring reply. A recent scientific study has shown that handling a fish with any sort of non-proven aid besides moistened hands (and even that in some cases) removes the protective slime coat on the fish that helps them to resist infection and disease. Perhaps my contradictory and overwhelming desire to touch a trout yet release it without any harm but hurt feelings is causing me to be a little harsh and idealistic but if the fish is going to be released into hot oil, then a murder mitten is effective for keeping the struggling beast still for the last glorious moments of it's life to be memorialized. It's less brutal to show photos of a living fish blissfully unaware of impending doom than a great beast laying dead on the dirt next to a person's boot for "scale." At least we aren't fooled by what fate had in store for that creature.

Some remote tourist-driven shops apparently still have outdated grasp-aids made from nylon netting gathering dust on pegs (honestly, I love the Cracker Barrel look of retired historical fishing gear as decor), but there are also a plethora of home-brewed options in case you don't have your gaff on hand or the funds for that superfluous sock. You could repurpose the old guttin' towel, since it already smells like fish. You could use a blue nitrile exam glove that has no mate, which is convenient in case you want to do a body cavity exam and see what the fish has been feeding on it helps to keep a small tube of water-based lubricant dangling from one's lanyard to make it glide in better; a white besequined halloween glove from the 80s; a Freddy Kruger nightmare claw works just as well if that is more your aesthetic. Hee hee.. Or you could just spend some time and effort learning how to handle a fish, or simply release it and treasure the memory sans hero shot and tell a tall tale about the size and the fight at every opportunity while you insist that everyone henceforth address you by your formal title of "Papa.":

Brenna

# Thanks To Our Friends & Supporters!

