



the indicator

The newsletter of the Firelands Fly Fishers Inc.

www.firelandsflyfishers.org

P.O. Box 244, Avon Ohio 44011

Volume 5 Issue 7

November 2008

President's Corner

All the waiting for Steelhead fishing is finally coming to an end, the fish are showing up in area rivers. Conneaut Creek has been fishing well lately and this will get better with rain and colder weather. Finally a chance to use all the flies everyone has been tying since the last steelhead season ended.

A few notes on Conservation: Belize is going to make all Bonefish, Tarpon and Permit fishing Catch and Release very soon. A few groups have been fighting to have this done for a few years and finally they have been successful. The "clincher" in the fight was –what else-MONEY. Belize realizes about \$60 million/year from fly fishing for the three species.

Considering that Belize is about the size of Rhode Island, this is a huge amount of money. Included in the new law will be a fishing license with a fee to police the new law. These species have never been a big market item for eating, but one concern was that as other food fish species declined, then more Bonefish, Tarpon and Permit would show up in fish markets. Kudos to Belize for acting early on this potentially unfavorable situation.

Closer to home is a joint Cleveland Museum of Natural History Trout Club/ Emerald Necklace TU program on Nov. 19. **Whit Fosburgh**, Director of TU's Coldwater Conservation Fund is speaking about Global Warming and Coldwater Fisheries. This will give you some insight about Global Warming and how it directly affects trout fishing. The meeting at the Natural History Museum is a dinner meeting at \$35.00, but the dinner is optional. Cocktails are at 6 PM, dinner at 7 PM and the program starts at 8 PM. If you do not attend the dinner then the program is free. More information is available at www.cmnhtc.org.

The second batch of club shirts is currently getting embroidered and should be ready to pick up at the next meeting. The shirts are a real work of art if you haven't seen them.

At the November meeting, our speaker, **Dale Kotowski**, will give a presentation entitled "Seasons of the Yough." Dale runs the fly shop at Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters in Ohiopyle. Their website is: www.wilderness-voyageurs.com/trout. The Youghiogheny River (Yough) is a coldwater release stream from a dam. Stays relatively cold all year and has great trout fishing is July, August and September. Dale will give an outstanding introduction to the Yough. There are also many other excellent Trout streams in the area. The Yough is located southeast of Pittsburgh in the Laurel Highlands area of PA. Ohiopyle also has great whitewater rafting and is a few miles from Frank Lloyd Wright's house, Falling Water. It is about a 3 hour trip from Cleveland. This could be our June fly fishing trip for next year.

Upcoming events: December meeting is the Christmas Potluck Dinner. It will be over 2 months between eating events for the Club! We are working on a speaker for January and our February meeting will be with the officers of the Ohio Council of FFF. Fly tying starts again in November – check the schedule below.

Good Fishing!!

Bill Grake, President, Firelands Fly Fishers

Future Events

General Club Meetings take place on the second Wednesday of each month at French Creek Nature Center, 4530 Colorado Ave. Sheffield Village. Meetings begin socially at 6:30 PM.

October General Meeting

Larry Elswick of Studio-e Outdoors - <http://www.studioeoutdoors.com> and Al-Lure brand Alpaca dubbing fibers, was on hand in October to share some of his memories, photos and advice on canoeing and fishing in Minnesota's famed Boundary Waters. Thanks Larry! A good place to start planning your adventure is <http://www.bwcaw.org>

November General Meeting

Please join us on Wednesday, November 12 at French Creek when our guest speaker will be **Dale Kotowski** of Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters. Dale will be educating us on fishing in the Youghiogeny River/Ohiopyle area in southwest PA. <http://www.wilderness-voyageurs.com/flyfish.htm>

December General Meeting

Be sure to join us on Dec. 10th for the annual Christmas Party Potluck Dinner. Everyone is asked to bring a dish to share, a list will be published in next month's newsletter with reminders of what to bring.

Monthly Meeting Schedule

Nov. 12th – General Meeting, French Creek NC, guest speaker **Dale Kotowski**
Dec. 10th – Annual Christmas Pot Luck Party, French Creek NC (eat, eat, eat...)
Jan. 14th – TBA
Feb. 11th – an evening with the Ohio Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers
Mar. 11th – Saltwater Fly Fishing
Apr. 8th – TBA
May 13th – Casting Night
June 10th – Annual Summer Picnic and Raffle

TGIF - Fly Tying Fridays!

Fly Tying is moving to Fridays for the remainder of 2008. Fly tying is open to everyone, so bring a friend or family member. The club does have some tools and vices available for your use and there are plenty of people available for instructions, advice or just to talk about fishing! Gander Mountain is located in Cobblestone Square in Sheffield Village, near Rt. 301/Rt. 254 and I-90. **Classes are 6 PM until 9 PM**

Lodge Room at Gander Mountain: Fridays in November 7, 14, 21, 28; December 5, 12, 19

Lodge Room at Gander Mountain: Thursdays in January 8, 15, 22, 29; February 5, 12, 19, 26

Northern Ohio Fly Tying Expo

The date and location are set for the 8th Annual Northern Ohio Fly Tying Expo; Saturday, January 10th at Lakeland Community College in Kirtland. <http://www.expo2009.ncff.net/>

GLC Fly Tying Expo

The Great Lakes Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers will host the 9th Annual Fly Tying Exposition at the Ingham County Fairgrounds in Mason, Michigan on Saturday, December 6, 2008. The expo will be open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. <http://www.fffglc.org/index.html>

Fly of the Month, November - The Skunk

Hook: Size 2, 4, 6 - Salmon hook similar to Mustad 36890, Daiichi 2441 or Tiemco 7999.

Thread: Black 6/0 thread.

Body: Black coarse dubbing.

Tail: Red hackle barbs.

Rib: Fine silver tinsel.

Collar: Black hackle feather.

Saddle: White calf tail fur. (Kip tail)



Photo # 1 Start your thread on the hook and tie in the tail of red hackle barbs.

Photo # 2 Tie in the silver tinsel at the base of the tail facing backwards. Leave it for after the next step. Dub in a body of coarse black dubbing. Taper it (slender to full) as you progress toward the eye.

Photo # 3 Spiral wrap the tinsel over the dubbed body and tie off just short of the eye.

Photo # 4 Tie in a black hackle feather near the eye and wrap 4 to 5 times.

Photo # 5 Measure out a length of white kip tail - even to the body. Tie it in, as a saddle, over the top. Form a head and whip finish the thread. This is the completed fly.

A classic salmon and steelhead fly. This is a timeless but productive wet fly for all steelhead waters.

For Fly of the Month recipes and patterns, please visit our web site at www.firelandsflyfishers.org

Tom Zmina,
Director of Fly Tying, Firelands Fly Fishers

Indicator Nymph Fishing

Increase Your Success by Controlling Unseen Drag

by Steven Vorkapich

I used to think of nymph fishing as “Chuck & Chance it.” For most of the nymphing done today, that description still remains true. Attaining a true Drag-Free drift is almost impossible, and even when it is accomplished, it usually lasts for only a very small portion of the drift.

While a dry fly fisherman can see his dragging fly and mend to correct the drift. A nymph fisherman must learn to visualize the progress of his fly and adjust for drag, unseen except by the fish.

Let’s look at how drag occurs. Imagine you are fishing a weighted stone fly pattern while wading upstream through a series of riffles. You cast your nymph upstream and across into a likely looking run. As the fly drifts with the current, you lift the rod tip; taking up the slack as the nymph drifts downstream, hoping to feel the take (or better yet, you watch the point of where the line enters the water for the slightest sign of a pickup). If the cast was a long one, you might strip line in as the drift approaches you. As the fly passes below, you slowly lower the rod tip, maintaining tension in the line until the nymph swings out at the end of the drift.

What has your fly been doing unseen below the surface? Try to visualize its progress. The sinking fly begins to drift with the current, but to keep in contact with its progress; you quickly snatch the slack out of the line. If you did this with a dry fly, you’d expect to see drag immediately, and that is exactly what happens with your nymph. Additionally, your fly is drawn toward you, accelerating its downstream drift relative to the current speed and (because you cast at an angle to the flow) dragging it cross-current toward your rod tip. An experienced fisherman might pull only the slightest tension, on the line, minimizing the effect, but it’s still drag. As the fly passes below, the reverse becomes true: you are now causing the nymph to drift more slowly than the current speed - drag again. Had you been fishing a dry fly, you may have also made several mends in the course of its float to compensate for subtle changes in the flow, but you couldn’t see your nymph dragging, so these were ignored as well. Of Course, if you were lucky, you might have hooked a fish anyway - if you were lucky.

Traditional nymphing techniques fail to achieve a natural drift for many reasons. For example, a common method for minimizing the effects of casting across currents of different speeds is to keep a short line and hold the rod high. Unfortunately the fly and fly line always fall (or swing like a pendulum) in the direction of the rod tip, creating drag. Unless you keep the tip of the rod directly over the fly, gravity will always prevent a drag-free drift.

A similar effect occurs in a tight leader. Cast a sinking fly into a lake so the leader lands extended from the tip of the floating fly line. The fly will not sink toward the bottom directly below where it entered the water; instead it will swing toward a point below the end of the fly line. In moving water a sinking nymph will be pulled across current and out of the desired drift -more drag.

As with the dry fly fishing, differing currents between a fisherman and the fly push against a tight line and leader. The resulting tension either speeds the fly’s drift relative to the flow, slows it down, or sends the fly arcing wildly across the current. Simply stated, most nymphing techniques fail to achieve a drag-free drift, because they rely on a tight line to telegraph the invisible take by the fish. Yet, as with dry fly fishing, the basic rule applies, if you have a tight line, you have drag.

Of course, it is possible to fish a nymph on a slack line, if the fish (and particularly the take) are visible. If

the fish are in clear, shallow water or feeding on emerging nymphs just below the surface, the presentation to use with a lightly weighted fly is exactly the same as with a dry fly. This is Drag-Free nymphing at its simplest form.

Most of the time you cannot fish in such ideal conditions. As depth and flows increase, you have less control over your presentation. For a nymph fisherman to achieve a dead-drift, he must maintain a slack line. If achieving a Drag-Free drift sounds like a formidable task, it is. There is, however, a tool that allows you to both detect strikes and control your drift as you would a dry fly. It's called a Floating Strike Indicator.

Floating Indicators

Floating Strike Indicators, while gaining popularity, are not a new idea. You can use just about anything that floats and is relatively easy to cast and attach to your leader. Small corks, pieces of soft foam, greased spun deer hair, or even a large dry fly is just a few examples. There are three advantages to using a Floating Indicator.

The first one is **Depth Control**. A nymph suspended below a floating indicator can sink no deeper than the length of tippet between the indicator and the fly. You can concentrate on your drift while your nymph hangs suspended just below the surface, at mid-depth, or inches off the bottom. When an indicator is used with split-shot, (particularly the small micro-shot), you have a deadly combination. Split-shot gets a fly to the desired depth quickly (even small nymphs that you cannot add much weight to), while the indicator maintains the drift at a predetermined depth.

The second advantage is the **Strike Indication**. The slightest twitch, pause, or change of direction can signal the take from a fish. With experience, it becomes almost a reflex action to set the hook on any unusual movement. More importantly, it is no longer necessary to fish a tight line to detect the strike. The ability to maintain a slack line is what sets this method apart from other techniques and forms the basis for the technique's high success rate.

The third and most important advantage is **Drift Control**. Without slack line, a Drag-Free drift is impossible to achieve. I believe a proper way to fish a nymph and floating indicator is to imagine you rigged the nymph, tippet, split-shot, and indicator and tossed the whole combination into the current unattached to your fly line or leader. The ensuing drift is what you should hope to duplicate.

The key to successful nymphing is to fish the indicator exactly as you would a dry fly; by casting and mending so as to maintain slack and achieve a Drag-Free drift. When you are fishing with sinking line, sinking tip, or a floating line with a long leader, the portion of line beneath the surface cannot be mended once the cast has been made. When you fish with a strike indicator, you should have no more tippet under the water than is necessary to reach the desired depth. A floating fly line and an indicator maximize the amount of line and leader on the surface, which provides the greatest amount of control over your presentation.

Many fishermen have little difficulty learning to fish dry flies effectively with a relatively Drag-Free drift, but nymphing often seems difficult, because the drift and take of the fly are usually invisible. Floating indicators bring nymphing into the realm of visible. Fish your indicator with the same attention to Drag-Free presentation that you give a dry fly. Think of nymphing in terms of Dry Fly fishing, and your catch rate will increase tremendously.

Steven Vorkapich, owner of Float Master Products, is a member of Firelands Fly Fishers and has been fishing all of his life. You can check out his products by visiting his web site at www.floatmasterco.net

Federation of Fly Fishers

About The Federation of Fly Fishers - [The Federation of Fly Fishers](http://www.fedflyfishers.org) is a 43-year-old international non-profit organization dedicated to the betterment of the sport of fly fishing through conservation, restoration and education. The goal is to support fisheries conservation and educational programs for all fish and all waters. Based in Livingston, Montana, the FFF and its councils is the only organized advocate for fly fishers on a national and regional level. The organization has individual members as well as 300 local fly fishing clubs across the U.S. For further information, visit www.fedflyfishers.org.

In the Bylaws, the purposes of the Federation are listed as follows:

- a. Cultivate and advance the art, science and sport of flyfishing as the most sporting and enjoyable method of angling and the way of fishing most consistent with the preservation and use of game fish resources;
- b. Be the voice for organized fly fishing;
- c. Promote conservation of recreational resources;
- d. Facilitate and improve the knowledge of fly fishing;
- e. Elevate the standard of integrity, honor, and courtesy of anglers;
- f. Cherish the spirit of fellowship among anglers everywhere;
- g. Establish and maintain liaison with other organizations of anglers and conservationists and government agencies concerned with the sport of angling; and
- h. Keep its members informed of developments of interest to the membership.

Firelands Fly Fishers Board of Directors

Board meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM

President: Bill Grake	bahiapark@yahoo.com
Vice President: Steve Smith	pnpinc@alltel.net
Secretary: Joe Sloboda	archwoodangler@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Bill Graw	william_j_graw@keybank.com
Director of Annual Funding: Ted Zalenski	zmant@att.net
Director of Communications: Tim Schulz	T_timeFFF@yahoo.com
Director of Fly Tying: Tom Zmina	Zminat@yahoo.com
Director of Membership: Brent Feorene	brentfeorene@att.net
Director of Outings: Carl Kocian	flyguy@centurytel.net
Director of Raffle:	
Director of Web Site: Rob Mastnardo	r.mastnardo@firelandsflyfishers.org
Librarian: Mike Janosko	mjanosko@aol.com
