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Mission Statement: Trout Unlimited is a national organization dedicated to protecting and improving cold water fishing resources. Our local chapter is a key building block and our local members volunteer their time, money and energy to improving cold-water fishing resources in New Hampshire. Almost all members love fly fishing, and related activities, such as fly tying.



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First and foremost, I would like to say that I hope that all our chapter members are staying (and will continue to stay) healthy and safe during this coronavirus pandemic. It is with mixed emotions that I write my final President's message for this newsletter. I would like to touch on three achievements that our chapter attained during my tenure of which I am most proud. Please note that I am in no way implying that I can take much credit for any of these accomplishments. Rather, the Board of Directors (BOD) and volunteers from our membership have worked together as a team to attain these successes.

The first success was the formation of an effective and dynamic Board of Directors. Going forward, our BOD membership consists of Curtis Page, Bob Bluhm, Ted Norris, George Rollend, Todd Nelson and Tom Villemure. As our by-laws require, I will remain on the Board for one more year as Past President. Other than Curtis and me, all the others have served for 15 months or less on the Board and they continue to bring fresh ideas and energy to the table. I have been gratified and honored to work with every single one of them. I would also like to note that our Vice President (Chris Hunt) and Treasurer (Jack Pollner) are stepping down after many years of service. I would like to extend my gratitude to Chris and Jack for their many contributions and wish them well in their important roles as Dads in their young families. I would also like to acknowledge one of our board members, Michael Croteau, who has moved on to bigger and better things as Chairman of the NH State Council of TU. We wish him much success.

The second achievement is our recent success at significantly increasing attendance at our monthly chapter meetings. For the past several years, it seemed that no matter how we tried to encourage members to come to meetings, we only averaged 12

– 15 attendees. Once in a great while (the December Christmas Social being the notable exception), we were able to get over 20 people to attend. Then, last summer, I volunteered at the Dr. R.J. Schilling Fly Fishing Tournament and Beer Festival where I fortuitously met with three presidents from other NH TU Chapters. We were commiserating about the paltry attendance at our monthly meetings when Richard Kingston, the President of the Basil Woods Chapter indicated that they found a tool which significantly increase attendance at

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their meetings. He informed us that TU National had a tool that any chapter could use (for a fee) to notify members of upcoming meetings. By providing them with details of the upcoming meeting, TU would publish, print and mail out beautifully illustrated postcards informing chapter members of the meeting. I responded that we already informed membership of upcoming meetings using email. Richard indicated that they had been doing the same, but it was not until they started using the postcards that they saw attendance increase. I was somewhat skeptical but brought it up at a Board meeting in late summer and we agreed to try it during the upcoming year. When our attendance at the October and November meetings still fell in the teens, we decided to use the postcards for the January meeting as a trial. Lo and behold and to my surprise, we had over 45 attendees at the January meeting. We continued to notify members using the postcards and attendance at the February and March meetings was between 35 and 45 people. It is our intent to continue this practice.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our April chapter meeting due to the coronavirus outbreak and the State's directive to cancel large gatherings. I was disappointed because our speaker scheduled for the meeting was Angus Boezeman. Angus is always a big draw and I always learn something new and practical when hearing him speak about fly fishing. Hopefully, we will get Angus to reschedule next season. I only hope that this virus doesn't also kill the momentum we have built up in bringing members to our monthly meetings.

We are planning something different for our final chapter meeting in May before the summer recess that meets all social distancing requirements mandated by the coronavirus outbreak. Our May 12th chapter meeting will be our first on-line only chapter meeting featuring David Van Wie, author of 'Storied Waters'. David was one of our presenters at the 2020 Fly Fish NH Show and his presentation was very well received. We will be sending out an email that provides details on how to attend this on-line meeting. Who knows? On-line meetings may be the new norm for quite some time. Although I truly hope that we will be able to gather at Sweeney Post for our next season's meetings starting in October.

The third success is the 2020 Fly Fish NH Show that our Chapter put on in February. Thanks to all who attended and thanks especially to all who volunteered. Your willingness to lend a hand wherever it was needed, and your positive attitudes certainly helped make the show the great success it was. It seemed that whenever I needed someone

to help with something, one or more of the volunteers were always there to do it. The exhibitors especially appreciated your help. I cannot remember how many times that an exhibitor told me that they exhibit at many of the fly fishing shows up and down the east coast and that this is their favorite. They love the venue, the management of the venue, the setup, the attendance, the quaintness and the camaraderie. When we lost our great friend and Past President Ron Sowa in the fall of 2018, I was greatly concerned about the viability of the future of the Fly Fish NH Show since its resurgence was largely due to his devotion, efforts and contacts within the NH fly fishing community. Luckily, my fears were unfounded. Thanks to all the volunteers, the exhibitors who love the Show and the help of Ron's family, it has continued to grow in both scope and attendance for the past two years. I have informed the Board that I am committed to continue to help organize the Show in the future so that, hopefully, it will continue to be a success.

This year, with the help of donations from many of the Show's exhibitors, we were able to hold a successful raffle that benefited the Ron Sowa Memorial Youth Fund. You will be happy to learn that the raffle brought in \$900 which we are donating to the NH TU Kids Trout Camp in his name.

Our Chapter Officer Elections will be held during the May 2020 chapter meeting. The following are the nominations for Officers:

- Vice President – Curtis Page
- Treasurer – Ted Norris
- Secretary – Bob Bluhm

You will notice that there is one office in the list above for which we have no nominee and that is the office of the President. I have served the maximum of two, 2-year terms as dictated in our by-laws and have served on the Board for a dozen years. It is time for someone new to take over as President. The Board had a succession plan in place at the beginning of this season but unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, this plan fell through. We have some tentative plans moving forward and the Board will be working throughout the Summer to try and install a President early next season.

Meanwhile, I will continue to stay involved with the Chapter as Past President. I hope to see you all at one of the monthly meetings. Stay healthy and safe!

Tight Lines,
Joel Kasper, President

Recap of the 18th Annual Fly Fish New Hampshire Show

Fly Fish NH Show “Best in history of the FF NH Show!”:

Some significant milestones of the
2020 Fly Fish NH Show:

Most exhibitor booths – 50

Most paid attendance – approximately 640

Most total attendance – a little over 800

Joel Kasper, Chapter President commented: “I can’t remember how many times that a vendor told me that they exhibit at many of the fly fishing shows up and down the east coast and that this is their favorite.” Exhibitors love the venue, the management of the venue, the setup, the attendance, the quaintness and the camaraderie. Attendees also love the variety of exhibitors and the human scale of the show. We believe this show is one of the best in the region. The speaker – seminar schedule included well known experts on fly fishing technique and technical knowledge.

Thank you to our member volunteers, our great exhibitors, guest speakers and our attendees for your parts in making this an annual success !

We’re looking forward to the 2021 show as a continuation of the great success you all have come to expect ! See you in 2021.





List of Exhibitors

Allagash Tails	Native Fish Coalition
Back in the Maine Stream	NH Fish & Game/Operation Game Thief
Broadside International	NH Guides Association
Cabins at Lopstick	NH Rivers Guide Service
Capitol City Fly Tyers	NH State TU Council/NH Trout Camp
Casting for Recovery	NH Wildlife Federation
Catchalure Fly & Lure Retriever	North Country Angler
Chick Embroidery	Northwind Outfitters & Guide Services
Dan's Fly Shop	Osprey Fishing Adventures
Elliott's Hand Tied Flies	Red Brook Tenkara
F.D. Kretchman Rod Co.	Rising Tide Anglers
Fly Fishers International	Samantha Aronson
Fish On Streamers	Shadcreek Flies
Fish Story Guide Service	Shoals Fly Fishing – Capt. Peter Whelan
Fisherman's Choice Custom Flies	Stripers Forever
Flyosophy Charters - Capt. Mark Dysinger	Sunny Brook Nets
Fly Spoke Shop	Tall Timber Lodge
Hill Country Guides	The Fly Rod Shop
HMH Vises	Three Rivers Stocking Association
Joe Calcavecchia Saltwater Flies	Tom Jutras
Lou Zambello/David van Wie	Trecko & Papa
Merrimack River Valley Trout Unlimited	United Fly Tyers
Nashua Flycasters	Wildlife Heritage Foundation of NH

Upcoming meetings

May's meeting will be a Zoom conference call featuring Author **David A. Van Wie**.

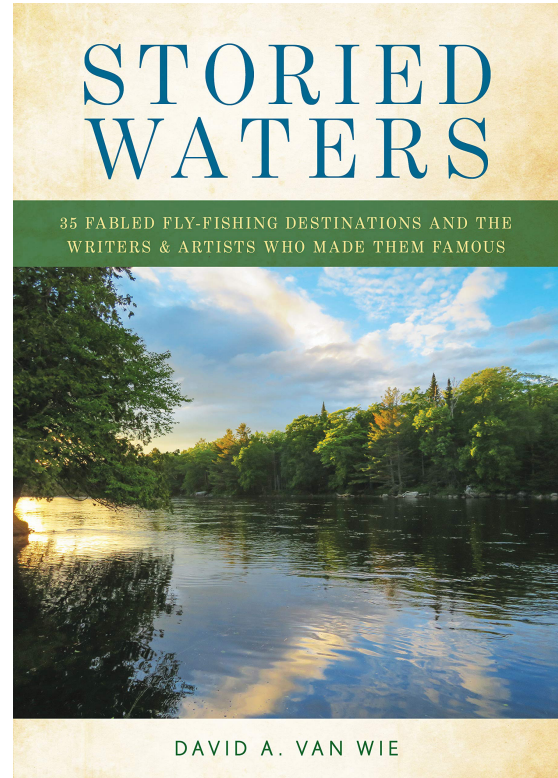
To access the call, president Joel Kasper will send out an email with the call information.

May Meeting:

STORIED WATERS

35 Fabled Fly-Fishing Destinations and the Writers & Artists Who Made Them Famous **Storied Waters** (Stackpole Books 2019) chronicles the author's six-week odyssey from Maine to Wisconsin and back to explore and fly fish America's most storied waters and celebrate the writers and artists who made them famous. Van Wie follows and fishes in the footsteps of giants from Thoreau to Hemingway, Robert Traver to Corey Ford, Louise Dickinson Rich to Aldo Leopold to Winslow Homer and many more. Storied Waters is a grand vicarious adventure, driving the backroads for weeks at a time exploring beautiful places, and meeting fascinating people who share a common interest. This on-line event will be a live PowerPoint presentation featuring many of his photos and video from his trip including many insights on his trip and the writers included in the book, some famous and some nearly forgotten.

David A. Van Wie writes a monthly column for **The Maine Sportsman**, has published feature articles in Northern Woodlands and the Maine Sunday Telegram. He is coauthor of **The Confluence: A Collection of Essays, Art and Tall Tales about Flyfishing & Friendship**. After a 35-year career in environmental consulting and government, he now writes and lives in Lyme, New



Hampshire. He is also an accomplished photographer whose images have appeared in his books, magazines and on-line.

You can purchase signed and personalized copies of his books through his website www.watchyourbackcast.com

Trout Unlimited Merrimack River Valley Swag

Swag will be for sale at the chapter meetings.



\$20 for long sleeve
\$15 for short sleeve



\$22 for hats

I recently had a “new to fly fishing client” for a day trip to some northern streams. We met well before day break, loaded up my truck, grabbed a couple of coffees and the conversation nearly immediately took a different path. Usually the talks are about the fish, the sizes and the anticipated hatches. To the new fly angler this can certainly get out of hand and way too technical quickly. No reason to overwhelm them before we even get there. So on this trip I began asking the questions, just small talk about past experiences that the client might have had such as; where have you fished, what did you catch, a bunch of simple questions to establish a comfort level between guide and client. On this ride the tables were quickly turned when he asked “Can I ask you a question?” Before I answered I thought for a moment, now if I say “no” that ends the conversation and might put a damper on the whole day. If I say “yes” what could he possibly ask, “how many fish”, “how big”? So I simply said “Sure, go ahead”. Without a pause he looked at me and asked, “what is your most important piece of fly fishing apparel?” I thought, fly fishing apparel, that’s the question? What kind of question is that? I guess I could respond with the obvious, a fishing vest-a home away from home, or maybe waders- nothing like being dry, but no those two choices are too easy then it came to me. The most important piece of fly fishing apparel has to be my “hat”. A hat you might ask? Let me explain why. At last count I have 61 hats in my collection, and most of them at some point in my life have been worn while fishing. I have bought some, collected some through friends, fly shops and various outdoor companies, been asked to wear them, and actually been offered compensation to wear them. I still have them all much to the chagrin of my wife.

It’s interesting that out of the 61 hats; 15 are some shade of green, 19 are blue, 7 are gray or black, 3 white, 2 red, 4 orange, 7 camo and 4 are so faded that who knows what color they actually are. I’ve got some signed hats; one by Lefty Kreh, even after he scolded me about my fly casting technique, another signed by George Harvey, he actually had a job teaching fly fishing at Penn State. He commented as I tied on a fly to fish the famed Spruce Creek in Pennsylvania. He said “that’s ugly” and started to walk away. He stopped and turned and further commented with a big grin, “I’m talking about the fly”. Two years later I actually fished with George and I gave him an “ugly fly” that he actually caught a fish with. I’ve got a hat that was

given to me for buying my truck, fits well but I never had much luck fishing when wearing it. I’ve got a hat that a sales rep in Colorado offered to compensate me to wear during a casting competition. I couldn’t do it. He had a great product, a strike indicator.

But tough to wear a hat on television that advertises with a slogan “every nymph needs a pimp”. He told me to keep it anyways. I still haven’t worn it. I’ve got many hats from various fly fishing companies, Simms, Orvis, Winston, MFC, LL Bean, Fish Pond, Hyde, etc.. I have 4 hats that I obviously wear quite often, thus the fading. Those are my “go to” hats. Some might refer to them as “lucky hats”. I look at it much differently. Certainly they are “lucky”, some have travelled across country many times with me. They’ve been to blue ribbon waters, they’ve been there when I’ve been too slow or quick at setting the hook. They’ve heard the sounds I make when I can’t tie on that #24 midge at dusk. They’ve heard me serenade the trout in hopes of a take. They’ve protected me when a client or fishing partner has that errant cast. They have been the only witnesses many times to the sights I see, the animals I encounter and the adventures that occur. More often than not, only they know the real size and number of fish I catch. They’ve been loyal. In return I’ve risked landing a fish to rescue a wind blown cap as it drifted downstream. I’ve turned the kayak around on many occasions and actually used the length of my fly rod as a retrieval tool. I’ve tried to be loyal.

Those hats have memories, you can’t lose a memory.

What’s my most important “piece of fly fishing apparel”? Is there really any other choice? It’s the hat, hands down.

About the author:

Rick Forge is veteran NH guide who is passionate about the outdoors. He has appeared in the ESPN Outdoor Games and OLN Fly Fishing Masters Competition. During the spring and summer he is a fishing guide/fly-fishing instructor and during the winter he makes the rounds of the outdoor shows doing seminars and presentations. He is the owner of Rick Forge Outdoors and Rick Forge Productions. For more information visit his website at www.rickforge.com





Why do fishing reports always include streamflows? Why are guides always complaining about crazy streamflow changes? Why am I asking questions that are clearing leading the topic? Because streamflows are incredibly important to the success of your day on the water when fly fishing. In this article we're going to give a practical how to approach on how to inspect streamflows for any river that has a gauging station and use that info to plan for our day.

For anyone new to the subject, streamflows measure the rate of water moving through a stream at any given time. Scientists measure that in Cubic feet per second or CFS. The USGS and many local state agencies have 1000's of stream gauges across the US on most major waterways to manage streamflows for agriculture, flood control, recreation and more. As fishermen, understanding what the increase, decrease and current value of the streamflow we're going to fish can help us a great deal in preparing our fly boxes and our expectations for the day.

Step 1 – Finding Normal

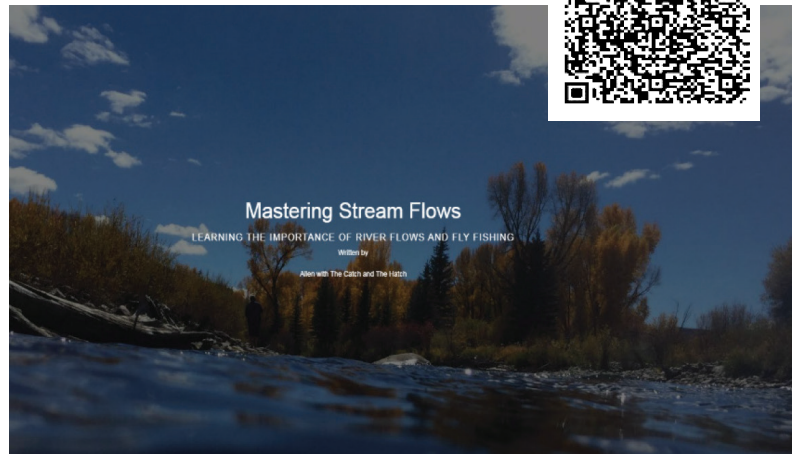
The first step in determining streamflows is to find what normal is for that time of year. 200cfs in winter on a river may be quite different than 200cfs in summer. Sure the river is flowing at the same rate, but one of those is going to be quite different from "normal" as flows are usually much lower in winter, even for tailwaters. So we want to find what is normal for that season or month and then compare that to the current value.

Almost all fishing reports will include streamflows, but the confusing part of this info is that we don't know what the number mean in relation to the fishing. The South Platte river in Colorado can have "good" flows at 200cfs while the Bighorn river can have "good" flows at 2000cfs. If you've rarely or never fished these rivers and don't know the size of the river, you have no clue what that number means.

Luckily there are two things you can do here. First is simply google the river name and get some pictures. Decide for yourself if it is a small, medium or large river. While this changes depending on where you're from, I think a good way to think about it is as follows:

Small River/Creek: Something you can mostly always jump across or close to it. It's also somewhere you can almost always cast where you want from any side of the river. Likely 5ft – 15ft across on average.

Medium River/Creek: Something you can commonly cast



across, but it usually has two sides of the river that allow for different casts. Medium size rivers are 15 – 50 ft across in most places

Large Rivers: Anything above medium. 50ft+ across on average and typically see flows above 750+ CFS year round. You can not cast across them in most cases and you pick sides to fish. Once you've determined the size of the river based on the pictures or using google maps to get a satellite view of the river, you can have an idea of what to expect for flows.

The second and more important step is to visit USGS or your local state stream gauge and check the historical data. The historical data tells you if what you're seeing is normal, higher or lower for that time of year. This is extremely important. If you're using USGS, which most times will be the case, you can see a little triangle on the graph which shows the historical 10-30 yr average based on how long the streamflow gauge has readings. Typically if you're within 10 -20% of the historical average, the river should behave as normal for that time of year in terms of streamflows and fishing. Anything higher or lower will effect the fishing in some ways which we'll cover in a moment.

For now, log this away once you've found the streamflow and whether it's normal, higher or lower than average.

Step 2 – Figure out the Seasons and The Hatches

This step may require some additional research on your spot for different rivers as hatches change from river to river. Generally speaking you get the following hatches of insect categories for each season:

- **Winter** – Midges and BWO mayflies for the Western US, some possible winter caddis for southern regions and little

black stoneflies in late winter early spring.

- **Spring** – Midges, Mayflies (BWO, Hendrickson, March Browns etc), Caddis, Stoneflies (Skwala, Little Black Stones, Salmonflies some years)

- **Summer** – Midges, Mayflies (Green drakes, PMD/ sulphurs, Pseudos, cahills, callibaetis, tricos, etc), Caddis, Stoneflies (Salmonflies, golden stones, yellow sallies)

- **Fall** – Midges, Mayflies (BWO, Mahogonay duns, tricos, PMDs etc), Caddis (october caddis and others), Stoneflies (occasional hatches but sporadic at best)

While this is generalized, it has some good knowledge to use as a base. Look for local hatches in your area and your rivers to narrow it down further.

Once you have seasonal and hatch info, you're ready for the next step.

Step 3 – Figure Out Optimal Flows for the River

Determining optimal flows is important and while local knowledge (guides and fly shops) can help a lot in helping you understand what “good” flows are, the historical data found in the first step can be used again. Look at this graph from a local river here in Colorado.

Looking at this graph we can see that through most of the year the flows range between 100 and 200 cfs. These are the optimal flows for this section of this river. You can fish it lower and fish it higher, but optimal, stable flows are normally between 100 and 200 cfs. You can use this process to figure optimal flows for any river with a stream gauge. Once you have this info, you're now ready to put it all together and decide what kind of fishing you should expect.

Step 4 - Structure, Water Clarity and Water Temps

This is the last step that requires some experience and knowledge of the river. You need to have some understanding of the river structure, water clarity and water temps. A lot of these gauges have water temps which help, though not always accurate. Water temps ultimately effect insect hatches and isn't crucially important if you are not trying to hit a specific hatch. Water clarity affects visibility for trout and if they are used to clear water, it can be hard for them to see flies in murkier water. If it is often off color, then the fish usually can adapt well and figure things out just fine. Google maps can help you see typical water clarity sometimes, but asking a local is your best bet.

That leaves us with understanding river structure. Rivers handle high and low water flows differently. If a river runs through a deep canyon with little room to expand in high water conditions, it will not perform as well in high water. If there are lots of braided channels, and room for the water to expand, it can fish well in high water

as long as water clarity persists. Adversely, a river without

Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent instantaneous value: 109 03-22-2018 09:45 MDT



much structure in the water to create pools and pockets for trout can struggle in low flows. Some of this can be seen on google maps if you look at the topography layer to see elevation lines and satellite views to see rocks and other visible structure in the river. There is no “perfect” scenario though and it depends per river on how flows create fishable water or challenging solutions. Once you understand the river structure for the river you want to fish, you'll see how flows change the shape and holding locations for trout. Certain flows make for great dry fly fishing because it creates the right areas of water that fish move into and eat dries. While other rivers when flows get lower create big, slow holes that trout will bunch up in making it easier to find and catch them with nymphs.

Spend some time learning the river by walking a lot of the river, taking pictures for you to refer back to later and after just a couple visits you'll be able to understand what makes for good fishing based on flows and stream structure.

Step 5 – Putting it All Together

Putting it all together can sometimes be easy and sometimes be quite difficult. In general, you want the flows to be within the historical range +/- 30% while staying in the optimal range you determined.

For example, if the flows are 800cfs and are normally 775cfs for that time of year, it passes the first test, but if the optimal flows are only 100 – 200 cfs, then you're likely in a flood or runoff situation and that can generate tough fishing. You have to use all the data together to tell the story correctly. Let's do a couple quick examples:

As of today's date, the south platte in Deckers is at 110cfs. Historically, flows are around 130cfs. That is within 30% +/- range. When looking at the historical over a year, I can see flows stay within 100 – 200cfs, so that is in the optimal fishing range. It's spring time here so we can expect midges and baetis to be hatching on that river and active under the water. The river is in a bit of a canyon,

but there is decent room for it to expand with lots of solid rocks and stable runs, holes and riffles that stay in the same places roughly year round so it's a pretty stable river. Given all of this data put together, we can assume flows are going to produce pretty stable fishing and should produce fishing with what is to be expected for the time of year. No crazy weather or anything recently either to make us think it would be fishing out of the normal and we can expect a normal to good day on Deckers.

Another example was from a couple years back in Byers canyon of the Upper Colorado River during May (late spring, early summer). While I was unable to find the exact flows, I was fishing in late May, typically run off and high flows in CO but it was during a drought year and flows were way lower than normal. Flows were likely around 1000 cfs when they should have been around 5000cfs. This was well outside the historical range, but was in the optimal range for other times of year making it a place that could be worth fishing. I know that this was run-off for us that year and that the salmonflies would be hatching then. Usually the canyon is dangerous to fish during late May due to the high flows and the salmonflies hatch without much pressure from anglers allowing trout to have a good time during high water. This year, though, with low flows it was safe and optimal to fish and we were able to experience an excellent salmonfly hatch catching nice fish on really, really big dry flies. Super fun. My knowledge of the historical and actual flows along with my insect knowledge helped me identify a good opportunity to fish and it really paid off with one of the best memories I've had in fly fishing. This example shows how optimal flows are often more important than historicals.

One last example is back at Deckers on the South platte. Flows were 260cfs in April a couple years back. This was above the historicals for that time of year and was above the optimal range but not by far. The most alarming piece of info was the quick increase in flows due to a large rain. Though common to have these spikes in flows from rain, it triggered an idea in my head. Commonly when flows spike up it means annelids (worms), and crane fly larva get dislodged in the stream and float downriver in large numbers. This underwater "hatch" creates some great fishing where those insects exist and are active. Sure enough we had a great day fishing even though the historical and optimal flows didn't hit their mark. The lesson here is to watch for weather changing the streamflows up or down drastically making for insect opportunities and feeding opportunities for trout.

I hope these three examples give you some clarity on how the steps and data above can be used to help understand streamflows and anticipate fishing experiences.

Let's go over a few frequently asked questions know and provide some clarity on them.

HOW DO RAPID STREAMFLOW CHANGES EFFECT FISHING?

I almost always have bad luck fishing when flows drop drastically. Fish feel threatened with downward trending flows over a short period of time and unless it's the end of fall going into winter where flows slow down, there is usually worse fishing when flows drop quickly.

When flows come up quickly, it can often improve fishing. As long as flows don't get too high for the river (way above optimal or historical ranges) it can improve fishing. If flows are higher than 50% of the average and above optimal ranges and it's happened quickly, that's usually too much water and fish will also struggle to move around and adjust to new habitat and holding locations. While this happens, they stop feeding for the most part until things have stabilized or dropped.

DO STREAMFLOW CHANGES OR LEVELS EFFECT INSECT HATCHES?

In short, yes. It can be a big component to triggering some hatches, while others are temperature and seasonally based. Other times, as mentioned in the example above, crane flies, or other nymphs under the water can be dislodged by increased flows making good fishing opportunities. Lower flows can cause insects to move away from the banks that are now above water. As they migrate to deeper water, fish can pick them off making for good fishing opportunities. It really helps to know more about your bugs and their behaviors in order to anticipate how streamflows will effect them in relation to fly fishing.

WHAT ARE GOOD STREAMFLOWS FOR RIVER (XYZ)?

We already covered this, but I'll state it quickly again. Good streamflows can be determined by historical averages and optimal flow ranges that you can get from historical streamflow graphs on USGS or whatever streamflow site you view.

HOW DOES VOLATILITY OF STREAMFLOWS AFFECT FISHING?

In general, the more stable the streamflows and the smaller, more gradual the adjustments, the better that is for fishing. There are certain opportunities as discussed above where quick changes create unique opportunities, but by in large, steady flows that gradually grow and decrease along with seasonality is the best. This is why tailwaters are such good fisheries for trout. Dams help regulate streamflows

and if done properly for sake of trout populations can help fishing and overall trout health on the river. Stable streamflows create abundant insect life and in turn lots of food for the trout to grow big and grow fast. If there is a lot of volatility on the river graph on the report you see, you're likely worse off than with stable flows.

HOW DO I FIGURE OUT STREAMFLOWS AND HISTORICAL CHARTS LIKE YOU DID IN THIS ARTICLE?

Visit <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/rt> and then in the top right, navigate to your state. Then click on the link on the right that says "Streamflow Real-Time Table" and a list of all gauges will come up. Click on the gauge you want to get the graph for today and the last several days as default. You can use this first graph to see the triangle on the graph which is the historical average. Then you can adjust the parameters in the blue box in the middle of the page. Change the "begin" date year back one year to see a years worth of data. Then use that graph to determine optimal flow ranges. Then you're done and have historical and optimal flow ranges. Mark them down somewhere so you have it on hand for future knowledge so all you have to do is check the flows current value and you know what to do with it.

Conclusion

That about sums it up! While it can take some time to learn this stuff for all the rivers you fish, it's highly valuable in being able to understand how the fishing should be based on the flows. Once you have that idea, you can look at the weather, fishing reports and more to help you decide where you should best fish. We hope you enjoyed the article and found it informative.

You Mastered Streamflows... Have You Mastered Your Fly Box?

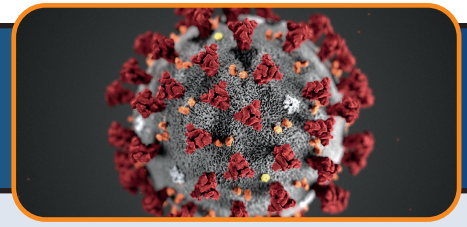
Knowing when to go based on the flows will help you a ton in your fishing success. Stock up on the right flies to make the most out of your adventure. If you're not sure what flies you need in your box, our assortments are guide-selected and chosen by experts to be great for any occasion. Take a look at our top selling assortments below and stock your box when you're ready!



Permission to reprint this article was given by the FLYMEN Fishing Co. to the Merrimack River Valley Trout Unlimited.

Selected NH Rivers Ideal Flow For Wading TM Merrimack River Valley Trout Unlimited

River's Locations	USGS Site No:	Cubic Feet per second
Androscoggin River At Errol, NH	USGS Site No:1053500	1400-1500
Androscoggin River Near Gorham, NH	USGS Site No:1054000	1900-2100
Ashuelot River At West Swanzey, NH	USGS Site No:1160350	400-500
Cocheco River Near Rochester, NH	USGS Site No:1072800	100-300
Connecticut R Below Indian Stream	USGS Site No:1129200	300-400
Connecticut River At North Stratford, NH	USGS Site No:1129500	1000-1200
Contoocook River Near Henniker, NH	USGS Site No:1085000	400-500
Isinglass @ Rochester Neck Rd Dover, NH	USGS Site No:1072870	200-300
Lamprey River Near Newmarket, NH	USGS Site No:1073500	200-300
Merrimack River At Franklin Junction, NH	USGS Site No:1081500	1000-1200
Newfound Lake Dam (NFLNH)	NHDES Site No:NFLNH	100-150
Pemigewasset River At Woodstock, NH	USGS Site No:1075000	350-550
Piscataquog River Near Goffstown, NH	USGS Site No:1091500	200-300
Saco River Near Conway, NH	USGS Site No:1064500	550-650
Smith River Near Bristol, NH	USGS Site No:1078000	75-150
Souhegan River Milford, NH	USGS Site No:1093852	300-400
Trophy stretch of the Connecticut River		150
Suncook at North Chichester	USGS Site No:1089500	50-100
Sugar River at West Claremont	USGS Site No:1152500	100-150



The Covid-19 pandemic is affecting America like no crisis ever has. The physical, economic, social and emotional impacts are incalculable. Two weeks ago, schools in NH were shut down and restaurants were relegated to selling take-out. Now all non-essential businesses have been mandated to close. It is obvious that many businesses will be negatively affected by the covid-19 pandemic. When this first struck, I wasn't sure how this would affect my guide business. Then it became brutally clear.

There are few full- time fly-fishing guides here in Northern New England. With about six months of productive guiding weather we need to cram a lot of trips into a short period of time. On some years we take calculated risks, making business purchases at the end of the guiding season in order to get good deals. This year I bought a boat in December so that I could pick it up at the Marlborough fly fishing show and avoid shipping costs. All full time guides I know work second jobs in the winter. My job as a ski instructor is just enough to keep the heat on through winter.

Once March rolls around I finish my taxes and examine my finances. I first put money into repairs. Then I sell older gear so that I can buy new gear for my clients to use. Lastly, I stock up on flies, fly tying materials, terminal tackle, and miscellaneous gear. This way I don't run out of things like 5X tippet by mid-June . While March is an expensive month, I'm usually booking a lot of trips.

This March I've lost more trips than I've gained. About half of my bookings are from people who travel long distances: for vacations, weddings, and other planned events. These trips are getting canceled. Customers don't

know if or when they will be back to NH. They want their deposits back. This makes financial planning a nightmare. If you must cancel a guided trip this season, most guides will honor your deposit for a later date. Let guides keep their deposits in 2020.

I've been selling more gear than normal lately, only replacing what I really need. I've had to re-think gear usage. Sanitizing my truck, rods, and boats will require additional time and expenses. Food and transportation services will also need to be adjusted.

Guides are dealing with these business challenges on top of the stresses of everyday life. For my family this is a difficult time as our second child is due April 8th. Because of Covid-19 I might not be allowed in the hospital when my child is born. The early season is always a hectic time for full time fishing guides. We work to balance family time with the demands of a seasonal job that takes us away from them.

If local fishing guides are going to survive this crisis it will take the help of local anglers. With travel restrictions in place you won't be fishing as far from home this year. Make the most of fishing near home by hiring a guide. If you don't know when you will be able to fish buy a gift certificate, or put down a deposit for an undetermined date. We are all in this together, and we can all get through this together. A great way to start would be spending time on the water together.

Tight lines,
Nate

Ron Sowa Memorial Youth Fund Raffle/Donations to NH TU Kid's trout Camp

Many of the Show's Exhibitors donated prizes to the Ron Sowa Memorial Youth Fund Raffle at the Fly Fish NH Show. Because of these generous donations, we were able to collect \$900 which has been sent on to the NH TU Kids Trout Camp in Ron's name. This represents a 50% increase over what we collected at the 2019 Show when we depended on donations alone.

Ron Sowa was a true friend to all who loved the New Hampshire outdoors. He was a registered NH fishing guide and participated in numerous conservation projects. In addition to his position as Executive Director of the NH Wildlife Federation he was active in several local

wildlife organizations. Ron was a Board Member and Past President of the Merrimack River Valley Chapter of TU and a Board Member and Vice President of the Fly Fishers International Northeastern Council. He coordinated the Fly Fish New Hampshire Show for many years and was instrumental in its resurgence in recent years.

Ron frequently assisted and taught at TU's Trout Camp for teens and advocated for young people in his endeavors whenever possible. He saw the future of the outdoor sports he loved in our youth. In Ron's memory we established a fund that will financially assist boys and girls to allow them to participate in organized outdoor programs such as Trout Camp and Barry Camp.

In addition, our Board of Directors voted to donate an additional \$500 of our own funds to the Kid's Trout Camp. This donation has also been sent out.

Fly lines are confusing. You may have browsed through your local fly shop and noticed a wall of all sorts of different lines hanging nicely in their little boxes. Weight forward, double taper, sink-tip, and so on and so forth. What does all of that mean and which one of those fly lines will work best for you when learning the fly fishing basics and how to fly fish? I'll try to shed some light on that topic for you.



Figure 1 Image courtesy of James J. Jenkins

What Does The Fly Line Do?

The **fly line** is one of the most important pieces of gear in fly fishing. That line is where the whole concept of fly casting and presenting your fly to the fish all comes together. In my previous article, [What is Fly Fishing](#), I explained how fly casting is the process of transferring energy through the fly line to cast your fly out ahead of you. That

article detailed the difference in traditional casting where the lure contains the weight to be cast out. In fly fishing, that weight is the fly line that carries your light-weight fly. So you can see the importance of the fly line. Without this you wouldn't be able to effectively present your fly to a fish. Try casting a fly attached to a regular piece of monofilament and you'll see just how difficult it can be.

Each different type of fly line has specific characteristics to help you with casting and also help with effectively fishing in different situations. This is primarily done with the taper of the fly line and where exactly the weight is placed along the length of the fly line. Think of it as a string that starts out thin and tapers to a thicker portion at the end. The main point to understand here is that the fly line is what makes it possible for you to transfer the energy from the fly rod during the cast down to the fly and get it to the fish.



Fly Line Length

A typical commercial **fly line** that you can purchase today falls in the length range of 80' -90'. This length, in combination with your fly line backing, will cover you in any situation you find yourself. There are some specialty lines on the market over 100 feet, but they are geared more towards distance casting situations.

You may be thinking, only 90 feet, that's kind of short isn't it? I thought the same thing when learning the **fly fishing basics**. What you will come to find out with fly fishing and fly casting is that most of your fishing will be done in the 30'-40' range, if not even closer than that. Very rarely will you need to make an 80 foot cast to a fish. The only circumstances I know of necessitating such casts is saltwater flats fishing. Learning to cast your entire fly line is a feat that takes practice. Starting out though, lean towards perfecting your casting in that sweet spot and you'll go far.

Fly Line Tapers

There are fly line tapers applied to every type of line on the market today. These will usually consist of one of three different types of tapers. Those are weight forward, double taper. These specific tapers to the fly line help facilitate the fly cast and help make your fly fishing life just a little bit easier. Want to cast further? There's a taper for that. Plan on casting to spooky trout in a small spring creek? There's a taper for that. These tapers combine with other specific fly line characteristics to allow you to target pretty much any type of fish in any condition. Here is a great resource from Scientific Anglers to help explain this.

Weight Forward

This fly line is probably the most common taper on a fly line today. As mentioned earlier, imagine a piece of string that slowly tapers to a thicker portion at the end. With a weight forward fly line, you will have the end attached to your backing. From there the first 50'-60' of line is pretty much a consistent diameter with no taper at all and is called your running line. In the last 30 feet is where the taper starts and contains the bulk of the weight of the fly line, called the belly. This will then taper back to a thin line in the last 5' -7' feet to allow you to attach your leader more easily, called the tip. Many different varieties and tapers of weight forward fly lines exist and fly line companies are always trying to hit the sweet spot with them. You can have very aggressive weight forward lines where the bulk is in the last 20 feet or even more moderate tapers that extend past further than that 30 foot mark. Each taper design allows for different situations. The more aggressive taper gives you more power and thus helps make further distances easier. More moderate tapers allow more delicate presentations but less distance.



Double Taper

The Double Taper fly line is another common option you'll find. Take that string from the earlier example and now imagine it starting out attached to the backing as being a consistent diameter, like the weight forward taper.



However, instead of that lasting the majority of the fly line, the double taper will begin its taper after the first few feet of line. The bulk of the weight is pretty much centered in the middle of the line. This will then taper back to the original starting diameter to allow you to attach your leader. The beginning taper on the end of the fly line will mirror the ending taper.

There are two advantages to this type of fly line taper. One is that you can easily reverse your line if one of the ends gets damaged. The second, and biggest, advantage is that this taper allows for a more subtle presentation. You won't get the same distance from this fly line, but if you are targeting spooking fish, then this is the line for you.

Level

Level fly lines are an interesting type and not very commonly used. Imagine that same string again. Now attached that string to your backing. This time you have no taper on the line and that is all. It's a pretty boring line in comparison. These lines are budget fly lines and don't provide any significant advantage other than they are usually less expensive.

Here's a short video explaining fly line tapers more visually:

Types of Fly Line

There are three main types of fly lines with sub-categories of those: Floating, Sinking, and Sink-Tip. Within those types you have specific fly lines such as weight forward tapered floating lines with a special taper to allow more distance in your cast, sink-tip lines that only allow the front portion to sink below the surface, and sinking lines with a super-fast sinking rate to reach those fish down deep in lakes and rivers.

Floating Fly Lines

Floating fly lines do just that... they float. These are the most versatile type of fly line allowing you to fish dry flies, nymphs, streamers, rivers, lakes and everything in between. You can get either a weight forward or double taper on these lines as well. This is the type of fly line I would recommend when learning how to fly fish.

Sinking Fly Lines

The sinking fly line differs from the floating lines by the rate at which it sinks. The tapers on these will typically be of the weight forward variety. You can get a sinking line with specific types assigned to them. They range from intermediate all the way through a Type 7. These different types

associated with them pertain to a specific rate at which the line will sink. This is useful for when you determine the fish are feeding at a specific depth and need to target them in just the right area. Lake fishing is your most common area in which you'll use a sinking fly line. The typical sink rates are as follows but will vary depending on the fly line manufacturer (NOTE: *ips = inches per second*):

- Intermediate = 1.5-2.0 ips (2-4')
- Type I = 1.5-2.5 ips (2-4')
- Type II = 1.75-2.75 ips (3-6')
- Type III = 2.5-3.5 ips (5-10')
- Type IV = 4.0-5.0 ips (10-20')
- Type V = 4.5-6.0 ips (10-20')
- Type VI = 6.0-7.0 ips (15-25')
- Type 7 = 7.0-8.0 ips (20-30')

Sink-Tip Fly Lines

The sink-tip line is a combination of the floating fly line

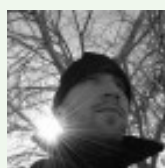
and sinking fly line. What you get is the tip section of the fly line, usually the first 8' to 16' feet (approximately), is the sinking portion and the remainder is the floating line. These types of fly lines are useful when fishing streamers in rivers or also when fishing lakes with the same patterns. The benefit they add is in casting.

When fishing a full sinking fly line, the entire line sinks under the water...even the extra line at your feet. As you retrieve the line and go to make a cast, you have considerable surface tension as you try to pull that line that is sunk in the water out and into the air. The floating lines do not have this problem as the surface tension is greatly decreased with the line floating on top of the water. You also don't have the excess fly line sinking beneath you and getting tangled below the surface of the water. This may sound like a minor thing, but the more and more you deal with it, the thought of line that floats sounds even better. Ideally, these are your perfect streamer fishing fly lines.

Conclusion

Hopefully this shed a bit of light on all of those fly lines hanging on the fly shop walls. Each manufacturer has specific processes and tapers that they apply to each different fly line and each has its place. Companies such as [Scientific Anglers](#) and [Rio](#) produce phenomenal fly lines and you can't go wrong with any of those. You can find these at any local fly shop or even online. Here are a couple from [Scientific Anglers](#) and [Rio](#) found on Amazon.

With this basic understanding of fly lines it will hopefully help you determine the best one for your situation. My recommendation...start out with a weight forward floating line. It will cover almost every scenario you would need when learning the fly fishing basics. As usual, be sure to leave a comment or [contact me](#) with any questions and sign up for the newsletter for future updates and news.



About Clint Losee

Clint Losee is an avid fly angler of 30+ years, web developer, and Utah Landscape & Nature Photographer. You can connect with him on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#). Curious about some of the gear he uses?



Right QR: Point your phones camera on the QR code to be taken to a quick video explanation of fly line basics.



Left QR: Additional informational video by Huge Fly Fisherman



The new Orvis Mirage LT was recently released with a headline boasting that it's 30% narrower and 30% lighter than its big brother the Mirage USA. Lighter is obviously a feature in which it's easy to see what the benefits would be. Someone looking to balance an unbelievably lightweight rod like the Orvis Helios 3 or Sage X would be well suited to the Mirage LT.

But after the LT's launch we once again found ourselves answering the old question of what's better: a narrow or wide spool. The old misconception came up, the one that says because of the narrow spool, the line will stack up quicker, giving you a larger effective arbor with less rotations of the spool resulting in a quicker retrieve rate.

Arbor and Full Diameter

In modern reels, width doesn't play any noticeable part in line pick up. In fact a narrower reel often means a slower retrieval rate, but for different reasons other than the width itself. The determining factors to look at when buying a reel for retrieval rate are arbor diameter and full diameter.

In simplest terms you pick up the most line per rotation when your effective arbor is largest. Your effective arbor is largest nearest the full diameter of the reel. The axiom is that modern reels are designed to be filled with line and backing as near full diameter as possible without rubbing line on the frame. So let's say you have a full reel (backing + fly line) with a 4" (total) diameter and your friend has a full reel with a 5" diameter (total). Two fish eat right at the boat and each pulls 100' of fly line. After losing that 100', your friend is still going to have a larger effective arbor with the larger diameter reel (regardless of width). He's going to get that fly line back with less rotations with the 5" reel. Since the time it takes you and him to make a full rotation should

be extremely close, he's going to get the line back quicker with the reel that needs to make less rotations. The larger diameter reel.

If we're comparing reels with a full inch gap in total diameter, we're most likely comparing two different size reels. So when comparing reels with the same diameter. Let's say 8 weights with a 4" full diameter, arbor size steps up as the determining factor in retrieval rate, width only helps dictate backing capacity. So you have two 8 weight reels, each hold 200 yards of backing and have a 4" diameter, but one is narrow so its arbor diameter has to be smaller to fit the backing, the other has a larger arbor and is wider to fit the backing. At any point in the fight the effective arbor is going to be larger on the wider reel with the larger arbor, so it's going to pick up more line per



rotation. To fit the backing, the difference in width would be determined by how much larger the fixed arbor is on the wider reel. If the second reel were made even wider it could hold more backing, again increasing effective arbor at any point in the fight. The Orvis Mirage USA (spools only not including full frame width) is around 20% wider than the Mirage LT. Its arbor is also around 20% larger and its full diameter is around 7% larger. They both hold the same amount of backing (200 yards of #20 dacron). The USA picks up line around 14% quicker than the LT.

The Tradeoff

If retrieval rate plays a big factor in your decision, you now know or already knew that arbor diameter and full diameter are retrieval rate's determiners and that backing capacity is width's main concern. So if you have two reels with the same full diameter and the same arbor diameter, but one holds 150 yards of backing and the other holds 300 yards of backing, the spool that holds 300 yards is going to be wider. You decide that you only need and want 150 yards. Remember that each spool is designed to fill the

reel to near full diameter. So your effective arbor is going to increase faster with the reel only designed to hold 150 yards (the narrower one) than it is with the reel that's designed for 300 yards (the wider one). And that's where I believe the theory about narrower reels having quicker retrieve got its roots – trading backing for speed.

How Important is Retrieval Rate?

So since a narrower spool usually means a smaller arbor and a slower retrieval rate, why would you ever get a narrow spool and why did Orvis make a 30% narrower reel claiming it's perfect for bonefish? Let's first look at how much importance you place on retrieval rate. If a speedy retrieve is all you're interested in for your 8 weight, get a Mirage USA IV or a Lamson Speedster 3.5. They have the largest diameters and also the largest arbors. Most of the other reels are much more similarly proportioned to each other and any increase in retrieval rate amongst them is only going to be barely noticeable. They vary slightly but all modern reels, even the slower ones, have good retrieval rates. Especially compared to the small diameter small arbor reels of yesteryear.



Back to the importance of retrieval rate. If you've ever had a big bonefish run straight at you – you know that not even a 20% increase in retrieval rate is going to catch up to that fish so you need to use the drag of the line on the water to keep tension on the fish until it either turns or straightens out behind you. When fighting big fish such as albies, tuna or cobia close to the boat it helps more to have a quicker retrieve, especially when the fish is boat shy and is just spinning underneath the boat. But I believe there's only one game in which retrieval rate for fly reels is absolutely critical. And that's big tarpon. When you pull up and away to get a tarpon's head up, you need to crank back down to get another good pull, all without giving him an inch to get himself back into a comfortable position. Big tarpon is the only game I can think of in which optimizing inches and seconds can literally save yards and minutes. It's as mental as it is physical.

Torque & Level Winding, the Other Factors

Now, there are many factors to take into consideration that we haven't mentioned when choosing a reel, including

drag system and durability. For the sake of this article we're focusing on the factors influenced by the narrow spool of the reel that brought up the question "why would I want a narrow spool?". Specifically the [Orvis Mirage LT](#) in size IV for bonefish and inshore fishing. We've covered backing capacity and retrieval rate. We've touched on weight as it's pretty self-explanatory, a narrow spool can weigh less as it requires less metal, a lighter reel will balance a lighter rod. So what's left are torque and level winding.

Torque

We know a narrow spool usually means a smaller, deeper arbor. The distance between your handle and the arbor is greater. You create torque by exerting force onto the handle. The greater the distance between the handle and the arbor, the more force is exerted onto the line and whatever is on the end of it. It's easier to move a heavy fish or object with a smaller arbor. Not a big deal when you generate your moving power with the butt section of the rod. A slightly bigger deal is that the same is true in reverse. The smaller the arbor, the more force the fish has to exert in order to take line. This can be good or not so good. Good – when a fish is making a long run, peeling line, decreasing the arbor, and in effect creating more drag on himself that'll potentially slow him down quicker. Not so good – if you're fishing light tippet and the fish stops deep in your backing, then suddenly takes off again, leaving you with more drag than you intended. This is something not often talked about in fly fishing, as it normally doesn't present a problem, but it is definitely something to keep in mind if you're fishing extremely light tippet.

Level Winding

Where we do see narrow spools having a significant advantage is in line distribution on the spool. With less area to cover, the line or backing is less likely to stack up unevenly and cause problems. Level winding is easier to do with just your pinky. It also becomes less critical as it happens more naturally. Many anglers forget to level wind at some point in the fight, especially when they're focused on the fish. A narrower spool allows you to get away with it more than a wider spool. In the final seconds of the fight with a narrower reel, it's less likely you'll have line rubbing on the frame due to poor level winding.

The Final Decision

So when you're deciding on a reel, especially one for saltwater, take into account all the functions and features of a fly reel – from weight to retrieval rate, durability, drag system, backing capacity and even looks and appearance. Then base your decision on what's most important to you and what's going to be best for the kind of fishing you

do. The most important features of a bonefish reel to me are: smooth reliable drag system, durability/quality, backing capacity (minimum of 150 yards of #20 dacron), and weight (I want a lightweight outfit, as balanced as possible. I'd error on the heavy side, but too heavy as well as too light can hurt your casting). And if your decision comes down to wide vs narrow spool after factoring everything else in, the narrower spool makes level winding easier.

	Backing Capacity (WF8F)	Weight	Full Diameter	Arbor Diameter	Width
Abel SDS - 7/8	240 yds, #20 Dacron	9.07 oz	3.86"	2.41"	1.05"
Abel Super - 7/8	200 yds, #20 Dacron	6.74 oz	3.9"	2.37"	0.92"
Hatch 7+ Finatic Gen 2	210 yds, #20 Dacron	8.50 oz	4"	2.47"	1.11"
Lamson Litespeed G5 - 3*	225 yds, #20 Dacron	5.08 oz	3.88"	2.19"	1.11"
Lamson Speedster - 3.5*	225 yds, #20 Dacron	5.70 oz	4.37"	2.76"	1.08"
Waterworks-Lamson Cobalt - 8	250 yds, #20 Dacron	5.70 oz	4.25"	2.29"	1.15"
Nautilus CCF-X2 - 6/8	175 yds, #20 Dacron	7.6 oz	3.95"	2.50"	1"
Nautilus NV-G - 7/8	200 yds, #20 Dacron	6.6 oz	3.95"	2.48"	1.09"
Nautilus X-Series - XL Max	175 yds, #20 Dacron	4.8 oz	3.7"	2.08"	1"
Orvis Hydros SL - IV	200 yds, #20 Dacron	7.4 oz	4.25"	2.76"	0.98"
Orvis Mirage LT - IV	200 yds, #20 Dacron	5 oz	3.95"	2.29"	0.94"
Orvis Mirage USA - IV	200 yds, #20 Dacron	8.9 oz	4.25"	2.74"	1.13"
Redington Grande - 7/8/9*	200 yds, #30 Dacron	7.9 oz	4.10"	1.96" (V-Spool)	1.26"
Redington Rise III - 7/8	200 yds, #20 Dacron	5.5 oz	4"	2.48"	1.02"
Sage Spectrum - 7/8*	200 yds, #20 Dacron	6.38 oz	3.98"	2.25"	1.03"
Sage Spectrum LT - 7/8*	200 yds, #20 Dacron	6 oz	3.98"	2.25"	1.03"
Tibor Everglades	200 yds, #20 Dacron	8.5 oz	3.89"	1.67"	0.85"
* indicates concave or "v" shaped spool					

To give you a better idea of how the reels we carry compare to each other in terms of arbor diameter, full diameter and backing capacity, we're working on redoing the specs on our reels' pages.



Reprinted MRVTU Newsletter

With permission from Ole Florida Fly Shop

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 Boca Raton, FL

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The Tier's Bench at Stone River Outfitters

Tying the Simple CDC Caddis
By Nate Harris

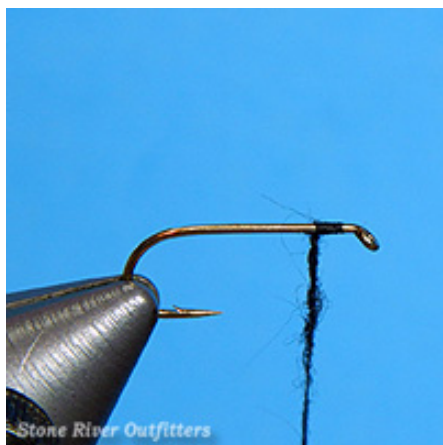


The Simple CDC Caddis

Granted, while this pattern doesn't look like much, the Simple CDC Caddis has proven one of our all-time favorite dry flies for trout. So much so in fact, we literally carry 2 or 3 boxes full of this fly (in various sizes and colors) with us at all times! A deadly pattern that we and many others have fished successfully from Maine to Montana, the Simple CDC Caddis is not only extremely effective, it only takes about 30 seconds to actually tie! Here is how it's done.

Recipe / Materials List

- Hook: Favorite Standard Length Dry Fly (Sizes 12 - 20)
- Thread: 14/0 Gordon Griffith's or similar (color to match body)
- Body: Favorite Fine Dry Fly Dubbing (color to match hatch)
- Wing: 2 Natural Gray CDC Plumes (not Oiler Puffs!)
 - **Step 1:** First attach your thread approximately 1 hook eye length back from the eye of the hook with a traditional jam knot.



Step 2: Next, take a tiny amount of your favorite black dry fly dubbing and sparsely single-strand dub approximately 2 to 3 inches of your thread.



Step 3: Next, smoothly wrap your dubbed thread rearward to the area of the hook shank located directly above the barb. Once there, reverse direction and wind/dub forward up to your original tie-in point, building a slight taper to the body as you proceed towards the eye.

***Special Notes: Remember! You want a sparse body for this fly. Do not use too much dubbing.



Step 4: Next, select two CDC plumes and position them opposite of each other, with their concave or

cupped sides facing together, and the tips lined up so that they are even.



Step 5: Next, with your wing formed, lay it directly on top of the hook shank with tips extending approximately an 1/8 inch past the bend of the hook. Once positioned, temporarily tie it in place with a couple loose thread wraps, but do not trim the butt ends yet!



Step 6: Next, carefully grab the tip ends of your wing with one hand, and the stem butt ends with your other, and slowly pull your wing to length by drawing the butts towards the hook eye.

***Special Notes: By tying in the wing slightly longer with a couple loose thread wraps, then drawing it to length towards the eye of the hook, the cupped CDC fibers are forced together helping form a tent-style wing. This tent-style wing will trap more air bubbles, helping the fly will float better.



Step 7: Next, once you are happy with the wing length, lock it in place with several snug wraps of thread and trim off the stem butt ends as close as possible. The wing should look similar to the picture shown.



Step 8: Lastly, cover up the remaining butt ends of the CDC wing with several nice smooth thread wraps while creating a small head. Once the head is formed to your liking, whip finish, cement, and you're finished!

Summary / Closing Remarks: There you have it folks! Another beautifully simple yet wildly productive fly pattern that can be easily adapted to match almost any local hatch desired, don't be afraid to try changing the colors of the body, the CDC wing, or both! Exceptionally versatile, easy-to-tie, and oh so deadly too, if you've not yet given tying or fishing the 30 second Simple C.D.C. Caddis a try... trust us... you should! As always, have fun with this one friends! Thanks too for all your patronage and support. And please don't hesitate to call on us if we can be of further assistance or help! Sincerely - **Nate Harris**

The Tier's Bench at Stone River Outfitters

Tying the Usual Dry Fly

By Nate Harris

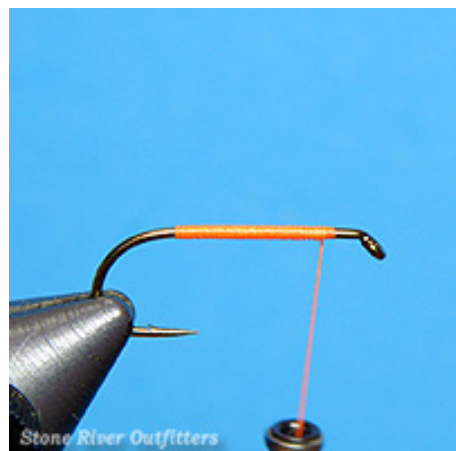


The Usual Dry Fly

Developed by legendary Upstate New York fly tier and fly designer Francis Betters, the Usual Dry is an exceptionally easy pattern to tie, and is incredibly effective at drawing trout to the surface when fished too. A simplified spinoff of his original Haystack dry fly design, Fran's Usual uses only one material in its construction - the coarse, translucent, naturally buoyant hair drawn from the paw pad area of a snowshoe rabbit's foot. A perennial favorite here in the New England that's sure to work wherever fast flowing waters and eagerly rising trout are found, here's how we tie the Usual Dry.

Recipe / Materials List

- Hook: Standard Dry Fly Sizes 10-14
- Thread: Danville's 6/0 Fly Master (Fl Orange or Fl Pink)
- Wing: Snowshoe Rabbit Foot
- Tail: Snowshoe Rabbit Foot
- Body: Snowshoe Rabbit Foot



Step 1: Attach your tying thread comfortably behind the hook eye, and wrap a smooth level thread base rearward to a stopping point located just above the hook barb, then forward again as pictured to create the fly's vibrantly colored underbody.



Step 2: Cut a clump of coarse hair from the paw pad area of your snowshoe rabbit's foot and preen out the fuzzy underfur from the clump's base using your fingers as shown, leaving only the longer fibered guard hairs pinched. This tuft of longer guard hairs will become your fly's wing.

*****Special Note:**

Do NOT THROW AWAY THE UNDERFUR and errant hairs preened from your wing clump! They will be used later to create your fly's dubbed body.



Step 3: With the tapered tips facing forward, quickly measure your wing clump against the hook so that it equals approximately 1 to 1.5 times the length of the hook shank.



Step 4: With the naturally tapered tips still facing forward over the hook eye, tie the hair clump firmly in place using several tightly drawn thread wraps, then trim the rear-facing butt ends at an slightly pitched angle, like shown. As with the previous step, remember to save these trimmings too, as they'll be needed later to create your fly's dubbed body!



Step 5: Exploiting the sloping taper created by your angled cut above, smoothly wrap your tying thread rearward towards the hook point binding down the trimmed butt ends of the wing as you go.



Step 6: To create the Usual's tail, select another slightly sparser clump of snowshoe rabbit foot hair and preen the bunch with your fingers in the same as done earlier when preparing the wing. Once prepared, briefly measure the clump so that it equals approximately 1 to 1.5 times the length of the hook shank, then firmly tie the tail clump in place with tapered tips facing rearward and trim away the excess butt ends neatly like shown. Once again, do not discard your trimmings!



Step 7: Working from tail to wing then wing back to tail, carefully bind down any errant protruding hair butts using a few well placed wraps of thread. Remember, a smoothly tapered, vibrantly colored underbody is your goal.



Step 8: Gather up the preened underfur and excess trimmings saved from previous steps and coarsely blend them together by hand to create dubbing for your fly's body.



Step 9: Pinch or roll your hand-blended dubbing around a single strand of tying thread, then wrap forward towards the hook eye to create the Usual's shaggy dubbed body. When you reach wing, gently lift the long hairs upwards using your fingertips and place another two or three dubbed turns in front of the clump's base to help keep your wing propped.

***Special Notes: Snowshoe Rabbit Foot can be frustratingly unruly! A very thin bead of wax applied to your thread before pinching or rolling will no doubt make dubbing this fly's body easier.



Step 10: Once satisfied with your wing's angle, clean away any excess dubbing from your tying thread, build a small neat head, whip finish, and apply cement.

Summary / Closing Remarks: There you have it friends! Another beautifully simple yet wildly deadly all-purpose-attractor type dry fly pattern that we and many others fish frequently with complete confidence and amazing success, if you've a few spare minutes at the tying vise this winter, we highly recommend giving Fran Betters popular and proven The Usual Dry a try! As always, have fun with this one gang. Thanks so much for all your support, and please don't hesitate to call on us if we can be of further assistance! Sincerely - **Nate Harris**

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Testament of a Fisherman

I fish because I love to. Because I love the environs where trout are found, which are invariably beautiful, and hate the environs where crowds of people are found, which are invariably ugly. Because of all the television commercials, cocktail parties, and assorted social posturing I thus escape. Because in a world where most men seem to spend their lives doing what they hate, my fishing is at once an endless source of delight and an act of small rebellion. Because trout do not lie or cheat and cannot be bought or bribed, or impressed by power, but respond only to quietude and humility, and endless patience. Because I suspect that men are going this way for the last time and I for one don't want to waste the trip. Because mercifully there are no telephones on trout waters. Because in the woods I can find solitude without loneliness... And finally, not because I regard fishing as being so terribly important, but because I suspect that so many of the other concerns of men are equally unimportant and not nearly so much fun. — Robert Traver, Anatomy of a Fisherman