

FLY LINES



DECEMBER 2016

December – Christmas Dinner with Philip Weigall

Members will be delighted to hear that the guest speaker for our Christmas Dinner this year will be Philip Weigall. Philip hardly needs any introduction, as he is so well known to us all as a top Victorian fishing guide, author, fly fishing commentator, and editor of the very popular online magazine *FlyStream*.

Philip is also a long-time member of the Association, and has been a very popular speaker at many of our dinners. His topic for this year's Christmas dinner is entitled: 'A Few Ideas to Catch More Trout'. Philip believes there are a number of reasonably simple, achievable – but possibly not obvious – things that anyone can do to become a more successful trout fisher. This is a topic dear to all our hearts, so don't miss it.

All members are encouraged to attend the Dinner, and if you haven't yet made your booking then please complete the booking form included as an insert in this issue.

Thursday, December 15,
6:30 for 7:00 pm at the
Celtic Club

Again at this year's dinner some of our 25 and 50 year members will have their years of membership acknowledged.

**Mark it in your diary – Thursday,
December 15, 6:30 pm at the Celtic Club.**



THE VICTORIAN FLY FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

VOL. 65 NO.3 – DECEMBER 2016

Organisation No. A0024750J

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Index

VFFA Office Holders	2	Looking For A Fishing Lodge?	19
February 2017 Meeting With Rick Dobson.....	3	Black Fly – The Forgotten Food Of Trout	20
President’s Message	4	Bill Jeans In The UK	23
Web Fish.....	5	My Day On The River Nore.....	24
The November Meeting With Andrew Briggs....	6	Fly of the Month	29
Editor’s Desk – Lyndon Webb	12	VFFA Meetings & Activities	32
For The Love Of Trout.....	17		

February 2017 meeting - with Rick Dobson

Our first meeting in the new year, the February meeting, will be another lunchtime meal in the Shamrock Restaurant at the Celtic Club.

Guest speaker for this meeting will be Rick Dobson, a very loyal and supportive VFFA member, and the very friendly and approachable proprietor of the Aussie Angler tackle store.

Rick is a very skilled and experienced angler who has fished top locations all over the world. He feels that it’s perhaps a bit too easy these days for us to be sidetracked by all the latest fads and fashions floating around.

Rick likes to keep it uncomplicated, so next February he will give us what he describes as his ‘simplistic strategies and tactics for catching trout in Victoria, Tassie and New Zealand’.

Rick is always a very informative and entertaining speaker, and his presentation will be well worth hearing.

So mark it in your diary – Thursday, February 23, 12 noon at the Celtic Club.



President's Message

This past month has been a particularly interesting one for the VFFA. Perhaps the most important event was the Talk Wild Trout Conference held by Fisheries Victoria at Mansfield. But more of that a little later.

First of all I want to make sure all our members are made aware of a significant development involving the VFFA and the Red Tag Fly Fishers.

A few months ago we were approached by the President of Red Tag, John Trioli, regarding the future of their club rooms, the 'Artists Hut' in Yarra Bend Park, which many of you will be familiar with. John came with a proposal to relocate the hut away from a potentially hazardous golf driving range to a location closer to the Red Tag Casting Pool.

Subsequent discussions with Red Tag representatives and debate and decisions at VFFA Council level have led to an agreement in principle for the VFFA to be a joint tenant of the hut with the Red Tag Fly Fishers, in the event that an application to Parks Victoria concerning the hut's relocation is successful. This would also involve the VFFA in contributing a portion of the costs associated with the relocation project.

Of course there are many issues to be resolved before this proposal can proceed, but we believe such a development would provide valuable benefits to the VFFA and its members. Red Tag and the VFFA are two of the oldest fly fishing groups in Victoria. A number of the founding members of Red Tag in 1932 were also members of the VFFA, so it seems entirely appropriate for the two of us to come together in this venture.



I will ensure that members are kept informed of developments with this potentially exciting project.

Talk Wild Trout 2016 was an extremely interesting and informative day held early in November at Mansfield, and organised by Fisheries Victoria. VFFA was officially represented by Dermot O'Brien, Hamish Hughes and myself, but it was great to see so many other members in attendance as well. We also attended a pre-conference BBQ hosted by the Mansfield Fly Fishers and Fisheries Victoria, which proved to be a valuable opportunity to meet and talk with some of the main players in trout fishing in the state and also from Tasmania.

The conference itself was well-organised and well-attended, and Dermot's report on proceedings appears elsewhere in this issue of *Fly Lines*. However, let me say that it is clear a lot of work is underway at present trying to fully understand the impacts on trout of climate change, in-stream habitats, stocking, riverbank clearing and revegetation.

One of the highlights for me was a presentation by Taylor Hunt from Fisheries on the health of the state's best wild trout streams, based on survey research of trout numbers and size ranges. While the study could not be considered complete or conclusive, it certainly suggested that these river systems, with one or two exceptions, appeared to be improving and regaining health compared to recent years.

While it might be easy to be cynical about some of the conclusions, I firmly believe that Fisheries should be congratulated on their efforts and encouraged in their endeavours as they strive to find more scientifically-based answers to the puzzle of understanding what it takes to ensure ongoing development of trout populations and hence productive trout fishing in Victoria in the years ahead. I am sure we all look forward to hearing of

continuing work in this area and a positive outcome for future generations.

On the way home I took the opportunity to spend a few hours visiting the Howqua River, and while it was still running a little high and strongly, I did see a number of good fish moving in the river. A good sign, and perhaps real evidence to support Taylor's contentions about the improving health of one of my favourite rivers.

Well, that's all from me for this month. I look forward to seeing a good number of you at the annual Christmas Dinner on December 15, and to hear more on trout and fly fishing from our guest speaker, Philip Weigall.

Until then, good fishing and tight lines.



Web Fish

Cast regularly at vffa.org.au

About the VFFA web site:

The VFFA web site has a comprehensive coverage of VFFA events, meetings, trips, ... updated monthly making it easy to track dates and times.

Features of VFFA web site:

- Monthly Newsletter delivered to members in full colour.
- Live access to more than five years of past Newsletters
- Newsletter in PDF format for easy reading on computers / iPads / tablets & smart phones
- Newsletter in PDF format that can be read and saved on iPads and tablets like eBooks
- Calendar of all activities that can be synced with all you digital device calendars
- Gallery of events - Photos and Event reports
- Where to fish directories: Victoria, Tasmania, NSW, New Zealand

The November Meeting with Andrew Briggs

Andrew is a Senior Project Officer with the North-East Catchment Management Authority. He has a great personal and professional interest in river health and habitat restoration and their effect on trout populations. At our November meeting he gave a very informative and entertaining talk, revealing in the process an exceptional knowledge and expertise in this area, and he spoke with great enthusiasm about the very practical work he has overseen on the Ovens and other rivers in the north-east. His talk was based around a PowerPoint presentation showing before and after photos of areas where he and his team have done instream work to significantly improve the flow and habitat for the resident trout. The following is a brief summary of some of the major ideas he presented.



Thank you very much for your kind introduction. It is a pleasure to be here tonight. I thought it would be good to talk about some of the work that we have been doing. The what, wherefore, and why of trout habitat in particular, and how we can work together to improve it.

But first I need to admit that I am not actually a fly fisherman. But I am very willing to be converted, and I do need to be educated. As I was explaining earlier at dinner, I am reformed from a grandfather who was a mountain cattleman who would take pack horses

up onto the High Plains to the Rocky Valley Dam and poach all the rainbow trout there, then salt them and bring them out. I've come a long way from there, but haven't quite migrated yet to fly fishing.

The photo on the screen shows me with a small rainbow I'd caught. The little rainbow in the photo, which I call 'pocket rockets', was caught in one of my favourite streams - the upper end of the West Kiewa River. And that photo was after the fire event of 2006/07. I was able to do quite a lot of work up in that area, and it taught me a lot, and lots about fishing as well. I can still remember the first little rainbow I caught in that area. I thought I was into a real thumper, but when I pulled it in it was about the size of my phone.

The rivers up in this area are what we call 'high-energy rivers', and they are full of high-energy trout too. The rivers up there are very cold, so they hold lots of oxygen. So you have this highly oxygenated cold environment that these fish absolutely thrive in.

The high-energy element of the West Kiewa is an extreme example, but it is a common feature of our trout streams that they have this high-energy at the steeper end of the catchment. Water weighs a ton per cubic metre, and it moves quickly

when it gets a head of steam up, so when you are thinking about habitat, particularly from the viewpoint of introducing habitat into a waterway that has been denuded of habitat through one mechanism or another, that high-energy component is really critical to consider.

We have all seen photos of those lowland rivers with some of the fantastic work that has been done in re-snagging the Murray, the lower Ovens and other rivers for Murray cod and other native species. Where you've got big slow-moving rivers with very deep water you can just drop a log in and it will sink to the bottom and you can just leave it and wish it well. Often it can be as simple as that.

But you can't do that in those high-energy environments because the river in flood will just pick up that log and transport it downstream and knock something over with it. You have to think about that. So this high-energy aspect of these rivers becomes a factor not to fight against, but something to start manipulating and using.

When you start putting habitat into a trout stream there is a raft of things that you need to consider, including the services that habitat provides. There are the obvious things, such as shelter so that the fish can escape from birds and other predators, and they can ambush prey, and juveniles can hide, and there is shading provided. But another important factor to think about in these high-energy waters is what scientists refer to as a 'velocity refuge', which is nothing more or less than the lee behind a stone so that fish in these high-energy waters can have a spell. They don't want to be out in the current sprinting a marathon all day.

At the recent Trout Conference at Mansfield John Douglas was talking about the behaviour of wild trout versus

stocked trout. Wild trout are very conservative with their energy. In a high-energy waterway they will get out of the current and sit there and grab food as it races past. Their food to energy ratio has to be precise. If it takes too much energy to chase down a morsel of food then the fish condition will go backwards. This idea of a refuge which fish can get behind and have a spell is, of course, something we all know about, and it's where we go looking for fish.

The diagram on the screen now shows a typical pool in a river with a glide or a run coming in. There's a ripple around the outside and that's the high-energy zone in this pool, and where you have that high-energy area is a key factor. It's bringing food and oxygen in, and it also enables the river at that point to transport sediment. If it gets enough energy up then one of the things that you'll notice in a waterway such as this is that all the sand has been transported away. This is one of the key indicators of a high-energy stream.

The next photo shows the enormous boulders you have in a typical high-energy stream. I have been up on the West Kiewa River when it has been in flood, and it was a fairly character building experience. When you can hear those huge boulders grinding and knocking into each other you've got geology in motion. All of the sand there has been whisked away.

In looking at this next photo of a river you can easily identify the high-energy zone and the lower energy zones. You get deep pools in high-energy streams. A deep hole is scoured, and then you have what I call the big 'Lazy Susan' where food comes in and just goes round and round in circles. And the energy drops out and that's why you get the sandbar created on the inside of these pools. >>>

The low energy zones are where the sandbars form.

These are the kinds of triggers that you're looking for when you start introducing habitat. You examine the water and decide where you can create a high-energy zone to transport sediment and where you might also create a velocity refuge in another part of the pool, behind a boulder or somewhere like that.

You can place a log or a tree in a pool to interrupt one high-energy zone in one area to create another one in another place. So all of a sudden, within the same pool, you have alternating areas of high energy and low energy. This means that water and food in the water column will take longer to go through the altered pool. Equally, your fly presentation will take longer to go through the pool.

I was thinking about the fact that was mentioned before that the north-east area has so many trout streams. The north-east catchment area is actually quite large, from the King River in the west through several other river systems as you move east. And it turns out that 38% of the Murray-Darling's water supply comes out of an area which is only 2% of the total catchment area. So in a year like this year with big flood events happening and a lot of water is coming down, the steepest catchments in the Murray-Darling Basin have a lot of energy, and a lot of sediment is being moved around.

Let's describe some of the techniques that we use. Bed seeding is one, where we place big rocks in the river, these being usually large granite rocks. We've done some of this in the Ovens River and a little in the Snowy Creek, with more happening there later this year. It can be most effective in lower energy areas of the stream and very useful for providing

velocity refuges in high flow conditions.

When I'm working with community groups, and we have done some of this in the King River with the community there, it might seem a bit incongruous if you are walking through an area in the summertime and you spot a dry shingle bank with some big boulders there that are not even wet. Your reaction might well be, "So how is this helping the fish?" Of course at that time of the year in December or January it's not helping them. But it's there for when the water comes up and is charging through the area in the winter and spring months. The fish won't be out in the main channel then. They will be along the edges and they will get out and forage in the grassy verges. So we are creating velocity refuges for the fish in high flow times. But the work is invariably done in these places in February or March or April when the flows are lowest and it's thus easiest to do the work with the least impact.

Here are some photos of the work done on the Ovens just upstream from Bright, where we placed some granite boulders into a reach. It was a bit of an experiment. These were very big rocks that were donated to us; some being half as big as a Volkswagen beetle. We thought at the time we'd get the biggest rock we could find and put it in the highest energy part of the river to see what happened. We did this, and within two months of placing these boulders the September 2010 flood occurred, followed by the December 2010 flood. So we had a big flood event with a lot of energy and a lot of water coming through. The big rock shown in the photo worked extremely well; so well in fact that it dug such a huge hole that the rock itself actually fell into the hole. That rock is now part of the geological record for all



A very comprehensive PowerPoint display was the basis of Andrew's presentation.

time. One day someone will ask how some Glenrowan granite happened to be at Bright.

We learned a lot from that little exercise. What also happened was that the other three rocks that we put in didn't shrink but got buried in sediment coming down. Now you need to be aware that the Ovens River had a lot of gold mining happening in the upper reaches from the mid-1800s through to the early 1900s. The type of mining used was gold dredging, with massive floating gold dredges on the river. One dredge kept at Harrietville was in fact the largest dredge in the southern hemisphere at the time. So virtually all of the floor of the Ovens Valley between Myrtleford and Harrietville got turned upside down at this time. They finally switched off the dredges and then started growing

tobacco, so they straightened the river and moved it over against the hill to get it out of the way. As a consequence the Ovens River has a very unstable bed with a lot of it poorly consolidated, except for the odd outcrop of bedrock.

We found in this experiment that rocks work best where they catch flood debris. Then we have rocks and logs working together. A little bit later on we put some more rocks in a broader lower energy environment, and they too have been very successful. The photo now on the screen shows some flood debris that was caught. The big rock here was placed on its edge to ensure it caught debris, and it did. It caught a heap of debris that tipped it over, and now there's an island growing in the middle of the river, all created by that one rock.

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When you are talking about this kind of exercise you need to pick your spot, because when you are placing habitat you are actually trying to create erosion. And that can be quite a confronting thing for people to talk about. For generations in Australia there were three big enemies – weeds, rabbits and erosion. Now all of a sudden you are suggesting that to improve a particular reach of river you need to create some erosion in it. You need to be careful of your messages sometimes, particularly in a high-energy river that has been made artificially straight and has excess sediment in it. In a flood they do erode and can almost over-compensate – they have too much energy and the erosion you get can on some occasions be quite spectacular.

What about rock groynes? These again are rock structures. They were originally designed by the old river trusts as an erosion control technique, but as an erosion control technique in rivers they are fairly marginal. You put them on outside bends where there are high flows. You are looking to disrupt that high flow and create some turbulence and energy to create some bed scour. The Goulburn-Broken CMA commissioned a study analysing some of their habitat structures that they had put in and they found that brown trout really love these habitats, particularly where there is wood involved. They also found that Macquarie perch tend to be drawn to them as well. But they're not so great for platypus habitat. So if you're ever devising a project and you are thinking about these types of things in a known platypus habitat it might cause some consternation. But as a fish

habitat structure they can be quite successful.

LUNKERS is an acronym. It was a technology developed in Oregon in the USA. It stands for "Little Underwater Neighbourhood Keepers Encompassing Rheotactic Salmonids". What it means essentially is a nest box for trout. When you build a nest box for a possum or a bat or bird the reason is because there are no natural hollows in the trees because all the old trees have been cut down. It is no different with fish. A lot of these rivers have been heavily modified – snags were taken out, banks were straightened, and all sorts of other things went on.

So what we're trying to create here is an undercut overhung bank while still affording some stabilisation of the bank whilst the natural system recovers. It's kind of like a box culvert made out of hardwood timber. You do your necessary bank stabilisation work first and then you place one of these lunkers there and put some rock over the top plus some topsoil to encourage it to grass over.



Andrew's Lunkers – all ready for installation

These pictures show lunkers that Goulburn-Broken have assembled ready to be installed. They are lifted in with an excavator and are then locked in place in the riverbed. When placed in the right spot in the right waterway they can be very effective. Goulburn-Broken has pioneered this approach in Victoria, and probably in Australia. I've now got a very big pile of sawn red gum almost under armed guard at our depot to work with. Hopefully the Green Army teams or perhaps some of the prisoners from Beechworth prison will assist in their construction and installation. We can build these things in a type of flatpack at the depot and then take them out and put them on-site. We can work with people like yourselves. The Greenwells Fly Fishing Club at Albury are very interested in helping us in finding the sites and putting these in, and then helping us look after them afterwards. We are quite excited about this. We were going to be doing this sooner rather than later, but in the meantime we've had a heap of floods, and we have to get on top of the floods first before we can get back into this work.

Just on floods, a lot of these structures and flood recovery and erosion control are not mutually exclusive – you can do both at once. I've been at the CMA over 12 years and this is one of the bigger evolutions I've seen. River management used to be the tail end, or the heavily engineered end, of river management, with vast quantities of rock deposited to protect banks at all cost, with habitat remaining a bit of a fringe boutique area. But now there is a recognition that you can have both at the same time.

Logjams. These are very different in high-energy streams to what was done in the lower energy rivers we were talking about earlier. This is where you

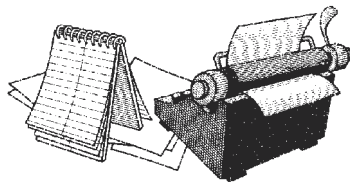
have several trees and you virtually weave them together and pin them in place with timber poles. The pictures on the screen show this effect in the Owens River. This is basically where you have a log bed buried in the river bed at right angles to the flow. You can see the root balls of the trees, and it is very important to have these still intact. They provide the buttress. When you face them into the flow they create a disruption and absorb the energy out of the flow. You can see in the photo where these logs have been pinned in place. They produce areas of fast flow where the sediment is taken out and quiet areas where sediment is deposited. Before we did this work this section was flat and uninteresting. In looking at it before and after the floods you can see that it's gone from a section where there was no sand or silt to now there are sections of deep water with larger pebbles and sandy silty material too. This of course helps the macro-invertebrate community.

When combining rocks and logs with riparian vegetation the sum is greater than the individual parts. The Arthur Rylah Institute did some electro-fishing surveys and they found that around rock groynes in combination with logs they found the most fish. More brown trout were captured in worksite areas than elsewhere. Does it work? A report on the benefits of instream habitat was commissioned by the Goulburn-Broken CMA. The Arthur Rylah Institute did the research work, which was funded by the recreational fishing licence program, as was all the work that has been done.

One of the take-home messages is that we must work together on this. We need to be talking to each other. It is exciting that all groups are now working together to improve the rivers river habitat and the fishing.



From the EDITOR'S DESK



"Carpe Diem" does not mean "fish of the day." (Author Unknown)

"Scholars have long known that fishing eventually turns men into philosophers. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to buy decent tackle on a philosopher's salary." (Patrick McManus)

"The fishing was good; it was the catching that was bad." (A.K. Best)

"I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing." (John's Gospel 21:3, NIV translation of the New Testament)

Ah, Peter – we all know the experience. It has fallen to me to write the report on the recent VFFA trip to Warrnambool, where sadly, 'it was the catching that was bad'.

What are the conditions necessary for a good fishing trip? I guess two obvious ones are the weather conditions and the water conditions. A bit of favourable luck, too, is helpful. Somewhere in his writings David Scholes mentions the foolishness of planning a fishing trip more than a few days ahead. There is obvious wisdom in this, but the VFFA calendar was drawn up months ago, and of course the Warrnambool trip was scheduled then for its traditional time – the weekend after the Melbourne Cup. And why not - November is usually a good time to fish Warrnambool. But you can't help bad luck. Last year there was too little water; this year there was too much. And we were duded by the weather.

In the days leading up to the trip the locals checked the fishery for us. The Hopkins River and the Mt Emu Creek were unfishable, both being high, fast, and the colour of my well-milked evening Milo, so the remaining options were the upper Merri at Woodford and the Moyne at Port Fairy. Jim Blakeslee dangled a fly or two in the upper Merri and had no trouble connecting with three quite respectable trout. Two he returned, but the third, a 4½ lb brown, went home to be smoked for the Saturday night barbecue. Then Jim and Adrian Jacobs, the Warrnambool club president, fished the Moyne at the Toolong bridge, and in the water downstream from the bridge interviewed three sizeable browns before Jim lost a thumping 6 pounder in the weeds. So things were looking good.

A few of the Melbourne team went down early, and on the Friday afternoon Jim took David Wakefield, John Pilkington and Hughie Maltby over to the Toolong Bridge for a look. They leaned over the guard rail, peered into the depths, and spotted a hefty trout quietly working his way upstream. David leapt over the corner of the bridge to clamber down for a closer look. His progress was interrupted, however, when a large (four feet long and quite portly) clearly aggravated tiger snake stuck its head up out of the grass and lined up his left knee. Fortunately David's reflexes were up to the task, and his hasty backwards leap was a thing to behold. The snake slithered off down the bank, daring anyone to follow. No one did.



Saturday evening at the Blakeslee's

On the Friday evening the team gathered at BoJangles restaurant in downtown Warrnambool for the traditional pizza and strategy meeting. Following Jim's report on his recent fishing the air of excitement and expectation was palpable and could have been bottled and sold.

Saturday morning, 9:00 am sharp, all ten Melbourne members gathered at Jim's magnificent property on the banks of the Merri at Woodford. We were joined by our guides for the day – Jim, Adrian, David Coutts, and Peter Hussey. The previous night's enthusiasm, however, was dampened a tad (quite literally) by the threatening rain. Overnight the barometer had plummeted, and Saturday – the day when the Melbourne team were to fish the local waters guided by local members – saw threatening black skies, frequent showers, and howling winds. Nonetheless the local guides were distributed among the Melbourne

anglers, and we headed off.

Adrian took John Pilkington, David Wakefield and myself to the upper Merri at Grassmere, where David and John rigged up and headed downstream, and Adrian took yours truly for a look at the upstream water.

Some government department, in its wisdom, had removed the willows from several hundred yards of river bank, which were now bare and denuded. Adrian was sure there would still be some fish there though, so we fished along carefully, but saw nothing. The upper Merri is deep and narrow and slow flowing, and copiously decorated with strapweed. We soon arrived at the point where the willows lining the banks started again. Adrian was an excellent guide. He knows this part of the river well, and has caught countless fish there. He was familiar with all the best

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Friday night at BoJangles in Warrnambool. The planning meeting.

sections and could relate tales of the big fish taken from each pool. But not so today. We both fished carefully and expectantly, but nothing showed. The water was high but dropping, and while slightly coloured was still clear enough to fly fish. The trout that Jim had caught here earlier had been full of shrimp, so the recommended strategy was to strip a large black Woolly Bugger along the edges with one of Jim's shrimp patterns trailing a couple of feet behind. The idea was that the large black pulsating fly would grab the attention of fish, which would then hopefully take the shrimp. This is Jim's tactic, and it works well for him.

Of course the frequent showers cooled us down, and we needed cooling because the howling gale topped with frequent ferocious gusts made casting difficult. All too often our casts were snatched away at the last moment and driven into the strapweed, where those long green tentacles gathered our flies in a strong embrace. This required much ripping and yanking to pull them free. It was heavy

tippet country. On other occasions our casts didn't even make the water. When we were in among the trees airborne casts were often snatched and distributed in the surrounding shrubbery. Flies and leaders then had to be carefully untangled from the hideous jumble of branches and twigs. Adrian explained that the upper Merri can do your head in. The river yields fabulous trout, but at times is a mongrel to fish. "You'll explode with invective and vitriol you didn't even know you knew!"

So we fished our way upstream, taking turns in plonking flies into successive pools and channels. I was ahead of Adrian at one point when my flies got blown into some reeds on the far side. I was standing on a mushy soft edge, and tentatively stepped forward to get a better angle for the retrieve. My left foot sank down into the water and my thigh boot filled. Yes, the water was cold. I wrestled my way back up the bank, pulled off the bloated thigh boot and emptied several litres of water back into the river, raising the level a couple of

inches. By this time Adrian had caught up, and seeing my thigh boot, asked: "Should we have an early finish today." "No way," was the response, "I've got one soggy leg, but the other one is still dry, so let's press on."

We fished up through another half kilometre and reached a point where the only way past a complicated electric and barbed wire fence barrier was to climb down a steep, slippery bank to the river edge. I went first, my foot caught in a skinny blackberry shoot, and I crashed headfirst down into the muddy edges. Fortunately, my well-honed fly fishing reflexes responded – I'd held my rod high throughout the tumble. A broken rib or dislocated shoulder was tolerable, but a broken rod was unthinkable.

When Adrian saw me lying prone in the mud he thought I'd had a heart attack, so madly grabbed at his phone whilst trying to figure out where the helicopter should land. I raised a hand to indicate I was still breathing, then gathered myself to proceed. But the afternoon was rapidly disappearing and there was a long walk



Jim's 4½ lb brown – smoked and tasty and not much left

back to the car. On the way back Adrian called in at a favourite pool and fished his flies along a fabulous looking edge. He had a touch and we spotted a small recently released brown following his retrieve. The only fish we'd seen all day, and we would have much preferred to see his elderly uncle.

Back at the car we caught up with David and John, who likewise had not

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Adrian fishing a typical stretch of the upper Merri. The sun appeared occasionally – but never for long.



The rain appeared all too frequently. Plenty of reeds and blackberries and strapweed to contend with.

troubled the scorers. In fact the team of anglers fishing that day included four local members, all experienced and knowledgeable fly fishers who knew their water, and dare I say 10 VFFA members from Melbourne who between them had countless years of experience and fishing success in heaps of places, yet none of us landed a fish on the day. Conditions had defeated us. Of course, it goes without saying that a few days later the weather settled, the sun came out, the wind disappeared, and Jim was again catching fish in numbers.



Lester Walton brought his bicycle, as there is an easy riding tracking along the bank of the Moyne downstream from the access bridge.

A hot shower and change of clothes made a world of difference. We all re-appeared at 6:00 pm at Jim's magnificent property, and the evening meal – entrees and hors d'oeuvres, smoked trout, a magnificent main of various barbecued meat dishes with superb salads, scrumptious sweets following ... made a brilliant end to the day. The lack of fish was forgotten, or forgiven, and the very warm relationship between the Melbourne members and the wonderfully welcoming and hospitable local fly club members was further enhanced.

The annual trip to Warrnambool has been a very special feature of the VFFA calendar, and it was again this year. Despite the weather it was great to be out on a river again after the wet winter and spring we'd experienced. And the magnificent meal at Jim's place is always a top feature.

Tight lines and lots of drag-free drifts,
Lyndon



For the Love of Trout

... report by Dermot O'Brien

Optimism was the message that came from the *TALK WILD TROUT 2016* conference held in Mansfield on Saturday, November 5.

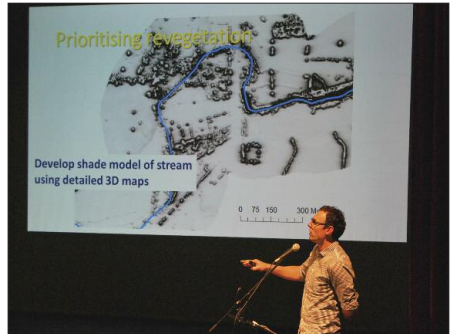
However, a healthy Victorian trout fishery will not necessarily come easily or quickly, was the warning that came from the experts.

About 200 trout savvy registered delegates attended the conference and the VFFA was well represented and included new President Mike Jarvis, immediate Past-President Hamish Hughes and this Council member.

This important event actually started informally on the Friday night with a barbecue staged by the Mansfield and District Fly Fishing Club and Victorian Fisheries. This gave the aforementioned VFFA Council members the opportunity to rub shoulders with not only locals, but Fisheries bosses from both Victoria and Tasmania. The state of Victoria's trout fishery was obviously the main talking point, and many could not hide their passion for trout and fly fishing, and their disappointment in our fishery in recent years.

Executive Director Fisheries Victoria, Travis Dowling, launched the conference with a message about improvements in Victoria over the past ten years and said there was every reason to be optimistic for the future.

Key note speaker and international guest April Vokey spoke passionately about trout and her trouting experiences. She played a video about the Montana fishery and the savage debate about stocking or no-stocking that raged there in the past. The decision was made to keep that fishery a wild trout fishery and



The 2016 Wild Trout Conference at Mansfield (photo courtesy of Marc Ainsworth)

now both experts and trout fishers are delighted with the outcome.

Two years into the three year Wild Trout Fisheries Management Program, stocking trials have been disappointing. Fisheries expert John Douglas said that the failure of stocking to increase trout populations in the Howqua and upper Goulburn Rivers was not unique. Numerous stocking trials have been undertaken in various Victorian streams in the past and most of these trials had similar results. And similar to results obtained in other countries also.

It appears that where there is an existing breeding wild trout population, that natural population is far more efficient at recovery than it would be by stocking fish into that system.

The good news: research has indicated that there are trout in the system and recovery is occurring. However, if we want to accelerate recovery in trout stream populations, strategies such as habitat rehabilitation needs to be seriously considered.

Trout habitat was also a recurring theme at the conference. A paper entitled >>>



*The 2016 Wild Trout Conference gathered a crowd of several hundred
(photo courtesy of Marc Ainsworth)*

Managing Willows in Victoria was included in conference documents and a new approach to willow removal is now underway; where in some cases willow control should be staged over several years. In this plan, some willows are removed or poisoned and native habitat planted, and then up to six years later when the natives are more mature, willow control would be resumed. This enables streams to retain some necessary shading, which is vital for trout.

Also, landholder and stakeholder concerns, including fishing groups, can be taken into account.

Andrew Briggs from the North-Eastern Catchment Management Authority spoke in detail about stream habitat improvements. He described the use of log-jams, logs, rocks and even structures to create undercut banks.

Dr John Morrongiello from Melbourne University said the recent Millennium Drought (1997-2009) was still fresh in the minds of trout anglers. He said this could be a glimpse of what our future trout fisheries may look like if we don't act on the risks of climate change.

Trout stress as it relates to water

temperature was highlighted and again the benefits of stream shading dominated. This issue is the subject of more research.

One of the day's highlights was the report card on 12 of our best streams. These were:

Barkley River:	Very Good
Dargo River System:	Good
Upper Goulburn River:	Moderate
Howqua:	Excellent
Jamieson River:	Low
Kiewa River System:	Excellent
King River:	Good
Merri and Hopkins Rivers:	Excellent
Mitta Mitta River System:	Very Good
Morass Creek:	Very Good
Nariel Creek System:	Good

It is worth noting that the Nariel Creek was the worst performing stream researched in 2015 and researchers say there is now a relative abundance of brown and rainbow trout up to 30 cm compared with surveys in previous years.

While the conference was underway Executive Director Fisheries Victoria, Travis Dowling, announced that the Minister, Jaala Pulford, had released \$1million over four years for an Angler Riparian Partnerships Program. The funding will be used for partnerships between nine regional catchment management authorities and regional angling groups to deliver better riparian habitat.

Wrapping up the conference, Philip Weigall described the event as “gold.” He said we all want a better trout fishery and he saw habitat as key to success. Philip believes that we have a once in a generation opportunity and we can make a better plan for a wild trout fishery – one step at a time. There are obviously many challenges ahead.

Simply stocking streams seems unlikely, with better habitat the real key. How the VFFA chooses to be involved is now our immediate challenge.



April Vokey was the keynote speaker (photo courtesy of Marc Ainsworth)

Looking for a Fishing Lodge?

Are you in the market for a comfortable, well-equipped fishing lodge? Well, Wes Betts may have some information that just might be the answer.

As many people know, Wes has a lovely property on the Howqua River, downstream from Sheepland Flat, and he tells us that another property not far from his at Tobacco Flat has come on the market.

"The house would make an ideal fishing lodge for someone or for a small

syndicate and is right on water ideally suited to fly fishing," Wes tells *Fly Lines*. "Mansfield real estate agents Clark & Co. have the property listed."

The three-bedroom bluestone and timber house is open plan and has a bathroom complete with a spa, a great kitchen, solar power and 240 volt generator back-up.

And it goes without saying, the neighbours are fantastic!

Black Fly (Reed Smut) - the forgotten food of trout

... Phil Bailey

Research states that the Black Fly (Order Diptera, Family Simuliidae) may be as important a food as baetis (considered to be the most dominant food) for trout and grayling, yet we see little comment on it even though they are prevalent in all streams that hold trout around the world.



There is a staggering amount of information about Simuliidae, yet they are largely overlooked by fly fishers. Why is that?

Consider this: there have been over a hundred studies showing that Black Fly are more important than even Baetis as a trout food. Yet we fly fishers haven't really honed in on it. In a study by Dr J. David Allen (a prominent US stream ecologist) it was established that black flies were consumed by trout at a much higher rate than the proportion of other food in the drift (i.e. the amount of food available to trout drifting in the water). While Simuliidae were only about 10% of the food, they made up nearly 70% of the trout's diet.

If that doesn't interest you then consider that on that same stream Baetis, the supreme focus of fly fishers, made up 70% of the drift but only 20% of trout food.

Malcolm Greenhalgh and Denys Ovenden, in their publication "*The Fly-Fishers Handbook- 1998*", state that "Reed Smuts (known as Simuliidae) are abundant in rivers, especially fast flowing clean rivers", and our rivers are becoming cleaner now that pollution is being attacked.

So why haven't we focussed on trying to understand and imitate this important food source more deeply? I think there are two main reasons. The first is that larvae and pupae do not show up in river insect sampling in sufficient numbers to warrant our interest. This is because they are extremely difficult to dislodge from the river bed. The second is that these flies emerge ready to fly and do not sit on the surface waiting to dry before flying off. So we as anglers may never even realise that they are hatching. Added to this is that the fish feed on them BEFORE they leave the water, and not on the surface as they do for other insects. Not seeing the hatch means we miss their importance and hence don't see them as an important part of the food chain of both trout and grayling.

But we haven't entirely missed it. Who hasn't been plagued by the "black curse" or smutting feeders or gnats etc? Who hasn't tied up Griffith Gnats, IOBO's and other small flies trying to catch those frustrating sipping fish? The reality might be that our successes are mere chances, or the fish are feeding on something different.

So what are Black Flies, or Reed Smuts as we anglers like to name them?

There is no doubt that the fish probably feed on them at all stages in their life cycle. The larvae, about 10 mm long, are

shaped a bit like a club. They attach themselves to rocks or weeds using hooks on their posterior, and feed through small fans trapping food at the top. They are probably eaten by fish in this stage but are difficult to imitate as they largely stay put.

The pupae stage may offer some opportunity to us fly fishers though. Unlike other insects, Simuliidae do not migrate to pupate. They simply do it in the cocoon they build that is attached by a thread. This period lasts for about a week and these cocoons would be prime targets for foraging trout and grayling.

But it is the adult and its emergence that offers the most interest to us.

When the adult emerges from its cocoon a unique and fascinating sequence of events occurs. Fully formed adults burst from the cocoon encased in a bubble of air. They rise rapidly to the surface without drifting very far, arriving at the surface ready to fly off. Depending on conditions, there may be a very tiny delay as they try to burst through the surface. This small bubble of air is a certain trigger point for the fish and needs to be imitated for any success. Another intriguing thing is that these adults have red eyes, which may be another small trigger point.

Given that research suggests that Simuliidae form such a prominent part of the trout's aquatic food then it is most likely that these adults, trapped in a bubble of air, are fed on voraciously as they rise to the surface. Perhaps those micro

sipping rises we so often see are fish feeding on the adult, just under the surface, as it tries to burst through the meniscus of the water surface.

The flies I use have been developed to suggest both the rising adult and one trapped fleetingly under the surface.

Black Fly Adult:

I fish this on the point. The pattern uses a size 18 dry fly hook with a large gape and with a lead wire wrapping. The body is tightly dubbed black Swiss CDC dubbing. The under wing is UTC Mirage Opal Tinsel, doubled and laid along the body. The wings are two Black CDC feathers tied as wonder wings to just behind the body and tied in after the eyes. The eyes are a piece of red 8lb mono clipped tight against the head of the fly.

There is a case for using white CDC for the wings as the naturals wings are clear. But I want this fly to sink and attract air bubbles which I think will show up the "silver" effect much better. >>>





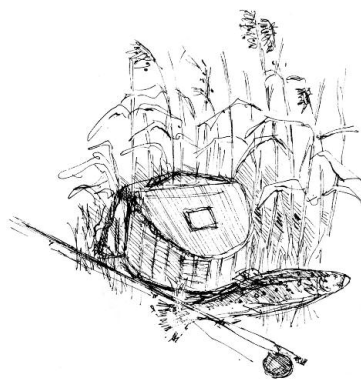
Glisten Spider

I fish this on a dropper or attached right onto the tippet about 50 cm above the point fly. For this pattern I use a Kamasan B525 (as I use for all of my spiders), size 18, but you could use any hook. The thread is black and is only used to fasten the body and hackle and form the head. The body is UTC Mirage Opal Tinsel tied over the hook without any thread underneath. Three to four layers are applied to give a bulbous effect. The hackle is two turns of a starling back feather.

As Simuliidae predominately hatch early in the day, I fish them in the mornings. They love fast water so my prime target area is right at the back of fast water and as it begins to flatten out into pools. However this also includes flat faster water where there are rocks with weed attached to them. I don't 'swing' the flies

because they rise so fast and I want to get as natural a drift as possible.

I hope you have enjoyed this article. There is enormous scope for us to develop other patterns and techniques to try and imitate this little known and important trout and grayling food.



Bill Jeans in the UK

Ever since I was married on the cliffs in the village of Dinbych-y-pysgod in south-west Wales in 1974, I've wanted to travel across the sea to Ireland to see where my great, great granny came from. The opportunity came in June 2016 with the boss wishing to revisit her old home town, a beautiful seaside village inside the old town walls - beautiful beaches but very cold seas.

To digress, the town of Milford Haven is close by, and from this we have the naming of Milford Sound in New Zealand.

We had dinner in a pub in Llandrindod Wells in North Wales on the night that Wales played Portugal in the European Cup soccer, unfortunately losing 2-0. I ordered a pint of Guinness to get in some practice, then enquired about my wife's options in regard to a glass of wine. "Colour and size?" asked the barman. "Red and large" said I. "Done," replied he. All very straight forward.

We took the three-hour car ferry from Holyhead to Dublin and watched the approaching mist. On arrival we visited Trinity College and the Book of Kells, then a few pubs before heading west to Galway (to see the sun go down on Galway Bay).

There's a salmon weir there on the River Corrib, which is well worth a visit at the right time of year. After lunch it was a short drive to the beautiful little village of Cong, County Mayo, on the River Cong. In 1951 film director John Ford made his movie, *The Quiet Man*, starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara, in this village. There's a famous statue there of John Wayne holding Maureen O'Hara, and everyone has their photo taken with it. Oscar Wilde spent his early years there.

Cong is ideally located between Lough Mask and Lough Corrib, and you can fish for wild brown trout, ferox trout, salmon and pike from February through to October. If you are there in October you can also shoot for woodcock and snipe.

We had tried to book accommodation at Ryan's Riverlodge B&B situated in the village and overlooking the River Cong, but last winter it was too close to the river and they had a metre of it flowing over the ground floor. It was still being renovated when we were there.

However, Peter Golding and I did manage to secure the services of David Ryan (from the oldest family in the village) for a day on Lough Corrib. At first light I peered out our hotel window, and it wasn't pretty - grey skies, drizzle and wind. After a hot breakfast we drove the short distance to the sheltered inlet to meet David, who apologised for the weather. Fortunately there were some small islands a few hundred metres offshore which offered a windbreak of sorts, so we could slowly motor out in his small boat and drift back to shore, fishing a team of three wet flies whilst sitting side-saddle on the hard wooden seats and copping the full force of the wind, which had travelled 30 miles across the lake. We explained to David that it was just like fishing Little Pine.

My first fish was a "wee perch", aka a bloody redfin. Later, I landed my first wild Irish Atlantic salmon, fully 6 inches long. We moored on a small island in the lough for a magnificent lunch packed by Martha (David's wife), and David tried to light a fire for a cup of tea, but without success. I suggested that a drum of dry wood kept at the spot would be a good idea, or perhaps a thermos, but he >>>

insisted, "That would be cheatin'". We sat under a dripping tree and swapped fishing stories. "You should have been here last week," he said. We resumed our fishing efforts and fortunately Pete Golding landed a nice brown which David promptly dispatched to take home as we were staying at the pub. The big difference in the scenery was the view through the mist of Ashford Castle, once the home of the Guinness family, as we drifted back to shore. We were also entertained with the occasional uncaught salmon leaping from the water. Not surprisingly, we were the only boat out.

We finished a bit early at the guide's suggestion (code for 'nothing happening') and headed home, very wet but not too cold. David very kindly suggested a reduced fee.

The girls (wives) had a mixed day. They had planned a walk around the abbey ruins and a visit to the castle (successful), then watching the Wimbledon men's final on TV (unsuccessful). The proprietors of the five pubs in town

didn't know that Wimbledon was on, and had no reception for it, so the girls had a choice of Hurling or Gaelic football. Not happy Jan!

Later that evening, I bumped into David in the street and he had a car load of eel nets. He is clearly a very busy man.

With dry clothes on we went out to try another small pub for another great night of food, Guinness, and live music. They even played some Aussie numbers when they heard our accents.

Next morning at breakfast a young boy appeared at our table with a handful of flies. "Dad asked me to bring these to you." Which was a more than adequate exchange for the bottle of Wolf Blass we had offered the day before.

Unfortunately, we had to move on. By the time I get back to Cong again, Ryan's Riverlodge B&B will be back in business and I'll be looking forward to staying with David, Martha (a fishing widow if ever there was one), and their two fishing sons, Daithi and Domhnall.



My Day on the River Nore

... Iain Skinner

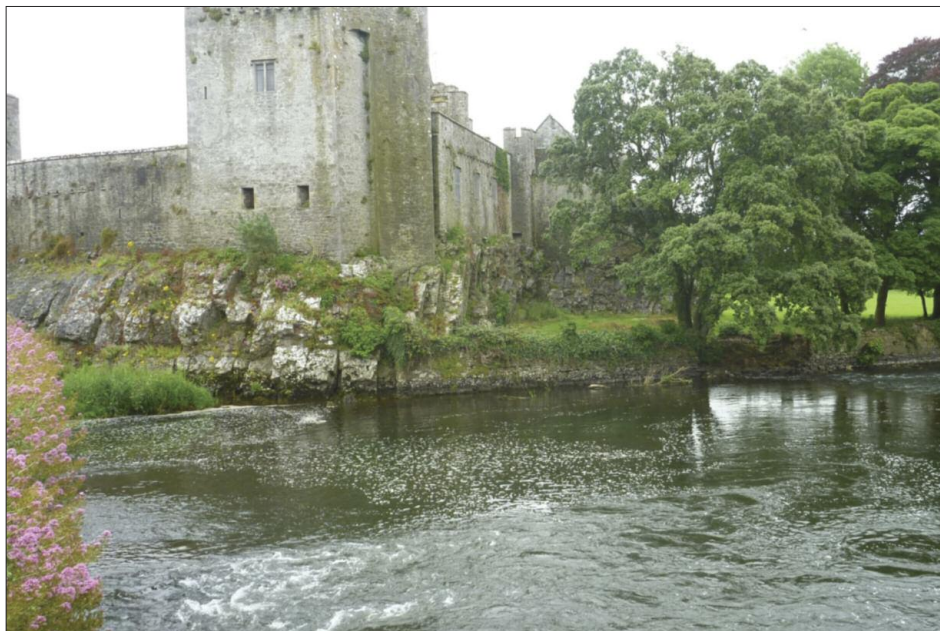
Ireland is very green (not just their Rugby jumpers) and the land of ABC (Another Bleeding Castle), but as far as I could tell from my research it is also a haven for fishermen. From huge loughs to tiny streams, trout to salmon, and guided to solo - Ireland has it all. So when there appeared to be a day "free" in our short Irish visit I looked into fishing guides around Kilkenny. But more of that later.

The Trip

Our trip to Ireland started with a short, but delayed, Aer Lingus flight from Edinburgh to Dublin. We picked up our

car and headed south along the coast road to Waterford. I had booked two nights in town and we arrived late enough on the first day to allow for just dinner and a quick walk before retiring.

Our hotel was on the waterfront of the river Nore estuary, and as Waterford has been a strategic port from Viking times onwards this area is loaded with museums and attractions. Reginald's Tower, the Medieval Museum, the Bishop's Palace (modern) museum and Waterford Crystal are all located within metres of each other in the Viking Triangle. All are worth a visit and we



Cahir Castle on the River Suir

spent our entire second day between these four attractions.

Next day we motored circuitously from Waterford to Kilkenny visiting Cahir Castle, the Rock of Cashel (though not stopping there because of the number of tourists) and the Famine House museum, that was closed until after lunch.

Continuing on to Kilkenny we arrived at Mt Juliet Estate – a country house hotel with grand rooms, country sports on tap, and an amazing Golf Course. Close to Thomastown and about 15 minutes south of Kilkenny the River Nore runs through the middle of the estate. Unfortunately to fish the estate water costs an extra 50 Euros, a little out of proportion with the 15 Euros charged by the Thomastown Angling Club for a day ticket on the 2 – 3 kilometres of water downstream of the hotel!

Kilkenny has, as most large Irish towns do, a castle (built in the medieval period and more recently restored or rebuilt)

along with multiple important historic churches. There is a craft centre and a plethora of small souvenir shops. Everything is within walking distance, parking is simple and complicated (very Irish that) and it is close to several other major centres including Waterford and Cork. The wild south and west coasts are within a very short drive and the visitor is really overwhelmed with choices. My suggestion is to pick a few places, book accommodation there, and spend a day or two exploring each well.

The Accommodation

Despite the minor irritations of the fishing our accommodation at Mt Juliet was nothing short of awesome. With rooms named after local and national identities, and a spectacular view of the River Nore from our bedroom, we were made more than welcome by the staff. The Porters particularly were delightful and highly knowledgeable about the estate and local attractions.

>>>



River Nore from our room at Mt Juliet Estate

The food was high quality and there were several different dining options in the hotel and at the Golf Course. Add a pool and gym and you have a hotel that can cater for nearly every whim.

The River Nore

The River Nore is a beautiful river. Rising in the Devil's Bit mountain area of County Tipperary, it flows 140 km south-east to enter the Celtic Sea at Waterford. Along with its adjacent rivers, the Suir and the Barrow, the three are known as the Three Sisters and drain a significant part of southern Leinster (south east Ireland). The river fishes well for trout, sea trout and salmon. It flows through Kilkenny, and several fishing clubs hold rights to the fishing. Thomastown Anglers Association has the following introduction on its website (<https://thomastownfishing.wordpress.com/>):

"Thomastown Anglers Association aims to maintain our fisheries, safeguard our part of the beautiful river Nore for future generations and to have fun.

The river Nore rises in the Devils bit

mountains in County Tipperary. Flowing through fertile limestone regions it is joined by the river Barrow (outside New Ross) and the river Suir (in Waterford) before entering the sea at Waterford Harbour.

The fast flowing, fertile waters of the Nore with its ripples, glides and pools make it an excellent fly fishing destination. With healthy stocks of brown trout up to 5 lb and good annual runs of Salmon and Grilse, the river Nore is a hidden gem for fishing in the South-East.

Thomastown anglers hold 7 kilometres of wild game fishing available via day tickets on the river Nore in Co. Kilkenny. See our 'membership' section for details on day tickets and membership.

Fly fishing for wild brown trout is excellent throughout the season with fish averaging 20 cm and fish of 30cm+ not uncommon. Given the right water conditions Salmon fishing can produce excellent specimens in good numbers, with fish of 15-20 lb not uncommon."

Sounds inviting, doesn't it!

My Guide - Noel

Wanting to make the most of my one day I had looked into local guides. A quick internet browse showed a guide based in Thomastown – Noel Molloy of Noreside Fly Fishing, whom I had booked several months in advance of my trip (www.noresideflyfishing.com). Noel is a fantastic fisherman and a patient and attentive guide. My specific plan was to spend the day short-line nymphing, and nymphing we did.

Noel was an excellent teacher and both guided and taught with clarity and simplicity. He explained his view of the techniques we used and ensured that I spent every possible minute fishing every single part of the beats we were in. I was collected at 9:00 am and returned to the hotel at around 8:30 pm. None of the fishing was more than 10 - 15 minutes from the hotel, so minimal time was wasted in transit, and we parked only minutes from the beats we were fishing. While we spent all of our time on the

Nore proper, there was the option of several feeder streams and the selection of where to fish was down to angler preference and seasonal variations.

Compared with many other countries the guiding rates in Ireland were very reasonable. At around 180 Euros (AUD \$260) per day the value is astounding. Noel sourced me a pair of waders and boots that fitted well and was able to supply any equipment I needed. The guiding fee included local permits, licences and lunch. I can heartily recommend Noel and his local waters for anyone wanting a small stream experience in waters loaded with fish.

The Fishing

Using a short, tight line technique with dry fly indicators in shallow water, and fluorescent line indicators, with weighted nymphs, in the deeper water, we caught somewhere around 20 - 30 fish over the day. This was achieved in only two runs on the river, the longer of which was around 400 metres. None of the fish >>>



Noel Molloy playing a fish (from his website)



Landing a tiny Nore trout

were particularly large, the biggest being around 25 – 30 cm. But they were prolific and found everywhere, from the larger fish in 3 - 4 foot deep areas to fingerlings in 6 inches of water, in fact the sort of water that I would generally walk through rather than fish.

Nymphing the Nore

The techniques we used were the same as those I had learned in Australia but with shallower water, and flows varying from fast to almost still, we also used some much smaller and lighter nymphs.

Noel ties his nymphs particularly skinny and uses minimal weight. Despite this they seemed to get down quickly and some of the takes came within seconds of the nymphs hitting the water.

This reinforced for me the great importance of maintaining a tight line at all times so that these early, and often subtle, takes could be picked up. Needless to say this was quite a challenge with only fine leader material and ultralight nymphs to cast and control. I probably missed as many fish again as the 20 - 30 that I caught.



River Nore brown trout

We didn't see many rising fish at any stage of the day but Noel assured me that I could use a dry to tempt fish to the surface if I wanted. He also gave me the option to fish some of the other smaller waters, but given the success of fishing the main River Nore it wasn't needed.

The River Nore is hardly a trophy water though fish up to 5 lb are sometimes taken. Despite this it is as pretty a stream as you will see and the small streamside Grennan Castle, next to the Thomastown Hurling Club grounds, is delightful to explore. If you get the opportunity to fish in the south east of Ireland make the effort to get to Thomastown, look Noel up and book a day's (or several) fishing the River Nore and its tributaries.



FLY OF THE MONTH

The Beadhead Pheasant Tail Flashback Nymph



This fly is one that was promoted some years ago by the guides at Goulburn Valley Fly Fishers. It's fairly quick and easy to tie, and once you get yourself organised you can put together a pile in no time. It's a good fly too, and has caught a lot of fish in the rivers around Thornton.

To quote from the Goulburn Valley website:

"This fly has been one of our real favourites at the (Goulburn Valley) fly fishing centre. At any time we will have a hundred of this humble pattern in our boxes, and as far as listing a most successful nymph pattern on the Goulburn, well this would have to be it. All who have read our fishing reports over the past two years would know of its reputation. Great when fished in fast water and over drop offs, it is the first choice when fishing the sliding indicator rig with a Royal Stimulator on top. It's an extremely successful fly that we use everywhere we go. A must have on all Victorian rivers, it works particularly well in the Goulburn, Mitta Mitta and Swampy Plain rivers. In fact it should be carried in all sizes from 12 - 18 whenever you are fishing Victorian rivers for trout."

So there's the recommendation, and it's fairly easy to tie, so give it a go.

>>>

Materials needed:

- Hook:** Wet fly or nymph hook, sizes 12 – 18 (size14 being a good size to start with).
- Thread:** Dark brown Unithread 8/0 .
- Bead:** Gold, 2.4 mm being the ideal size for a #14 hook.
- Tail:** Fibres from a natural brown pheasant tail feather.
- Body:** Fibres from the same natural brown pheasant tail feather.
- Rib:** Fine copper wire.
- Thorax:** Peacock herl
- Wingcase:** Narrow strip of some silvery material – Flashabou, Shimmerflash, Uni-Mylar, ...

Tying Procedure:

1. Slide the bead around the hook shank so that it sits hard up against the eye, then insert the hook in the vice.
2. Tie a few turns of fine lead wire behind the bead and push them into the back of the bead to keep it centred and to add a bit of extra weight.
3. Tie on the thread and run some turns over the lead, then down to the bend.
4. Tie in half a dozen fibres from the pheasant tail feather to make the tail, which should be slightly shorter than the hook shank.
5. Tie in a short length of copper wire for the rib.
6. Tie in four or five fibres from the pheasant tail feather for the body, then the thread back to just behind the bead.
7. Wind the pheasant tail fibres around the hook shank to construct the body and tie them off behind the bead.
8. Wind the copper wire in loose turns around the body to form the rib. Wind it in the opposite direction to the direction the pheasant tail fibres were wound. This avoids the problem of the rib sinking into the pheasant tail fibres and thus disappearing from view.
9. Tie off the copper wire rib behind the bead, and then tie in the short strip of shiny reflective material for the wingcase. Leave this pointing back over the tail.
10. Tie in one or two fibres of peacock herl for the thorax. (The thorax should be slightly shorter than the body.)
11. Wind the thread back to just behind the bead, then wind some turns of the peacock herl up to this point then tie the herl off.
12. Lift the wingcase over the thorax and tie it off right behind the bead.
13. Whip finish the thread behind the bead, then cut the thread and add a small drop off head cement with a toothpick to complete the fly.





LIBRARY NEWS

A note from our librarian, Rick Dugina:

Very few members are using this valuable resource. I am looking for suggestions as to how it can be made more accessible.

Please contact me on mobile 0401 963 601 or via the email library@vffa.org.au

I am currently updating the database to bring in some great first editions. This will be displayed on the website soon. I am also reviewing the old rules around the lending criteria. We'll keep you posted.

V.F.F.A. ITEMS FOR SALE

The Association has the following quality items for sale:

Book "The Country For An Angler" (the History of the VFFA)	\$70.00 each
Book "Geehi to Great Lake"	\$45.00 each
Book "Time Flies: A Victorian Fly Fishers' Association Fly Box 1932-2015."	\$70.00 each
Columbia Shirts.....	\$70.00 each
Polarfleece jacket with VFFA logo	\$40.00 each
Association ties (blue or maroon)	\$35.00 each
Wine glasses and whisky glasses inscribed with VFFA logo, set of 6	\$45.00 per set
Cloth badges.....	\$7.00 each
<i>The Australian Trout by Jack Ritchie</i>	\$20.00
V.F.F.A. car stickers.....	\$2.00 each

Members wishing to purchase any of these items should contact
Hugh Maltby prior to the monthly General Meeting on telephone 0423 283 079.

VALUED DONORS

The following made donations for the raffle at the 2016 Annual Dinner:

- Aussie Angler Tackle Outfitters • Armadale Angling • Australian Fishing Network
- Essential Fly Fisher Launceston • FlyLife Publishing • FlyFinz Fishing Tackle and Books • Gavin Hurley's Fly Fishing & Pro-Angler • J.M. Gillies Pty Ltd
- Mayfly Tackle Pty Ltd • Millbrook Lakes • Ray Brown Onkaparinga Flies
- Stevens Publishing Pty Ltd • The Flyfisher Tackle Store Melbourne
- Hook Up Bait & Tackle •

VFFA Meetings at the Celtic Club & other activities.

December 2016

- 5 Monday Council Meeting - 7:30 PM
- 15 Thursday Christmas Dinner – 6:30 for 7:00 pm
Speaker: Philip Weigall – fishing guide and prominent author
and writer

February 2017

- 6 Monday Council Meeting - 7:30 PM
- 11 - 17 Tasmanian Trip at Hayes on Brumbys
Event Co-ordinator – Hamish Hughes
- 23 Thursday General Meeting – a lunchtime meeting – 12 noon in
the Shamrock Restaurant. Guest Speaker: Rick Dobson, from
Aussie Angler.

March 2017

- 16 Thursday General Meeting – 8:00 PM
Guest Speaker: TBC
- 20 Monday Council Meeting - 7:30 PM
- 24 – 26 Annual Big River trip

April 2017

- 14 – 17 Easter 2017
- 20 Thursday General Meeting – 8:00 PM
Guest Speaker: Antony Boliancu, guide from the Goulburn Valley
Fly Centre
- 24 Monday Council Meeting - 7:30 PM
- 28 Friday Bairnsdale Fly Fishing Club's 50th Anniversary Dinner
- 29 – 30 Donger Weekend with Bairnsdale Fly Fishing Club

May 2017

- 18 Thursday General Meeting – 8:00 PM
Guest Speaker: TBC
- 22 Monday Council Meeting - 7:30 PM