



Volume 15, number 6

December 2012

The December meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will be held on Saturday, December 15, 2012, at 2:00 P.M. at the Rockland House on Route 206 in Roscoe, NY. Jim Froio will be tying an Emerger Thing—a Hendrickson emerger pattern. Bring your vise, tools, and materials and tie along with Big Jim.

Hook: Dry fly or wet fly, size 12 to 14
Rib: Copper wire
Body: Pheasant tail
Thorax: Hendrickson dubbing
Hackle: Hen or partridge

On the agenda: Dave Brandt has received an offer from Alan Liu concerning a project involving completing and selling copies of *Trout Flies*, by Richard Salmon, several dozen of which are in Liu's possession. This book, originally published by Sportsman's Edge Press in 1975, had actual materials attached to the pattern recipes, and in the copies involved here, the process of attaching them needs to be completed. An original version of this book is on offer at Amazon.com for \$275.00. Liu proposes that if he donates the copies and the guild members complete them, he and the guild will split the proceeds according to a deal yet to be worked out. We need to discuss this offer at the meeting.

Also: Books, Book, Books. Judie DV Smith says: "I am going to bring to the meeting a couple of boxes of fishing and fly-tying books that I bought at auction last year, all in pretty good condition, priced mostly between one and five dollars. I have to get them out of the way. I'll let members who attend pick numbers out of a hat—lowest one gets first choice, and so on. Proceeds will go to the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild Educational Programs Fund."

January Somerset Show Tyers Needed

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will have a table at The Fly Fishing Show in Somerset, NJ, on January 25, 26, and 27, 2013. (See the ad at the end of this issue.) We need tyers to staff the table on all three days. If you can help out, please contact John Kavanaugh at flymank@optonline.net, (973) 219-7696, or via his Facebook page.

After Sandy

If you suffered severe losses in Superstorm Sandy, tying flies may not be high on your list of priorities these days, but eventually, the consolations of fly fishing may seem attractive. If you lost materials, tools, or whatever in the storm, the guild and its members

may be able to help get you back to the vise. Contact Judie DV Smith at judiedvsmith@yahoo.com.

Danbury Show Report

The Danbury Arts of the Angler show, held on November 10 and 11 this year, went very well at the guild's booth. Both days, we had many visitors who asked questions about the Catskill fly and fly-tying methods, materials, and more. We signed up seven new members and had seven renewals, along with the sale of some logo hats, patches, and pins, but did not sell any DVDs.

Please Note: One person renewed for two years, but didn't record the extra year. If you're that person, please contact Judie DV Smith at judiedvsmith@yahoo.com or Bud Bynack at budbynack@verizon.net or (914) 961-3521.

I would like to thank the tyers that assisted in manning our booth for this good two-day show. Bud Bynack's extended-body fly (the Harry Darbee version) attracts fishermen, as well as fish, and Pete Peterson was busy as usual demonstrating many different types of flies, including dries and nymphs—classic as well as beadhead versions. Dan Thomas worked away at his station, producing some very nice flies that drew many comments from visitors. This was Dan's first stint at the Danbury show, and I hope there are many more to come.

I was disappointed that one of our stalwarts, Bob Osburn, could not be with us this year, because he fell ill during the week prior to the show. We hope that Bob has made a complete recovery.

All in all I think it was a successful show for the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild.

—Ed McQuat

Bill Dorato and the Dorato Hare's Ear

Many fly fishers endlessly search for that "silver bullet," the one fly that always seems to catch trout, especially under tough conditions. Well, a few years ago, a good fly-fishing buddy and fellow guild member, Dave Plummer, put me onto a dry fly that comes close to filling that tall order. The name of this pattern is the Dorato Hare's Ear, and this is its story.

William C. Dorato (1915–2000), known as Willie to his good friends, was a native of Albany, New York, an avid fly fisher, and quite an accomplished angler and fly tyer. He was also a founding member and first president of the Clearwater Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and he fished with the likes of Dud Soper, Dick Talleur, Art Flick, Frank Mele, Tony Bonavist, Del Bedinotti, and many other noted anglers. He frequented the Catskills, especially the Delaware system, plus the Battenkill near his home grounds. And it was on the Battenkill that he conceived his Dorato Hare's Ear while trying to imitate the hopping caddisflies prevalent on that river. According to longtime friend Del Bedinotti, Dorato's fly "created the

Up on the Esopus



With Ed Ostapczuk

illusion of movement due to the mix of wood duck wings and brown and grizzly hackle” and a body of hare’s mask, “complete with spikes,” hair spikes that act like additional hackle legs.

The late Dick Talleur thought enough of Dorato and his dry fly that he gave special mention to both in at least two of his many angling books. In chapter 26 of *Mastering the Art of Fly-Tying*, Talleur called Bill a “highly skilled and astute” tyer who can tie “classic patterns with the best,” yet “his fly-box contains a vast array of nondescript, subtly seductive creations.” In *Trout Flies for the 21st Century*, Talleur included three different variations of the Dorato Hare’s Ear (DHE), recommending that this dry fly is best tied in sizes 10 to 16. Included were the basic DHE originated by Dorato, plus a Light and Gray Dun DHE, the work of Talleur’s creativity and love of the pattern.



Dorato Hare's Ear tied by Bill Dorato.
Courtesy of Tony Bonavist. Photo by Ed Ostapczuk

In an e-mail that Talleur sent me several years ago, he wrote, “The DHE is still one of my main go-to flies. A few years ago, on the Farmington in CT, I hooked a huge brown on a size 14 Light Dorato, just at dusk. I played it for quite a while, finally it wrapped me around a rock, and that was the ball game. I’m pretty sure it would have been the biggest trout I ever caught.”

Both Eric Leiser in his *Book of Fly Patterns* and Terry Hellekson in *Fish Flies* include a little bit of material on this dry fly, but other than that, the average fly tyer might be hard pressed to locate much information on the pattern. I feel very lucky that Dave Plummer introduced me to this dry fly several years ago, and it is now one of my main go-to dry flies, too, for finicky, large, surface-feeding brown trout on tailwater streams such as the West and East Branches of the Delaware River. It’s also produced hard-to-move trout on Catskill freestone streams such as the Esopus and Willowemoc, and just this past summer, it accounted for its share of cutthroat trout out in Yellowstone. I like a Dorato Hare’s Ear when caddis are about and on small hooks when Blue-Winged Olives are active. I tie this pattern in sizes 16 to 20, but a size 18 is by far my favorite size under almost all conditions.



Dorato Hare's Ears. Flies and photo by Ed Ostapczuk

Both Del Bedinotti and Dick Talleur are in agreement on the pattern for a basic Dorato Hare’s Ear, and it is as follows.

Thread: Camel or brown
Wing: Wood duck
Tail: Brown and grizzly hackle barbs, tied very short
Body: Hare's ear mask with spiky guard hairs
Hackle: Brown and grizzly, mixed

Dave Plummer uses two grizzly hackle tips instead of brown and grizzly hackle barbs for the tails on his Doratos, so some variations of this pattern certainly exist, as is the case for most successful trout flies. Many thanks to Tony Bonavist, Del Bedinotti, and Dave Plummer for background information used to pull this article together and for introducing me to this highly effective dry-fly pattern.



The Catskill Curler

About a month ago, I had the opportunity to view a box of flies tied by a guild member for a new display that the guild is making to take to shows. We wanted to make up a plate of Catskill flies that represents what we stand for as the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild. Opening up all the little boxes, film containers, and envelopes that contained the member's flies, I came across one that made me stop and marvel. Dave Pabst tied this example of a Catskill Curler, and though I have never seen one in hand, I immediately knew what it was. Tied on a looped return-eye Limerick bend long-shank Mustad, it was just exquisite. And when I say "exquisite," I mean a perfectly tied example of a classic stonefly nymph tied *right*. I have seen variations of this fly on-line tied in every imaginable way, but never have I seen one tied as this one was—tied to Catskill perfection.

Later, I did a little research on this pattern and found that it was first tied by Matty Vinceguerra. The fly's name is derived from the way a big, dark-bodied stonefly nymph drifting free in the current of our Catskill streams has a tendency to curl its body. Local anglers sometimes called stonefly nymphs "curlers"—hence the name Catskill Curler. The fly now is known as both the Catskill Curler and the Catskill Coiler. As the pattern gained popularity and more people started buying and using it, city folk included, a thick New York accent would change the word "curl" to "coil," as in "Hey honey, you gunna take them *coilers* outta yer hair???" Today, both pronunciations are acceptable for the name of the fly.

This is a pattern that uses a minimum amount of materials, turkey tail being the primary ingredient, but when finished, it has all the right triggers that make it a really fine "big fish" fly. While not a fly for the purist, it is no doubt a great pattern for getting down where the fish are, and I plan on having a good supply of them for the spring opener.

Start with a long-shank wet fly or streamer hook (Eric Leiser's *Book of Fly Patterns* calls for a Mustad 9672) and a good base of 3/0 tying thread. Then wrap two sections of lead on the sides of the hook shank to give the fly a flattened body. This not only makes the pattern more realistic, but gets the fly down in the water column quickly. The abdomen is composed of turkey tail fibers—four or five are about right for a size 6 hook. Using the tying thread as extra insurance for durability, twist the fibers around the thread in a rope, then wrap forward to about midshank. A prepped slip of turkey tail forms both wing cases. I brush on some Flexament beforehand and let it dry to make the wing case durable and to help keep its shape when folding. After tying the thorax, legs,

and second wing case, leave a small section of turkey beyond the thread head to add a little bulk, as on a natural stonefly nymph.

Here is the dressing from Lieser's *Book of Fly Patterns*.

Hook: Mustad 9672, size 4 to 8

Thread: Brown monocord 3/0

Underbody: A strip of lead wire on each side of the shank

Tail: Two peccary fibers

Abdomen: Turkey tail fibers and brown thread, twisted in a rope

Wing case: Dark brown turkey tail section, coated with Flexament or Pliobond

Thorax: Tan ostrich herl with tan thread, twisted in a rope

Legs: Mottled light and dark brown hen ringneck pheasant tail fibers

Head: Formed from turkey section used for wing case

Eyes: Painted on with black lacquer



There are many contemporary stonefly nymph patterns to choose from today, but this is one born in the heart of the Catskills and worthy of space in your fishing box.

Looking Back Upstream

The History and Development of CDC

By Mike Hogue

A few years ago, I finished a manuscript for a book. For various reasons, the entire book was never published. The article that follows was one of the chapters and is now on my Web site, <http://www.mwflytying.com>, along with a new CDC material I am now offering. I worked with Marc Petitjean to edit this, and some of the material has never been published anywhere before. — Mike

Cul de Canard and its development as a fly-tying material originated with Swiss and French tyers. Perhaps the best history of CDC can be found in Leon Links's book *Tying Flies with CDC: The Fisherman's Miracle Feather*. Links traces the development of the feathers back to two 1920s tyers: Maximilien Joset and Charles Bickel of Switzerland. Patterns from these early tyers had a raffine body and a CDC hackle that was spun in a circle around the front of the tying hook. These flies were the Moustique du Jura and the Mouche de Vallorbe.

Frenchman Henri Bresson first used the name “cul de canard” in the 1950s. This name roughly translates into “duck’s bum” or “butt of the duck.” Since a fair number of Americans were unable to pronounce “cul de canard” correctly, the name CDC stuck.

As time went on, the French and the Swiss continued to create more dry flies made largely of CDC. These patterns utilized CDC that was wrapped like the more conventional chicken hackle on traditional English wet flies. By using a forward-spun design, many of the early French and Swiss tyers were able to imitate many types of mayfly duns and spinners. These patterns were largely local, however, and were not as widely accepted as some other patterns, such as the Hare’s Ear and the Adams.

In the 1980s, Slovenian native Marjan Fratnik developed the clever F Fly. The F Fly was designed with a CDC feather tied with the tips facing backward and flat on top of the hook as a flat wing to create an imitation of caddis wings, stonefly wings, or the wings of an emerging dun. The F Fly quickly caught on, as did the use of the CDC material, leading to the development of additional patterns based on this concept and design. This simple fly has proven to be so popular that it is considered to be the most effective dry-fly pattern used by the French International Fly Fishing Team to help capture repeated International Fly Fishing Team Championships.

In the mid-1980s (1984–1986), Marc Petitjean of Switzerland began to develop a new generation of CDC flies. Marc experimented with several patterns using full feathers twisted and wrapped using the CDC barbs for bodies and wings. About this same time (1984), Gerard Laible of Germany also began using trimmed barbs from the stems of the CDC feathers in a dubbing loop as a substitute for hackle. These changes allowed the material to be utilized in different ways. With CDC used as a body material and as a hackle substitute, the flies became no-hackle variations, allowing the flies to float without the need for traditional hackle. Petitjean’s innovations also developed additional uses for the material beyond the traditional use of CDC only as a winging material.

In the 1990s, Petitjean furthered the development of CDC by creating a dying process that protects the fibers and preserves the CDC’s natural oils. His method does not use acid dyes or heat. Petitjean developed fifteen dyed colors and began marketing his material commercially, allowing tyers to utilize commercially processed materials. During this period, Petitjean also started tying flies commercially, allowing him to develop additional designs and better imitations.

The development of CDC as a fly-tying material in the United States can be credited to Loy Swaffar of Springdale, Arkansas. In 1990, Loy and Donna Swaffar meet with Bill Black of Umpqua Feather Merchants (Bill is now owner of Spirit River) in Glide, Oregon. At the meeting, Loy, Donna, and Bill discussed the commercial uses for CDC as well as its availability and cost. Bill suggested that Loy contact René Harrop about this material for additional input and suggestions for color and quality choices.

By using René’s input, Loy was able to select the colors and identify the qualities he would need to process CDC as a fly-tying material. Like Petitjean, Loy also used a dying process that retains the oils of the original material. Over time, he was able to process a commercially viable number of pounds of material per month. Much of this material went to commercial fly tyers, with the remainder going to distributors, retailers and packaging firms. Loy Swaffar was also largely responsible for the development of other products, such as Ozark Mottled Turkey Quills, Turkey CDC, Turkey Biot Quills, Ozark Wild Turkey Marabou, CDC, CDC Puffs, Marabou Spey Hackle, Burnt Turkey Spey Hackle, and Grizzly CDC. Many of these products were repackaged by distributors under other labels. Umpqua, Orvis, Hareline, and Rumpf all sold Loy’s items under their labels.

Loy and Donna Swaffar harvested these feathers from hunted ducks. Loy lived near Stuttgart, Arkansas, which is one of the major north-south flyways in North America and one of the world's largest duck-hunting centers. Each fall, Loy and Donna would travel around Arkansas to collect bulk feathers from hunting camps, guides, and duck processors. Also centered nearby were numerous large poultry processors.

Loy and Donna used their local contacts to develop a world-class feather-processing company based on this region's natural and agricultural resources. A few years ago, Loy passed away, and Donna retired and closed their processing plant. The fly-tying world owes Loy, Donna, and Jeff Swaffar a debt of gratitude for the creation and development of these wonderful fly-tying feathers.

René Harrop went on to develop several patterns to aid in the catching of highly selective trout on the flat water and long, clear pools of the Henry's Fork and Yellowstone region. By utilizing CDC, he was able to implement many unique ideas. Many of his concepts for flies evolved from flies based on the Comparadun (developed for the Delaware) and the No-Hackle designs created by Doug Swisher and Carl Richards in Michigan.

In 2003, Marc Petitjean introduced the Magic Tool. The Magic Tool is similar to a set of Bulldog paperclips and is used to prepare CDC for dubbing loops. By using the Magic Tool, Petitjean was able to combine more than one CDC feather, combine CDC and traditional hackle, or combine CDC and dubbing. Petitjean also developed new techniques for combining materials using a traditional split-thread method of dubbing to create dubbing ropes and synthetic hackle to replace traditional chicken hackle.

The Structure and Natural Attributes of CDC

CDC comes from any waterfowl. Ducks, geese, and swans all have CDC feathers. While the name CDC means "butt of the duck," these feathers actually come from the back of the bird, not the actual butt. On any waterfowl you can lift up the tail and find the preen-oil gland and the feathers that surround it. Each bird uses this gland to add waterproofing qualities to its feathers, and this waterproofing is one the reasons why these birds float. Indeed, one of these feathers' main attractions is their natural ability to repel water.

It was generally assumed that the oil in each feather is the primary reason why these feathers continue to float even when wet. On closer examination, though, it was discovered to be the structure of the feathers' fibers that gives CDC its unique properties. Each individual feather has small fibers that branch off to the side, holding and trapping pockets of air. This ability to trap air is the major reason why these feathers continue to float when wet. It can be argued that any feather will float as long as it continues to hold and trap air. So it is the structure of the feather, and not necessarily the oils, that causes CDC to float so well.

Tying with CDC

In an Internet article (<http://globalflyfisher.com/tiebetter/tying-with-cdc>) that was also later published in *Fly Fisherman* magazine, Hans Weilenmann outlined the uses for CDC and categorized CDC in terms of four distinct types. That approach can work, but it can limit your choices of sizes, hooks, and also how the feather can be used. A more effective method of measuring and sorting CDC is simply by the length of the fibers. Sizing CDC feathers is a lot like sizing hackle. For example, you use size 10 hackle on a 10 hook, where hackle width is usually defined as one and one-half times the gap of a

hook. Likewise, with CDC, you can simply use small feathers on small flies and use larger feathers on large flies. In addition, larger flies using larger feathers may require feathers with a bigger and stiffer stem to give them mass and also stability.

CDC can be used instead of hackle, deer hair, dubbing, or legs on a fly. You can tie CDC in a bundle of stacked fibers like deer hair to create a dry fly. Bundling fibers in a group adds pockets that hold air. You can also twist the fibers to create bodies. Feathers can be tied as down wings to imitate caddisflies or used for upright wings in mayfly patterns. You can spin the fibers in a dubbing loop to create your own hackle, or you can wrap the feather like a more traditional hackle. When using these feathers, what is most important is to create some way to trap air. By designing this into each fly, you increase its ability to float.

Standard CDC versus Genetic CDC

The most common type of CDC is the prepackaged material that was originated by Swaffarco. Usually these feathers are harvested from wild ducks or smaller, commercially raised farm ducks. The typical CDC feather is about three-quarters of an inch to one inch long. The natural color is either white or dun, although feathers now come dyed in many colors.

I've coined the term "genetic CDC." This type of CDC comes from ducks that are crossbred for many years to be larger than the usual wild or farm duck. Through better breeding and a better diet, these ducks create wonderful CDC. This CDC is unique in that the fibers are almost double the size of standard CDC. Much like the genetic hackle capes we now have used for many years, this CDC is of a better quality than the standard CDC previously available.

These premium feathers have fibers that are significantly fuller and have much more capacity to hold and trap air. Genetic CDC feathers are ideally suited for use in spun loops or for twisting to create dry-fly bodies, since they are so much larger and fuller. This larger CDC can also be used for streamer wings, on nymphs, as collars, or as a spun loop hackle. The fibers are soft and fine and are suitable for use in midge patterns, dry flies, or even terrestrial patterns. I recently started selling CDC that originates from ducks raised commercially in the Catskills. I have named this product Catskill Mountain Premium CDC. I hope to expand the availability of the this material. For now, though, I am the only one offering this it.

For Sale

Slide Projector. If you feel, as I do, that good ol' slides offer a more vivid, more colorful, and more generally appealing way to view an assortment of photos, old or new, than to see them presented digitally via a computer and a PowerPoint program . . . this could be your lucky day. It would be especially so if you have slides, but no longer have a projector. For \$25 and a bottle of Newcastle Brown Ale, and for taking the time to pick it up, you can have a fine working carousel projector and several empty carousels. The bulb in this projector costs about as much! If it wasn't an extra set, I would not be parting with it. If you are interested, call Dave at (607) 433-2924.

Dyna-King Sidewinder Vise. The original Dyna-King full-rotary vise. Brass and stainless steel. Comes with a parachute tool, bobbin cradle, both regular and midge jaws, and an extra set of both regular and midge jaws. \$225.00 to a guild member, with free shipping—or pick it up at the December meeting. For pictures and more information, contact Bud Bynack at (914) 961-3521 or budbynack@verizon.net.

Catskill Fins, by John Bonasera, will return. Willow and BK are hunkered down in the Junction Pool for the Winter Solstice.



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 Fly Fishing Show



**The Garden State Convention Center
Somerset, New Jersey**

January 25, 26, 27, 2013

Show Hours

Friday: 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Saturday: 8:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

two-day pass

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

three-day pass

Admission

Adults: \$18 for one day

\$28 for

\$38 for

Children under 5 free, under 12: \$2

Scouts under 16 in uniform: free

Active Military: \$10

Cash only at the gate

Regardless of the weather, the show will go on!