

FLY LINES



SEPTEMBER 2018

The VFFA Annual General Meeting

Members are reminded that the September meeting will be our AGM, and President Mike Jarvis is keen to remind us that all financial members are eligible for nomination and election to the Council. Notice papers relevant to the AGM are included with this newsletter, these being the Nomination Form, the Appointment of Proxy Form, and the meeting agenda.

Council meets regularly, and all the management issues involved in running the Association are dealt with at these meetings, so that our monthly general meetings can be given over totally to the advertised activities – guest speakers, auctions, fly tying demonstrations, ...

So if you have some experience and skills in management and a keen desire to see our Association remain vibrant

Thursday, September 20,
8:00 pm,
at the Kelvin Club

and responsive to the needs of members, please give some thought to nominating for Council. Meetings are invariably lively and entertaining, and you will enjoy your participation as well as no doubt contributing useful perspectives and opinions for the benefit of our Association.

The date – Thursday, September 20, at the Kelvin Club.

All members are welcome to join us at 6:15 pm for dinner in the Kelvin Club prior to the meeting, but PLEASE make a booking by 5:00 pm on Wednesday, September 19, by phoning 0498 254 497 and leaving a message.



Your Council hard at work

THE VICTORIAN FLY FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

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Index

The VFFA Annual General Meeting	1	VFFA Notice of Major Event.....	17
VFFA Office Holders	2	Talk Wild Trout 2018.....	17
New Members.....	3	Melbourne Freshwater Fish Habitat	
President’s Message	4	Workshop.....	19
The October Meeting with Kristina &		Flight of Fancy.....	20
Adam Royter.....	5	European Nymphing - My approach	
Peter Morse at the August Annual		(part 2).....	24
Dinner.....	7	Report from way out west.....	29
From the Editor’s Desk.....	13	Tasmanian trout fishing season outlook	35
Cast Away 2018.....	15	Fly of the Month	37
Three Important Events	16	VFFA Meetings & Activities	40



Lake Emily- a Nancy Tichborne watercolour

New Members

This month we have the pleasure of welcoming five new members to the Association. Alan Pilkington, Tom Treseder, Cameron Fary, Duncan Johnston, and Duncan Johnston (Snr) have all joined our ranks. We trust that their years of membership will bring a great deal of enjoyment and pleasure. We look forward to welcoming them each personally at a future meeting.

President's Message

Well, after two years this is now my last Message as President of the VFFA. In a way I feel a little sad as I have quite enjoyed the journey, but it is time for someone else to grasp the reins and help steer the Association into the future.

First let me thank everyone for the support and encouragement I have been given by Council and by members of the VFFA over the past two years. Without that sort of support it would have been a much more difficult role.

I have always considered it an honour to have held the position of President of this association and I sincerely hope that I have managed to contribute in some small way during my tenure. The VFFA is a fine organisation with a wonderful history that has made a significant contribution to fly fishing in the state. I am sure it will continue to play a valuable role into the future.

I have to say I did enjoy the Annual Dinner last month, and I would like to thank everyone involved in making it such a great event. It all ran so smoothly, the food and service were first-class, the raffle and surprise auction a great success, and our speaker really knew his subject. It takes time and effort from a number of people to organise an event such as this. They know who they are, and I'd like to thank them for the fine job they did, along with the people who donated prizes for the raffle.

Despite the fact that a number of regular attendees were away (probably somewhere considerably warmer than Melbourne) we ended up with a good turnout to hear special guest Peter Morse deliver a very thought-provoking presentation on broadening



our fly fishing horizons. While I have no problems targeting other fish species with a fly (and do so from time to time) I must say I hope that I will always find that there are trout in a mountain river somewhere to challenge my casting capabilities.

And talking of casting I owe some of you an apology for not mentioning during the evening that there would be no President's Casting Day the day after the dinner. It was cancelled last year because of a lack of support the previous year, and as we had not received any groundswell of interest to re-instate the event nor any volunteers to run it, it was left off our calendar for 2018. I probably should have mentioned this during my remarks during the evening and I apologise for any inconvenience this might have created.

The next meeting on September 20 is the AGM, and although many people tend

to regard this as a bit boring and not up to the standard of our regular general meetings with a guest speaker, it really is important that the AGM is supported by members, as they should be interested and concerned about what is in store for their association and who will be leading it into the future. Dinner at the Kelvin Club will be available as usual, so come along, have a meal and a drink or two with friends and be part of the decision-making of the VFFA.

Well, that's it from me, not just for this month but forever. I will be staying on Council as the Immediate Past President and look forward to catching up with you at future VFFA meetings and events.

Take care and tight lines.



The October meeting with Kristina and Adam Royter

Kristina and Adam are well known in the Australian fly fishing world. Among other significant contributions both have written articles for *FlyLife* and other publications. They moved to New Zealand some years ago, and commenced a trout guiding operation - Stray South Fishing Outfitters - a few months ago. Here is Adam's introduction to their world:

Fishing South of the Border

Geographically, if you fish where we live, you're fishing south of any border in Australia. Our home town of Alexandra, in the South Island of New Zealand, is some 200 km south of the most southern town in Tasmania. So, when we say it's cold, we mean it! But let's look at what the fishing here has to offer.

I've been fly fishing for 31 years and involved in the fishing industry for 30



Kristina Royter showing her consummate skills



Adam releasing a fine South Island trout >>>

years, so have a clear idea of what is and what is not a good fishery.

New Zealand offers something different to the travelling angler. It's not that you can't catch a 10-pounder in Australia, because you can! But people come to New Zealand because the fishing is excellent (on the right day), and yes, the fish are on average considerably bigger. And this is the point - you shouldn't come to New Zealand to catch a 10-pounder. You come instead to tackle fish that are 3 to 5 pounds with every hook set. So, you're getting more bang for your buck!

Now trout are the most opportunistic freshwater fish around and that makes them pretty easy to catch. If I was to give you just three pieces of advice on fishing New Zealand they would be these:

First, you need to fish skinnier tippet. The water here is incredibly clear and if you don't make allowances for that then you're going to get refusals! The bottom line is you'll be fishing more 4lb tippet than anything else, so you'll have to be more gentle and take more time when it comes to the netting process.

Second, fish with smaller flies. Trout are stupid, but one thing they are masters at is picking a fraud! Trout have the ability



A superb South Island brown




Making the connection

to look at your offering and instantly refuse it as a fake.

So how then are you going to hold on to this leviathan you've just hooked on a size 16? For starters, hold back a tad on the pressure. Once the fish is hooked, take your time.

Finally, and this is probably the most important thing you can learn to do in your whole fly fishing career — become a better caster. And I'm not talking here about Sunday casting sessions at the club, where you all get out and try to cast a whole fly line. I'm talking about presenting your fly as fast as you can to the fish that's sitting right in front of you.

The majority of the fish you'll catch in New Zealand will be within 30 feet of you, and many will be less than 20! So if you want to practice something useful on your Sunday line-blasting extravaganza, try rigging up a line with a casting fly and a good working leader, and put a dinner plate out 25 feet in front of you. Then, with your fly attached to your guides as if you were walking along the river bank, unhook it, cast, and deliver the fly to the target, i.e. right on that dinner plate.

So, come to the South Island of New Zealand. The fishing is better, the beer is better (trust me on that, because I've had a few), and the times are better when you come on down and fish with the Royters at Stray South Fishing Outfitters. 

Peter Morse at the August Annual Dinner

When I was invited to come and speak tonight I asked some members of the Association what I should talk about. I think I spoke to five different people - and got five totally different answers. So it was a little difficult choosing a subject for tonight, but I've put together a show entitled 'Broadening Your Fly Fishing Horizons'.



Peter Morse in full flight

The last time I was here Rex Hunt was too. When I was putting my shirt on for tonight I remembered that occasion, and that I had purchased this particular shirt in London a few years ago when I was there to do a talk on Australian fly fishing at Farlow's in Pall Mall. I had packed my one good shirt for that occasion and had sent it off to a local laundry - from where it disappeared. So I had to go and buy a new shirt, which I wore to this presentation at Farlow's.

I had gone to Farlow's earlier in the day when copies of my book were being sold, and there on the counter was a poster advertising the fact that 'On Wednesday night Peter Morse, a famous fisherman from Australia, is coming to do a talk.' I thought it was very nice of them to promote my talk in this way, but while I was standing at the counter another Australian gent appeared who looked at the photo of me on the poster and said:

"That's not Peter Morse. Peter Morse is about 6'4" and he comes from Victoria." I wish Rex was here tonight, as it was he who was identified as being Peter Morse. We could have shared the joke.

The Fly Fishers International organisation promotes 'all waters and all fish', and I have stuck closely to that program for 40 odd years, whereby if it swims I will try to catch it on a fly. A fish species has got to eat, and part of the skill of the fly fisherman is to tie flies that imitate the food that it is feeding on. One of the longest running fly fishing challenges on earth has been milkfish. They are plankton feeders mostly and spend a lot of their time in the blue water sifting plankton from the water. They are also one of the most powerful fish in the ocean. It has taken years for fly fishermen to develop patterns that we can consistently catch them on. And that's the sort of challenge that we as fly fishermen absolutely love.

So my talk tonight is about expanding your horizons. It's about opening up your view of what fly fishing actually is. Now I know that we have a lot of trout fisherman here in the room. Where I live in the Blue Mountains there is a national park over the road from my house, and the street in front of my house connects



Sorting out the raffle winners

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Bill Fary with his son Cam and son-in-law Tom Tresseder. Cam and Tom are new VFFA members.

to a walking track, so we get lots of walkers passing by. Now I do a lot of casting practice out on the road where I've painted fish there as targets. There are trees on both sides of the road so it's a wonderful place to practice my casting.

There is an endless stream of walkers passing by when I'm casting, and they always ask: "Where do you go trout fishing around here?" I tell them that I don't fish for trout around here, and then they say, "But you are fly fishing!" Then it becomes an explanation that fly fishing in today's world is not confined to trout like it once was, but is more defined by fly casting - the method we use to get our imitation of an insect or other food item to the fish. We cast to the fish using a fly line to carry the fly to the target, regardless of what the fly represents, and, to me, regardless of what species of fish it is.

So my life of fly fishing has been about chasing all these other species and trying to push the boundaries and catch species that haven't even entered the radar of most fly fishermen. My talk tonight goes a little down that path, though I've made it as local as I possibly can and I haven't included any particularly exotic species.

Fly fishing is all about casting, and that's what defines the sport for me. I do like

fishing for trout and I spend about a month of every year in New Zealand. I also get to the Snowies as often as I can, so don't think that I am in any way anti-trout. I grew up fly fishing for them and both my father and my grandfather were fly fisherman. So I guess I do have the fly fishing gene in my system.

But I do love catching all sorts of fish, regardless of what they are. In the last 15 years we've gone through drought cycles and climate change and river degradation, and we have faced locked gates and decreasing access to trout waters. I moved to the Blue Mountains in 1979 for the fishing, but haven't fished for trout there for probably for 15 or 20 years, simply because it is now so difficult and so marginal.

And that's a problem for a lot of young people coming into the sport these days. They want access to trout streams but find they can't get access unless they know someone who will allow them onto some reasonable water. So we accept the idea that there is other water out there with other fish in it, and we want to fly fish, so we'll tie some flies that represent what these other fish eat and we'll try to catch them using fly fishing methods.

Here on the screen is a photo of an estuary system near Coffs Harbour and we're fishing there for blackfish or luderick - a classic weed-eater. Anglers have been tying up weed flies using synthetic materials and dead drifting them to catch these fish. It's interesting that most of the top luderick fishermen in southern New South Wales are now using weed flies rather than natural weed as bait. And we're not talking here about fly fishermen. We are talking about bait fishermen who are using flies instead, because flies are far more effective.

Here is my controversial bit. Carp have become an enormously important species as far as I'm concerned for introducing

people to fly fishing. I run a fly fishing school on Lake Keepit at Tamworth every year, and people come from all around and spend a weekend there learning how to fly fish. I had an elderly man come down from Armadale a few years ago who was in his mid-70s. He had fished for trout all of his life up in the New England streams, and while he had fly fished for 60 years he had never seen the backing on his reel. I put him onto a big carp and he couldn't believe it. He hasn't fished for trout since then, but goes carp fishing all the time.

Carp, as awful as they are in appearance, make up 95% of the biomass in our freshwater systems. The latest information I heard is that they now won't be introducing the virus that was developed to kill the carp because of the massive cleanup problems that will arise. If over 95% of the biomass is killed then the pollution problems will be immense. They may go back to developing the 'daughterless carp program', but that could take 100 years to be introduced. Then again, I'm hearing that some of the virus may be 'accidentally' released in a few places.

However I still believe that carp are a great fly fishing target. When I fish at home, I fish for carp. I had a day on a dam last summer fishing with an

angler called Ken Smith. We fished this dam and caught over 70 carp on dry flies, sight fishing them all in relatively shallow water. If I was asked to write about the ten best days of fishing in my life this day would be one of them. It was extraordinary fishing and purely for sport.

Carp teach you so much about how to handle big fish. I mostly fish for them with 4 and 5 weight rods with 6 lb tippets and Woolly Worms, these being my preferred fly. And it's all sight fishing, there being no point in blind fishing for carp. You find your fish, throw your fly to it, get him to eat it and then deal with it. You will learn more in a week fishing for carp than you will learn in 10 years of fishing for trout. You'll learn heaps about finding fish, spotting fish, and getting a fly in front of them, simply because there are so many more opportunities.

So don't waste them as a resource. Here is a photo of the Turon River which is west of where I live. It's a freestone river and there is a carp in there of about 8 lb. How many shots a year do you get at an 8 lb trout? Maybe one a year in New Zealand? But on this day we were walking up the river and catching 30 or 40 fish a day. And they were a lot of fun. Ten years ago my good mate Peter Hanrahan could



Peter had a captive audience

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not even say the word 'carp' as he hated them. But it's all he fishes for now.

Here is a photo of Lake Keepit, one of my favourite destinations. It's a big shallow dam that reminds me of bonefishing shallow margins. Carp are also about as edible as bonefish. But it's all about the fishing, and about learning how to handle big fish on light rods, so that when you go to New Zealand and hook your 10 lb trout you can handle it. Carp will sort you out quickly if your knots are no good and your fishing skills aren't up to it. Have a look at this photo of a 15 lb carp caught on a 5 weight rod. Wyangala Dam has a silt base and the carp there are quite pelagic. They feed on baitfish, so this is a place where you can catch them sight fishing and using dry flies.

You've all seen carp and you hate them – they are one of the most loathed species here in Australia. However we should make the most of them, because they will teach us a great deal about fly fishing.

Let's go now to the coastal rivers and fishing for bass. This is the Macleay River. I did a trip there with some mates in 2007 and we spent three days boating down this river catching bass up to 50 cm, all on surface flies and casting with 5 and 6 weight rods.

Almost all the fishing I'm talking about here tonight involves using tackle that you already own. You don't need to go out and buy 9 or 10 weight rods. Just take your trout gear out with whatever fly line that you've got. You might need to change the leader a bit though, and use some different flies. And then go bass fishing. There is some wonderful bass fishing east of here, and wherever you find bass you also find estuary perch. We catch them on surface flies. It's wonderful summer time fishing.

Three years ago we floated down the Douro River on the south NSW coast expecting to find some big bass. When we

got there we sensed there was something missing – the sound of cicadas. And there were no bass in the river, as all the big bass had pushed up into the headwater streams.

The next species I want to touch on are yellow belly. In New South Wales we catch a lot in both impoundments and rivers, and particularly the rivers of New England. Wherever you find Murray cod you're going to find yellow belly. They are almost a by-catch when you're fishing for Murray cod. These are fish that are not on anyone's radar, but they may be. If they eat then they are going to eat a fly, so don't dismiss them. They love gravel and rocks and they prefer the rocky points. So use an intermediate line and heavy wet flies to get down deep and fish across the bottom. In the rivers they hang around the snags and you usually catch them when you're fishing for cod.

I do most of my Murray cod fishing up in the New England rivers and their headwater streams. They are a wonderfully iconic Australian fish, and extremely predatory. The Rise Film Festival this year includes an extraordinary movie produced by Josh Hutchins fishing for Murray cod near where I live. There was one cod caught that was well over a metre in length. Cod are becoming an increasingly important fly rod target, with more and more fishermen chasing them.

Moving down to the coast now and we are fishing a Tasmanian East Coast river for bream. There were big weed beds there and the bream were sitting in among these weed beds. They were also sitting in among the bushes. Very challenging fishing. If you go to Tassie regularly and get blown out of the Highlands then get yourself down to the east coast where you'll find some fantastic bream fishing, particularly in the coastal lagoons. Here is a photo of a Tassie river. We were fishing hard in

against the bushes there where the fish were all lined up. But it was one cast per bush, because if you caught a fish then you didn't get another one at that spot. Bream are very smart fish.



A magnificent Tasmanian bream caught on a fly

Here are some photos of Muz Wilson flies and a Tasmanian black bream from the West Coast river. The next photo shows another bream caught on a Muz Wilson BMS fly. It's a yellowfin bream from a NSW East Coast lagoon that had been cut off from the ocean for a number of years. There was a big soldier beetle hatch happening and the bream were rising everywhere eating soldier beetles. When we arrived we could see fish cruising a big weed bed and we ended up catching them on Royal Wulffs. Bream eat live insects and were happy to sip a Royal Wulff off the surface.

So you can see that we need to push our fly fishing boundaries and change our expectations. If there are insects around they will get eaten. I recall an occasion when a big easterly wind was blowing off the coast in West Australia and there were grasshoppers on the surface 10 miles out to sea, and small snapper were coming up to feed on them. If insects get on the water then stuff is going to come up and eat them. Then your trout fishing experience becomes extremely relevant.

Here are some more pics of bream fishing in Tasmania. There were stingrays in the water, and bream came all around the stingrays eating little shrimps. The flies

we use for bream include shrimpy things and prawns and crabs. We have flies for the bottom and some for mid-water, and some surface flies. They feed on galaxias in the lakes in New South Wales, and I'm sure you'll find the same in the Gippsland Lakes. In the big cicada years bream linger in the lee shores off the forest areas and eat the cicadas that fall on the surface.



If you look carefully to the left of the reel you can see the outline of a well-hidden flathead – a top ambush predator.

Flathead of course are probably the most popular recreational fish in Australia, and are usually found on the edges of sandbars on falling tides, particularly the second half of the runout tide. Beautifully camouflaged, they are an ambush predator and a lot of fun to catch. Great eating too.

We also do a fair bit of fly fishing for whiting on the New South Wales flats. Ron Pearson, a retired school principal living in Albany in West Australia,

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Whiting can be caught on flies...

worked out how to catch King George Whiting using sinking lines with a fly on the bottom in the sand. It's not sight fishing, but they are delicious. Here in the central New South Wales coast the best whiting fishing occurs when there is a prawn run on. We use surface flies on them – poppers retrieved really fast. When whiting are in the mood they will hit almost anything, but it requires a very fast retrieve.

For years people tried retrieving worm flies slowly along the bottom but then we discovered that whiting love a fast retrieve. Edges of weed beds are good spots and so too are channels with a little bit of deeper water. These days anglers fishing for whiting often tie in small stinger hooks behind their flies, as whiting are notorious tail nippers. They will follow, nipping at your fly, but you won't get a bite. So a little trailing stinger hook will help pick them up.

Salmon are the next pelagic fish to consider, being prolific in your harbour here. Apparently they're being caught at the mouth of the Barwon River at present. These fish are widely available on the Victorian coast and again in Tasmania. They are a great introductory fish for saltwater fly fishing. The West Australian version grows to about 15 lb, being a slightly different species. They are a great sport fish, though dreadful eating.

Here is a photo of Mark Taylor, well-known Australian cricket captain, fishing for small tuna on Sydney Harbour using light trout rods and small flies and fast retrieves. Yellow tail kingfish can also be caught along the coast. They are making a huge comeback after being decimated by the commercial fish traps. They are a top sport fish.



... and so can snapper

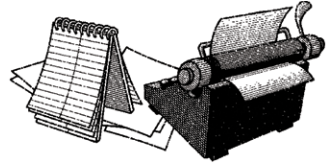
And finally the fish that Port Phillip Bay is so famous for – our snapper. What's required to catch a snapper on a fly?

Enormous patience and the capacity to fish very deep. They are a very highly prized table fish and sport fish, once enormously prolific and now recovering. They are caught in West Australia on fast sinking lines where the fly needs to sink faster than the line. We locate them using depth sounders and fish for them mainly in 10 – 12 metres of water. Snapper hit a fly very hard, and to catch them we needed to use very fast sinking lines with short leaders and heavy flies. The flies we used are Clouser deceivers. I don't think the colour matters too much.

So that's it. My aim tonight was to encourage you to explore some other fly fishing opportunities. I hope I've done that.



From the EDITOR'S DESK



My friends Andrew and Eve live at Cygnet, near the Huon estuary. Their house was built years ago – by hippies – with more enthusiasm than skill, definitely without council approval, probably while under the influence of hallucinogenic mushrooms. The poorly applied cladding allows not only breezes to pass through the building, but also wildlife. Only last week they removed a large tiger snake from their young daughter's bedroom.” (The opening paragraph from a chapter in Greg French's latest book – *Water Colour*.)

I thoroughly enjoyed this year's Wild Trout Conference. The sessions were entertaining and extremely informative, lunch was superb, and – a real bonus – there was opportunity to catch up with a number of fly fishing colleagues. Some were friends I hadn't seen in ages, and a few were people I had known only as email contacts. It was beaut, for instance, to finally catch up with Kylie Hall, a scientist at the Arthur Rylah Institute who is a keen reader of our newsletters.

Greg French was there too, signing copies of his latest book – *Water Colour*. I bought a copy and can strongly recommend it. Greg is a skilled and entertaining writer, and once you start reading it's a hard book to put down. It's not all about fishing either, though there are enough great fishing stories to confirm that Greg is indeed a master angler.

The latest issue of *FlyLife* (number 93, Spring 2018) has a comprehensive review of *Water Colour* by Rob Sloane. Rob reminds us that Greg loves dogs, young children, family, friends, world travel, and printed maps. He dislikes driving, shopping, shampoo, nonsensical rules and regulations, bureaucracy, clear felling, hire cars, and heaps else. And as you'll learn from the book, he dresses like a vagabond, drives his beaten up sedan beyond sensible limits, wears elastic sided boots for walking and wading (same pair), is generous, sincere in his

beliefs, good with his hands, true to his word and, with the exception of travel, has no care for the material things money can buy.

In the book Greg tells us that he only ever owns one fishing rod at a time, replacing it when it gets broken beyond repair. In the early 1990s he broke his rod, so went around to visit his friend Lester for advice. Lester was on the back lawn threading a fly line onto a brand-new four piece 6-weight Sage, which he laid on the ground to go and greet Greg. At that moment Lester's cat leapt out of the apple tree, pounced on the rod and bit off the tip. Lester cursed like a madman, and said he was going to Launceston to buy new one. He gave the Sage with the broken tip to Greg, who glued on a new tip guide and used the rod for many years. He broke it countless times, and the Sage company repaired it or provided replacement sections each time. The story is quite a saga.

In another chapter Greg talks about his meticulous fishing diaries and goes on to say that “the fact that I have recorded (detailed) data on countless occasions for dozens of lakes and rivers means that I can now predict where the best fishing will be on any given day at any time of the year. And, trust me, choice of venue can be the most important decision a fly fisher makes.” That would indeed be a very useful point to reach in >>>

one's fishing career, though getting there undoubtedly involved a high cost in time and effort.

I came across one particular chapter that I thought would be great to include in this issue of our newsletter. So I emailed Greg and asked for permission to use it, then immediately regretted my impertinence in asking if I could filch his material for our newsletter. But within an hour Greg had emailed me back, inviting me to go ahead and providing a pile of photos to go with the chapter I wanted to use. So "Flight of Fancy" is included in this issue. It's a ripper yarn too, so enjoy it.

Greg's book is of course a compilation of memories, and memories are such an important component of our fly fishing lives. I know that when Hubert or Andrew arrive home from yet another successful trip to New Zealand's South Island I'm itching to catch up and hear the stories. How do it all go? How was the fishing? What were the highlights? Wayne Sanderson has just arrived home from some weeks in Alaska and British Columbia. I'll buy him a coffee soon too, and pester him for the details.

Memories come in all colours. One with a less than savoury finale that I recall relates to the end of 1981, the year I spent working in New Zealand. I fished a lot that year with Ray, a neighbour who was a very keen fly fisher with a great knowledge of the local streams. As often as we could we'd head off in his ancient Holden sedan.

Ray was a keen fly tier but resented paying for the necessary bits at tackle shops, so had a habit of collecting his raw material along the way. We'd be driving off to a river somewhere for a bit of trout when Ray would spot a dead rabbit or possum or fox or bird on the road. He would immediately hit the brakes and dash back to collect the cadaver, then stuff it into a plastic bag in

the boot of his car (which had developed a fruity fragrance from the putrefying bodies accumulating there). When he arrived home he would rescue as much usable fur or feathers as he could and include these in his next batch of flies. He caught a lot of fish, and I strongly suspected that the trout he undid were attracted as much by the smell of his flies as the delicacy of his tying.

Ray was also, by a country mile, the worst fly caster I had ever seen. His fly rod was a decrepit ancient cane weapon he had rescued at a car boot sale and then repaired with strips of electrician's tape. He couldn't cast with it, and neither could I. No-one could – it was shocker, but he still caught a ton of fish with it.

He used a fast sinking line and big wet flies, and the water we mostly fished were small, clear, fast-flowing streams. When we arrived he would wade out into the top of a run and strip generous amounts of line off his reel and let them fall onto the surface. The coils of line and the attached wet fly would rapidly disappear downstream in the current, and then Ray would then start retrieving line slowly and carefully, working his fly through all the likely spots. He connected often, and to some surprisingly large fish at times.

Like most New Zealand fly fishers in those years, Ray wore a pair of heavy rubber waders that were standard issue there. He often looked enviously at my Aussie Horne waders, and at the end of the year he asked if he could buy them from me. I agreed, and some cash swapped hands. The arrangement was that we would make one final trip together and then I'd pass the waders over and they'd be his.

We headed off to the delightful Ohinemuri for our final outing, and had a beaut night, catching fish in a number of runs. It was almost dark when we

arrived at the final section we were to fish, but to get to the water there was a bit of a scramble down a steep gravelly cliff. Of course on my way down I lost my footing and slid the rest of the way on my backside. I wasn't hurt, but the rear end of Ray's new waders were shredded. I was aghast and appalled; Ray was close to tears.

So at the end of the night I gave him the waders and his cash. He figured that with enough superglue and offcuts of vinyl he

could manage a repair. I think that when we parted company we were still on speaking terms (though perhaps barely).

So memories come in all shapes and sizes. Keep collecting them, and enjoy your new season.

Lyndon Webb



Cast Away 2018

Would you like to know how to make a steeple cast in a howling wind. Or, would you like to know how to do the perfect bow-and-arrow cast under a willow tree to a willow grubber? Of course you would!

Perhaps you just want a little more distance from your "bread and butter" overhead cast, or you want the kids to pick up the basics with no bad habits.

So, on Sunday September 16 at the Red Tag pool in Fairfield Ian Sambell and Judith Oliver, both VFFA members and accredited casting instructors, will show you how.

Following the success of this same event last year we are staging another casting clinic, only the 2018 casting clinic will be bigger and better. There will be something for casters of all levels. Experienced fishers who may be wishing to take the kinks out for the up-coming season and the absolute novices will all be catered for.

The clinic is open to members and guests alike, so don't be afraid to bring the wife and kids. This is a golden opportunity to learn from the experts, so dig out your favourite rod and line and turn up.

Those who come will be given a great little casting booklet to take home. In 1990 Bill and Jay Gammel produced a publication for the International Federation of Fly Fishers called *The Essentials of Fly Casting*. Their intent was to 'help fly casters learn quickly to cast more efficiently'. Once casters know and remember the five essentials of casting they are in a better position to analyse their casts and correct their own mistakes. Copies of this now classic booklet will be available to all who come to the casting clinic.

The clinic will run from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and it will culminate with a sausage sizzle.

The IMPORTANT thing this year is that we require bookings. So well before September 16 please ring the VFFA hotline - 0498 254 497 - and leave your name and the number of people attending.

We stress this is very important.

Don't miss the opportunity to learn from the masters.

Tight lines,

Dermot O'Brien.

Three Important Events

Latrobe Dams in October

This year's trip to Thorpdale is scheduled for Sunday, October 7. The Latrobe Valley club stocks several dams in the local area and each year VFFA members are invited to travel to Thorpdale to fish these dams. The two organisers for this event are Terry Rogers and Hamish Hughes. Members interested in participating will find all the details given in the NOE on the following page.

Given good conditions and friendly weather the dams are attractive and interesting fisheries. The water is often quite clear and fish can be polaroided along the edges. So here is a great opportunity to connect with a trout or two to get the new season underway, fishing in the company of the very friendly and hospitable Latrobe Valley members.



Hamish with a fabulous Thorpdale brown

The Annual Warrnambool Trip in October

The very popular trip to Warrnambool and District is on again this year - from Friday, October 26, to Sunday, October 28. The NOE for this trip was included in last month's issue. Members will fish a number of local rivers including the Merri, Hopkins, Mt Emu and Moyne. These rivers offer a variety of fishing to some very big brown trout.

The members of the Warrnambool Fly Fishers will again guide us, and join with us for a magnificent evening meal at Jim Blakeslee's Winery on the Saturday

evening. Members will each share the cost of this meal and provide their own drinks.

The event organiser is Richard Kos, and members can confirm their interest in participating by contacting him on Mobile 0430 091 300, or email – kossy1@bigpond.com.

The Visit by Simon Gawesworth in November

Many members will recall the visit by world champion fly caster Simon Gawesworth in March of 2015. The great news is that Simon is returning again this year in early November. So we are moving our November meeting to a dinner on Thursday, November 1, which will be held at the Metropolitan Hotel in William Street. Simon will be our guest speaker that night, and he will talk about casting and RIO products. He will be joined on the night by Marc Bale, who works for the Gillies company and who will tell us about the latest Sage products. The cost of the dinner will be \$60, and an invitation will be included next month in the October issue of *Fly Lines*.

On the Saturday, November 3, Simon will be running a casting clinic at Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club's casting pool at Yarrambat. Simon is only in Australia for a few days, so we are very fortunate to have him for these two exciting events.



Simon – a champion angler and caster

VFFA Notice of Major Event – Thorpdale Dams

October 7, 2018

Our LVFF colleagues stock a number of large dams on private farms around the Thorpdale district. Trout up to 9lb have been caught. The LVFF members are particularly friendly and they invite all our members to join them at the VFFA Dam Day on Sunday October 7. LVFF are our honorary guides. After a morning's fishing we get together for a BBQ and then set off again or an afternoon fish.

Location

Meeting place Thorpdale public gardens opposite the Bakery.

Date and Timing

Sunday October 7. Meet at 9 AM for 9:15 AM departure for dams.

(Make sure you have adjusted your clock for daylight savings summer time.)

Catering

The LVFF will put on a BBQ in the Thorpdale gardens at lunchtime. BYO drinks, if required.

Cost is a multiple coin collection to cover lunch and a raffle to raise funds for stocking the dams.

Equipment

#6 rod and reel. Full waders not required. Sunglasses, brimmed hat, suncream and wet weather jacket just in case.

Registration

Please book on VFFA message number 0498 254 497 by Friday, October 5, so our hosts can arrange guiding and catering for all VFFA guests.

Event Co-ordinators

Hamish Hughes and Terry Rogers

Date of this notice - August 21, 2018

Wild Trout Conference 2018 – a Passion for Trout

... Dermot O'Brien

The fourth Talk Wild Trout Conference took place on August 11 at the Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre in Preston. Like the previous conferences in Mansfield it was well attended and a resounding success.

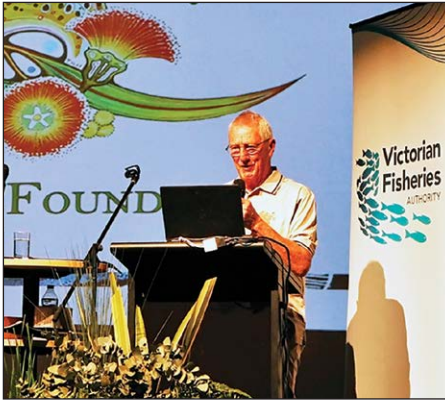
The VFFA had a healthy representation as trout fishers from all over Victoria, including a bus load from Bairnsdale, gathered to demonstrate their passion for trout, discuss trout and hear the latest from Victorian Fisheries staff and other experts.

Guest speaker Jim Fredericks from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game told the audience that though management

programs emphasise maintenance of self-sustaining populations of trout over



John Douglas was one of the presenters >>>



So, too, was Terry George, president of the Australian Trout Foundation

hatchery supplementation, hatcheries are still an important component of the Idaho fishery management programs. He said that hatchery trout, mainly rainbow trout, are used in reservoirs and streams where the habitat is not capable of supporting natural production sufficient to meet angler demands.

He told the audience that Idaho stock about 10 million trout per year. And Idaho is roughly the same size as Victoria and has a population of 1.7 million.

According to the latest research surveys in Victoria, the size range of trout likely to be encountered by anglers is around the 25 cms mark and there are better fish in some streams. The research indicates that Victoria is not a trophy fishery but provides numbers of fish with in the 25 – 40 cm size. The research also indicates that the Victorian fishery is very resilient and the trout populations have shown their capability of recovering quickly after adverse events.

And, while trout populations can vary considerably from season to season, there were enduring populations of trout in all streams surveyed.

“Health Cards” for six streams were interesting. The Buckland River – very good, Upper Goulburn River -excellent, Howqua River – excellent, Jamieson River – good, King River system – very good, and the Taralgon Creek – good. During the day (as at previous conferences) stocking was referred to time and time again.

The experts keep telling is that the survival rates for stocked fish are LOW. As an example, reports of a low abundance of trout in both the Howqua and the Upper Goulburn rivers led to Fisheries spending nearly \$900,000 to trial stocking hatchery trout in these rivers a few years ago. Some 30,000 yearling browns were fin-clipped and stocked – 5,000 per year in each river for three successive years. Then when an electro-fishing exercise was carried out on both rivers, a grand total of 17 fin-clipped trout were found. So stocking yearling trout in wild trout streams didn’t seem a good idea. But the good news is that the research indicates that wild fish populations recover quickly from lower numbers.

A big part of the day was devoted to habitat, and the message is that habitat is key to the long-term survival of trout. Trout fishers through their clubs and associations were urged to get behind the Angler Riparian Partnerships Program by contacting a CMA. (The VFFA has been a prime mover in two such events in recent years.)

Terry George and Matt Byrne from the Australian Trout Foundation were able to point to their successes in assisting trout habitat over recent times. The ATF also took attendees through an explanation of how the Jordan-Scotty incubator boxes work and described a recent hands-on project at the Snobs Creek Hatchery. It is too early to tell if the Jordan-Scotty



Dermot O'Brien, a VFFA councillor; chaired part of the afternoon discussions



program has been a success, but hopes are high.

After the heavy stuff Rex Hunt took attendees through his trout fishing journey and Phil Weigall addressed the impending opening of the stream season with ten tips for fly fishers.

All in all the conference was very worthwhile. It continues to demonstrate, by the Victorian Fisheries Authority and fishers alike, a commitment to trout in Victoria.

Melbourne Freshwater Fish Habitat Workshop

The Australian Trout Foundation is organising another Melbourne Fish Habitat Workshop. Volunteers are needed to help with a number of habitat projects which will enhance our Wild Trout Fishery. We need to plant native trees, shrubs and grasses in the riparian zones along the river banks, and to put snags and boulders back into the streams.

So you are invited to the Melbourne Freshwater Fish Habitat Workshop

Date: Saturday, October 6, from 9:30am to 3:30pm

Venue: Arthur Rylah Institute
Conference Room: 123 Brown Street, Heidelberg.

Meals: Morning Tea and Lunch provided.

Who should attend the Workshop? Habitat Volunteers who have already worked on restoration projects; or who would like to register for restoration works; or interested anglers who are

interested in joining a Habitat Committee to take on important roles in co-ordinating habitat restoration projects.

There is a rapidly growing interest in helping develop and grow sustainable fisheries. Anglers who interested in joining the volunteers are invited come on board with The Australian Trout Foundation, Native Fish Australia, the Victorian Fisheries Authority, the Department of Environment Land Water & Planning, the Freshwater Fish Habitat & Flows Alliance, Arthur Rylah Institute, VRFish & the Victorian Fly Fishers Association, and take some ownership of our fisheries.

The ATF has acquired funding from Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) and the Department of Environment Land Water & Planning (DELWP) to present Fish Habitat Workshops in North East Victoria, Melbourne, Gippsland and South West Victoria. So come and hear all about it on Saturday, October 6.

Flight of Fancy

... a chapter from Greg French's most recent book, *Water Colour*. Used with permission, and some great photos he kindly provided.

I'm at a party chatting with a fly fishing friend, Rick Stuart-Smith. "How would you like to fly down to New River Lagoon with me and Dad?" he says. New River Lagoon is located in the Southwest National Park, halfway along the South Coast Track, 25 kilometres from the nearest road. It has recently become moderately popular with backcountry fly fishers, the main attraction being the reliability of bait-feeding trout where the outflow stream flushes into the wild Southern Ocean.

"The plane is small," Rick warns. "Dad built it himself from a kit. There's only room for one passenger and even then it's a tight squeeze. You'll only be able to take a rod tube and a small daypack."

People don't often fly to New River Lagoon. I'm not even sure that it's legal, not without a special permit. And Prion Beach, which separates the lagoon from the ocean, is notoriously soft and dangerous.

Rick misinterprets my silent thinking as reluctance. "It won't be much of an

inconvenience for Dad to shuttle us to the lagoon," he adds hastily. "He uses a private airstrip at Sandfly, north of Huonville, which is just 80 kilometres as the crow flies from Prion Beach. I'll meet you both at Sandfly, and once you two take off I'll start driving south to Southport, which is only 30 kilometres from Prion Beach. By the time Dad drops you off and flies east over Mount La Perouse I'll already be it Southport waiting for him. It'll all be quite efficient really, and Dad loves flying so just accept that you'll be doing him a favour."

I hate flying. Then again, I've never been one to turn my back on an adventure. "Sounds great. Can't wait. When will we go?"

"Next month suit you?"

"September is a bit early for reliable runs of whitebait. October would be better, November better still."

"Problem is I'm having surgery on my shoulder in October."

"Okay, September then. What date?"



Room for just one pilot and one angler!

"Well, we can't book a day as such. The plane is tiny, remember, so the weather has to be absolutely perfect. What say the last week in September? Expect a call on the first day with light wind and no fog or low cloud. You'll have to be ready at the drop of a hat."

I decide not to ask any more questions. Doubtless the answers would be equally unsettling. The phone call comes on the evening of September 22. "Tomorrow's the day. The forecast is brilliant. See you at Sandfly at eight in the morning."

The airstrip turns out to be little more than an unimproved sheep paddock, sloping uphill, lumpy with tussocks. It reminds me of Mongolia, of how scared I was in the Cessna Caravan coming in to land on the ungroomed steppe. Then again, I survived that landing, and this doesn't look any worse.

I drive through an open farm gate and along the edge of the runway towards what appears to be a farmer's machinery shed. The front comprises several large roller doors, one of which is wide open. I spy a tiny white plane inside. And a spritely man, buzzing about, oiling this, wiping that. Getting out of my car, I realise I don't have butterflies in my stomach so much as albatrosses.

The plane has been parked nose-first in the shed, and given the depth of the bay I calculate that it must be less than 7 metres in length. The wings, barely head-high, are attached above the cockpit and have a total span of less than 10 metres.

They look flimsy: aluminium frames bound in shrink wrap. Attached to the top of the wings, where they join above the cockpit, is a naked engine. I can see all the working parts. It reminds me of the Datsun 180B engine that Corky, a mate from my Strahan days, used to plonk on his kitchen table whenever he needed to 'do a bit of work on it'. The propeller is attached to the back of the engine, making it look as though Rick's

dad held the plans upside down during assembly.

I notice Rick in the far corner of the hangar. He strolls over and introduces me to his father, Peter, a semi-retired geologist, who is confident and jovial. "Won't be too long before we take off," Peter says reassuringly. "It takes just half an hour or so to prime the engine and complete the mandatory checks."

After pouring some fluid into the engine, Peter manually turns the propeller, one-third of a rotation at a time, as if cranking an old Ford Model T. Again and again and again he rotates the prop. Then the engine makes a belching sound, like the last croak of a fresh cadaver, as it's being rolled off the hospital bed onto the death trolley. In response, Peter wipes his hands on an oily rag and says triumphantly, "Perfect."

I remind myself not to ask questions, and resolutely turn my attention away from the engine to the branding on the side of the plane: 'Progressive Aerodyne SEAREY'. That seems innocuous enough. More alarming is the disclaimer: 'EXPERIMENTAL'.

"Give me a hand to push her out of the shed, will you," Peter says, and we do. She handles like a heavy boat trailer. Then Peter lifts up the Perspex cockpit cover, climbs in, urges me to 'squeeze in' beside him, and hands me a pair of earmuffs. "The muffs double as headphones so that we can talk to each other above the sound of the engine," he explains. Then he turns a key, the engine fires up, and before I quite realise what's going on we're bouncing along the tussocky runway.

The ground falls away and soon we are cruising smoothly. Ahead I can see Huonville and the long, narrow Huon estuary cutting through the rural flatlands.

Peter, perhaps sensing my nervousness, is first to talk. "The kit for this >>>



The view from the top was magnificent

plane cost \$60,000, and I probably spent a thousand hours putting it together. There are about six hundred in use around the world. Statistically they are super safe." There's unmistakable passion and authority in Peter's voice, the same passion and authority I see in dedicated yachtsmen.

Below us now is the Hartz Mountains National Park. Some of the western slopes adjoining production forests in the Picton valley have been clear-felled - a travesty - but the wilderness to the south and south-west now has World Heritage protection. It amazes and saddens me that most Tasmanians have no idea how globally rare temperate wilderness areas have become, or how valuable the Southwest has become.

Spread before us are vast tracts of lowland rainforest, steep mountains, and highland moors. The effects of ancient glaciation are pronounced: U-shaped valleys, scraped rock sheets, erratic boulders, alpine lakes.

Peter and I try to make sense of the mosaic of vegetation types. Apart from obvious changes due to altitude, many transitional boundaries mirror changes in the underlying geology, from dolerite to sandstone and limestone to quartzite. But sometimes the vegetation changes for no apparent reason. I enjoy mulling the options with Peter. It helps take my mind off the fact that we are sitting high above the wilderness in what reminds me of a flimsy Meccano creation from my youth.

East of us now is Precipitous Bluff, so close it feels as though I could reach out and touch it. It rises steeply out of the dense rainforest to 1145 metres, and we are flying at about 1000 metres, alongside 300-metre cliffs of columnar dolerite. In the 1960s and 1970s this mountain, which dominates views from the South Coast Track and from out at sea, was the scene of one of Australia's seminal conservation battles. A prospecting company, supported by Tasmania's Department of Mines, proposed the mining of high-grade limestone - for the fluxing of iron and steel - from the lower slopes.

Conservation groups battled the matter through the courts and helped establish the principle that members of the public have a legal interest in protecting publicly owned wilderness. Subsequently Precipitous Bluff was included in a major extension of the Southwest National Park, but there was a price to be paid. The state-owned Forestry Commission wanted compensation for the loss of potential production forest, so land was excised from the Hartz Mountains National Park. Included in this act of bastardry were the logged coupes we have just flown over.



Even sea run browns require care and stealth

The lagoon itself, some 8 kilometres long, lies at the foot of Precipitous Bluff and is dark with peat-stained water. I note that the outflow is meandering two kilometres along the back of the beach at the foot of the rainforested dunes. It's not always like this. Sometimes, after storms, the lagoon will break directly out to sea, crossing just a hundred metres or so of beach. Then ocean waves can push right up into the lagoon, and the water everywhere becomes remarkably clear.

We are circling the lagoon now. "I'm just looking for a place to put down. The waves don't bother me - this thing can handle small whitecaps if necessary - but I wouldn't want to hit a partially submerged log or reef." While talking, Peter is winding a handle, akin to those used in old-school cars to raise and lower side windows, and I can see the wheels lifting like an insect's underwings.

So this is an amphibious plane, a flying boat. Who would have guessed? Though I suppose SEAREY - Sea King - would have been a giveaway to someone more mechanically minded and less petrified than me.

The landing, or watering, is remarkably smooth. We motor in to the long bank of pure-white sand that separates the southern shore of the gentle lagoon from the pounding Southern Ocean. I clamber out, and Peter passes me my rod and pack. Then he's off. I have forty minutes or so to assess the fishing before he returns with Rick.

First, though, something much more urgent. I grab a roll of toilet paper and head up the dunes into the scrub.

By the time the plane returns and Peter and Rick have caught up with me, I've fished my way down the beach side of the outlet channel all the way to the breakers. By now I have discovered that we are indeed too early for the peak of the whitebait runs. Nonetheless some small schools of galaxias are making their way upstream, and resident brown trout are feeding on them with gusto. All you have to do is spot a shower of frightened baitfish, present an imitation, strip once or twice, and a trout will sprint a couple of metres to intercept the fly.



Fortunately it floats as well as flies

Polaroiding is okay too. The water is burgundy, but the dark fish stand out reasonably well against the white sand. Still, the best action is on the far side of the river along the edges of >>>

the overhanging rainforest. Rick says he knows a spot where we should be able to wade across. I'm sceptical but, sure enough, at the mouth of a small tributary - McKays Creek - he proves that the heavy current is nipple-deep at most. Then again, I'm shorter than him. I follow, dubiously, in his wake. At least the substrate feels mostly flat and sandy.

Targeting the trout as they ambush bait from amongst the root balls is superb fun, and it's a real bugger when Peter shouts from the other side that our time's up. "We're going to have to get out of here before the weather deteriorates."

Rick leaves straight away, but I use my extra forty minutes to fish my way home. I reach the lagoon just as Peter is circling to land. "There is some urgency now," he says as I grab the nose of the plane. "An unexpected sea fog is closing in from the east."

Peter seems a little uneasy as he deviates this way and that, looking for holes in the clouds. There's clear sky to the west, so I suppose we could go the long way



Rick surveying the fishery

around if necessary, providing he has enough fuel. But I don't ask questions. And he prefers to talk about the future. His next project might be a gyrocopter.

I look to the future too. After all, we keep ourselves alive by assuming we have one. Mainly I think about the possibility of getting Peter to fly me to other very remote locations, which would be illegal and at odds with my desire to keep wilderness areas free from mechanical access.

We are, all of us, fragile and complex.



European Nymfing – My Approach (Part 2)

by Philip Bailey.

I hope you found some benefit from my previous article on Modern European Nymfing. Believe me, it can become addictive, especially as you master the technique and your catch rates increase.

In the last article I discussed four critical elements to think about when nymfing. In this article I want to discuss two other elements - line control and depth control. Once you get these two elements right you will be surprised at how rapidly your hook-ups will increase.

You will recall that my set up includes a FIPS (0.57mm thick) conforming fly line which has a 4.75 metre leader attached. The main reason I use this is that when

casting flies a short section of the thin fly line is within the rod runners. It is much easier to grab hold of the line than a length of slippery monofilament. Something for you to consider. In any case, it is rare that the fly line is outside of the rod tip.

So let's get started with a couple of simple rules. The first is **don't over power** your cast. You will know when you are doing this because the leader doesn't lay out straight and you end up with loose line across currents and the flies landing in a different place to where you intended. A smooth transition from the back cast to the forward is better.

The second is to **shoot line**. Shooting a little bit of line on every cast will keep the leader in the air longer, allowing it to straighten out and for your flies to lob where you aimed. You will find that when I discuss line control you will have some line ready to shoot anyway.

Line Control

This starts right from when you make the forward cast. I tend to fish more upstream than directly across, so my objective is to cast the flies upstream into the water I want to drift through, and this can be quite some distance from the tip of my rod. That extra length is achieved through lifting and pushing the rod away from me as I cast.

If you have watched the two videos I recommended in the first article then you will have seen that the best way to get a good cast is to put tension into your leader **before** you make either the backcast or forward cast. So I won't try to explain that in this article.

With tension in my leader and with about a metre of line loose in my non-casting

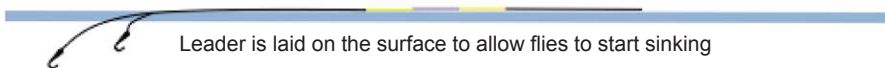
hand I make a smooth but forceful cast upstream towards my target area, allowing the loose line to shoot out. With practice you will soon be able to obtain a fair level of accuracy.

Allow the entire leader to lay out on the water. This is important as it allows the flies to sink quickly without any influence from you or the rod.

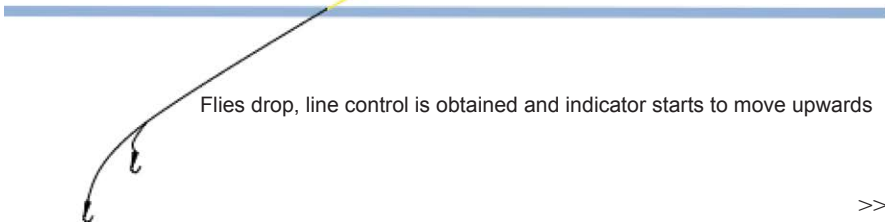
Then, without any hesitation and using your non-casting hand, gradually apply some tension to the leader as it begins to drift downstream while at the same time you begin lifting the tip of your rod tip. Make sure the leader is under one of your fingers gripping the rod, so you are pulling line against your casting hand and not straight through the runners.

This lifting of the rod tip will cause the leader to move from a horizontal orientation (lying on the surface) up into a more vertical orientation. At the same time you should feel the tension in the leader increase. If done quickly you will obtain line control early in the drift. This is critical, as a fish might take one

From this



To this



>>>

of your flies as they are dropping. You also need to ensure that the indicator is entirely above the water. But be careful to not over-tension the leader, as this will accelerate the flies and thus they act unnaturally.

This is how you can get control of the flies and leader as they drift downstream.

A word about indicators. Until recently indicators were mostly used to identify takes during the drift, so were greased and left floating on the surface. The problem most anglers then encountered was having too much slack in the leader, and unless a fish grabbed the flies aggressively a lot of fish were missed.

Nowadays indicators are made of monofilament and are integral to your leader construction (see my diagram in the last article). They are used in a different manner. With improved rods and leader materials, nymph fishers are now able to move from a 'dead drift' technique to one of 'controlled drift' (discussed shortly). This means that indicators are now used more to understand what is happening with your leader and drift, rather than indicating when a fish has taken a fly.

Indicators do not need to be long, but they can vary. I like mine to be about 60 cm and to include three coloured sections with any darker section in the middle (again see my leader diagram from the last article). At times I even add an additional 60 cm section of opaque white line above the indicator to make it easy to see where my leader is when it is laying on the water and in dull light conditions.

Depth Control

Obviously you can achieve depth control by changing the weight of your flies. The trouble is that the river bottom is always changing and so is the depth. If you only use weight for control then you will be

perpetually changing flies (and replacing tippet material). What you really want to do is use the leader and the drift to control the depth. So here are some tips.

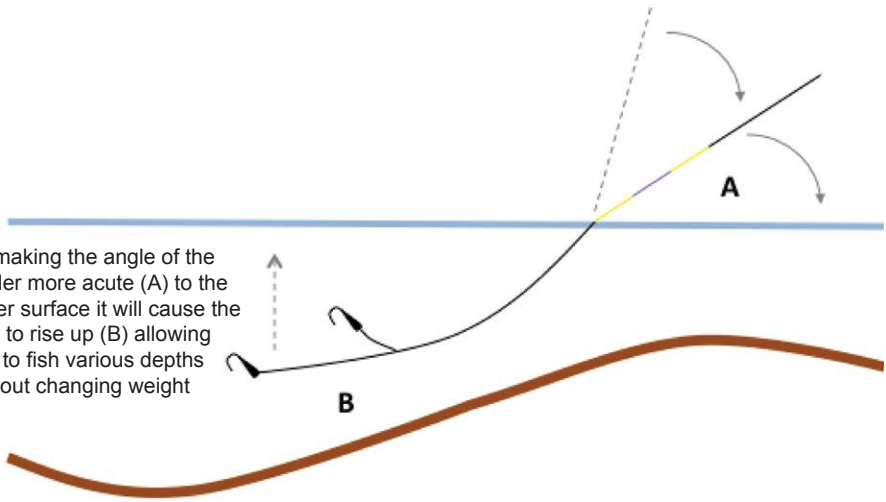
Your tippet section (including any droppers) should be the same as the depth of the water you are fishing plus an additional 50 cm – 75 cm. This additional length is critical as it allows both flies to drift close to the bottom. It also allows you to adjust the depth of your flies if you think there is a depression in the river bottom. Err on being longer rather than being too short.



Tippet hangs down and the flies are laid along the bottom

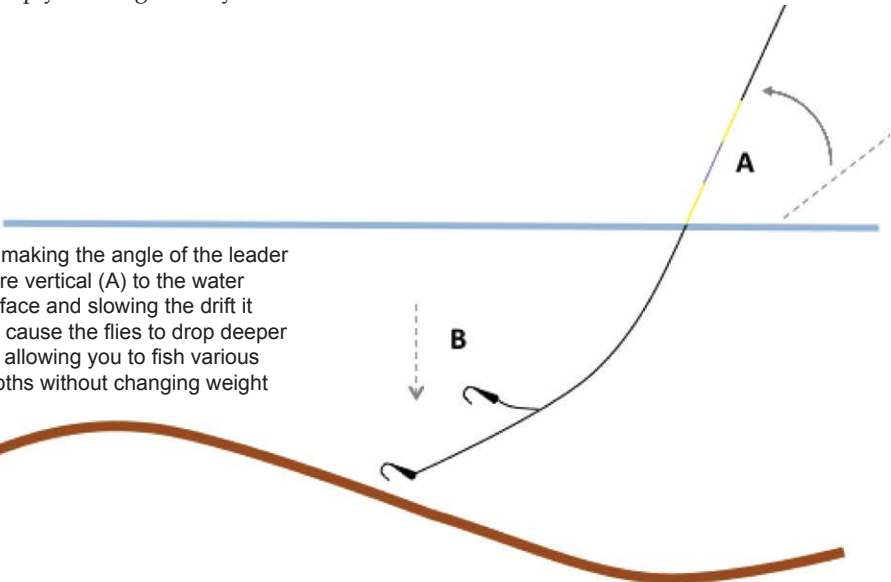


The more acute the angle of the indicator is to the water surface the higher the flies will travel in the water column. So if you have two fairly heavy nymphs on your leader, you can change the angle of the leader to lift the flies up without them catching on the bottom, and thus you don't have to change to lighter flies. This is very helpful when you are covering water that has many short sections of various depths, and it is also helpful when fishing pocket water. To lift the flies and change the angle simply speed up the leader drift.



By making the angle of the leader more acute (A) to the water surface it will cause the flies to rise up (B) allowing you to fish various depths without changing weight

The more vertical the indicator is to the water surface the lower the flies will travel in the water column. So in deeper water you want to make sure that the leader is almost vertical and the flies are drifting on the bottom. You can do this, without changing flies, by simply slowing down your drift.



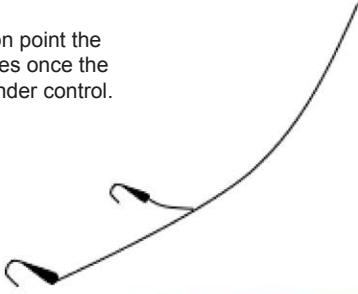
By making the angle of the leader more vertical (A) to the water surface and slowing the drift it will cause the flies to drop deeper (B) allowing you to fish various depths without changing weight

Try changing your heavier fly from the point to the dropper. Most anglers put the heavier fly on the point, and this has advantages but also some disadvantages. Having the heavier fly on the point allows you to put more control along

the entire leader and tippet as you lead or dead drift the flies. In this case if a fish takes either the point fly or a fly on a dropper there is an instant transfer of information to you.

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Heavy fly on point the dropper rises once the leader is under control.



Heavy fly on dropper allows the lighter fly to trail at a lower depth



However, in less deep water it can be advantageous to reverse this and put the heavy fly on the dropper and let the lighter fly trail behind. With the heavier fly on the point the dropper will probably sit higher off the bottom, whereas if the heavier fly is on the dropper both will drift closer to the bottom. You need to experiment and work out what works best for you.

Bringing it all together. You need to be in control of the drift at all times. So how do you do this?

Let's start from the forward cast. The cast has been made, you have got control of the line and the indicator is starting to move into a more vertical position. The secret is to **slightly lead** the flies through the drift by either accelerating (to lift) or slowing down (to drop) the speed of the flies. Don't be aggressive - just get in contact with them and maintain control. Leading the flies changes once the flies have drifted down past you. When that happens you move the rod tip upstream and continue to control the downstream drift. Using this tactic you will 'feel' the fish grab at the fly, so set the hook at any hint of a delay or knock.

As the flies begin to drift back towards you use both your casting arm and your non-casting arm to maintain line tension. Your casting arm can move downstream and/or upwards to do this, while your non-casting arm can continue to retrieve

slack and any unwanted line. As the leader passes your body, start to move your rod tip upstream so that the leader moves downstream past you. You can then drop the rod tip to allow a longer drift. From this position it is easy to make an upstream cast as you have tension on your leader and thus start the process over again.

Another tip - make sure you flick your wrist as though you are setting the hook at the end of the drift, as you never know but a fish may just be ready to snap at your fly.

I hope these tips add to your venture into European Nymphing. All the best for the new season, which of course has just opened now in your Victorian rivers.

Philip Bailey

Yorkshire UK.



Philip's nymph box for grayling

Report From Way Out West – Christmas Island 2018

Ahhh! It was great to be back at my favourite Paris flat. What a beautiful place! It was 10am, steady breeze out of the east, the sky was blue with a scattering of cotton-ball clouds, warm sun on my back, and the temperature of both air and water in the low 30s Centigrade. Perfection! I stripped line off my reel and began casting.

By now you realize I don't mean an apartment in Paris, as in France. Rather, a fantastic bonefish flat near the abandoned copra plantation at Paris, Kiritimati (aka Christmas Island or CXI), one of the many Central-Pacific islands that make-up the nation of Kiribati. It also happens to be the largest coral atoll on earth and a saltwater fly fisherman's paradise.

I had arrived with a planeload of other anglers and returning islanders on the once-a-week Fiji Airlines flight from Nandi on Wednesday, August 1. We landed at 6:30 am, and a driver from Ikari House was waiting with the usual flat-bed truck to collect our luggage and transport us to our fishing lodge.



Marc Clinchy from Taupo, New Zealand, with his 15 lb milkfish taken on a #6 green weed fly

After collecting my bag, clearing Immigration and Customs and paying \$50 for a week's "fly-fisherman" licence, I had climbed onto the truck and seated myself next to a couple young Kiwi anglers. Marc was a fishing guide

from Taupo, and James was a keen fly-fisher currently living and working in Townsville. It was their first time on Christmas Island and they were looking forward to what it had to offer. We chatted and got to know each other during the half-hour drive to Ikari House on the north-west side of the island.

After arriving, we had a few hours to settle in, have breakfast, then get our fly fishing gear together. I took the opportunity to discuss how the fishing had been with a group of sun-burnt anglers sitting around sipping coffee. They had fished the previous week and would be on the return flight to Fiji later that afternoon.

At 10 am James, Marc and I met our guides and climbed onto our boat. Rods were safely stowed, then we motored off for Day 1 in the lagoon. Destination - the flats at Paris. 15 minutes later we jumped off the boat into two feet of warm water over a pure white sand bottom. The palm tree-lined shore at Paris made a fantastic tropical island back-drop.

As this was the first time for James and Marc, I was happy to let them have a guide each to show them how to spot bonefish, then select the best flies and fish them appropriately. They were both fine anglers, so it wouldn't take them long to get the hang of it. I had the benefit of experience from my two previous trips and headed off on my own. Besides, I love to spot fish myself.

Within a few minutes I saw a pale blue-grey shape coming my way. It looked big, with its nose down scavenging for shrimp, crabs and worms. I was fishing a 12 foot leader with 14 lb fluorocarbon tippet, and since the water was fairly shallow I had tied on a #6 Christmas Island Special with >>>

bead-chain eyes (basically a pink version of the Crazy Charley).

I cast 12 feet in front of the fish, and watched its movements intently as I made a long strip ... long, long, then stopped as the fish rushed the fly and turned nose to the bottom. I made a strip-strike and 'he's-on!' The adrenaline started to pump as loose line flew out of my hand, then up from the surface of the water and raced out through the guides. My reel screamed as it went from 0 to 1,000 RPMs in a split second.



Jim and Pedro with Jim's 35 lb GT taken on a 2/0 Chartreuse and White Clouser

The bone tore off in a great arc across the flats, with line hissing and throwing a rooster-tail of spray as it cut through the water. All my fly-line was gone, along with 150+ yards of 30 lb braid backing, before the fish stopped. It made a series of head shakes, allowed me to wind back a bit of line, then took off again. Several long, smoking runs and 15 minutes later I had my first bonefish of 2018 at my feet. What a beauty.

I floated the fish gently next to my rod and estimated it to be 24 - 25 inches fork-length and weighing 8 - 9 lb. It was my best CXI bonefish ever, just Day 1, and the others weren't near enough to take the camera. Bummer! I figured there

would be other big ones during the trip. For this one, though, there would be no photos; only fond memories as I slipped the fly from its mouth, held the fish in the water for a minute to let it revive, then watched it swim away to live and fight another day. As it turned out, that was my best bonefish for the week.

At 1 pm we met and reviewed the morning's fishing. Lunch was demolished while the boat cruised to our next venue - Smokey Flat. Aside from areas of silty, gravelly or sandy bottom, Smokey has some large stretches of coral and rubble near the edges that drop away into deeper water. These edges provide prime habitat for trigger fish. Trigger fishing can become addictive. I told James and Marc about their reputation for being wary and difficult to fool into taking a fly. At times you will see them doing a headstand with their tails out of the water, excavating for shrimp, crabs and clams.

Triggers are easily spooked and you get lots of refusals, yet inexplicably they sometimes take readily. So, you need to be persistent. Occasionally a trigger can be enticed into inspecting a fly, a rubber-legged Gotcha or a crab imitation for example, inched along the bottom. You need to be stealthy in your approach, casting carefully and landing the fly without too much of a splat and not too close to the fish. Then you let it sink to the bottom and draw it slowly towards the fish with short strips. If it doesn't spook and bolt and you see the trigger swim over and appear to have a close look at your fly, then a quick strip-strike may result in a hook-up.

If hooked, its powerful first run is amazing and its habit of making a beeline for, and diving into, one of the 'hide-holes' that triggers excavate in the rubble is characteristic of the species. The only way to avoid losing a big trigger is to 'hang-on' and not give it any line. If you

can't stop a trigger from making it to its hole in the rubble then the fish usually wins the fight in short order by cutting the leader on the sharp coral. So, keep the trigger out of its hole and you have a better chance of landing it.

This challenge sounded pretty cool to Marc, and especially James who became a master at catching them. They spent that afternoon and most the week looking mainly for triggers and GTs. Each day Marc and James would set off stalking, casting to, sometimes spooking, other times fooling and hooking then battling triggers. Occasionally the fight would be out in the open, but they would often get 'holed' and lose the fish. Sometimes they could reel up to the hole, grab the leader, pull the fish out. It would then race off and the fight was on again.

At the end of the day, while we sipped a cool drink Marc and James would pass their phones or cameras across and share their photos of each other grinning, and holding big peach-face, mustachio, or yellow margin trigger fish. There were even some nice photos of bonefish they had taken as 'collateral damage.'

When we got back to Ikari House at 4:30 pm on Wednesday there were a number of other fishermen who had already been on the island for a week or two. Amongst them I was glad to see Zoran, a friend from Melbourne now on his fourth visit to CXI.

I had met Zoran on my first trip back in 2016, and had shared a room, boat and guide with him for the following week. In 2016 Zoran was fishing a few hundred metres from the Milkfish Farm when his guide, Pedro, shouted "GT... GT!!" He cast and hooked that Giant Trevally on his "chook-on-a-hook" fly, then fought it for almost an hour before landing it. Pedro estimated its weight at about 45 lbs. Since then, while Zoran still

loves catching bonefish, each year he is determined to land another big boy. He missed his chance in 2017. This trip he had lost another big one before I arrived when the hook pulled out after fighting it for 15 minutes. 'DESOLATION' describes how he felt.



Jim with a 3 lb bonefish from Paris

Other anglers included Mike, an Englishman living and working in Washington DC. He had flown in via Honolulu, had been at The Villages for two weeks, and was spending his third and last week at Ikari House. He was only after trophy GTs, and fished solo with a boat and driver to chauffeur he and his guide around. Later in the week he would lose a big GT when the Perfection Leader Loop attaching his leader to the fly line broke. "An unforgiveable failure of equipment!" one of the other anglers pronounced after listening to Mike's lament.

There were also four very experienced fly-fisher/surfie mates there from NSW – Peter, Ron, George and Radge. Like Mike, they were there for their third week, and were 'CXI veterans' who had the place well and truly 'figured-out.' It was in fact their 13th trip to the island chasing bonefish, triggers and trevally. They talked a lot about fishing "the worm." I later learned that George, who was a fine fly tier, had developed a special worm imitation that was >>>

deadly on bonefish. It was the Wabnitz Worm – named after Dr Colette Wabnitz, an attractive marine biologist they had met in 2014 when she was on CXI doing research on the aquarium fish trade. (If you want to tie George Hammer’s original version of “the worm,” google Wabnitz Worm Fly, then when a listing of sites comes up click on forums. sydneyflyfishing.com.au. Or check this month’s Fly of the Month).

After showering and settling into my room, I joined the others in the dining area for a delicious buffet dinner. While we dined, David, the ‘organizer,’ sorted out which clients would fish together, who their guides would be, which transport (boat or truck) they would use, and where they were going. Venues included those accessed by boat such as the flats inside the Lagoon, or those outside (off the west side of the island) for those chasing milkfish, tuna, sailfish, etc. A 1½ hour truck ride to the south end of the island was required to fish either the Huff Dam /Milkfish Farm and Submarine Flats area or the Korean Wreck site for those wanting to fish on the Ocean Side wave platform.

After sorting out the arrangements for Thursday I was exhausted following the long flight from Melbourne-Sydney-Nandi-CXI, and was off to bed by 8 pm.

The routine that we followed on Day 2 (Thursday), and for most of the week was to rise and get dressed at 5:30 am, have breakfast at 6, then head down to the beach and climb aboard our designated boat for the day at 7 am. I fished with Zoran and our guide Pedro. Marc and James were on the same boat with their guide Kubota. Once we were aboard we headed off to fish one of the many venues in the central lagoon. They all have interesting names such as Y-site, Run-Like-Hell, The Wall, 9 Mile Flat, Submarine Flat, Orvis Flat, Motu Tabu (a

bird nesting sanctuary), Cat Island, and French Flats. We would usually fish a couple in the morning, climb aboard the boat for lunch while motoring to the next venue, then fish a couple of other flats in the afternoon.

Where we fished depended on the phase of the moon and the tide. For example, during Thursday, which was a few days after the full moon, we spent some time casting to schools of bonefish in the channel off the eastern edge of Paris Flats on a run-in tide. Why? The bonefish congregate there at that time of the month prior to spawning.

Amongst the schools there were some big ones. If your fly isn’t snatched by a smaller fish there is always the chance of hooking a trophy. But there is a downside to this - schooling fish in the channel attracts lots of fishermen. So, after an hour as part of the ‘picket-fence’, during which we caught a few fish up to 4 - 5 lbs, we had had enough and moved to another flat where we could have the bones, triggers, golden trevally and GTs to ourselves.

That day I had good luck with a #6 Christmas Island Special (which my guide Pedro called the “pink fly”), especially during the morning on an incoming tide, when the sun and wind were in the east and to our backs. The afternoons were another story. Once the tide started out and the sun moved towards the western horizon, thus shining into our faces, the fish were more wary and often spooked.

I experimented, trying a longer leader and lighter tippet, and eventually cracked the problem. When I put on a #6 Chartreuse Crazy Charley (which Pedro called the “yellow fly”) in the afternoon I started catching more fish, especially over a yellowish silty bottom. I followed this routine for the rest of the trip with

great success, hooking and landing lots of bones in the 17 - 19 inch (2½ to 3½ lb) range along with a few that were 21 - 23 inches (5 - 6 lbs). Every now and then I would cast to a trigger, get the occasional hook-up and usually end up 'holed' and getting cut off. A few unlucky fish were stopped before the safety of their bolt-hole and I was able to land them.



Jim's friend Zoran Vasic from Bundoora with Guide Pedro. This is a typical CXI bonefish of about 2½ - 3 lbs

That evening over dinner I talked Zoran, James and Marc into taking the boat outside the lagoon mouth the next day to fish the wind-lanes for milkfish. I had been skunked on my four previous outings and was keen to give it another try. I needn't have bothered. The milkies were there in conga-lines that were hundreds of fish long. I cast and cast my #6 green weed fly into their paths, trying to cast the fly into each fish's mouth. Nothing, nothing, ... nothing. Then Marc shouted "fish-on!" For 20 minutes his milkie ripped the line from his reel, did laps around the boat, dived under it, and in fact tried every trick in the book to break him off or pull the hook free. Finally, Pedro netted a 15 lb mullet-on-steroids milkie. Marc was ecstatic. So were the guides, who took selfies holding the fish. They would be eating it that night because it had been caught 'outside' and thus could be kept. We tried

a few more schools of milkfish until the sun was well up. No luck, so we finished the day catching bonefish and triggers, with the odd small GT, in the lagoon.

Saturday, Day 4, rolled around and, so far, all of us had cast at big GTs but none were hooked or landed. The tide would be coming in for most of the day, so as the tide was favourable, Zoran, Marc, James, Matt and I took the 1½ hour truck ride south to try our luck at the Huff Dam / Milkfish Farm and Submarine Flats – well known hangouts for big GTs and bonefish, and some good-sized golden trevally and triggers too. The three young guys made tracks across the dam, on a mission to score a big GT at Submarine Flats.

Zoran and I could occasionally see big ones cruising in to the base of the dam and smashing small milkies that were schooled up there. We cast big milkfish flies at them for a while but got ignored, so we drove back to the shelter huts at the dam to have lunch in the shade. And that's when the GTs really started crashing into the schooled-up milkies at the base of the wall.

I couldn't resist, so put down my sandwich, picked up my #10 Sage, walked to the wall and started casting. All hell broke loose when a GT grabbed my Chartreuse-and-White Clouser and took off down the channel towards open water in the lagoon. As line screamed off my reel I ran after the fish and just made it in the nick of time at the end of the canal, as the GT turned 90 degrees around the corner and sprinted clear, heading out into the lagoon and toward the horizon. I had a total 700 yards of 30 lb braid backing on the reel, which was colour coded, and I had only a few turns of 300 yards of yellow backing when I managed to stop the GT's first run.

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Then followed half an hour of head-shaking, then pump-and-wind to gain some line back, alternating with several more powerful runs. Eventually the GT tired and I began to wind it in faster and faster. Just one more run, then it was done. Pedro put on a glove and grabbed the exhausted GT in front of the tail. What a feeling of relief and victory! After three trips to CXI I had finally landed a good-sized, 35 lb GT.

We got back to Ikari that afternoon and climbed off the truck, stiff and with sore backsides after our 1½ hour ride. Zoran and I clinked glasses and sipped a G&T to celebrate my first decent GT. When the others settled in Zoran passed the camera around with the photos he had taken recording my tug-of-war with the GT. Peter said, "You know you'll have to take those photos straight to the pool room when you get home." He's not wrong. I felt like I really was 'King of the Castle'.

On Sunday and Monday, Days 5 and 6, we were back in the lagoon and Zoran and I had a great time chasing bonefish while looking for a shot at a GT. I gave him one of my #6 Christmas Island Specials to try Monday morning and he proceeded to catch fish after fish. At the end of the day he returned it to me, saying he had done very well fishing a "Naked Charlie." The fly only had the chrome dumbbell eyes, some pink tying thread at the head, a strand of pink thread trailing out the back, and a couple bits of pink crystal flash left from the wing. I know you're supposed to keep your bonefish flies sparse but REALLY!

That evening it was party night and Ikari put on a feast for us. The menu included a whole roast pig, grilled lobster, teriyaki chicken legs, coconut fish, more fish, chili octopus, breadfruit, rice, potatoes, corn, salad...the lot! All delicious too! The Bamboo Boys played poly-pipe vibes, there was a hula dancer and the staff sang

and danced for us. We felt like honoured guests.

Finally, it was Day 7. James, Marc and Matt went Outside chasing sailfish. They rose 8 to teasers. James managed to hook one that took off, jumped, straightened his #8/0 hook and was gone within a few seconds. They eventually caught several rainbow runners, one of which we had for dinner that night. Meanwhile, Zoran and I took the truck to Korean Wreck, but the surf was big and the tide too high. What a waste of a trip! We retreated to Y-site in the lagoon where I caught more bones, another trigger, and a nice blue-bar trevally, but nothing as thrilling as catching that big GT a few days earlier. Zoran had a cast at a couple GTs in the afternoon, but they refused his fly and that was it for 2018.



Jim playing tug-of-war with that big GT at the Milkfish Farm

Now, as I write this I'm back home in Victoria sitting by the fire. The south wind is blowing a gale and sheets of freezing rain rattle against the windows. I've only been home a week and am already thinking about the next time I will be able to walk the flats at Kiritimati. Fisherman's paradise!



Tasmanian trout fishing season outlook 2018-19

... from John Diggle, Director of Inland Fisheries for Tasmania

The brown trout season started on Saturday, August 4, and the outlook remains fantastic.

Most lakes and rivers continue to benefit from good winter rains and have high levels and flows. The fishing on the opening was exceptional at waters including Four Springs Lake, Penstock Lagoon, and Tooms Lake (despite this being one of the few lakes needing a bit more rain).

Over the winter we have been busy moving wild adult brown trout to popular waters. Check out our website - <https://www.ifs.tas.gov.au/> to see what we've been up to.

Anglers chasing a trophy trout should try Lake Crescent early in the season, as it is producing some big well-conditioned fish right now, and should fish well until November. The water level has risen steadily through winter, and further rain in spring should bring the marshes into play, which will produce some exciting fishing.

Another trophy trout chance is Blackmans Lagoon. Over winter we stocked Blackmans Lagoon with wild adult brown trout, and these fish will grow quickly in this productive water. Opening weekend reports were really good for this water, mainly for boat-based anglers who were catching large fish.

Talbots Lagoon and South Riana Dam are also waters well worth a look for a bigger than average trout.

But angling in Tasmania is not all about trophy trout. It is about the amazing fishing experience. It is impossible to list all the fisheries expected to perform well going into the 2018-19 season. Here are

just a few we think will be worth a look: yingina / Great Lake, Woods Lake, Lake Echo, Bronte Lagoon, Little Pine Lagoon, Penstock Lagoon, Four Springs Lake and the Bradys Chain.

If its numbers of fish you are after look no further than lakes Pedder, King William and Burbury. These are reliable but be prepared for some rough weather, particularly early in the season. For a more sheltered option with good numbers of fish, try Huntsman Lake.

Rivers will also provide great fishing in the coming season. Just how good they are will depend on the rainfall we have for the rest of winter and spring. If the major rivers aren't in flood, the sea run trout will be about in the estuaries and lower reaches from the start of August. This can provide exciting fishing right through to Christmas. Anglers should look to the River Derwent, Huon River, Pieman River, Mersey River, Inglis River and many more right around the State. Great river fishing is often available close to home. Reports from the second week of the season indicate that some very large fish - in the 6 - 8 kg range - have been taken in the River Derwent downstream of New Norfolk!

Over the closed season we transferred trout to waters with limited recruitment. Some 24,000 wild adult brown trout were relocated from spawning traps in the Central Highlands. Fisheries that have benefited include:

- The Bradys Chain with (almost) 10,000,
- Four Springs Lake with just over 4,000,
- Penstock Lagoon with just over 3,000,
- Lake Crescent with an even 2,000,
- Lake Leake received 1,100
- Craighourne Dam gained 1,100, >>>

- Tooms Lake got 1,000,
- Blackmans Lagoon got 600,
- Curries River Reservoir got 600,
- Pet Reservoir also received 600,
- Nineteen Lagoons received 400,
- South Riana Dam, 400, and
- Lake Dulverton, 115.

In June, our Minister, Sarah Courtney, released the Tasmanian Inland Recreational Fishery Management Plan for 2018-19. The Plan will ensure Tasmania's trout fishery performs to its best. A strong trout fishery creates flow-on benefits to businesses and communities.

The Plan will guide the management of our world-class trout fishery for the next decade. It will help grow and develop recreational trout fishing by:

- providing better opportunities for anglers,
- assessing fishery performance, and
- managing fish stocks as a recreational resource for future generations.

The Plan looks to increase participation locally and from tourism markets. It takes on the challenge to balance the needs for individual fishery management at key lakes and rivers and standardising fishing regulations. The Plan is available from the Inland Fisheries Service website - www.ifs.tas.gov.au.

Some of the regulation changes include:

- A five fish daily bag limit for all rivers.
- A minimum fish size of 300 mm for most lake fisheries.
- A five fish daily bag limit for Big Lagoon (Bruny Island), Briseis Hole, Gunns Lake, Lake Dulverton, Lake Duncan, Lake Isandula, Lauriston Reservoir, Lake Lynch, Lake Mikany, Lake Skinner, Lamberts Dam, Little Lake, Pawleena Reservoir, Rossarden Dam, Rostrevor Reservoir, Risdon Brook Reservoir, Shannon Lagoon and St Clair Lagoon.

- A two fish daily bag limit, with a minimum size of 400 mm and only one fish to be taken over 500 mm for Penstock Lagoon, Lake Crescent, Camerons Lagoon and Bruisers Lagoon.
- All angling methods are permitted in Huntsman Lake.
- A daily bag limit of two brook trout in all inland waters.
- A daily bag limit of five Atlantic salmon in all inland waters.
- The boundary for the open-all-year section of the River Derwent now extended upstream to the New Norfolk Bridge.
- The boundary for the open-all-year section of the River Leven is extended upstream to Whisky Creek.
- A two fish daily bag limit with a minimum size of 300 mm and no more than one fish over 500 mm for all Junior Angling Development fisheries: Bushy Park Estate Dam, Frombergs Dam, Hiscutt Park Pond, Lake Waverley and Taylors Dam.
- Only people under 18 years old may fish at Junior Angling Development fisheries.
- A daily bag limit of 12 river blackfish for all inland waters, independent of the salmonid daily bag limit.

There have also been other minor changes, so please check your Tasmanian Inland Fishing Code 2018-19. If you have copies of our Anglers Access Brochures please be aware that most have been updated to reflect the changes in the Plan. And don't forget to update the InFish app ready for the new season.

If you want to buy a licence, know more, or simply want to pass on your experiences then visit the website (www.ifs.tas.gov.au), ring on 1300INFISH or email infish@ifs.tas.gov.au, as we do value your feedback.

FLY OF THE MONTH

*The Wabnitz Worm Fly
(... a top bonefish pattern)*



In this issue of *Fly Lines* Jim Blakeslee gives a fascinating insight into the fishing at that wonderful place called Kiritimati, which is more popularly known as Christmas Island. The island is raised coral atoll in the northern Line Islands, and is part of the Republic of Kiribati.

In his article Jim describes a fly that was particularly effective – the Wabnitz Worm. To quote from his report: “They talked a lot about fishing “the worm.” I later learned that George, who was a fine fly tier, had developed a special worm imitation that was deadly on bonefish. It was the Wabnitz Worm – named after Dr Colette Wabnitz, an attractive marine biologist they had met in 2014 when she was on Christmas Island doing research on the aquarium fish trade. (If you want to tie George Hammer’s original version of “the worm,” google Wabnitz Worm Fly, then when a listing of sites comes up click on forums.sydneyflyfishing.com.au).

So there it is, and here it is. This column mostly gives details of trout flies, but more and more of our members are venturing into salt water fly fishing, so perhaps it’s time we described a fly for this style of fishing.

Materials:

Hook: Gamakatsu SL11-3H #6 or #8.

Thread: Flat waxed in Orange or Salmon Pink.

Krystal Flash: Orange or Pearl.

Eyes: 3.0mm or 3.5mm gold dumbbell or medium brass beadchain.

Wing: Hareline medium Ultra Chenille in Worm Brown. (Substitutes: light tan polyester wool melted at one end to prevent unravelling or light nylon cord dyed light tan)

Overbody: V-rib in shrimp pink or clear (substitute: 16lb clear mono)

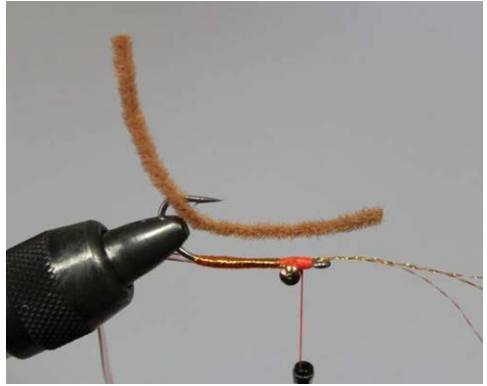
Tying Procedure:

1. Put the hook in the vice and wrap thread along the shank to a point just above the end of the hook point.
2. Place a piece of V-rib or clear mono on the hook shank behind the thread, then tie it in by continuing to wrap turns of thread to the start of the bend in the shank.
3. Wind wraps of thread back towards the eye of the hook and tie in the dumbbell eyes or beadchain.
4. Take two long strands of krystal flash, double them over and tie them in between the hook's eye and the dumbbell eyes.



5. Wrap the krystal flash around the hook shank back to the bend in the shank, then wrap it forward again to the eyes, leaving sufficient krystal flash so that it can be extended back one hook's gape width past the end of the hook. (At this point, if you wish to make the fly extremely durable you can coat the body with a thin coat of epoxy or CCG.)

6. Turn the hook over in the vice. Take a piece of the Ultra Chenille about twice the length of the shank and measure a length of it from the front of the hook to the bend. Then pass the hook's point through the Ultra Chenille at the measured spot.



7. Loosely tie in the Ultra Chenille forward of the eyes so that it sits along the top of the shank.

8. Overwrap the Ultra Chenille with the V-rib or mono to give a segmented appearance, paying particular attention to keep the Ultra Chenille along the top of the shank. Tie off the V-rib forward of the eyes and trim both the V-rib and Ultra Chenille.



9. Hold the krystal flash back along the hook and form a head to the tie, whip finish and coat with a head enamel (Sally Hanson's clear nail polish, CCG or Araldite - your choice). Then melt the end of the Ultra Chenille with a small flame using a cigarette lighter.
10. Finally – go fishing. For bonefish fish this fly slowly in either a long slow strip or short 2" jerks, or a combination of both (deadly on CXI bonefish). This fly should also be suitable for bream and flathead and would be worth trying on a long shank #8 for whiting.

VFFA 2018 meetings & other activities

September 2018

- 1 Saturday Our Victorian rivers open again to trout fishing
3 Monday Council Meeting - 6:30 pm
16 Sunday Casting Instruction Day at the Red Tag Pool with Ian Sambell and Judith Oliver (VFFA members who are highly qualified casting instructors)
20 Thursday 2018 Annual General Meeting – 8:00 pm

October 2018

- 1 Monday Council Meeting - 6:30 pm
7 Sunday VFFA annual visit to Thorpdale to fish the Latrobe Valley Club's stocked dams as guests of the Latrobe Valley Fly Fishers
18 Thursday General Meeting – 8:00 pm at the Kelvin Club, with Guest Speakers Kristina and Adam Royter, New Zealand fishing guides.
26 – 28 Annual Warrnambool trip. Event Co-ordinator – Richard Kos

November 2018

- 1 Thursday Dinner at 7:00 pm at The Metropolitan Hotel, 263 William St, Melbourne, with Guest Speakers Simon Gawesworth (World Casting Champion and RIO representative) and Marc Bale (representing Sage products)
3 Saturday Casting demonstration and clinic by Simon Gawesworth at Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club's Casting Pool at Yarrambat
12 Monday Council Meeting - 6:30 pm

December 2018

- 3 Monday Council Meeting - 6:30 pm
6 Thursday Annual Christmas Dinner with guest speaker John Philbrick (VFFA past president, life member, newsletter editor for 13 years, and highly skilled and experienced angler)

The following made donations for the raffle at the 2017 Annual Dinner:

- VALUED DONORS**
- Aussie Angler Tackle Outfitters • Armadale Angling • Australian Fishing Network
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