

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild



GAZETTE

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The February meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will be held on Saturday, February 21, 2009, at the Rockland House on Route 206 in Roscoe, NY, at 2:00 P.M. This meeting will feature the annual materials swap. It is also the annual meeting for the election of officers.

This long-anticipated—and sometimes dreaded—event has been taking place since December 1995, and throughout its life, it has been plagued by not having any concrete rules. Although it was started as a pure swap, it didn't take long to discover how difficult it was to keep it that way, especially as the number of participants grew. Some members would like to see it be purely a time for exchanging one's excess materials for someone else's, with no money changing hands. Instead of this ideal situation, it has grown into something much more resembling a flea market. This format is appealing to some members, as well.

In light of all this, we have decided on a couple of ground rules regarding our now fifteen-year-old swap. First, we feel that one should bring at least a few items that are earmarked just for swapping, while also feeling free to bring some things for sale. But we also are aware that this compromise is probably not the best solution, and I am asking for input from anyone interested in this little yearly get-together about how to run it for the most mutual benefit. All suggestions will be welcomed by the guild in its ongoing effort to please all of the people all of the time.

—*Dave Brandt, President*

Memberships Renew in February

And this is February. If you receive the *Gazette* by snail mail, check your mailing label to see if you need to renew. If you receive it by e-mail, note that we have added your renewal date next to your name on the address line. Membership is only \$10.00 per year. For renewals, send a check, your current address and phone number, and, if you wish to receive the *Gazette* by e-mail, your e-mail address to:

Bob Osburn, 3 Good Time Court, Goshen, NY 10924.

Off-Month Meeting Notices

Meeting notices for months when the *Gazette* is not published will now be sent as postcards, rather than in envelopes, unless there is reason to do otherwise. It'll save us some money.

—*Judie DV Smith*

The March meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will be held on Saturday, March 21, 2009, at the Rockland House on Route 206 in Roscoe, NY. at 2:00 P.M. The guild will be tying flies to be used by Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing Inc. Bob Cohen, a guild member, is the New Jersey coordinator for this program, which introduces wounded veterans to fly fishing as an assistance to their physical and emotional rehabilitation.

Bob brings veterans to the ponds at the New Jersey Pequest Hatchery five or six times a year, where, assisted by volunteers from groups such as Trout Unlimited, he teaches fly fishing. All the gear required has been donated by generous manufacturers, but Bob needs flies for use on his fishing days. Please make an effort to turn out for this special event. If you cannot make it, flies can be tied at home and mailed to him at Bob Cohen, 120 Warren Drive, Aberdeen, NJ 07747.

As part of this program, Bob is teaching fly tying to veterans at Lyons Hospital in Lyons, New Jersey, and is in need of vises. Should any member have an old vise in good working order, consider donating it to Healing Waters. You can mail your vise to Bob at the above address. Should any New Jersey Guild members be available to teach at tying sessions, give Bob a call at (732) 441-7390.

—*Paul Murphy*

The 2009 Fly Tyers Rendezvous will be held on Saturday, April 18, at the Rockland House on Route 206 in Roscoe, NY, from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. The event is free and open to the public. There will be a reception following at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum afterward. If you are a tyer who would like to participate and have yet to sign up, please contact tying cochair Leslie Wrixon at lesliewrixon@yahoo.com or (508) 733-8535.

This year, as part of the Rendezvous, we will have a tying contest to help celebrate the bicentennial of Rockland County. Tyers and attendees at the Rendezvous may participate by submitting two of the same fly at the door. One fly will go to the guild and the other to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, where it will be displayed as part of the bicentennial festivities. The requirements are simple: Flies must be wet flies (quill wing, soft hackle, no-wing-style, etc.) tied on hooks no larger than a size 8 traditional wet fly hook. Flies must include three of the following colors: royal blue, maroon/claret, white, and gray. (These are the colors of the local high schools.) So help celebrate the bicentennial!

—*Leslie Wrixon*

Tyers and Help Needed

The Sullivan County Historical Society has invited us to have a table at their Sportsmen Show at the Sullivan County Museum, Main Street, Hurleyville, NY, on Sunday, March 1, 2009, from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. (snow date, Sunday, March 8). We always had a table during the years they did the show, but they haven't held one for about four years. We always had a good time and were the only fly tyers there. If you're interested in helping or tying, please contact me at judiedvsmith@yahoo.com or call (607) 498-6024 as soon as possible. I need to let them know if we will attend this year.

—*Judie DV Smith*

Fly Plate Raffle

Raffle tickets for the Rendezvous fly plate framed by Ted Patlen are still available. Tickets are \$5.00 each, or six for \$25.00. The winning ticket will be drawn at the 2009 Rendezvous on April 18, with the winner to arrange pick-up or paying postage. Mail checks to CFTG Tickets, P.O. Box 663, Roscoe, NY 12776. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of your stubs.

Print Raffle Winner

The winner of the raffle for the framed David Footer print *Steep Bank Pool* was guild member David Plummer of Oneonta. He says, "Thank you so much. I love it and have hung it in a premier spot in my den."

—*Judie DV Smith*

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild at the 2009 Somerset Fly Fishing Show

Our presence at The Fly Fishing Show in Somerset, New Jersey, was nothing short of a huge success. On Friday morning, there was some concern due to the new location of the guild table in the entryway just inside the front door of the Garden State Exhibition Center, but not long after the 10 :00 A.M. start of the show, the guild struck gold.

This new location proved to be the best venture spot ever. With tickets going like hotcakes for the Dyna-King vise being raffled off at the show and for the guild fly plate, full of great flies tied by great tyers, it was a home run.

The presence of skilled tyers tying away, along with the raffle items, was a great draw for us. We were able to sign up sixteen new members, while twenty-three members renewed their membership at the show. We also sold forty-five raffle tickets for the vise and about half as many for the fly plate.

The drawing for the vise was set for Sunday afternoon at 3:00 P.M. Sara Low from the Theodore Gordon Flyfishers pulled the lucky winner out of a box that Al Ampe had provided. The winner of the vise was Craig Phillips of Bedminster, NJ. He had left the show earlier, but a phone call brought him the good news, and within minutes, he had returned to the show to pick up the vise.

The show would not truly have been a success without the help of all—in particular, Paul Murphy, who worked hard to get the volunteers and to set up the tying schedule. Also, the tyers themselves deserve a round of applause for their good help. They are Paul Murphy, Bud Bynack, Elmer Hopper, Gary Morison, Darren Rist, Hank Rope, Andy Brasko, Dan Caruso, Charlie Bates, John Kavanaugh, Mike Stewart, John Collins, Brian McKee, Bruce Pollock, Bill Leuszler, and Al Ampe.

Al Ampe deserves a special note for providing and setting up the table and chairs, as does John Kavanaugh for providing the easel for the fly plate. Thanks again, and I wish you all the best for 2009.

—*Joe Ceballos*

Looking Back Upstream



Thanks to the Guild

By Mark Romero

It's been at least a dozen years since my wife, Misako Ishimura, and I first joined the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild, and we would like to express our thanks to all the members for their sincerity and helpfulness in teaching us so much and to the originators of the

idea for the guild, who so wisely saw a need and filled it. Our very first fly-fishing experience was in the Catskills, when, on my wife's birthday in 1989, we were taken to the upper Beaverkill and to the East Branch of the Delaware, put in the river with used waders and tackle, given a ten-minute casting lesson, and let go. We didn't catch a single fish that day, but we were caught by something that, little did we know, would consume our lives.

The two of us already had been fishing together for over five years with spinning tackle, but from that day on the Beaverkill and the East Branch, we have never spin-fished again. We bought our first rods and waders, boots, vests, and everything needed from a Bass Pro catalogue, and off we went into a world that has continually fascinated and enthralled us. Who would have ever thought that we'd end up traveling all over the country and to other countries, entering fly-fishing tournaments and tying flies at shows for conservation? When Misako first applied for membership on the Japanese National Fly Fishing Team in 1997, all she had on her résumé was winning a New York City Trout Unlimited Chapter casting contest in Central Park, Manhattan, and having graduated from the fly-casting course at the Orvis school in Manchester, Vermont. Well, she made it onto the team, became the captain in 2000, and has kept the team together every since. Of course, she'd been fly fishing for a number of years, but we were still living in Manhattan and working so hard that we had only limited time to fish. We didn't even own our own vehicle until 1994 and had to rent a car every time we went fishing. I took the train every chance I got to go up to the Croton watershed in Putnam County, New York, and fish when I could. But most of the time, it was in the lakes and ponds in Central Park that I got in my fishing. After we got our truck in 1994, we spent a lot of time on Long Island, fishing the streams out there, and in the Poconos, fishing the Big Bush Kill, Saw Creek, and the Broadhead. Misa's company rented houses in the Poconos every summer, and certain employees could use them on a rotation basis.

By the time we started renting the apartment on top of the gift shop at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, we were so in love with the Catskills, we thought we'd retire there. When we had to vacate that apartment so Paul Dahlie, incoming executive director of the center, could have a place to live when he was in town, we bought our house in Roscoe, and it was too late to look back. So we became full-time Catskill residents.

Now, after having suffered numerous floods on our property and in our house there, we have bought a house in Arkansas and have a wonderful life in the South. The Ozarks are an incredible place. The fishing season is 365 days long, and the rivers here are put-and-take, stocked twice a week, fifty-two weeks a year. There are ten thousand fish per mile—browns, bows, brookies, cutts, and cuttbows. It's like a shoot-'em-in-a-barrel ride at Disneyland. Big fun!

Misa and I have been on the Theodore Gordon Flyfishers Conservation Committee for fifteen years, and yet, when faced with the put-and-take situation that we have here . . . well, I figure that we might as well "join 'em." There's a tradition in the Ozarks of families feeding themselves from the river on a regular basis, and that's not going to change anytime soon. The good thing is that the population is so sparse that not even the locals (and they are constantly exceeding the limits set by the regulations) can damage the resource, because it is so plentiful.

We constantly travel to do fly-tying/fly-fishing shows, (twenty-seven events in 2008), tournaments (three in 2008), and other fly-fishing adventures. We did nine new shows in 2008, and we have invitations to do about half a dozen even newer ones in 2009. But we would like to show our appreciation to the guild by inviting members to come down to Arkansas when they can and be guided by us, (free of course) and shown around, especially if you've never "done the Ozarks." Every fly fisher owes it to himself or herself to see and fish these magnificent rivers and lakes. The lakes have enormous populations of white bass, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, striped bass, "wipers,"

walleyes, giant bluegills, catfish, saugers, bullheads, many different kinds of bream, and trout. The area was voted number one in the nation for combined hunting and fishing by a national magazine this year. It's truly an amazing fly-fisher's paradise. There are five rivers, three for trout (the White, the North Fork of the White, and the Little Red, holder of the world record for brown trout), and two for smallmouths (the Buffalo River and Crooked Creek). And the two lakes that hold back the water for the White and North Fork Rivers have a combined 2,300 miles of shoreline. Just let us know when you want to show up, and we'll do our best to be able to accommodate you in style. We may be able to put you up ourselves, and we'll take you to get some catfish and hush puppies to die for.

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild has meant a tremendous amount to us over the years. The friends we made, the flies we learned how to tie, the August picnic, the meetings in the cold Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum classroom with Judie's hot coffee, the Rendezvous, and all the laughs and fun times and memories will stay with us forever. We miss you all so much whenever we think of the Catskills, which is almost daily, and it is you, the members of the guild, who are in our fondest memories. Yes, we've found a paradise here, (no snow, dirt-cheap property taxes), but we will never know another place as special as the Catskills because of you, the members of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild.

You can email us at markflies99@hotmail.com or misakoflyfish@gmail.com and let us know when you might be able to "come on downnnnnn." We will do our best to be ready and take good care of you when you get here. We have a spare bedroom, with private bath and kitchen, all right off the tying room. So just let us know. And if you'd like to see some pics of the tying room or of some of the events we've done in the last three or four years, go to <http://www.kodakgallery.com/misakoishimura> and click on any album you like. There are hundreds of pictures there for you to enjoy. We also have started a new fly-tying club here in the Ozarks called the Swallow's Nest Fly Tyers. Click on the Swallow's Nest Fly Tyers album for more.

Finally, if any of you would like to tie flies at either of two wonderful shows we have here each year, please let me know as far in advance as possible. The Sowbug Roundup, a three-day (Thursday/Friday/Saturday) fundraiser for the North Arkansas Fly Fishers, (a conservation-minded Federation of Fly Fishers-affiliated fly-fishing club), is the third weekend in March—this year, it's March 19, 20, and 21. It's a huge show, with close to a hundred and fifty tyers over the course of the three days. And the FFF Southern Council Conclave is the first weekend in October every year. I can get you into either show, if you'd like to tie, but I need to know as far in advance as possible.

Thank you all again for everything you've given us and everything you've meant and continue to mean to us.

Dick Talleur Wins Book of the Year Award

United Fly Tyers has awarded their Book of the Year Award for 2008 to *Trout Flies for the 21st Century: Over 200 Essential Patterns That Catch Fish Anywhere, Anytime*, by Dick Talleur, published by the Lyons Press as part of their Fly Tyer series. Talleur has provided the fly tyer with yet another well-written book that provides the history of the flies, the fly patterns, and tying instructions that are easy to understand and to follow. With the book's larger-than-actual-size photographs, the fly tyer can easily examine the completed fly and see details that are important to tying trout-catching patterns that are well constructed.

Runners-up for the 2008 award were *Muskies on the Fly*, by Robert S. Tomes, from Wild River Press, *LaFontaine's Legacy: The Last Flies from an American Master*, by Al and Gretchen Beatty,

from The Lyons Press, and *Fly Patterns of British Columbia: The Roderick Haig-Brown Centenary Edition*, by Arthur James Lingren, from Frank Amato Publications.

The new year has started out for me with reflections on the past and a stroll down memory lane. I have found myself reflecting on 1989, a year that was truly special to me. When I learned about wet flies and saw how these flies caught fish, I knew I had to learn how to tie them.

The Wet-Fly Corner



With Andy Brasko, a Genuine Wet-Fly Fisherman

Back then, you could still buy wet flies from catalogues such as Dan Bailey's and Cabela's. Even local fly shops carried wet flies, but the problem was that the number of patterns available was limited, and the knowledge of what pattern to use and when was even scarcer. So I went on a quest to find fly-pattern books that might contain recipes for wet flies. The first book I came upon was Dave Hughes's *American Fly Tying Manual*. I thought it was a gold mine, and at the time, it had more than enough patterns to keep me busy—at least, that's what I thought.

There were thirty patterns to tie, and the problem was selecting one to start with. So after an hour of trying to decide, I went with a pattern called the Gray Hackle Peacock. What interested me in this pattern was the simple description that accompanied the pattern: "The red, peacock, and grizzly make this a killing combination." So off to my kitchen table I went to try to tie this pattern.

Back in those early days, I would keep the picture of the pattern on the table so I could look at it and tie it the way it looked in the picture. The Gray Hackle Peacock pattern called for a tag of medium gold tinsel. I had no idea what a tag might be or how you tie one, so I omitted the tag.

After I'd tied a dozen flies, it was off to the stream on the weekend. So there I was, on the South Branch of the Raritan River in the Ken Lockwood Gorge. I spotted a trout that had risen and made my offering. On my second cast, I landed a pretty little trout about ten inches long, which to me back then was more like twenty. I couldn't believe that this pattern that I had tied and had cast only twice had caught a trout. It seemed all too easy.

For years, I have always had this faithful pattern in my fly box, and it is one of those patterns that always has caught fish for me. My wife Annie is also my fishing buddy, although she once spent more time scaring trout than she did catching them. She just loved the way this little fly looks, though, and wanted me to tie one on for her. So, good husband that I am, I did.

She immediately caught her first trout in two seasons. I just looked at her and laughed and felt good for her. She was convinced that the little pool had more fish in it and went back to fishing intensely. Thirty minutes and six trout later, she had emptied the pool and exclaimed she was done fishing for the day. She was bragging that she outfished her husband, who believed she would never catch a trout. The high that I had gotten catching my first trout in the Ken Lockwood Gorge on a wet fly is also what I saw in her eyes on that day.

Last year, I finally started using this pattern again after a long layoff and used it as a searching pattern on a two-wet-fly rig. The fly produced quite well, just as I had experienced back in 1989. The fly worked from the spring through the fall, and I truly can't remember a time when I didn't catch at least one fish on this pattern. This fly has worked in the Catskills, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. This little pattern that Dave Hughes introduced me to back in 1989 is truly a fish catcher, as well as a memory maker. It's just an overall good fly to have in your fly box. It's a truly attractive fly that is also very simple to tie.

This fly is one of the very few patterns that I tie and fish in a size 10. Back then, I was a new tyer and struggled with the smaller sizes at first. A fly shop by the name of Ray's Sporting Goods in New Jersey, where I had bought my first vise, was my place to go and ask questions. After a long

discussion about tying, with a few tips given to me by a gentleman named Walter, who I later found out was the president of the Central Jersey chapter of Trout Unlimited, we decided that I could get away with tying and fishing this pattern on a size 10 hook. I guess this was the start of my rendezvous with destiny, since I eventually met Don Bastian and started fishing wet flies in size 6 and 8. Tying size 10 wet flies always makes me laugh. I have seen so many size 6 and size 8 hooks over the years that tying a size 10 makes me feel like I am tying a midge.

The Gray Hackle Peacock

Hook: Mustad 3906, size 10

Thread: Black Danville 6/0

Tag: Size 16/18 gold Mylar tinsel

Tail: 6 to 10 segments of red saddle hackle

Body: 4 strands of peacock herl, twisted and reinforced with the tying thread.

Collar: A grizzly feather from a hen cape.

Head finish: One coat of Griff's Thin, two coats of Griff's Thick



Photo: Annie Brasko

The pattern listed above is from Dave Hughes's *American Fly Tying Manual*. I have seen others omit the tail and not twist or reinforce the herl, which gives the body a very nice flat, smooth appearance. The trouble I have had with the fly tied this way is that it is not durable, and I have seen the herl break after a trout or two has been caught.

The Governor's \$10 Trout Stamp Proposal: An E-Mail Exchange

Bud:

I think that this issue is important enough to include in one of the guild newsletters. I spoke with Ron Urban, chairman of the New York State Trout Unlimited State Council, about the new trout stamp proposal, and I wish I had been able to make the most recent guild meeting, because the guild

members need to let Albany know how they feel about it. I'd still like to get the word out. Ron was going to pass along my opinions, and I'd like to do so here, as well.

The first is that a legal precedent was established some years ago that a conservation officer cannot prove intent concerning what it is that someone is fishing for. Now that catch-and-release angling for bass is legal in the spring, when people traditionally fish for trout, a lot anglers will not feel it is necessary to purchase the trout/salmon stamp. Think about the waters that host both bass and trout. Almost all the Finger Lakes, Lake Ontario, most of the waters in the Adirondacks, and the Catskill waters, especially the New York City reservoirs, do so.

The second is that we share many miles of trout water on the Delaware with Pennsylvania. Coordinating a stamp program on those waters would be close to impossible. We can't reasonably expect Pennsylvania conservation officers to enforce possession of the trout/salmon stamp on New York residents fishing the Delaware. And is New York going to insist that Pennsylvania residents purchase a trout/salmon stamp to fish on the New York side of the Delaware?

The third is that I don't think it is fair for the state to target a specific group of sportspersons, such as trout and salmon anglers, to put money into the State Conservation Fund. Governor Paterson has set a goal for the trout/salmon stamp to generate four million dollars a year for the fund. The Conservation Fund benefits all sportspersons, not just a single group. Based on information found on the Department of Environmental Conservation Web site about the number of licenses sold each year, I calculate that if the state were to increase the cost of each fishing, hunting, and trapping license by only two dollars a year, they would be able generate approximately 97 percent of that four million dollars. This would mean that *all* sportspersons purchasing a license would be contributing to goals set for the Conservation Fund, not just trout and salmon anglers.

The governor's proposal to shut down the Reynolds Pheasant Farm in Ithaca was reversed. We'll see what happens with the trout/salmon stamp idea. State officials in the past have taken money from the Conservation Fund and transferred it to the General Fund. There so far has been no formal commitment as to how this proposed Conservation Fund money raised by the trout/salmon stamp is to be used or that it would not be transferred to the General Fund.

If you feel strongly about this issue, write your local officials and cc officials in Albany, including DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis and Governor David Paterson, so they know that there is both widespread concern over this proposal and a viable alternative to it.

—Gary Sweet

Gary:

Those are persuasive arguments. Looking at it in the broader perspective, though, I'm surprised it's taken New York this long to figure out that licenses and stamps are a way to extract money from anglers and hunters. Consider this comparison with another large state in dire financial straits. In California, when I left five years ago, after you bought the basic fishing license, a striper stamp, a saltwater stamp, and a salmon and steelhead report card, there was not much change left from a fifty-dollar bill. And as I understood it then, except for the salmon/steelhead fee, all that money went into the General Fund, not to fund specific conservation programs. Plus, in California, the basic license goes up—*automatically*—every year. At the same time, the Department of Fish and Game is chronically underfunded.

I checked the California DFG Web site, and it turns out that since I left, there's a new Bay-Delta stamp for fishing in the San Francisco Bay estuary. So if you wanted to fish all over the state with hook and line (I'm not counting things like the "spiny lobster stamp"), here are the fees you'd pay

for a 2009 resident license. Basic license: \$41.20 (this year); Bay-Delta stamp: \$6.30; ocean stamp: \$4.75; Colorado River stamp: \$3.00; Klamath/Trinity River salmon card: \$5.50; steelhead card: \$6.30. Total: \$67.05

Because the California DFG is chronically underfunded, however, there are so few game wardens that in over twenty years of fishing in California, I never my license checked, and because the licenses are so expensive, yet never get checked, there are people who never buy them. That's bad public policy all around.

In other words, it could be worse in New York. And if it could be worse, it very well may be in the future.

—Bud Bynack

☞ The Rockland House ☞

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild wants to express its appreciation and thanks to Tom and Marea Roseo, proprietors of the Rockland House, for making the facilities at that establishment available for the guild meetings and for their continued support. Please reciprocate with your patronage.



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.