

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild



GAZETTE

August 2005

The annual Catskill Fly Tyers Guild picnic will be held on Saturday, August 20, from noon to 4:00 P.M. at the Elsie and Harry Darbee and Matthew Vinciguerra Memorial Pavilion. Bring a dish to pass, your own plates and silverware, and your own beverages.

There will be a casting contest! Also, bring two flies that are alike—one to trade and one for the guild—if possible, in separate film containers.

Please let us know whether you want hamburgers or hot dogs and how many will be coming. Guests are welcome, as long as we can plan for them. Also, let us know what dish you plan to bring.

We could use some help with the cooking, the casting contest, and the fly swap. For more information, to volunteer, or to RSVP, contact Judie DV Smith. She prefers to be e-mailed at darbee1@juno.com, or you can call (607) 498-6024.

If it's August . . . It's Time to Mark Your Calendars for Fall and Winter Events

The Fly Tyers Symposium in Somerset, NJ, will be held on November 19 and 20, 2005. If you are interested in tying there, please contact Paul Murphy at (908) 879-7929 or e-mail him at pmurphy100@patmedia.net.

The Fly-Fishing Show in Somerset, NJ, will be held on January 27, 28, and 29, 2006. If you are interested in tying there, please contact Paul Murphy at (908) 879-7929 or e-mail him at pmurphy100@patmedia.net.

If It's August . . . It's Youth Outdoor Expo Time

The Youth Outdoor Expo will be held in Grahamsville, NY, on August 27, 2005, from 10:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. on the fairgrounds. *Note:* It's August 27, not August 7, as computer gremlins claimed in the last *Gazette*.

This is how they advertise the event to the kids:

Come to an exciting day of hands-on activities, presentations, and demos. Learn from activities like 4-H, Bee Keepers, Horseback Riding, N.W.T.F. Jake-Day, DEP, YMCA, Bass Fishing, Fly Tying, Fly Casting, Taxidermy, Archery, Trappers, State Police K9, Sullivan County Sheriff's Dept., DEC, Building Bird Houses, First Aid, Trout Pond Fishing, and other activities.

We need your help! We will be teaching kids to tie a fly such as a Woolly Bugger. There have been between 100 and 200 kids there in the past. They say this will be one of the bigger ones, so we need more help. We provide all the tools and materials. The kids take home their flies in film containers.

The event is currently sponsored by the Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs of Sullivan County, The *Sullivan County Democrat*, and the Fish and Wildlife Coalition for Youth of the Hudson Valley Catskills. Maybe we should think about being one of the sponsors in the future, since we have an educational fund. This is what we are all about!

If you can help, contact Hank Rope at (845) 254-5904 or e-mail tyeflys@aol.com.

—*Judie DV Smith*

Restrictions on Raffles for Nonprofits Eased

Town Clerks have been advised of changes in the General Municipal Law, Chapter 678. It now exempts a raffle from license and reporting requirements when it is conducted by an authorized organization defined as nonprofit, religious, charitable, fraternal, or service organization of veterans or volunteer firemen and when net proceeds are less than \$5,000 from one occasion or less than \$20,000 during one calendar year.

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild fits that description. We have been doing a raffle or two a year and this year brought in \$1250. Normally it was a few hundred dollars. All the money we have collected has been put in our educational fund for scholarships. There were many restrictions on the way we could collect and use this money. One of these has now been eased.

—*Judie DV Smith*

Note: Dave Pabst, a Catskill Fly Tyers Guild member and manager at the Beaverkill Angler, has had two strokes and is in Harris Hospital. Notes or cards can be sent to Dave at P.O. Box 696, Roscoe, NY 12776.

Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Bead Heads and Eyes

By Gary Sweet



Beadhead patterns have become popular in the last fifteen years or so. Many fly tyers purchase ready-to-tie metal or glass beads. However, it is possible to make the beads yourself and in the process control the sink rate of the fly. The same type of bead chain that you can use to make your own bead heads is popular for many Clouser-type patterns, especially when the tyer doesn't need the faster sink rate that the lead and tungsten eyes provide.

Bead chain is available with brass, stainless steel, or nickel-plated or chrome-plated beads in sizes ranging from 2.5mm to 5mm. Unfortunately, bead chain is not as commonly found in the hardware and home improvement stores as it once was. I know several home improvement stores that carry either the 3mm brass or 5mm chrome or stainless steel chain in only that color. Bead chain is still being used for electrical and plumbing applications, however. Some commercial Venetian blinds use the 5mm chrome bead chain. Some craft stores still carry the bead chain, but it is usually in short lengths suitable for packaging on pegboard displays. The hardware stores sell you as many feet as you want, when they have it in bulk.

If you can locate the kind of bead chain you want, making your own beads is easy to do. All you need are a pair of dykes (wire cutters), a pair of long-nosed pliers, and a dubbing needle or awl.

If you want to use a single bead on a nymph pattern, use the dykes or wire cutters to cut a single bead off the chain. You will find that a section of the wire will stay in the bead and may interfere with the hook going through. You will also find that the hole in the bead is usually too small to insert a barbed hook. However, the bead can be put on the hook without damaging the barb or hook point. Use the point of the awl to force the bead to open up. Most people are not aware that the beads are constructed by folding two sides

of the bead around the connecting wire. To use the awl safely, use a scrap board or piece of plywood with a small hole in it to receive the point of the awl. You can also use the pliers in this way, allowing the point of the awl to come through the bead and between the points of the pliers. Either way, spread the bead apart enough to slip it on the hook shank. Put the shank into the separation on the bead and then use the pliers to close the gap or split in the bead you made with the awl. The bead can be held in place by using some thread to create a bump on the hook shank right where you want the bead to go. The bump of thread should be short enough so it is contained completely in the bead once it is attached to the hook.

One advantage of using a hollow bead is that you can control the sink rate of the bead by removing the air bubble from the center of the bead. By using some head cement or thinned Goop to fill the inside of the bead, you can now allow the fly to sink a little faster. I like to use one of the small-diameter nozzle-head cement applicators to get the glue into the bead. It is also possible to use thin or small-diameter lead or soldering wire wrapped where the thread would go to add weight to the fly. Head cement can then still be inserted into the bead head.

To make your own paired Clouser-type eyes and control the sink rate, cut off a pair of eyes and use solder or lead wire to fill the center of both bead eyes. It isn't that hard to do. Although the lead Clouser-style eyes are still legal to use and sell in New York, not as many suppliers carry them in stock. It helps to use a scale to help control the sink rate of the pair of eyes. I use a powder scale that is used for reloading ammunition. The scale measures in grains, with 437.5 grains per ounce. A set of eyes weighing one-fiftieth of an ounce is equivalent to 8.75 grains, including the weight of both the bead eyes and the solder or lead wire you put in the eyes.

Here is how you put the wire in the eyes. Do this before you attach the eyes to the hook shank. You will need long-nosed pliers, some inexpensive tweezers, solder or lead wire, and either an alcohol lamp or burner or a small butane torch. The small butane torch is similar to a grill lighter, but is used for small soldering jobs for which one of the normal-sized propane torches would be too big. The tweezers may be found at your local dollar store. To fill the eyes with the solder or lead wire, pinch the connecting wire between each of the bead eyes with the tweezers and heat the beads in the alcohol lamp. Once the bead has become hot enough, insert an end of the lead wire into the hole on the end of each bead, one at a time. The wire should melt and fill the inside of the beads. You can check the weight of the filled bead pair with the scale to see how much it weighs.

One way of controlling the sink rate is to find out the maximum amount of wire each bead will hold. Measure a length of the lead wire ten or twelve inches long and then calculate how much you need for a desired weight in each bead eye. You will need to know the weight of the empty bead-chain eyes, too. You can use the long-nosed pliers or another set of tweezers to hold the wire while it is being inserted into each of the bead eyes.

The only tricky thing in doing this is that you will need a steady hand to keep the wire from melting on the outside of the bead. Once the beads are filled and cooled off, paint them whatever color you want and enjoy.

The DIY Clouser-style bead eyes are great for saltwater flies. They are not any harder to cast than all-lead Clousers, and they get the fly down pretty quickly, even through strong currents and waves. On Block Island this year, for a couple of nights running, I hooked into four skates each night. Skates are bottom feeders, so I know these eyes got my fly down to the bottom.

Are you innovative? Imaginative in finding fly-tying materials and tools in unlikely places? Just plain cheap? Send ideas for do-it-yourself articles like this one to Bud Bynack at BBynack@cs.com or 69 Bronxville Road, Apt. 4G, Bronxville, NY 10708.

Seven! Seven!

By Edwin T. Johnson

Some years ago, before the local congressman became owner of both sides of a portion of the Salmon River in New York, near the estuary, we were able to fly fish for steelhead there. Entry was through braids in the river and could be accessed only during low water. The snagging season, which prior to 1995 had allowed fall-run salmon to be taken by that method, had ended on October 15.

It was there that I met up with Jack and Doug Smith, from Palenville, NY. We shared the area with another gentleman who, as it worked out, was to play an important role in what followed.

I caught a steelhead on the first cast. The gentleman said he would tail the fish for me. I had a salmon taylor and told him so, but he insisted. The fish took me down through the long riffle below the pool and into the next pool, where the gentleman, who had followed, tailed and released it.

We returned to the area we had been fishing, and on the next cast, I caught another steelhead. Once again, we repeated the procedure. Then we did it again. On seven successive casts, I hooked seven steelhead, all weighing between fourteen and fifteen pounds.

After the seventh release, I apologized to the gentleman for taking him away from his fishing. Then I insisted that he take some of the flies that I was using so successfully. He said he tied flies himself, but finally he succumbed and took some.

We went back to the original pool again, and he put on one of the flies. He promptly hooked a large steelhead, but lost it on the first jump. It was then that he came over and finally introduced himself as Doug Kerr. He told me he was a conservation officer and was going to arrest two guys who were snagging steelhead and brown trout across the river and below us. I had noticed he had a camera and had been taking pictures of these guys snagging.

Just then, we began to hear the sound of rushing water coming from a release from the hydroelectric dams upstream, which meant it was time to get out of there. Doug promptly arrested the snaggers and then, having shared my amazing run of fish, wanted

to swap names and addresses. He didn't have any more paper, so he wrote his on my fishing license. It's a great souvenir of a great day. Seven fish! Seven!

The next day, the water level was back down, and of course, I was back in the same pool. Jack and Doug Smith, who had witnessed me catching all those steelhead the day before, were there, too.

Sure enough, I hooked into something big and had quite a struggle with it. It turned out that what had taken the fly was a great big sucker. You can imagine what Jack and Doug had to say about my most recent steelhead.

Still, I had caught seven steelhead of fourteen to fifteen pounds on seven successive casts. I'm sure I'll never see such steelhead fishing again.

Hackle-Tip Wings

Got Fly-Tying Questions? Guild Members Have Answers—on the Web

From the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild Message Board at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Catskill_Fly_Tyers_Guild/. To join or initiate discussions like this one, first join the group by going to <http://groups.yahoo.com>.

- ◆ I've been experimenting using hen tips for wings on small flies lately (e.g. BWOs and midges). I have been having problems with the stems breaking off before or after I tie them off. Anybody else experience this? I'm using a new hen cape from Wiedner, bought at this year's Fly-Fishing Show in New Jersey. Could it be the cape? Or are certain hen capes more fragile than others? Suggestions or thoughts?

—Kurt Huhner

- ◆ Are you stripping the lower fibers from the stem, by any chance? Doing so will greatly weaken the stem and result in breakage. Simply pull the unwanted fibers down. Do not strip them from the stem. Aside from that, you may be cutting them with your thread during the pinch wrap or simply overmanipulating them. I suspect the culprit is in the preparation, not the tying.

—Loren Williams

- ◆ I *have* been stripping them clean! So you just pull the unwanted fibers away; tie on, then trim the "unwanted fibers" with scissors?

—Kurt Huhner

- ◆ Yep, just pull the unwanted fibers back along the stem and tie in at your measured point with a pinch wrap and two tight following wraps. Then clip the excess stems that are pointing to the rear, leaving the tips pointing forward. Pull the tips erect and build a very small (three-to-four-wrap) thread dam in front. The tips should now be erected and slightly divided due to the concavity of the feathers. A simple X wrap and you're off to secure the tails!

—Loren Williams

- ◆ All: I have done this before and have been successful. I believe the problem is with the thread. When tying in fine hackle tips, I use a # 10 thread, Gudebrod (white or black) which, I am partial to. I use a size 10 thread on just about most of my flies, except on streamers, where I use a size 6. This is contrary to Bob Osborn's thoughts, which are more scientific: The thinner the thread, the more wraps, which equals more work, but I feel size 10 thread is more forgiving and makes for a stronger fly. I hope this bit of experience helps.

—Joe Ceballos

- ◆ Also , another tip from Bob Osborn is *not* to strip the quill clean, but to cut the barbs down leaving some of them (barbs—clipped very short), enough for the thread to grab onto , thus holding it in place.

You can use a very small dab of superglue, as well. Fishy Fullum believes very strongly in this, and some of his flies are not even whip finished , but instead are superglued!

—Joe Ceballos

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild *Gazette* is issued five or six times a year to members. Membership is only \$10.00 per year. New, first-time members also get a **FREE** copy of the booklet *Favorite Rivers, Favorite Flies*, as well as discounts on guild patches and pins. **WANT TO JOIN THE GUILD or GIVE A FRIEND a GREAT GIFT?** Just complete this form, then mail it and a check to: **Bob Osburn, 3 Good Time Court, Goshen, NY 10924** and indicate if it is a new membership or a renewal.

*******Remember, memberships renew in February.*******

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Name: _____

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Would you be willing to accept the *Gazette* via e-mail?

Yes (please provide) _____

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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, BBynack@cs.com or 69 Bronxville Road, Apt. 4G, Bronxville, NY, 10708, (914) 961-3521.