

STREAMSIDE

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DAME JULIANA LEAGUE

WINTER-SPRING 2021

RIFFLES & RUNS



Keep Kicking

by Brenna Dekorte

Wandering around in the creek in search of a fish that will take my tiny streamer and I get lost in the beauty and feel at one with nature, alone, yet reminded of my connection to something greater. My gaze relaxes as it sweeps across the random, yet logical, order of how the water arranges and rearranges the banks and all that is caught up in its powerful flow. Then my eye gets drawn to something that stands out as not being placed there by natural forces but,

instead, is a glaring sign reminding me that I am not alone. We have all seen



them: a stack of rocks. What creature has erected this strange structure? Could it be the territorial markings of the elusive yet common pumpkin-spiced Sasquatch? What feelings are evoked when we see these? For many of us anglers, we are not receiving the warm and tender vibes of the architect when we happen upon these structures.

Since the dawn of human evolution we have had the unrelenting urge to build, to make our mark, to show others that they are on the right path, to memorialize lives and stories, to show our respect and devotion to nature and the divine or to triumph over its challenges. There are times, places and situations where stacking rocks is important and appropriate. For example, if you are an intrepid arctic explorer searching for a route through the Northwest Passage, then yes, mark your harrowing journey of frostbite and boot-eating with a big 'ol boulder pile. If you are a neolithic Celt marking a safe path through a

treacherous moor then that is very helpful. Thank you for your service, Bogman. Children are naturally taken to playing with rocks at the creek and adults visiting the creek are likely to share in that childlike wonder. as well. We wouldn't want to squash any budding architects out there by not letting kids play with rocks. It would be like telling a beaver not to dam. But also take the opportunity to teach them about all the little lives those rocks are home to. Did you know that our PA state amphibian is the hellbender? They are endangered and require clear moving water and large flat rocks to live. When large flat rocks are flipped and moved we might be destroying the home of these adorable snot otters.

Now in this age of separation from nature we have these confusing images of beautifully stacked and artfully balanced rocks calling us to get outside and enjoy the outdoors. But what if some of these ideas set us up to cause harm we don't readily see? Moving rocks in a stream can cause erosion, destroy the homes of enchantingly squishy aquatic critters, harm the habitat of macroinvertebrates that in turn feed all the fish. It makes sense when you think about it. We have to constantly remind people to "leave no trace" rather than leave behind a testament to ego and utter disregard for the forces of gravity. The national parks have even had to pass laws making rock stacking unlawful due to the pervasive habits of blissfully self absorbed trail-goers turned unwitting ecoterrorists. Yes eventually the winds and rains will come and the stream will wash away the impermanent masonry but why not make dismantling it part of the practice too.

Now when I see these faux cairns I take some joy in knocking them down in

creative ways instead of letting my sedimentary sentiments ruin my me-time. I wonder if dog walkers get a chill upon hearing my otherworldly roars as I channel Godzilla knocking over Tokyo high-rises as if they were mere jenga towers. As humans we are also gifted with the urge to destroy. But sometimes demolition can be positive and fun. Sometimes I do a round house karate kick and hi-yah to eradicate the pebble pillars. I may have even fallen once or twice in my exuberance, haunting cackles turning to splashes and squeaks of pain.

Keep building, my little Eiffels. I will keep kicking.

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A FRIENDSHIP RUNS THROUGH IT

By Bob Moser

I moved into the Bala Cynwyd office as the 30-year-old manager of a team of very experienced salespeople who had all worked for the previous manager for more than 25 years. Our firm, which distributed a vast array of chemicals and ingredients used in the manufacture of products such as soap, lubricants, paints, coatings, pharmaceuticals and all sorts of foods, required substantial market and product knowledge and expertise. No question, I was the kid trying to get my arms around a very 'established' business operation. As with any long-established organization there were the 'untouchable' beliefs about our business, both what and could not be done.

One of the sales team had responsibility for a third-generation-family-owned business in Manayunk, PA, a quaint neighborhood of Philadelphia. Our sales rep simply wasn't having any luck moving the relationship forward and wasn't seeing any way to fix this situation in spite of our supply opportunities matching the customer's needs beautifully. Suggesting that we make a joint call so that I could observe what was or was not happening. We set up a formal meeting with the customer's procurement team. It was clear in five minutes at the meeting that our rep and the customer's buyer were simply like oil and water. It was nothing to do with products or needs, and all about their being nowhere close to the same page. Hoping to avoid the screaming match that was building between the two, we ended the meeting quickly.

After this 'train wreck' of a meeting I asked our rep to tell me more about the company beyond their business of manufacturing wiredrawing lubricants. They were family owned, almost 100 years old, and with multiple family members working for the firm. The president and CEO, John, was known to be a tough, no nonsense guy who ran the firm with an iron fist. Our rep had met John once at an industry function but did not really know him. I thought, what the heck, we have little to lose, and after asking my rep if he was OK with my to seeing the CEO directly. He said, "Go for it."

The meeting with John began with the usual angry customer list of topics. My company was not responsive, our prices were high, our service poor, etc. I responded with my personal commitment to personally be involved in anything to do with his company to insure the basics were done perfectly. But more than that, I said, "John, our company is a family-owned business, as is yours. We've existed for close to 100 years so we must be doing something right, and that's why we SHOULD be each other's best partner." The comment seemed to resonate with John. He



Off To A Bad Start

said, "While that sounds good, I don't even know you. What do you like to do when you aren't working?" I said that I did many things, but my passion was flyfishing, and found it to be a special way to decompress and relieve stress. John was a smoker, and for the first time in this meeting, he leaned back in his office chair, reached into his jacket pocket, pulled out a pack of cigarettes and lit one. He'd been quiet through this process and he took his first drag on the cigarette while staring intently at me. "Tell me about this fly fishing you enjoy doing," he said.



"Our house is located right on French Creek and I'm fortunate to be able to fish in my back yard," I said. "I also have been lucky to have a dear family friend that is a member of a flyfishing club called 'Broadacres' and he's invited me to fish at his club several times. I simply love the experience of having to focus on the casting and choosing the flies while also realizing none of this is really of life or death importance. I think that is why I find it such a great escape."

"How'd you enjoy fishing at Broadacres?" he asked, which I found interesting since I had

only just mentioned this club's name.

"It's just beautiful and the fishing is great, but for some reason there is more to it than simply catching fish. The property just seems so set apart from the rest of the busy world that I was thoroughly refreshed both times I got to join him."

John looked at me again, and said, "My father was a co-founder of Broadacres in 1946, and I am now the stream chairman for the club. Flyfishing is something I've done with my dad since I was a kid, and to this day is my passion. How would you like to join me for a day at Broadacres?" he asked.

"I would love to," I replied, somewhat dumbfounded by what was happening.

Arrangements were made and I joined John for a day on the stream. It was fantastic. He shared ideas on approaches to the various pools, gave me some flies that he found to be special, and generally we spoke as two fishing buddies, not business colleagues. At the end of the day he said, "Bob, family companies need to have respect for each other and that respect only comes from knowing each other. I'd like to see you back at my office soon."

Our company's business evolved from there. Nothing was a given, and all, needed to be earned, but the relationship that had begun over a shared day fishing, grew into a major business partnership and a life-long friendship.



John and I shared many fishing days and trips for the next 25 years. We got to know each other's families well and celebrated the wonderful times and supported each other during the tough ones. Our friendship evolved into one where an entire morning fishing a stretch didn't require any words to be shared. We just simply knew where the other was located. A thumbs up for a hook-up was all that was necessary. Whether in Sullivan County on the Loyalsock, the Poconos floating the Lehigh, or on our home club

Broadacres, our friendship was simply comforting and a great part of life. We co-chaired fund-raising events for the American Museum of Flyfishing, hosted lottery winners from the Anglers Club of Philadelphia on fishing days, and became officers together at Broadacres.

Unreturned phone calls and texts were unusual for John. Ever one to 'manage things himself' he'd not wanted to share with me that he had woken up sick one morning and was taken to the hospital where extensive lung cancer was discovered. While the ugly course of the disease progressed over the next several months we spent what opportunities we had planning our next fishing trip... which was never to happen.

Flyfishing ran through this friendship like the DNA in a cell, which expressed itself in a shared passion for this fine sport that created a once-in-a-lifetime special relationship. I can't step into the water today without seeing John delicately dropping a dry fly into a riffle and thinking back to that first meeting in his office when he said, "Tell me about this flyfishing you enjoy doing."



BIO

Bob Moser has enjoyed fishing his entire life. In 1986 he and his wife Joanne and their newborn daughter Katie moved from Pittsburgh to Kimberton, PA to a new home directly on the banks of French Creek. What a magical piece of luck! Having easy access to trout water Bob enjoyed bait and spin fishing for several years, but rapidly got intrigued by fly fishing. A local fly shop called 'Anglers Fine Line' which was located in the village of Kimberton and owned by a DJL member, Jeff Nissle, was the catalyst for Bob becoming a passionate fly-fisher. Through Jeff's shop Bob took a casting class run by a little known but outstanding teacher, Ed Jaworowski. And as we all know, Ed has since become one of the flyfishing world's leaders in the science and art of casting. Between Jeff's support and guidance coupled with the casting lessons provided by Ed, Bob fell in love with the sport.

In 1988 Bob joined the Dame Juliana League, and has subsequently been the Secretary, the President, and a member of the Board. In 1994, Bob, along with Vice President Bob Molzahn, many other DJL members, and Bob's young daughter Katie, held the first Learn to Fly Fish course at the Phoenixville YMCA, and it has since occurred every year except for the pandemic year.

Bob acts as the lead instructor for the DJL Learn to Fly Fish Course.

Delaware Dreams

By Skip Krause with Joe King & Dick Moyer

There is nothing better than fishing... unless it is fishing in a very fishy place...unless it is fishing in a very fishy place when the fish are biting ... unless it is fishing in a very fishy place when the fish are biting with very fishy friends!

Joe King had just come back from a successful late August trip fishing for wild browns on the West Branch, Delaware River. He mused of big water, kayaking downriver and catching hungry trout. He simply said, "I need to go back".



STONES THROW CABIN NEAR
STILESVILLE

I said, "I'M IN!"

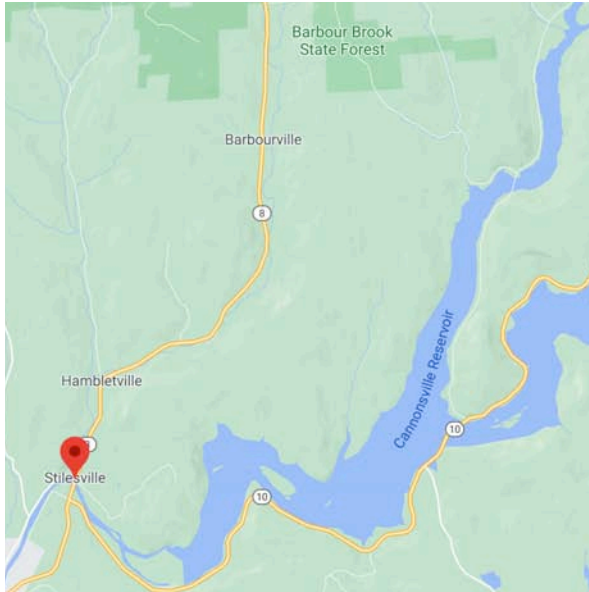
In early September, we loaded our kayaks, hooked up Joe's aluminum boat and drove to Stones Throw Cabin. This cozy nook sits on the north bank of the West Branch, Delaware River. This modern log "cabinette" is about one half mile downstream of the Cannonsville Dam in Stilesville, NY. It is situated perfectly for accessing this outstanding fishery.

From that streamside abode we could wade, launch and paddle our kayaks upstream to fish below the dam, or leapfrog vehicles to drift downstream to a take-out where one of our vehicles would be waiting to take us back upstream to our launch point. We also had the option to gas or electric motor the aluminum up or down river as desired. Joe knows how to keep his options open.

With only a few hours to sunset the first evening, we waded and explored near the cabin. The water was clear but low and the weeds were too snaggy. There were a few lookers to excite us but no takers to seal the deal.

In bright sunshine and beautiful scenery the next morning, we drove downstream and launched the aluminum at Ball's Eddy pool. That's about 2.5 miles upriver of Hancock, NY, the confluence of the East and West Branch. We worked our way upstream from there with

the electric motor. Joe stayed in the stern driving. I was in the bow casting unbothered by other fishermen. I like that! (What are friends for? Thank you, Joe!)



STILESVILLE AT THE BASE OF THE RESERVOIR

Regretfully, the water level was too low to maneuver the aluminum above or below the Ball's Eddy pool. Neither the gas motor nor the electric was an option ... so we waded a few spots the rest of the day near there and caught a few fish.

At last light we drove where the Oquaga Creek enters the West Branch. Small browns were rising in the run and Joe took several on his size 20 sulphur dries. I was skunked. (I hate that! Oh Joe, how could you?)

Since we wanted to learn as much as we could about the fishery, on day three we hooked up with a local guide, Dustin Mason, out of the West Branch Angler Resort. We met at the shop at 8:00 a.m. and rode with Dustin back to the Oquaga Creek launch, fondly known as "The Sewer Plant" in the town of Deposit. We



Our Guide Justin With Joe in The Bow.



The Ubiquitous Brown Streamer

launched his ClackaCraft drift boat down the steep bank and began to fish downriver.

On the way to the launch, Justin did his guide disclaimer thing and told us how challenging it was to catch a wild brown on the West Branch. He said, "Catching one or two of these wild



#20 SULPHUR



Fishing With The King

fish per day is a good day.” I’m not sure about Joe, but I was a little discouraged, thinking this may not have been money well spent.

Fortunately, five minutes into the drift, we had three fat wild browns hooked and released. Justin’s advice was to use a streamer, brown, strip it as fast as you can, pause, and strip again. We did it Justin’s way. His good advice led each of us to double digit browns. Love those little brown streamers! Could the October caddis hatch have been on?

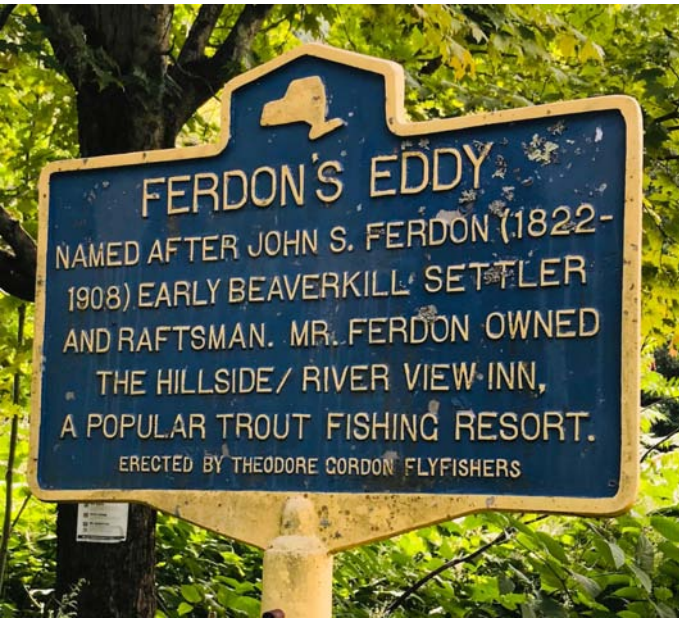
While drifting downstream, we passed another guide who had very little success with his clients that day. They were fishing nymphs under indicators. Justin chatted with him, commiserated and we overheard him say, “Yep, we’re doing very well! I have two flyfishers today who really know how to cast.” Nothing like a little flattery to bump up your gratuity!

Our only disappointment with the guided trip was not stopping in fishy looking runs to wade and cast to unsuspecting fish. Well, when you have a drift boat guide, work out your preferences in advance. A sweltering day in waders in a drift boat is an effective reminder to do so thereafter.

On our own again on day four, we launched our kayaks at the sewer plant and worked our way downriver. It was a wonderful day paddling, casting, and releasing fish. I had another double digit, wild brown day. Credit goes to that little brown streamer. Regretfully, Joe did not do quite as well as I. I love that! (Sorry, Joe!)

After taking the kayaks out at the West Branch Angler's launch, we had dinner right there at River Run Restaurant (<http://www.westbranchresort.com>). We clomped onto the deck in muddy boots, wet waders and covid masks. We were greeted and seated with a big server smile from a masked maiden and had a wonderful meal from a good, varied menu. They even had Joe's latest, "favorite" beer, Heineken ... until they ran out! Imagine!

Beaverkill and Ferdon's Eddy



Rain dawned on us the next morning so we took a side trip to the Beaverkill. Neither of us had fished this classic Catskill stream. We drove to Roscoe, NY, to the intersection of the Willowemoc River and the Beaverkill ("kill" being Dutch for "river"). We stopped in a local tackle shop, bought a detailed \$5.95 stream map showing access points with the classic pools identified

We passed by the Fly Fishing Museum and went directly to Ferdon's Eddy. This spot is where the first Hendrickson fly was tied a hundred and a few years ago by Roy Steenrod who named the fly after his fishing buddy, A. E. Hendrickson. We fished Ferdon's Eddy in off and on rain. Ferdon's is a pristine riffle and pool just below the junction with the

Willowemoc. I was in awe with the beauty of Ferdon's and the Beaverkill. It was like wading and casting into a giant flute of sparkling champagne. Intoxicating!

The bottom was right there yet two steps in I was waist deep. Another step and I would have needed floaties. It was September so there were no Hendricksons. We tried several locations and caught a few stocked fish on our favorite nymphs and thought it would be a wonderful place to return to fish during the Hendrickson hatch in the spring.

ROY STEENROD
1882 -1977



Delaware Redux



FERDON'S POOL ON THE BEAVERKILL



STEENROD'S DARK HENDRICKSON

After returning home from these five days of fishing delight, I shared my experience with another fine trout fisherman, Dick Moyer. I told Dick and Joe that I wanted to go back.

Dick said, "I'M IN!" Joe said, "I'M IN, TOO!"

It was now mid-September and with advance reservations at the West Branch Angler, Joe, Dick and I took our three kayaks and two vehicles back to wild brown heaven. Accommodations at the West Branch Angler were excellent and the River Run Restaurant did not disappoint.

Over several days, we launched our kayaks at various spots upriver and drifted downstream. The local names for the launches, "The Sewer Plant," "Old Geezers" and "Barking Dog," are historical. The launches at Hale Eddy, West Branch Angler and Ball's Eddy were at clearly mapped locations.

However, due to a few days of rain, the river was higher than on our previous trips. Nevertheless, we caught some beautiful wild browns. Streamers and nymphs both took fish. No double digit days but no boredom either. That's fishing! Fortunately, there was not a chub to be found anywhere. I love that!

We saw rising fish that first day back on the river. There was a tiny flying ant fall and the fish picked ants out from among the white, tiny, Japanese Knot Weed blossoms scattered all

over the surface. I for one was not ready with the right dry fly at the right time. I was well stocked with brown streamers (now useless)!

The next day, after a stop at the local tackle shop for size 20 flying ants, I was ready. My streamer rod was rigged with sink tip line and, of course, a brown streamer. A second rod was rigged with a floating line, 6 X tippet and a flying ant for the rising fish I had been drooling over since the day before. As it happens too often, the flying ant fell and the rising fish were nowhere to be found. Baa! Humbug!

There are many access areas for drift boats and kayaks on the West Branch. There is also a very detailed New York State Fishing Rights map available on line from the Department of Environmental Conservation (www.dec.ny.gov).

The accommodations and restaurant at West Branch Angler are excellent. A New York fishing license is required in New York waters, but either a PA or NY is acceptable in the main branch bordering both states. This is not fly fishing only, catch and release, unfortunately.

If you are thinking about fishing the West Branch, consider taking a kayak or hiring a guide but make sure he or she will stop and let you wade in fishy spots if you choose to. You can also rent a drift boat if you do not mind rowing. The West Branch Angler has rentals and will shuttle you upstream to a launch. Of course, access is fairly open and there are plenty places to wade.

Remembering



When we were contacted to write about our adventures on the West Branch, I asked Joe and Dick what stood out for them. That conversation went something like this:

Joe: “I remember flying ants, rising fish, size 20 sulphur dry flies and the river coated with those little white blossoms from the Japanese Knot Weed that lined the banks. I also remember catching good fish especially that big rainbow from my kayak just downstream of

the sewer plant launch in Deposit. And I really enjoyed paddling into the lee of the island just upstream of the Old Geezers launch and catching fish while casting and wading on both sides.”



Dick Moyer Cruising The West Branch

Dick: “I remember Joe’s plunge into the river, second only to his shameless goading of a poor waitress into making a special trip to town to buy him a case of beer (Heineken) for the next evening's dinner.”

Joe: “Well, there was that. What do you remember, Skip?”

Skip: I remember watching an osprey hover over a pool then dive to take a trout off the surface, and then its mate doing the same thing in the same place only seconds later. I will never forget wading and casting into that sparkling champagne - like water on the Beaver Kill. But most importantly, I remember fishing...fishing in a fishy place...fishing in a fishy place with fish biting ...and fishing in a fishy place with fish biting and with good and fishy friends. I love that!

Thanks Dick and Joe!”

“I want to go back!”

BIO

Skip joined Dame Juliana League to learn more about the technical aspect of fly fishing; to refine his skills at fly fishing, fly casting and fly tying; and to meet some accomplished fly



fishermen, aka "Fishing Buddies," who would be willing to put up with him streamside. Skip recently shared, "I am fortunate to have met Joe King and Dick Moyer, both accomplished in the art and skills of fly fishing...and both willing to put up with my lack of skill and bad humor -- sometimes. It is always a pleasure taking their pictures after netting their fish!"

See Skip's full bio and learn more about the Dame Juliana League Fly Fishing Course at [djflyfishers.org/learn to fly fish/instructors](http://djflyfishers.org/learn-to-fly-fish/instructors).

Skip Don't Need No Steenk'in Rod!

My Pal Al

By Charlie (As told to Al Chiglinsky)

Al and I have been hanging together for about six years now. I write this from my middle age perspective, but admit my memory of the early days with Al is hazy. Where memory fails I'll just yarn a bit. As Al says, "It all comes out in the warsh."

My earliest memories are of being surrounded by my whacko brothers and sisters. I vaguely remember a good home. We kids got fed, slept a lot, even got bathed, manicured, snuzzled and kept warm.

Sadly, I have no clear recollection of my parents. I do remember feeling loved. And I recall the mayhem of wrestling and playing with my furry siblings.

Then came Al.

Al responded to an ad my Owner - Person ran in the classifieds:

Singles Ad

Single Blond Male seeks female companionship. Ethnicity not an issue. I'm a very handsome guy who loves playing rough, long walks in the woods, hunting, guns, and cozy nights by the fire. Fix me dinner and I'll be eating right out of your hand. When you come home from work I'll be panting in anticipation. Call (xxx) 555- 1212 and ask for **Charlie**.

At the time my Owner-Person ran this ad she probably thought it would get a quick response from a lady who was either curious or had a good sense of humor. Instead, we got Al.

First Time We Met

Al tells me I was one of five golden labs. Al tells me now I was the last pup to be picked. How is that supposed to make feel? I think he tells me it keeps me humble. According to him I was the one who yelped a lot and bit my siblings. Can't really remember. But I do have a vague recollection of smelling Al's pant leg when I met him. I thought I could smell another dog. And there were whiffs of bacon, fish guts and fuel oil. These are all intoxicating to a Lab. I had a good feeling about this guy from the beginning.

I describe myself as the strong, silent type. Al may disagree. He thinks I'm the flabby, indolent type. Looks can be deceiving. In my youth I could do a 20 yard dash to a bacon scrap in less than 3 seconds. As I waddle into my midlife crisis I now realize there's no need to knock over furniture to pounce on a tortilla chip. No competition at Al's. Oh, occasionally I do have to get to the crumbs before Al's Person (Deb, my Forever-Mom) sweeps the floor. Living with Al has its ups and downs. But mostly ups. My only serious complaint is that when he's watching TV, sleeping, on the phone, on the john or jawing with his friends he seems to ignore me for a few minutes. It ain't right. Oh yes, and though he knows I need frequent chow breaks he thoughtlessly drives by the diners around Benton without stopping. Yet I rarely ignore **him**. Except when we go fishing. When we're fishing I can't seem to focus on much but the water.

On (And In) The Water

My earliest and best memories are tagging along with Al to the river. I learned that when the rod comes out and we get in the Jeep with the boat attached we're headed toward water.

RIVER WATER. Sometimes it takes Al too long to get there but I bark out commands from the front seat to keep him moving.

There's something about the river.



Rolling On The River

I'm not stupid. I know most people expect me to love the water. And I do. But I'm a disappointment when it comes to dukzes, geezes and fetching sticks. I have a horrible puppyhood memory of being shooed off the couch by Mom. She actually pushed me off the couch when I was busy drooling on her down comforter. I guess she was trying to rearrange me somewhere out of vacuum cleaner range. How did I know she wasn't playing? I enthusiastically chomped down on the blanket as Mom, who apparently meant business, started whipping my head back and forth with my jaws clamped down on the darn thing. It took me a moment to realize this wasn't a game. Before I released my frothy grip, I had chomped a major wound in the coverlet...a mouth full of gooey feathers. Mom was screaming and I thought, "What a strange game...a good tug of war followed by shrieks and bad human words."

Al heard about the whole thing when he got home from his oil deliveries. I was suitably contrite. He performed the obligatory half-hearted scolding but I could see we wuz still pals. After the blanket fiasco I began to get fearful of feathered things. Watching the dukses and geezes on or near the river brought on a mild panic attack. And after a few half-hearted tries Al (bless him) never tried to get me to chase those feathered things again.

But I dogress,



Not Fond of Feathers

Early on Al took me out in the canoe. I loved it then, I love it now. When I'm not snoring in the sun, I sit perched in a way that lets me peer into the water. I mostly like my own reflection. Occasionally however I see tiny things, little shiny shadows moving in and out of the weeds. Dog hypnosis sets in. As I watch I can't seem to control the steady stream of drool that falls from my gaping mouth. I hear it's a Lab thing.



One day on the Susquehanna when I was about 8 human months old I completely lost track of being in the canoe. I saw something flashy in the water. I dove in, rocking the boat. Al was frantic. Neither of us knew I could swim in heavy current. But since I was focused on the fishy things I didn't really know I was swimming. Apparently I was

paddling directly under the canoe where Al couldn't see me. Scared the bejaysus out of him. I could hear him hollering from above water. Hey, I thought he was cheering me on.

The current was quickly carrying us both downstream. The way he was screaming I thought Al must have caught one of those fishy things. He gets excited every time. *But he was yelling at me.* I couldn't climb back in the canoe so I (easily) swam to shore. It took Al a few minutes to beach the canoe, a few more to scold me. But I knew we wuz ok when he scratched my favorite spots .

I Found My Calling

Al takes me everywhere on his time off but our favorite times are fishing together. He catches them. I release them. I see the fly rod bob. I gaze transfixed at the fishy splashing. Al tries to net the fish as I crowd him. Into the net goes the fish. Followed quickly by my Sputnik-size skull. And usually a gentle release.



Attention



Inspection

The first time I tried helping Al with the fish he seemed annoyed. That was until we started drawing attention from the other fisherman. And before you ask, my release is gentle with trout. Once Al unhooks them I grab them like a good softie and put 'em back where they belong.



Retrieve



Release

I've learned a couple of lessons as a fish retriever. The most important one was learning not to get too rambunctious until Al unhooks the fishy things. He had to unhook me a couple of times. Now we fish barbless. Lesson number two: trout don't have prickly things... just about everything else we pull out of the Susquehanna does. A mouthful of catfish can ruin my day. One of the few fatalities I caused was a sunfish who stuck my



Fish Retriever On Duty ...

tongue as I was trying to release him. I don't like to talk about it. Here's a video of my finesse <https://youtu.be/hPJKqGdAUsl>.

We travel to a lot of fishing spots during the season: The Susquehanna and Delaware rivers, Fishing Creek in Columbia County, Big Pine, Little Pine, and the Loyalsock. Most of our time is spent on Fishing Creek <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPaeAb6eEVQ>. I particularly like Fishing Creek cuz its not too far from my favorite chow stops.

How To Survive In Columbia County



For a growing boy appropriate nutrition is critical after our fishing outings. For my fellow Labs I recommend Melonie's Kold Kup, just south of Benton a couple of miles. My favorites: a doggy dish of ice cream, hamburger well done or a grilled chicken breast. They treat me like royalty when they hear my nails clacking excitedly on the tile. And lots of water. Al also takes me to the Hoboken Sub Shop right in Benton, and a place called Westover's Country Grill just north of town. When we go to Westover's Al gets patio seating so I don't make a mess on the dining room floor.

Hopefully next season you'll stop if you see me take Al fishing. We always love to chat, especially if there's a treat or scratch headed my way. Though I'm still working on my release technique we work on it a lot. Best of all I am, by my own modest reckoning, the only certifiable Labrador fish - retriever in Columbia County.

BIO

My pal Al Chiglinsky is a retired police officer who currently delivers fuel oil in and near Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. Al is married to Deb who, when Al is not home, takes extremely good care of me. Al is 73 human years old and loves fishing with me most, but also travels to the cold places to catch Salmon and Steelhead. He doesn't think I'm ready to grab and release one of those - not yet.



Al treats me like a king. He treats everyone that way. He's lucky to have me.

Get Ready, They're Coming!

By Mary Kuss



Who are *they*?

Why, Brood X of the 17-Year Periodical Cicadas, of course!

This is the big one, the Great Eastern Brood. Last seen in 2004 (do the math), this brood is scattered across 15 states. Of greatest interest to me, however, is the dense cluster around my home near Philadelphia. It takes in southeastern Pennsylvania, central New Jersey, and parts of Maryland and Delaware. The Periodicals typically start emerging in mid-May, and by the end of June they are gone. So if you want to experience this hatch there's a very limited window of opportunity.

These insects are not to be confused with Annual Cicadas, also known as Dog Day Cicadas, which are present almost everywhere, every summer. Annual Cicadas have green wing veins, and their eyes are unremarkable. They are most abundant in August, which gives them their

nickname. Periodical Cicadas emerge earlier in the year, are a tad smaller, and have orange wing veins and prominent, bright red eyes. They emerge in much greater densities than Annual Cicadas do.



MK's Home Brew

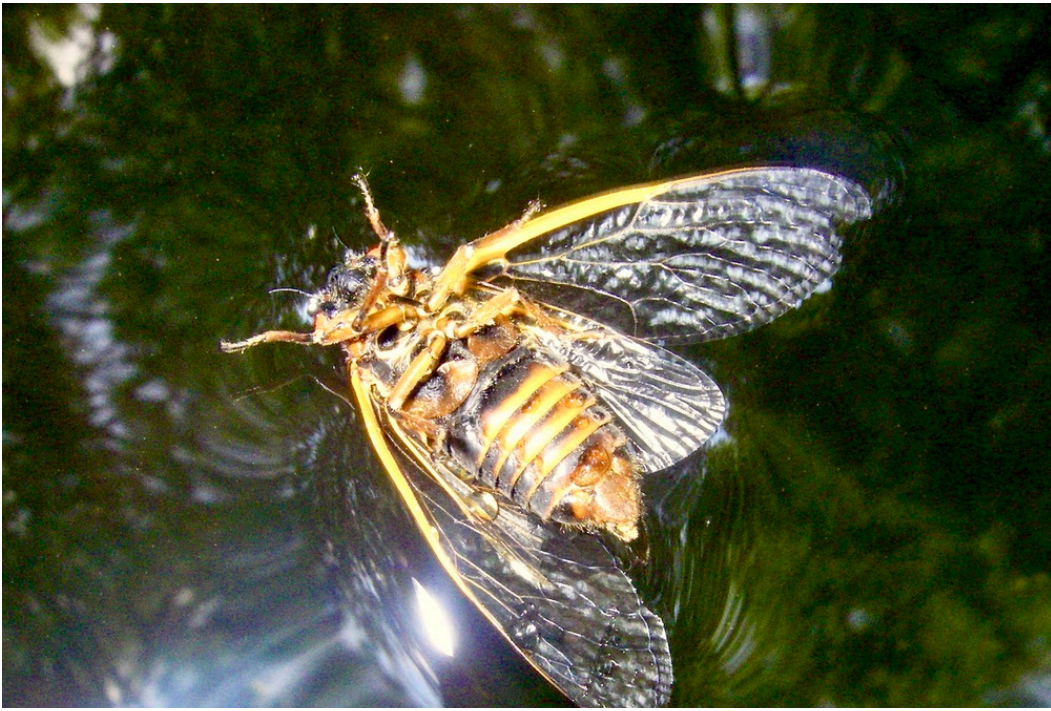
I first learned about Periodical Cicadas in 2004, when I read an article in Fly Fisherman Magazine focused on the impending emergence of Brood X. I was quite intrigued. They were supposed to be present in southeastern Pennsylvania, so I tied up a few flies and waited for them to show up in my yard. But they didn't. I heard no loud Cicada chorus, and didn't see a single one of them in my neighborhood. Later, too late, I found out that they had been so thick in a nearby town that people were crunching them under their feet on the sidewalks.

I knew so little then. I didn't understand that although the Cicadas were expected to be present in my area in 2004, there was no guarantee that they would be uniformly distributed. Nor that places where the emergence was happening would necessarily coincide with public access to fishable water.

I gave no further thought to Cicada emergences until 2008, when my good friend Ann McIntosh invited me out to her cottage in Spruce Creek PA, to stay and fish. We compared schedules and settled on dates in mid-June. A week or so before the trip I called Ann to touch base. "What's hatching?" I asked.

Ann had a one-word answer for me: "Cicadas."

This time it was Brood XIV. I drove out to Spruce Creek and made my way to Ann's cottage. I stepped out of the car, and my ears were assaulted by a steady, loud, high-pitched din. It sounded like a fleet of alien spacecraft coming in for a landing. Nearby trees were festooned with cicada shucks. Around the base of the trees were holes where the insects had come up out of the ground after 17 years spent growing and sipping sap from tree roots. Cicadas were flying around, perched on every tree and bush, sometimes crawling on me. You don't know what creepy is until you've felt a Cicada crawling on the back of your neck. Thank heaven they



Sometimes The Nighttime Is The Right Time

don't bite or sting. Some of them flew out over the stream and fell in. Any Cicada that hit the water didn't drift far before being eaten.

We fished Spruce Creek and the nearby Little Juniata for the next few days. Large, wary fish that would have otherwise been nocturnal were out and feeding on the surface all day long. I had heard and read stories over the years about rises that sounded "like a toilet flushing." I had always dismissed this as hyperbole, until I heard that noise numerous times during this trip. Casts I made to such rises were often ignored, sometimes drew a heart-stopping explosion, but never resulted in a hook-up. Still, I caught more big trout, more consistently, than I ever had before.

My most vivid and persistent memory from the trip was of a huge Brown Trout that drifted out from his hiding place under a streamside willow to intercept my fly, and delicately sipped it in scarcely a rod's length away from me. Spruce Creek hosts a number of such fish which I'd taken to calling "torpedoes." I'd always assumed they were impossible to catch. The trout immediately tore off upstream and deftly wrapped my leader around a large, waterlogged stick that was precariously perched atop a submerged rock. When I saw what had happened, I began a very careful stalk toward the fish in hopes of untangling my leader. The trout dangled downstream from the stick. I was so close I could see his eye move as he watched me approach. He shook his head occasionally. Finally I felt that I was as close as I could get. With painfully deliberate slowness I started to reach out toward the stick. As soon as my arm moved the fish violently jerked his head and snapped off my leader—not the 3X tippet but the much heavier material above it. So maybe I was right all along about torpedoes being uncatchable.

My second encounter with the Periodicals involved Brood II, in 2013. Understandably, anglers who know the current, precise location of a fishable emergence tend to keep their lips tightly zipped. But while doing a fly tying demonstration at the Pennsylvania Fly Fishing Museum's

annual Heritage Day in mid-June I engaged in conversation with a tyer at an adjacent table. The subject of Periodical Cicadas came up and he spilled the beans. At that very time they were emerging along a nearby stream which must remain nameless. There was no doubt how I would spend the following day.

Arriving at the stream in question, I pulled off the road and stepped out of the car. There was that unmistakable din. Luck was with me once again, my hot tip had panned out. While gearing up, a Cicada landed on me. *Oh baby, game on!*

This stream is smaller than Spruce or the Little J, and so are its fish. The fishing was challenging. Although my imitation attracted plenty of attention from stocked trout and jumbo Fallfish, and I caught enough to be happy, there were a lot of refusals and short takes. The overall experience, however, was wonderful and very educational. One discovery, among many, was that the naturals are top-heavy and tend to float upside-down. Apparently the humped back of the insect shifts the center of balance so that they land on the water inverted.

Now, as I prepare for the 2021 emergence of Brood X, I feel much more confident about finding good fishing. Prime areas for the emergence are within easy day-trip distance from my home. I am quite familiar with the waters I plan to fish, and the best access points. It will simply be a matter of driving around to various locations and listening for the Cicada Chorus.

Here's a link that will give you some background information and a good starting point for fishing over the Periodical Cicadas of Brood X. Do your detective work, and if you are fortunate enough to be in the right place at the right time the experience and the fishing will be unforgettable. Good luck!

<https://www.cicadamania.com/cicadas/periodical-cicada-brood-x-10-will-emerge-in-15-states-in-2021/>

BIO



Mary Kuss is now retired after a long tenure as an instructor, licensed Pennsylvania fishing guide, and retail clerk at The Sporting Gentleman, an independent Orvis dealer in Glen Mills, PA. She has taught countless group classes and private lessons in fly fishing and fly tying over the past 40 years. She has served on the Board of Directors for several non-profit conservation organizations, and has donated many hours of volunteer teaching. Mary is a life-member of Trout Unlimited and has served on the Board of the Ken Lockwood, Valley Forge, and Delco-Manning Chapters of T. U. She is the founder and an active member of the Delaware Valley Women's Fly Fishing Association, one of the largest clubs of its kind on the East Coast, which celebrates its 25th anniversary year in 2021.

Ponding at the Magic Tree

By Jim Clark

[This article was originally published in the Winter 2020 issue of the Valley Forge Trout Unlimited newsletter (<http://www.valleyforgetu.org/wp-content/uploads/BankNotes-Winter-2020-Web.pdf>). It has been purloined with both the writer's and publisher's permission.]

Onward and upward is the trajectory most of us strive for when we take up something worthwhile. After all, if as good as you were ever going to get happened on the first time out, what would be the point of continuing? To my mind, what little of it there is, the saddest hunter or angler is the one who is dealt a magnificent hand of beginner's luck in the form of a huge buck or fish on their maiden voyage, who then spent the rest of their life trying to duplicate the feat. Not to mention boring the snot out of their companions with the unrelenting tale of their single conquest.

At the other end of the spectrum is one who has a seemingly inexhaustible supply of ways to screw up the opportunity of the moment, but who comes away from each, smiling. If getting beat builds character, it also builds characters, and these folks are an absolute joy to hunt and fish with.

If they do accidentally succeed, they are usually dumbstruck at the lousy luck that befell their prey, and wouldn't think to brag about their own prowess. Such is the joy that they bring to their buddies that it usually results in someone volunteering to gut their deer or take photos of their fish so that they can tell their story. If they do happen to brag a little, they will be forgiven by the rest, with the smug assurance that this event will likely be only a benchmark signifying the start of another long run of horrible luck.

Most of us find ourselves in between these two extremes. The truly blessed find themselves growing up in a family with a long sporting tradition which supplies the mentors that allow them to complete the metamorphosis from wee little rookie to veteran. These families also tend to define their holidays and holy days outside the realm of government and religion, generally centered around celestial phenomena known as "Opening Days."



These friend - and - family oriented events, besides being the source of primary education for beginners, also allow the elder members of the tribe to relax the standards that they likely would practice the rest of the year. The dry-fly purist might backslide for a few hours by clinching on a tiny Colorado spinner instead of following the drift of a perfectly tied Quill Gordon. They might even kill a couple of stocked fish, something they wouldn't even consider at any other time.

Unfortunately, not all are so blessed. Many larval anglers are now the product of single parent, or even no parent, homes, seemingly self-generated out of mud puddles like horsehair

snakes. These are the specimens who, arriving late to the stream on the opener, and finding the banks filled to capacity by anglers who did care enough to arrive an hour or so early, will wade down the creek and plant themselves in front of the early birds. Apparently born both blind and deaf, they are oblivious to the entreaties of the bank-bound, often polite at first, and count on a loophole in the angler harassment statutes that keeps them from catching a well deserved rock between the shoulder blades. They are also the reason you won't find me streamside on opening day, something I thought would never happen.

We trout anglers are a resourceful breed, however, and some buddies and I did not take this sad turn of events lying down. Actually, we might have been lying down on the couches at hunting camp when we came up with the idea. We would stage our own opening day.

About a decade ago, on the Bedford County dairy farm where we are considered family, the Mearkles had a pond built on a low spot too wet to farm. We stocked the pond with channel cats, golden shiners, a couple of koi, and some largemouth bass fry. Relatives seined some crayfish from the East Branch of Sideling Hill Creek, which runs through the farm, and added them to the mix. Locally, this stream is known as "Little Creek," while the West Branch, located on the other side of Addison Ridge, and a far smaller stream, is known as "Big Creek." Go figure.

Anyway, our solution was to stock the pond with trout, establish our own opener, and attempt to fish them out before rising water temperatures killed them. The pond gets stocked several weeks prior to our opener, which we schedule to coincide with the opening weekend of spring gobbler season. Our limits are liberal, and our rules are few.

It took several seasons for us to get our system worked out. In fact, the first year we only stocked the day before our opener, and if we hadn't put them in ourselves, we would have sworn that there were no trout in there. My buddy Jack Ferguson went up every weekend in May and eventually took out about twenty or so, including a beast of a 22" rainbow, but the rest of us basically got skunked.



Silver-bladed spinners, both store-bought and hand-wrought are the stars of our little fishery, but that evil, sticky, prepared bait that comes in bottles, fills in during the slack periods. It was while I was using this stinky goo that I discovered the Magic Tree.

Just after the pond was built, I planted ten blue spruce seedlings around the perimeter, but due to a glitch in communications, all but one got mowed down that first summer. Right at the pond's edge, the survivor was turning into a pretty little tree, but on the 2012 opener,

Jack and I discovered that over the winter a buck had beaten the branches off the upper starboard quarter of it. While ruining its aesthetics, it made for a dandy rod rest, while the white bench we soon placed behind it made an even dandier butt rest.

"Magic Tree" came about because the first time I used it as a rest, the line shot out, and I was instantly attached to a ten inch rainbow before the rod tip stopped quivering. The next six casts, same result. We quit fishing right then, not wishing to break the spell, and awaited the arrival of the rest of our crew, who aren't quite the early risers that we are.



The Magic Tree At Work

An hour later, and before you can say abracadabra, two Mearkle grandkids had caught their first trout there, and their Grandpap caught his first in over forty years.

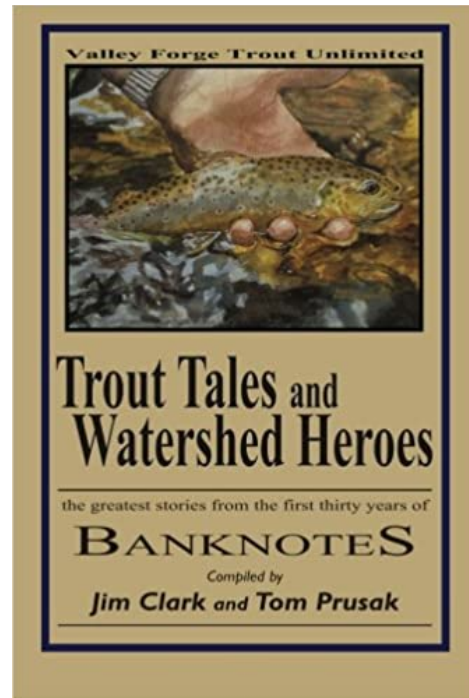
The Magic Tree is now reserved for rookies and the angling impaired, and I haven't used that white gunk since that one time. This was made easier by the discovery that a white and yellow woolly bugger was just as effective.

We did add the amenity of a stick used for conking the fish on the noggin before they go in the cooler, so trust me, no fishing lodge on this earth is better equipped.

Bio



The "Old Professor"



(https://www.amazon.com/dp/1456538748/ref=rdr_ext_tmb).

Jim Clark is a native of these parts and has haunted our streams since he was a tadpole. I met him for the first time about ten years ago when he and a few other members of Valley Forge Trout Unlimited thought having a Project Healing Waters nearby would be a great idea. Jim is a veteran of the US Air Force and has a special affinity or teaching local veterans how to tie flies. He is indeed a master fly tier. He has honed his yarns into some amusing recollections in the book "Trout Tales And Watershed Heroes".

Can I Get A Witness?

By Mark Usyk



Snow Zorro

I fish all winter. Now when I say I fish all winter, what I really mean is I never officially put up my fly rods for the season, but I also don't get to fish even a quarter of the time I do spring through fall. Winters in NY are unpredictable anymore at best. Maybe we get dumped on by lake effect snow bands all winter, or maybe we don't get much at all and it's just cold with a few dustings. But either way, April and the opening of trout season seems to almost always be the same. Tough.

I live on the Oriskany Creek, I can see it a hundred or so yards out my back window. It's not the prettiest stretch, but it's mine. Mine in the sense that it's behind my house and I know it well, not mine in the sense that I own it. It's public water and I've been guilty of looking up from my bowl of Cap'n Crunch on more than one morning to see movement, only to pick up the binoculars I keep on the table to spy on fisherman casting their way down stream. I hope to see a rod bend but haven't ever witnessed it from my table yet.

My end of the creek is literally the end. Downstream from me, maybe a mile as the creek snakes and bends but less as the crow flies it flows into the Mohawk River, but upstream from me, which is actually south, there's thirty something miles of creek and various feeders and uncounted ditches and drainages that equal a muddy, high, and cold flow on April 1st by the time it's passing my house. Even if we don't have snow in town here, along those thirty some-odd miles there are enough farm fields and hills and hollows that hold melting snow to totally destroy the creek by the time it reaches me. It's painful to see on the first day of April, the opening of our trout season. I can always drive south twenty minutes or so and find its waters not nearly as stained or high, and sometimes I do. And sometimes I even find a trout or two. But because it's the opening of trout season and the water looks so bad at home I tend to trick myself into driving north instead on many opening days.

To be clear, the Oriskany is open to catch and release trout fishing year-round. So I fish it all winter when the weather and temperatures allow, when it's not frozen over in the sections I like to fish. But on April first I like to drive north with thoughts of brook trout in the Adirondacks, a place that's been closed off to my fly rod for seven months. I know that the streams and rivers won't be blown out there like at home because driving less than an hour north is like driving backwards on the calendar. It's spring at my house, but still winter up there. The snow isn't melting yet, it'll be a couple more weeks at least, so nothing is blown out. But that's the problem... the snow hasn't melted yet.

In the Adirondacks on April first, driving down a dirt road is more like driving down a snowmobile trail. And sometimes that's exactly what it is. I used to do it in an old Toyota pick-up, then I did it in an even older Jeep, and now it's done in my newer, but still old but dependable Subaru. It's a much smoother ride, and while it handles the drive better than the previous vehicles I have to remind myself that if I let the loud music get the better of me and affect how fast I drive, going off the road means ripping off the plastic bumpers on something as insignificant as a snowbank. Somehow I'll make it to my parking spot, the car unscathed, not for a lack of trying. I'm old enough to know better, but apparently still too young to care.



Staying Dry And Warm

I'm layered up. Thermal underwear, fleece liner pants under my light weight waders; I

should have neoprene waders, I know. But I hate how hard they are to hike in. And up here, there's hiking to be done to get to the brook trout. I trudge through knee deep snow in some places, but it's the combination of the snow and the thick, crowded forest I'm trying to push through that will have me sweating like summertime if I'm not careful. Sweating on the way in only to finally stand motionless in thirty-five degree water is a sure bet for disaster. So I take my time. As tree limbs grab at fly rod guides and slash at my face I pause here and there to look up through the bare and cold trees to the passing clouds overhead, or to stand motionless studying the ground around me for the snowshoe hare doing the same. A grouse will inevitably take flight at some point, only a few feet away, it's wings beating as fast as the rhythm of helicopter blades but exploding from cover only a few feet away, making my heart leap out of my chest, right through the fly box in my chest pocket and through the down feathers in my jacket. I'll have to stand there for a moment and collect myself, stuff my heart back in where it belongs once it slows back down.

Finally at the stream, I take my first steps in. I can't really make a cast from the bank, the trees here crowd the water like boxing fans line the isles in Madison Square Garden for a main event trying to reach out and make contact with a fighter. I've got to get in the water. It's cold. Freezing. I picture the brook trout on the bottom sitting there nearly catatonic. They're cold blooded. If the water is only 35 degrees...so are they. Their hearts might only beat a couple times a minute in these temperatures, the way I see it. They don't need to eat much, just enough. I'm not planning on catching many. Ok, I'll be surprised if I catch any at all. This isn't about the trout. It's about an idea.

I drift a nymph, and small bead headed bugger, size 14. I drift it slow. Right on the bottom. I can picture it washing down around that rock at the head of this pool and sinking, probably not fast enough to get in the faces of the fish at the front of the run, most likely passing overhead. When it finally reaches the bottom it probably drifts past a couple brookies who look on straight ahead in indifference. It's too cold to care, the fly just a little too big. I could change it, but my fingers are cold and it's easier to fail with the same fly I have on than to change it, struggle with cold fingers, and still fail. I'm here to take in the sights and sounds more than to actually catch a trout, when it comes down to it. April first, trudging through knee deep snow, my breath in the air, this day is acted on out of principle alone. I could have stayed home because the rivers were blown out down there. I could've gone , the couple places I knew would be better but would have seen other anglers. Neither of those options are what I'm looking for. My stubbornness sets me up for a beautiful day of failure. I can think of a thousand worse ways to fail.

As I'm realizing my legs are beginning to sting from the water temperature, my line suddenly goes tight. For a couple seconds my mind struggles to decide if it's a snag or a fish, but it moves easily and the rod tip dances. It's a small fish. My mind was moving slow, taking in my surroundings and the quiet, and now it's suddenly flooded with fast thoughts. Will I get it to my net? Will I at least get it close enough to see it before it gets off? Is it even a trout or will it be a creek chub? And do I even care if I get it into the net and it's a creek chub? No. This fish is a gift. A bonus.

The drive, the hike in. The cold blue sky and my tracks through the snow on the bank through the trees behind me, they're the bigger part of the story, and the eight-inch brook trout I find in my net is the happy ending. A bird flutters through the alder branches across the stream from me.

At least I have a witness.

BIO



Mark Usyk is the author of Reflections of a Fly Rod and Carp Are Jerks. It's been said that while he's a fly fishing writer, his stories are actually stories about life, where fishing happens. Both books can be found on Amazon. He also writes the Streamer Junkie Blog on jprossflyrods.com. He lives in upstate NY, where he claims to be a marginal fly fisherman and pushes his beliefs of unplugging and living your own life, not the life others want you to live. Mark Usyk, Author:

Books:

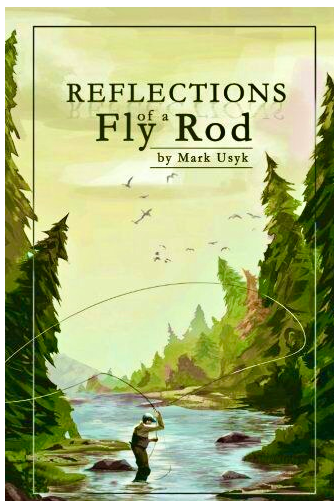
1. Reflections of a Fly Rod

2. Carp Are Jerks

Hear/Read Mark:

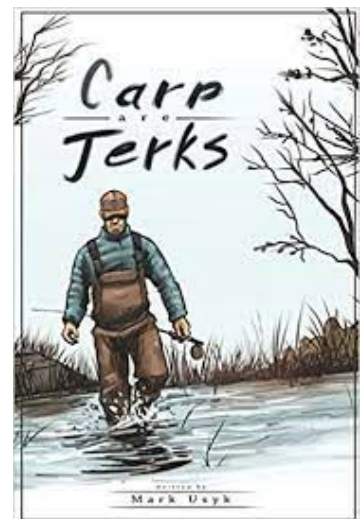
jprossflyrods.com: Streamer Junkie Blog

YouTube: The Marginal Fly Fisherman



<https://www.amazon.com/Reflections-Fly-Rod-Mark-Usyk/dp/1540779289>

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08BZRGHSY/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1



STALKING VIRGINIA COBIA WITH A FLY ROD

By Thad Nowakowski



"Eleven o'clock, big cobia swimming down sea, 100 yards out!"

After a couple of hours slowly cruising the shipping channel west of Cape Charles, VA, this is what I've been dying to hear. My brother, Andy, who's running the 27' Judge "Lady Broadwater" from the cobia tower, tries to position the boat with the 15 knot NE wind at my backcast side.

Add a good 2-3' "bay chop" into the equation, a tarpon cage that was built a tad too tall and getting the 10" game changer in line for a bite is no easy task to accomplish. On this August day, we got the cobia skunk, which isn't a first for this fly-rodder, but it added more experience to our collective account, hoping it will pay dividends on our next trip.



The Mighty Cobia

Cobia fishing on the lower Chesapeake, from Cherrystone to the Bay Bridge Tunnel, has exploded over the last decade. I've been fishing the Eastern Shore since the 80s and until recently, mostly targeted big bull reds and speckled trout.



Cobia Candy

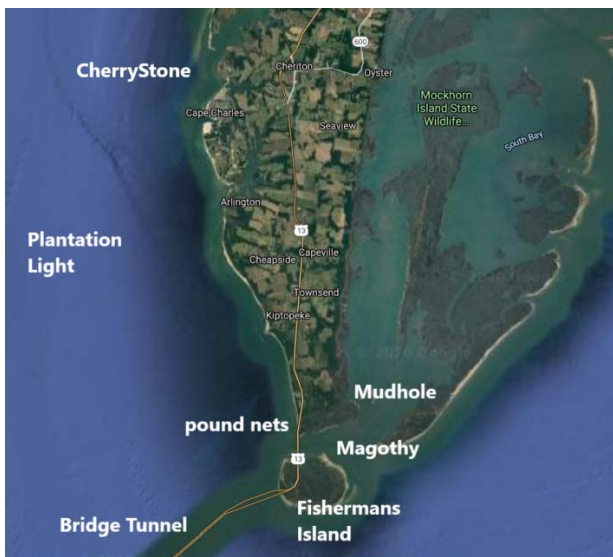
On any day that the wind is blowing less than 20, you'll see a myriad of tower boats, cruising the shipping channel, Plantation light, or along the bridge islands and support posts, hoping to spot cobia or large reds to pitch live eels, meathog bucktails, or live bunker to. There are a few folks into self-punishment, that are chasing them with fly rods. It can be accomplished, but as with all things involving the willow stick, there are a number of variables that will increase your probability of success.

The Three Cs for Sticking a Cobia.



Conditions -

Let's face it, casting a 10-12 weight, with a long, bulky fly, on a pitching bow, is challenging. If the wind is really kicking, it's next to impossible. Additionally, this is a sight fishing game. Clouds, sun at too low an angle, or not having a spotter elevated from a tower, make it all more difficult to see the cruising fish. If you can't see them, you aren't going to catch them. Plan your trip around a stretch of bright sunny days, with wind forecasts below 10 mph. You can sometimes spot these fish finning early in the morning, but only when it's dead calm.



Captain -

A highly experienced captain who understands fly casting immensely increases your odds. Knowing how to position the boat in order to line up a cast is the single most important variable. Typically, we see these fish cruising down sea, or following a school of rays or giant sea turtles. You must be able to cast past the nose of the fish, and then strip like crazy to run it by them. They are not typically spooky, but casting it right on top of them, which I've mistakenly done, will definitely send them deep.

Casting -

Like tarpon fishing, you need to boom out a cast for Cobia with minimal false casting. I have a 12 weight Epic glass rod spooled with the Orvis Depth Charge, 350 grains of rod-loading and fast-sinking fly line. I treated myself to this "pandemic rod" because it perfectly matched our boat, and has beautiful Japanese silk wraps that virtually disappear under epoxy! I don't like floating line for this application, because to succeed you have to get that fly under the water quickly. The fast, two handed strip (rod cradled under your arm), will keep your fly in the zone, only if it's on a sinking fly line.



On this two-day trip, the bay was a white-capped mess. We had a 20-30 mph west wind on day one. With our cobia fishing cancelled we loaded up the 24' SeaArk for inshore reds and speckled trout on the ocean side of the peninsula. We ended up catching two 21" reds that were hugging the marsh bank on an outgoing tide. Casting white Clousers right on the bank with a slow retrieve was the trick.

Whether launching from Oyster or

the Mud Hole by Fisherman's Island, there are miles of marsh creeks and oyster beds to explore. There are also a ton of mud flats that will leave you aground on an ebb tide if you don't know where you're going. Again, an experienced captain makes a huge difference in both finding and catching fish, but also by ensuring that you aren't waiting for the next high tide to make it back to the boat launch. Kayak fishermen should focus on Magothy Bay and Fisherman's Island, which is the southern most point of the Eastern Shore. In the spring, the flats in Magothy often have acres of 30-60 pound reds, giant black drum, or even the occasional striper. If you want to see how it's done, check out Kayak Kevin's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpRwNvje6QY>) for some amazing footage.



During the fall, it's not uncommon to find schools of "puppy drum" and specks in the 4-7 pound range that are fattening up for the winter. The usual mullet and small bunker patterns work great for both species. We typically focus on the pound nets that line the Bayshore. These nets act as fish funnels for those schools that are migrating out of the bay. Casting along the north side of the nets can be very, very productive

Chesapeake Fly Box

Eating, Drinking and Yarning in Cape Charles

There are a number of bed and breakfasts and AirBnBs in Cape Charles. Additionally, camping sites are available at Cherrystone Campground. This sleepy bayside town has also exploded in popularity in the last number of years but compared to the “shore” where we usually go, it is still a hidden gem. For finer dining, hit up the Oyster Farm next to the King’s Creek Marina, or for a completely casual experience, try wing night at Yuk Yuk & Joe’s in Eastville. These aren’t smothered in buffalo sauce, but beautifully fried and served on a cafeteria platter, every Thursday. Your sweet tooth can be satisfied at Brown Dog Ice



Thad's Red On the Fly

Cream, with flavors like Eastern Shore Fig or Lemon Poppy. Make sure to stop at Hardware, where you will feel like you were dropped back into the 50s. On evenings before supper, many of the town’s characters can be found on the rocking chairs outside of Watson’s, talking about fishing, hunting, and all the other things that make small towns great.

Red Fish: Catch & Release (Into a Hot Skillet!)

I simply filet the redfish as follows: with a very sharp filet knife (I use a Bubba Blade) make your first cut just aft of the pectoral fin, down to the backbone. With the tip of the blade, make your next cut running from the dorsal spines down to the

base of the tail. Keep running the tip of the blade along this cut against the spine until you



can loosen the entire filet from the ribs and it is just hanging onto the fish by the tail. Lastly, and primarily because I hate scaling fish, run the blade in between the skin and the meat, to skin the filet. Keep a pair of needle nosed pliers handy to pull out any stray bones from the ribs. For redfish, I keep it very simple with a hot cast iron skillet, melted butter on the filet, and blackening seasoning. The fish should smoke, as the crust of seasoning is formed in the pan.

If you are interested in giving the magnificent cobia a try, my father will be running charters on the Lady Broadwater next summer.

*Reach out to me via **Thaddeus.nowakowski@projecthealingwaters.org**, and I'll get you hooked up with Captain Ted.*

BIO



Thad Nowakowski started his fly fishing adventures chasing bluegills and bass in southern Delaware. His first weapon was a K-Mart glass 6 wt. about 35 years ago. Since then he'll throw flies at just about anything in fresh or saltwater. He's been with Pfizer for 25 years, is the energetic Program Leader for Project Healing Waters' Royersford Program and Training Director for Bushkill NAVHDA (North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association). Thad is married with three children and a pretty fair hunting dog, Gemma - a wire-haired Pointing Griffon.

Flying Wet

By Chas Boinske

Spring is here and that means that it's time to break out wetflies. Of course, wetflies can be fished year- round but they really produce in the spring.

There are five things to keep in mind when wetfly fishing that will enhance your experience.

1. Swinging Wets Is Not The Only Tactic To Use

The classic downstream swing is what most anglers think of when wet fly fishing comes to mind. Certainly, it can be a deadly tactic. However, when doing so, make sure to mend your line upstream periodically as the flies swing. This will slow the flies and give the trout a chance to see and eat them.

Beyond that refinement, also consider trying the following; fishing the wetflies as you would fish dry flies. Tied on light hooks, your wet flies will sit in or just below the surface mimicking stillborn, drowned and emerging flies. This can be especially effective during a hatch.

For you nymph fishers, consider tying a wetfly behind a heavier nymph. You might be surprised by the number of fish you take on the lift at the end of your drift.

2. Leader Setup

All hail the tippet ring! The tippet ring has made wetfly leader construction and maintenance much easier.

Take a standard 7ft 2x leader and add a 2 or 3mm ring. Tie on an 18 inch piece of 3x and add another ring. Next add an 18 inch piece of 4x. From each ring, attach a 6 inch piece of soft but heavy leader material like Maxima Chameleon.

You will want to use a heavier material on the dropper than you use in the following section. This helps avoid tangles because the thicker leader material of the dropper resists tangles. Once you master the two-fly rig, you can extend it to three flies by adding another tippet ring and dropper. You will make life easier if you remember to make the point fly your heaviest fly.

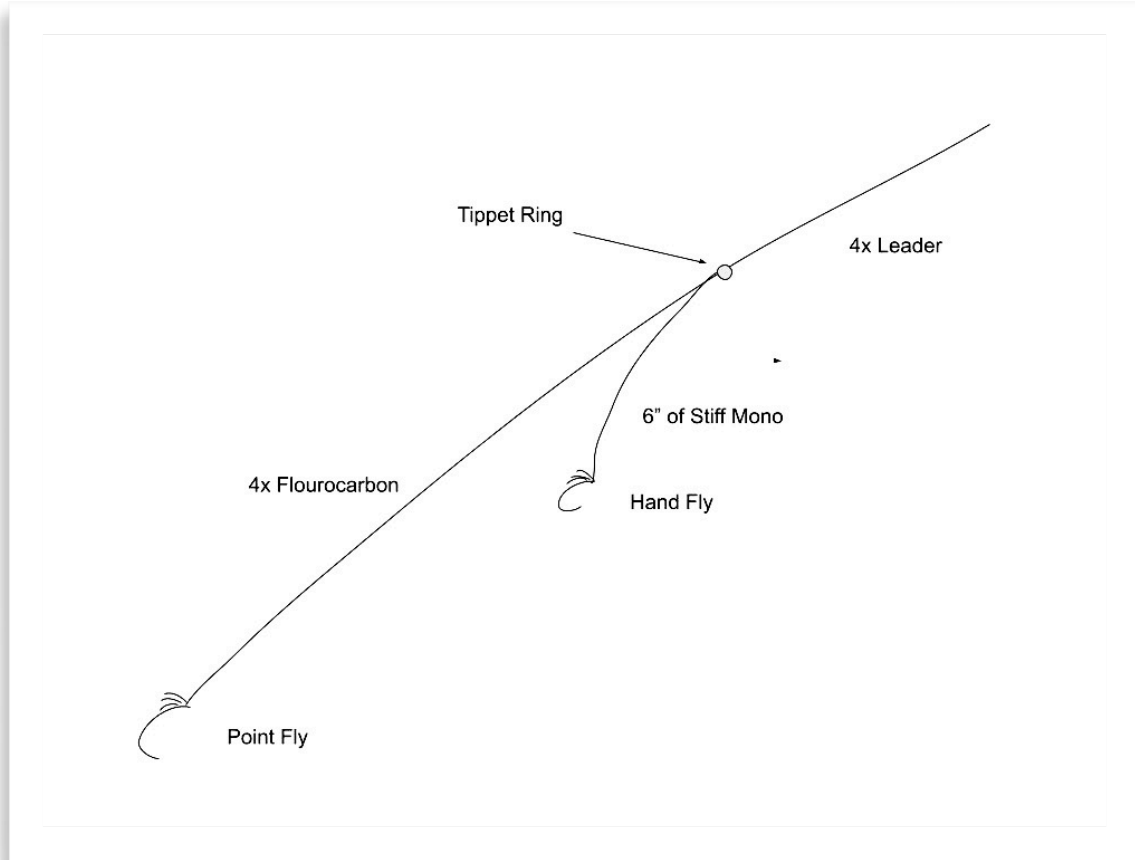


Tippet Rings

3. Fly Selection

Try the following setup; *the fly closest to you, on the first dropper, is called the "hand" fly.* In most cases this fly should be an *emerger* pattern . Its position in the cast of flies will place it on or just below the surface. The second dropper can be another version of the same insect

or something entirely different. The last fly, often an attractor pattern, is normally the largest of the three to facilitate casting.



A Simple Two Fly Wet Rig

In spring, I often fish an Olive Soft Hackle as the *hand fly* followed by a Partridge and Orange and then by a March Brown Wetfly.



Olive Soft Hackle, A Typical Hand Fly
(Tied By C. Boinske)



Partridge and Orange



March Brown (Weighted), A Typical Point Fly

4. Rod Selection

Fly rod selection for wetfly fishing is important but not critical. You can use whatever fly rod is at hand but if you want to fine tune your soft hackle game you may wish to consider the following; because you often swing wetflies down-stream and the fish sometimes take the fly aggressively, the angler can benefit from using a very soft-tipped fly rod. I most often use a Hardy Marksman 10ft 4wt that is fantastic. It has enough backbone to cast a wetfly rig upstream but the tip is soft enough to prevent breaking off fish on a downstream presentation. Unfortunately, I believe that they are no longer made but I have seen them on the secondary market. However, ask your local fly rod shop how to find a rod with these characteristics.

5. Cover The Water

In my experience, being able to cover lots of water is helpful when wetfly fishing. What I mean is that being able to work lots of real estate is really beneficial unless you are fishing a hatch. I spent all of 2013 fishing basically nothing but soft hackle flies. What I learned was that unlike other presentation methods, wetfly fishing success improved significantly when I manipulated the fly through the cross currents. A constant effort to mend line both to slow and speed up the fly depending on the situation paid dividends.

The central message is "vary your presentation." There are no hard and fast rules. There is no better time to start your wetfly fishing adventure than spring. As of this writing, the olives are on the move and the grannoms are just starting to seal their cases. I'm sure that my travels this spring will take me to Central PA where the grannom and olive hatches can be very good. Look for olives from the end of February through the end of March and then prepare for grannoms around tax time. If you do the same, and see me swinging soft hackles, please say hello!



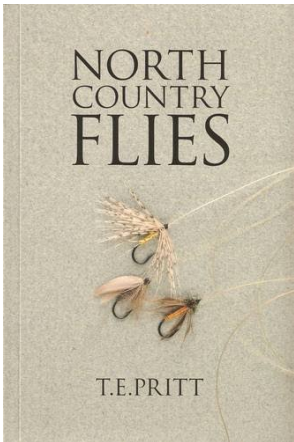
Grannom Larva



Grannom Adult

Resources:

A classic on the subject & my fo-to reference:



https://nwflytyer.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/north-country-flies_pritt.pdf

https://www.amazon.com/gp/aw/d/0811716244/ref=dbs_a_w_dp_0811716244



Chas Boinske

Charles P. Boinske is the Principle Wealth Manager & Chief Visionary Officer of Modern Wealth Management LLC. Raised in Kimberton, Chas has been fishing in PA for more than 50 years. These days he spends as much time as possible fishing in Centre County, Charles also enjoys the history of the sport, military history and spending lots of time with his family.

If you're fortunate enough to be his client he may even share how good wealth management requires the same discipline as catching a wily trout! Check out his Wealth Cast: <https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/the-wealth-cast-charles-p-boinske-cfa-dMwCtLGfuv8/>

LAST CAST

By Brenna



With spring fast approaching and trout season nearly upon us there will be lots of new anglers starting out after a long winter of being cooped up and stressed out. One of the best ways to teach others is simply by doing things as best you can. People learn from what they see and our actions speak louder than words.

Many of us in DJL had the opportunity to become certified Fly Fishing Skills Instructors through PA Fish and Boat Commission over the winter and one of the most basic and important things we learned was to be S.M.A.R.T angler, a useful acronym made of concepts we should all follow outdoors. **S**afety, **M**anners, **A**ppreciate, **R**elease, and **T**each. All of these are so logical and obvious but often skipped over when learning from books, tutorials, skill clinics and watching videos. Having a mentor or just someone to observe in the field is a rare yet powerful opportunity to fill in the gaps and advance as an angler. We tend to copy what we see when we are learning an activity. Whether it's from what we see out in the world or in images on social media. How you behave on the water reflects on us all and has effects on others. "Manners" is a word that we hear less these days as if it's a fading relic of the past. It's probably the most important concept out of these basics. Maybe the word in itself isn't popular because we are reminded of having been told to mind our manners as children. "Respect" is the big chewy center of this concept. If you conduct yourself with respect for the land, water, flora, fauna and all the marvels and dangers that accompany, we all are elevated. When we act without respect for the power of nature we bring harm upon them. When we disrespect the water, land and other living things we cause harm. We shouldn't need laws about littering, trespassing, poaching, and disturbing the peace, yet we do. There are things that aren't illegal but that doesn't mean we should do them. Confronting others on the water about ethics and etiquette never seems to go well. We learn to just focus on what we were doing and or move on to a different spot. Gratitude, like "appreciation" is something you feel inside. When you internalize these concepts, they are sure to be what you put out into the world.

See you out on the water, S.M.A.R.T. anglers!

Brenna

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