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Swirl Tips

August 2006 Issue

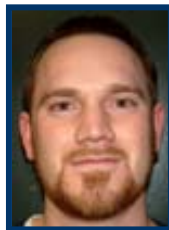
Evergreen Fly Fishing Club www.evergreenflyclub.org



MEETINGS

General Meeting – 4th Tuesday of the month, 7 pm (6 pm Wet Fly hr.) Flying Pig Brewery
Board Meeting – 1st Thursday of the month, 7 pm (6 pm dinner) Petosa's Restaurant
Conservation Committee Meeting – 3rd Thursday of the month, 7 pm Village Restaurant

**Meeting: August 22, 2006 @ Flying Pig Brewery
Wet Fly – 6:00 p.m. Meeting – 7:00 p.m.**



August Program By Eric Nordstrom

Everyone in our club should be aware of the declining state of our wild salmon runs in the Northwest. This month we are going to welcome a presentation from Matt Herron from the Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition.

He is going to give us a short presentation on the wild salmon runs that his group is working to restore, with special focus on the Snake River and Columbia River watersheds. You will definitely have time to ask about their goals and strategy for trying to save our wild salmon and steelhead, so plan on being prepared with questions about topics such as dam removal. I look forward to hearing what Matt has to say about the prospect of changing the outlook on a special resource that we all would like to continue to share with our future



Fly Tying Contest by Rob Gamage

The winner of the last fly tying contest (back in June) was Rob Gamage. (I should mention it was the only fly entered in the contest.)

The pattern for the August fly tying contest is the Muddler Minnow.

The original Muddler has spawned a large number of variations. Some have added a conehead bead for weight. Muddlers are now used all around the world. Fished on a sinking line it's buoyancy adds life to the fly. The buoyant deer hair keeps the Muddler off the bottom. Also, Muddlers can be fished as a waking fly. Skating a Muddler across the waves can induce ferocious takes from trout and Steelhead, which sometimes follow it for several yards. Good Luck!

Inside ...

Auction Update	2
Librarian's Corner	2
Jack Gobel's "LDP"	3
EFFC Coming Events	5
Auction Reservation	6

Hook: 3XL Streamer
 Thread: 6/0 for the body; Danville Plus for the collar/head
 Weight: optional
 Tail: Turkey Quill slips, matched pair
 Body: Flat Tinsel, gold
 Rib: Oval Tinsel, gold
 Underwing: Squirrel Tail
 Wing: Turkey Quill slips, matched pair
 Collar: Deer Hair, flared
 Head: Deer Hair, spun and clipped to shape



Auction Update By Jesse Scott

The auction is still two months away, but there are some things you can do now:

First; you'll notice a dinner reservation form in this month's newsletter. You can clip it and mail it to Don Mathiesen. I think if you have exact change, \$20, he'll take your money and reservation form at the next meeting.

Second; take a look at the trips, and if you have any questions you can ask the donor at the next meeting. Here's the current listing of trips to be auctioned off in October!

- **Clark Fork River** – Carl Johnson is the host for two days of drift boat fishing. The location is Superior, Montana, and the trip includes food and lodging for two people.
- **Sauk or Skagit River** – Ted Lewis is the donor. The trip includes a day of drift boat fishing and lunch for one person.
- **Stillaguamish River** – Dale Dennis is the donor. The trip includes a day of drift boat fishing for Searun Cutthroat for one person.
- **Puget Sound** – Dale Dennis is the donor and the trip includes a day of boat fishing for Searun Cutthroat for one person.
- **Skagit River** – Mike Benbow is the donor. This is a walk-in trip to the Skagit River to catch those big Chum Salmon. The trip includes lunch and photos for two people.

Lastly, if you have a trip to donate please contact one of the auction committee members so that we can advertise it next month. Thanks!



Publications By Jerry Buron

Club member Jack Hutchinson is involved with author and writer Steve Raymond in trying to set up a special collection of fly fishing text, memorabilia, and displays at Western Washington University. As part of that effort Jack Hutchinson wanted to let our members know that he will be accepting any donations of old fly fishing magazines that people would like to have go into this collection. If you have donations or further questions give Jack Hutchinson a call at (425) 259-2595.



Librarian's Corner By Jim Pankiewicz

*Fly-Fishing Coastal Cutthroat Trout
Flies, Techniques, Conservation*
By Les Johnson

This book is a recent addition to our EFFC library. It's just a marvelous resource for the experienced or aspiring Coastal Cutthroat angler. The author covers the realm and the life history of Coastal Cutthroat. He explains how to identify them. He has separate chapters for fishing in Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. He includes dressings for approximately 125 patterns along with some interesting tiers notes. He gives good treatment of tackle and accessories. Les devotes separate chapters to fresh water and salt water fishing. Les Johnson is arguably the quintessential Coastal Cutthroat expert.

Quoting Don Roberts, "Coastal Cutthroat trout populate nearly all of the streams and lakes along the Pacific Coast rainforest belt, from Northern California to Prince William Sound in Alaska. Until recently, they were all but ignored by fly-anglers,

most of whom preferred targeting salmon and steelhead. However, with those fish populations declining, more and more anglers are turning their attention to the coastal cutthroat, placing increased pressure on them. In Fly-Fishing Coastal Cutthroat Trout, Les Johnson has written the definitive book on coastal cutthroat—from their habitat and life histories to the most productive flies, techniques, and tackle—always with a deep sense of responsibility towards the future of these great fish. Johnson’s vast knowledge and love for this fish, coupled with data contributed by biologists and academics from California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and British Columbia, make Fly-Fishing Coastal Cutthroat Trout the most in-depth book ever published on this feisty and tenacious trout. No one knows more about the science, not to mention the compulsions, surrounding coastal cutthroat than Les Johnson.”

Jack Gobel’s “LDP!” By Jerry Buron with Jack Gobel



Prepared with the knowledge that Stillwater trout feed heavily on chironomids and what an effective chironomid pupa looks like, it’s time to put this information to work. This month’s article will talk about Jack Gobel’s successful method of fishing chironomids. Jack calls it “LDP” for Location-Depth-and Pattern!

Jack is also quick to point out that “LDP” is not just used for fishing chironomids in still waters but for all types of fishing in all bodies of water; lakes, rivers, saltwater etc. We’ll end this article with a brief consideration of effective equipment for chironomid fishing in still waters.

When fishing a new or a familiar lake how do I get started? There are the usual methods which can be helpful in determining what to use and where to use it by asking someone you know or someone at the launch site. Maps are sometimes available either at local fly shops, a friend who might have one, or a new popular method is searching the Internet. Maps are especially effective if they show contours of the lake, e.g. shoals, depths, bays, islands, etc. But what if you’re at a new lake and you have no one to talk with, no map, and no prior knowledge of the lake? This is where Jack’s LDP comes into play!

Where do I start? What do I look for and what are the indicators to help me locate fish???

The “L” **Location**: Jack Gobel offers these suggestions!

1. **Bird Life**: Visually look to see if you can see birds working the surface of the water or just above the surface of the water. Birds find hatching insects and where insects are hatching you’ll usually find fish looking for a meal.
2. **Water Surface**: As you cruise around the lake looking for shoals and drop-offs, look for insect “exoskeletons” floating of the waters surface. Granted, a basic understanding of aquatic insect life is needed. The presence of exoskeletons gives a good indication of what’s happening under the surface of the lake. Are the exoskeletons, chironomids, mayflies, caddis flies, damsel flies, dragon flies or one of several other types of aquatic insects? Then ask yourself, “which way is the wind blowing” and head in the direction of the wind and you’re liable to locate where the “naturals are coming off!”
3. If none of the above is present then use your electronics to help locate fish. Depth sounders (fish finders) help us locate shoals, drop-offs, underwater vegetation, e.g. weeds, rocks, gravel and other bottom structures.
4. If this doesn’t help then ask yourself, “What insects are most generally available at all times of the year?” What comes to Jack’s mind are chironomid larvae (bloodworms), chironomid pupa, mayfly nymphs, caddis

larvae, and damsel nymphs. Jack says he would start with a chironomid larvae, then mayfly nymphs, damsel fly nymphs, caddis larvae, dragon fly nymphs and if the lake shows good weed bed areas, try a gammarus scud. Good alternatives would also include leeches and general attractor type flies such as woolly buggers.

Let's say you've found a promising area to begin fishing! The next important consideration is what **depth** do I fish my fly pattern?

Depth: How deep do I fish my fly?

1. General Rule – Jack says he will start a foot or two off the bottom of the lake unless there is weed growth that he's seen on his depth sounder. If so, then you need to be a foot or two above the weeds. This is where a "strike indicator" becomes invaluable! More on strike indicators later.
2. How many casts before changing? Jack suggests not making more than three casts at this depth. No takes, then change depth by raising two feet above the current depth setting.
3. Move! – Jack doesn't make more than four casts without a grab then he'll move. *If you don't get any grabs don't try to create a hatch where no fish are working!* He says you don't need to move too far sometimes. He uses the analogy of a "sidewalk." Fish have areas they feed in or zones they work. The zone can be as small as six to eight feet in area. Fish work back and forth and will work the "sidewalk" extensively. This is where they've located feed and will work this "sidewalk" until they've exhausted the feed. Then they'll move to another area looking for a new "sidewalk" with food! I've encountered this situation often fishing where the person right next to me is fishing exactly the same fly (which in one case I gave him) and the same depth and he's knocking them dead while I'm wondering why I can't catch a cold!
4. One last thought on depth! Fishing small flies, especially chironomids, at deeper depths, say fifteen feet or deeper, Jack and I will use a small split shot (#4) about three to four feet above the chironomid. This helps

to get the fly down in the water column you wish to fish quickly and helps to keep your fly in the zone you wish to fish it. If you do this be sure to check fishing regulations to be sure adding weight is a legal method of fishing. I realize some fly fishing purists consider this "heresy." I'll let those folks deal with their own ideas of how to fish their presentations.

The final ingredient of "LDP" is "**Pattern.**"

1. Pattern: Is dictated by the clues we've determined earlier. They are what's emerging on the lake and what exoskeletons are present.
2. Observe carefully the size of the insects emerging and or exoskeletons to determine the fly pattern to be tried. If chironomids are coming off you'll need to match it as best you can. Jack and I believe size is more important than color. As a general rule of thumb the following holds true. Larvae stage is largest; pupa is smaller than the larvae but larger than the adult. Using this guide, e.g. say a size 14 adult chironomid would mean using a size 12 pupa or a size 10 larvae imitation. *A word on size! Hook sizes can be deceiving! Jack and I believe the hook length is more important than the hook gape (the distance between the hook shank & the hook point). You achieve the correct size of the natural with several different hook sizes by using different hook lengths. For example a size 14 2x long hook may give a better representation of a chironomid pupa than a size 12 standard hook shank length.*
3. Silhouette of your fly pattern is of critical importance! If you're trying to use a chironomid pupa to catch fish you need to have a pupa imitation that truly gives the silhouette appearance of that insect. Last month's article in Swirl Tips has good information on tying effective chironomid pupas.
4. Jack uses little weight on his patterns. If he does add weight he wraps the small lead wire on the thorax area of the fly. The more weight you have on the fly the less movement it will give in the water. Lethargic flies are not as effective as flies that sort of "dance around" at the end of your leader.

- Up to this point we've said little about equipment used for chironomid fishing. Equipment is important to be successful. It takes a combination of all these factors to be consistently successful.

The following is a brief overview of chironomid fly fishing equipment Jack recommends.

- Fly rod – a 5 or 6 weight rod 9' long
- Reel – choose one with a smooth drag system especially when you get into a larger fish. The newer large arbor reels are nice because they pick up line faster and create smaller coils of line.
- Reel backing – should be at least 75 yds. of 15 lbs. test.
- Fly line/s
 - Trend has been toward floating fly lines with long leaders for chironomid fishing.
 - Slow sinking (intermediate or type 1) line that is “density compensated.” This means the entire fly line sinks at the same rate which means you're presenting your fly at the same depth pretty much the entire length of your cast.
- Leaders – Jack uses fluorocarbon for last 9' of his leader and I like strictly fluorocarbon the entire length. I use a short heavier piece of butt section, say 0x or 1x, about 18" long to connect to fly line then 6' test fluorocarbon for the remainder of the leader. Why? There is less resistance and the leader is more likely to hang straight down.
- Strike indicators – these little buggers have revolutionized chironomid fishing! For years I made the mistake of not using them and it severely reduced my success at chironomid fishing. Why are they important? Two reasons: 1) they allow you to regulate the exact depth you wish to fish your fly pattern and, 2) you'll visually see the strike before you'll ever feel the

fish grab your fly. This significantly increased my fishing success. In fact, I use indicators for most all of my still water fishing, whether it is for chironomids, mayflies, leeches, or damselflies. It just works!

- The newer “quick release” strike indicators are my personal favorites. Jack uses a different setup but the principle of the strike indicator is the same. (See Illustration)



- Depth sounder – for me it is essential equipment! It takes the guess work out of depth of water I'm fishing and that's important.

Jack and I both hope that what we've written will help you to become more successful fly fishers. Jack has been very successful fishing chironomids for years and his willingness to share these tips is significant. Good luck and tight lines!

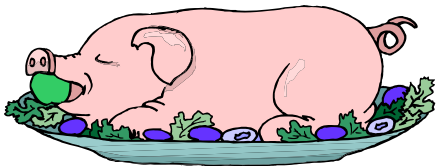
The following books and videos have been invaluable to me as a source of information on chironomid fishing and fly fishing in general:
 Chan, Brian M., *Flyfishing Strategies for Stillwaters*, 1991
 Rowley, Philip, *Fly Patterns for Stillwaters*, 2000
 Morris, Skip & Chan, Brian M., *Fly Fishing Trout Lakes*, 1999
 Davy, Alf, *The Gilly*, 1885
 Chan, Brian M., VCR tapes *Strategies of Stillwaters, Volumes I & II* (These titles may now be in DVD format)

EFFC Coming Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
September 17 th	Cutthroat Fishout	Stillaguamish River, Arlington
Sept. 29 th -Oct. 1 st	Kalama Cup	North Umpqua River, Oregon
Oct. 8 th	Dry Falls Fishout	Dry Falls Lake
Oct. 24 th	EFFC Annual Auction	Everett Elks Club
Dec. 9 th	Christmas/Awards Dinner	Hawthorne Inn, Smokey Point

Evergreen Fly Fishing Club
PO Box 221
Everett, WA 98206

Auction Dinner Reservations at Everett Elks Club
Tuesday, October 24th at 7:00 PM



Menu is Roast Pork, Tossed Green Salad, Vegetable Medley, Baby Red Potatoes, Rolls, Coffee or Tea

Name: _____

Sign me up for _____ dinners at \$20.00 per dinner.

Total enclosed \$'s: _____ Make check payable to: "EFFC"

Mail Reservation to: **Don Mathiesen** - or bring form & pay at the next meeting
15319 NE 166th Lane
Woodinville, WA 98072