



Volume 15, number 5

October 2012

The October meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will be held on Saturday, October 20, 2012, at 2:00 P.M. at the Rockland House on Route 206 in Roscoe, NY. The featured tyer will be Pennsylvania angler and tyer Rick Wallace, who has tied with Jack Garside and for most of the fly shops in the Lehigh Valley area. He will be tying hair-wing wet flies and talking about fishing hair-wing wets for trout.

Judie DV Smith Returns as Secretary

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild welcomes Judie DV Smith back as secretary. Carrying on the day-to-day business of the guild depends on the actions of its secretary, and Judie has agreed to fill this important office once again. We thank her for agreeing to undertake once more all the often unacknowledged, behind-the-scenes tasks that keep the organization going.

Danbury Show Tyers Needed

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will have a table at the Arts of the Anglers Show in Danbury Connecticut on Saturday and Sunday November 10 and 11, 2012. (See the show schedule and the ad in this issue of the *Gazette*.) We need tyers to staff the table on both days. If you can help out, please contact Ed McQuat, 31 Pine Mountain Road, Redding, CT 06896, (203) 544-8014, or edmcquat@optonline.net. Under the direction of our instructor-in-chief, Pete Peterson, the guild will also again be supplying vises so kids and others interested in learning to tie can get hands-on instruction and experience.

September Meeting Highlights

At the September 15, 2012, meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild, President Dave Brandt discussed the origins and development of the Hendrickson dry fly and tied examples of different versions.

Dave welcomed Bill Leuszler, our new treasurer, and Judie DV Smith as incoming secretary. He thanked Erin Phelan for her last 3½ years as secretary-treasurer.

Dave discussed the award given by the guild to a high school senior from Roscoe Central School. Courtney Taylor Banks received the \$100 award, and Dave read the thank-you note received from her. Livingston Manor Central School seniors did not participate. The current members of the Educational Fund Committee will continue for this year.

Dave reported that John Kavanaugh will continue as show chair and will be in charge of the two New Jersey shows, with Ed McQuat organizing the Danbury show and Allen Landheer the Lancaster, Pennsylvania show.

—Judie DV Smith, Secretary

The 2012–2013 Fly-Fishing Show Schedule

The Arts of the Angler Show. Saturday, November 10, 2012, and Sunday, November 11, 2012, at the Ethan Allen Inn, Exit 4 on Interstate 84 in Danbury, CT. Saturday, 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.; Sunday, 9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. See the ad in this issue of the *Gazette*.

The 22nd Annual International Fly Tying Symposium. Saturday, November 17, and Sunday, November 18, 2012. Now at the GARDEN STATE EXHIBIT CENTER, Somerset, NJ. Saturday, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.; Sunday, 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. See the ad in this issue of the *Gazette*.

The Fly Fishing Show—Somerset. Friday, January 25, Saturday, January 26, and Sunday, January 27, 2013, at the Garden State Exhibit Center, Somerset, NJ. Friday, 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.; Saturday, 8:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.; and Sunday, 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

The Fly Fishing Show—Lancaster. Saturday, March 2, and Sunday, March 3, 2013, at the Lancaster County Convention Center. Saturday, 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.; Sunday, 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

The Crane Fly: A Dry-Fly Pattern

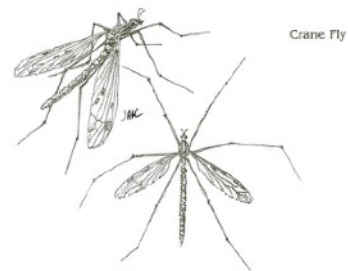
By Jack Pangburn

Crane flies look like giant mosquitoes, and some people call them “Mosquito Hawks.” With six very long legs, they also look like a long-legged spider, and others call them “Daddy Longlegs.” Crane flies are members of the aquatic genus *Tipula*, and there are some thirty species in North America. Their larvae live in the wet algae of shore debris and the sandy or muddy bottoms of lakes and ponds. The adult crane fly, which this pattern imitates, can be found along dark, shady small tumbling streams, around ponds of all sizes, and along the shores of most lakes.

Crane flies that live in temperate climates can grow as big as an inch and a half in length, and tropical species can be as large as two inches. Keep this in mind when dressing crane fly patterns. A long-shank dry-fly hook provides a good base on which to build this adult crane fly pattern.

The adult crane fly has another striking characteristic to consider. The six extremely long, skinny legs can be nearly twice the length of the body and are very fragile in appearance. So you need to choose a material for the legs that looks fragile, yet is strong. Both fine black monofilament and black horse tail hair, knotted to form knee knots, make durable imitation legs. You can tie and fish the pattern without legs, especially on fast water, but for stillwater fishing, you’ll want to fish a version with legs.

The tan to grayish-brown body color of the crane fly can be simulated with red fox fur dubbing. A fine, lightweight rib material provides segmentation. As a variation, you could form a segmented body by wrapping a thin strip of tan latex. The wings of a resting crane fly are set at about a 60-degree angle from the body. The pattern offered here employs a pair of gray goose biots for wings.





Photos and artwork by Jack Pangburn

A crane fly imitation is a very effective dry fly to use during the warm months from June to early October. This pattern is easy to tie and easy to fish. It has caught fish from the upper Willowemoc to the riffles of the Beaverkill. It makes a decent mouthful for any trout and will often trigger strikes when small patterns are ignored. You may need to dunk the fly in floatant to make it sit well on moving water and showcase its interesting footprint. On ponds and lakes, the dapping style of presentation mimics a distressed crane fly blown on the water and fluttering to free itself from the trap of the wet surface. This pattern also can be effective when it sinks below the surface.

Materials List

Hook: Extralong dry fly, size 10 to 18

Thread: Black, brown, or tan 10/0

Tail: Natural gray duck or goose biots

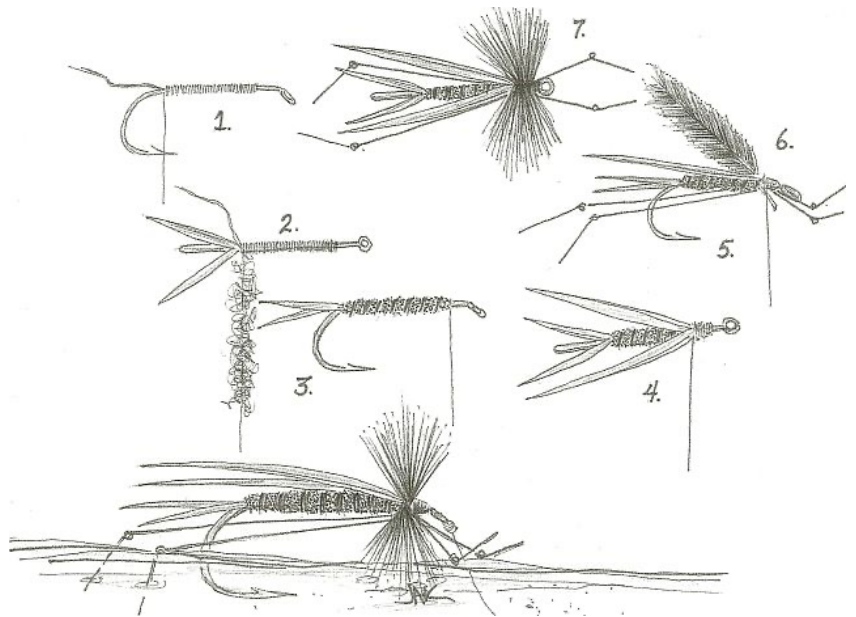
Body: Red fox fur dubbing

Rib: Fine copper wire, or thread

Wing: Natural gray duck or goose biots

Legs: Knotted black horse tail hair, or black monofilament

Hackle: Grizzly, natural red, or furnace



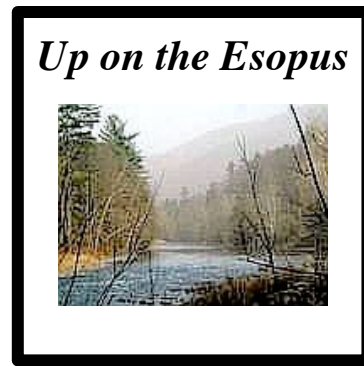
Tying Instructions

- Step 1. Wind the hook shank with waxed thread from behind the hook eye to above the barb. Attach the rib material at this point.
- Step 2. Attach the biot tails and separate by figure-eight wraps. Prepare a twisted dubbing noodle of red fox fur and form the body. (Option: add some sparkle to the fur dubbing.)
- Step 3. Spiral wrap the rib forward and tie off.
- Step 4. Attach the biot wings, splayed and extending to the tail tips.
- Step 5. Attach the knotted legs.
- Step 6. Select, tie in, and wrap the hackle.
- Step 7. Adjust the knotted legs, whip finish, and cement.

Edward R. Hewitt's Neversink Streamer

It's no secret that I'm a Neversink aficionado and a huge fan of Edward R. Hewitt. A few years ago, while reading Paul Schullery's *American Fly Fishing*, I stumbled upon the Neversink Streamer, which he attributed to Hewitt. Schullery, who was the executive director of the American Museum of Fly Fishing in Manchester, Vermont, described the fly as "a simple, predominately black pattern," but didn't provide any details about the fly's recipe. So I searched high and low, long and hard, to learn more about the fly—it was a Hewitt fly, after all, and called the Neversink Streamer.

Well, long story short, I contacted the American Museum of Fly Fishing directly, hoping that they would put me in contact with Paul Schullery so I could find out about this Neversink Streamer firsthand. The museum didn't do that, but Yoshi Akiyama—at that time the museum's collections manager—spoke to Schullery about my inquiry and searched through their archives, and I am grateful to Yoshi Akiyama and the American Museum for making the effort and taking the time to respond to my questions. He was most generous in supplying me with a photograph of an "actual fly that was tied by Ed Hewitt," along with their best guess at the materials used in the pattern, since no written recipe was to be found. Here it is:



Hewitt Neversink Streamer, courtesy of the American Museum of Fly Fishing

Hook: Size 12 to 14

Tail: Red/orange dyed hackle fibers

Body: Black wool, ribbed with medium black tinsel

Wing: Silver badger hackles with jungle cock eyes

Looking at the photograph, I found something a bit unusual about the pattern. It appeared to be tied on a wet-fly hook, not on a long-shank streamer hook. This is an anomaly that I also noticed on Art Flick's Black Nose Dace, the one pictured in the first edition of his *Streamside Guide*. That bucktail, too, appeared to be tied on a wet-fly hook.

I asked guild member Ted Patlen about these observations. Was I seeing things incorrectly, or was there something to this? Ted responded, "I have both streamers in my collection, both original flies. The Black Nose Dace is definitely on a wet-fly hook, I think it is a regular shank length, and the Hewitt is on a small wet hook, regular shank. I've seen about six of these, and they were all very small wet-fly hooks. The one I have is on a size 16 and is about one inch long." Patlen added, "Those guys hated fishing

streamers, but did. Where and when they fished them is key to the fly's structure. Many of the flies fished at night were bulkier. Summer patterns—I think that is what the Hewitt fly is—were sparser.”

Ted Patlen was also kind enough to provide me photos of both his Hewitt Neversink Streamer and Flick Black Nose Dace. Patlen's Neversink Streamer is tied ever so slightly differently from the one the American Museum of Fly Fishing has in their possession.



Hewitt Neversink Streamer, courtesy of Ted Patlen

That probably just illustrates Mike Valla's reminder that these old tying masters varied their style and patterns a bit in light of whatever materials were readily available at the time. Consequently, I don't feel too badly about having done so myself. I didn't have any flat black tinsel when I started tying Hewitt's Neversink Streamer, and I substituted fine oval gold wire, hoping to add a bit of contrast and flash. I still do. Furthermore, I tie mine on a size 10 Mustad 9671 nymph hook. It all works for me as I try to preserve the history of this pattern. The one consistent feature in all these flies is that by wet-fly standards, which this fly is not, the wing is slightly elongated, typical of a small streamer.



Ed O's Neversink Streamer

I have fished “my” Neversink Streamer on Hewitt's Neversink and been richly rewarded—on occasion—with some sizeable browns and a few brook trout. I tend to fish this pattern in the thin, clear waters of summer and fall, mostly as a single wet fly—small streamer—on a swing with a little bit of action. Try it—you might like it.

In last month's issue of the *Gazette* I mentioned that I planned to acquire a copy of Hewitt's *Days from Seventy Five to Ninety*. I did just that. The book is mostly a reflection on the life of the Dean of the Neversink, looking back some ninety years. It has

little to do with fishing, though there are some interesting tidbits to be had. Here is poem by Hewitt from *Days from Seventy Five to Ninety*.

Sing, little rivers, of your birth among the hills
From brooklets, springs, and raindrops making larger rills.
Sing, sparking brook and streamlets dancing over stones,
Pools with stiller waters holding trout in schools.
Sing, you larger rivers, with greater trout and salmon
Leaping skyward in the sunshine for no one knows what gammon.
Sing, my soul, with gladness, that I have known you well,
Life is better living since I have known your spell.



Favorite Fall Streamers

My favorite time of the year just arrived, and at the same time, we have been gifted with heavy rain to recharge our Catskill watershed.

This is the season when my dry-fly box works its way farther back in my vest, and the wallet with the long-shank hooks adorned with colorful feathers sits in front.

There is something special about fall in the Catskills. It's a shame everyone doesn't get to see it the way we do, standing in water, looking upstream, with the trees on both banks blazing with yellows, reds, and oranges. Hemlock and evergreen mixed in add freshness to the autumn palate, and as the wind and gravity work against the colorful setting, the fallen leaves line the banks and mix with the cold mountain stream water.

This is streamer-fishing weather, because browns and brookies in spawning colors look to bulk up for the nearing winter, and last weekend, I was most fortunate to be right in the setting described above, with the rivers receding, but still off-color. Dry flies were out, because water clarity was nonexistent. Anticipating this, I had already arranged my "fall fly" wallet for the season, colorful flies in various sizes suited for our Catskill waters.

This is another thing I love about the fall season. The flies of spring and summer, drab and earth-colored, are replaced with bright, flashy, autumn patterns.

I find that with streamers and bucktails, the pattern is not as important as the way it is dressed. Rather than carry dozens and dozens of various patterns, I tie and fish half a dozen or so in different styles and colors to suit conditions. I also prefer to use slightly shorter-shanked hooks than what many would consider to be streamer-sized. I like hooks from 3X-long to 5X-long,

simply because I feel that with 6X and longer hooks, the leverage of the long shank can easily work the bend out when a fish turns and rolls. When dressing the fly, keeping the



wings slightly longer than the total length of the shank also helps the fly retain its profile without the wing wrapping around the bend. Flies tied in the style of the Carrie Stevens streamers are notorious for knotting up with repeated casting, because the feather wing is very wispy when wet. I prefer bucktail, polar bear, and goose shoulder for winging material, the former being the most durable and resilient.

Here are my three favorite fall streamer patterns and their dressings.

My number one pattern is the Bumblepuppy. If I had only one fly to fish from September to November, without a doubt, this would be it. As Theodore Gordon did during his experiments with this fly, I change the dressing to suit conditions or just for fun. Most of the time I use it dressed as follows.

Bumblepuppy

Hook: 5X long, sproat bend, size 10 to 2

Tail: Red goose shoulder slips, as long as the hook gape is wide

Tip and tag: Silver tinsel and red chenille

Body: White chenille

Rib: Wide oval silver

Hackle: Silver badger, with teal or widgeon in front wrapped as a collar longer than the hackle

Wings: Polar bear underwing and white goose shoulder overwing

Cheeks: Jungle cock eyes, low and long, to about midbody

My number two pattern is the Jackass. I'm not sure if it's named after the farm animal or someone of whom the inventor was not at all fond, but this fly is a killer and a perfect complement to the light-colored Bumblepuppy.

Jackass

Hook: 3X long or 4X long, sproat or limerick bend, size 6 to 10

Tail: Golden pheasant crest

Tag: Red floss

Body: Peacock herl

Throat: Red hackle fibers, tied as a beard

Hackle: Brown, long and sparse

Wing: Bronze mallard

The number three pattern is the Vic Special. This pattern was introduced to me by my friend "Esopus" Ed Ostapczuk, and as a brook trout pattern, it is a real producer. It's also a great pattern to use in shallow and low water. It's a fast tie and a very pretty fly, with a minimum of materials in the dressing. This one says "fall favorite" all over it.

Vic Special

Hook: 5X long, limerick bend, size 8 to 12

Tail: Golden pheasant tippet, sparse

Tag: Peacock herl

Body: Red floss

Wing: Gray squirrel tail, sparse



“Dear Mr. Darbee” A Letter from George Grant

George F. Grant, 2212 Harvard Avenue, Butte,
Montana

December 7, 1946

Dear Mr. Darbee:

Thank you for your letter of November 20th. I will be very pleased to send you some of our strictly Western Style patterns. As a fly-dresser I am sure they will be of interest to you, and I think, too, that some of the patterns, if they are not too large, will be useful on your eastern streams.

During the past season I operated a tackle shop at West Yellowstone, Montana, which is at the west entrance of Yellowstone National Park, and the demand for flies was so great that I ended the season without a single stock fly. However, I am building stock now and will send the flies to you as soon as they are available. There will, of course, be no charge for these flies as I am more than happy to send them to you.

Was glad to note that you and Mrs. Darbee were given the national recognition that you so richly deserve in the May 1946 issue of “Fortune” magazine. It was a very authoritative article and I thought the color plates were the best I have ever seen. With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours, George F. Grant (signed)

Archival material courtesy of Judie DV Smith



Catskill Fins, by John Bonasera



This newsletter depends on all guild members for its content. . Items from nonmembers are welcome at the editor’s discretion. Without the articles, information, for-sale or want ads, cartoons, newsworthy information, and whatever else is interesting and fun that members submit, this newsletter simply becomes a meeting announcement. Send submissions to Bud Bynack, budbynack@verizon.net or 69 Bronxville Road, Apt. 4G, Bronxville, NY 10708, (914) 961-3521.



The Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum



Presents

The Arts of the Angler Show

At the Ethan Allen Inn,
Exit 4 on I-84 in Danbury, CT

Saturday, November 10, 2012, 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, November 11, 2011, 9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

This unique and comprehensive show combines the finest in fly tying, bamboo rod makers, books, and collectibles with the contemporary tackle and destinations most desired today. In addition to offering the best in fly-fishing equipment, tackle, accessories, and collectibles, this show provides attendees with continued exposure to fly fishing and reinforces the importance of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum and the Catskills. Educational seminars and programs are featured throughout the event.

For more information, go to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum Web site at <http://www.cffcm.net> or contact Erin at (845) 439-4810, or flyfish@catskill.net.

All proceeds benefit the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum



The 22nd Annual International



Fly Tying Symposium

November 17 and 18, 2012

NOW at the GARDEN STATE EXHIBIT CENTER

Somerset, NJ

SATURDAY: 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

ADULTS: \$15.00

SATURDAY

SUNDAY: 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

\$12.00

SUNDAY

WEEKEND PASS: \$20.00

CHILDREN UNDER 16:

FREE

This year's theme is theme "The Italian Connection," with representatives from sunny Italy . . . and Brooklyn, too! As always, we will welcome many tyers from a number of countries and all our fantastic USA tyers, including the incomparable Charlie Craven from the Denver area, making his first visit.