



The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild *Gazette*

Volume 26, number 4

July 2023

The next in-person meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will be on July 15, at 10:00 AM, in the Wulff Gallery of the CFFC&M. The guild will be at the museum's Summerfest on August 5 and 6. Read on in this issue of the *Gazette* for details.



Above: An *Isonychia dun* crawling through moss on the upper Beaverkill. Below: an *Iso spinner* from New Jersey's Pequannock River sticks out its "white gloves" and says "howdy!"

Photos: Chuck Coronato

President's Message By Joe Ceballos

Already, summer is here. It seems like just a few blinks of an eye ago that I was preparing a spring message and pondering the great mayfly hatches to follow. For now and to follow, we will still have some nice hatches, so consider reviewing old patterns and perhaps making some adjustments as needed.

At our next in-person meeting (July 15), we will present something new that has in the past been neglected. Thanks go to our vice president, John Apgar, for coming up with this in response to feedback from members regarding his summer tying list. The meeting agenda will focus on tying terrestrials: ants, beetles, etc. These insects become a significant portion of the trout diet during summer months when there are fewer hatches, and can be productive when fished appropriately. As anglers and tyers, we know that there are times when upright wood duck wings don't always make the grade, and a terrestrial pattern can be a better choice.

The meeting on July 15 will also feature general tying, and as always, we encourage sharing pattern ideas among members. It has been said that fly tying is only limited to one's imagination. What makes us different in the guild, is that

we pay homage and respect to the past, but acknowledge the present.

The guild will be at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum's Summerfest that is happening on August 5 and 6. We will have a spot sheltered under the pavilion, and we'll need members to volunteer for shifts to staff our table. I'd like everyone to read the announcement regarding Summerfest that is on the next to last page of this *Gazette*, and please consider signing up for a shift; we really need our members' help to make this work.

At the last meeting on June 17, and in the post-meeting report that followed, we announced our plans to have a guild picnic on Saturday, September 30. The picnic will be under the pavilion on the grounds of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum. We'll send future announcements regarding the picnic, but until then we just want that date out there so you can put it on your calendar.

Many thanks go to the guild's secretary, Ed Walsh, for contacting members who hadn't renewed their dues for 2023. Many more thanks go to our members, who have been responding in great numbers. I'm very pleased to report that our vibrant and growing membership now exceeds 250!

Most importantly, wishing all a happy and healthy summer.

Up on the Esopus



With Ed Ostapczuk

The Klinkhamer

Silver bullets—what can we say about them other than they are metaphors for magical solutions to complex problems. I have a precious few that occupy my piscatorial holster, and the Klinkhamer Special is included in that short list. The pattern is the handiwork of Hans van Klinken of the Netherlands. Hans is a noted fly fisher, writer, lecturer, photographer, and retiree from a thirty-five-year career as Commander of the Royal Dutch Army Gunnery School. His inquisitive mind and early fishing adventures as a young lad led to perhaps one of the most successful dry flies ever created—the Klinkhamer Special.

I first “discovered” this dry-fly pattern almost a quarter of a century ago through two online *Rackelhanen Flyfishing Magazine* articles. The first one was dated December 26, 2000—a belated by one day Christmas present to me, and this pattern has been in my “don't leave home without it” fly box ever since. The next article that I read was titled, “The (Arising of the) Klinkhamer Special.” A variation of this article is still to be found online if one Googles the title. Within the body of the article, van Klinken reported that 1984 was a very special year for him with “the creation of one of the best parachute patterns I ever designed.” The author delved into all the details and history of his fly, a popular parachute emerger, initially developed to imitate emerging caddis.

While fishing the Glomma River in Norway, the author tried to create a large dry fly that sat deep in the surface film, representing hatching caddis larva. He played with a few designs that were tweaked after each use. The initial shape had a thin, tapered body, which was kept, and used peacock herl for the thorax under the hackled parachute wing. The use of an elongated, curved hook forced the fly's body to submerge under the water's surface. Van Klinken reported that his original attempts incorporated a poly dubbing using a light tan color, hence he called his early creations the L.T. Caddis. In the article, van Klinken acknowledged that Swedish tyer, Tomas Olson, and American tyer, Roy Richardson, had also developed similar patterns in the same general timeframe, but these were not known to him at the time he designed his fly.

Hans noted that he originally designed this fly for use while fly fishing for grayling and whitefish in Scandinavia, but since 1986, he has also utilized it for trout. As the pattern's success and fame grew, van Klinken wrote an article for a Dutch fly-fishing magazine, but unbeknownst to him, the editorial staff renamed his L.T. Caddis the Klinkhamer Special, which it is now called. In addition, in some locales it is just called the Clink, among a variety of other names.

My hardcopy of this article is seven full pages, and it covers many different related topics and tips. One of the most interesting I found, and still wonder about myself, is a deliberation along the lines of “against all rules.” Some of the author’s angling friends have told van Klinken, “It goes against all rules that fish readily take such a large dry fly.” The pattern calls for its own hook, a Partridge GRS15ST. And it seems to me that a size 18 GRS15ST is equivalent to a size 12 or 14 normal dry-fly hook gap, not to mention the length of the elongated shank. All I know is that the Klinkhamer Special will often take selective, surface-feeding trout when most other dry flies fail.

If one searches the Internet, you’ll probably discover a variety of colors, names, and hooks in various sizes that are utilized. Per the original articles I read, I still have a supply of size 18 GRS15ST hooks, so that’s what I tie my patterns on. And basically, I tie the body in two different colors: olive and mahogany. I prefer the olive color in late April, May, and June, when trout are on caddis. For late season, as the color of aquatic bugs typically run darker and late season Isonychia are about, I prefer the mahogany color. I used to tie a yellowish Sulphur-body version as well, but I never found it effective when trout were taking Sulphur emergers. I think those flies were too much of a mismatch in size when compared with the real insects, but the two Klinkhamer patterns that I list below are often silver bullets for me.

Olive Klinkhamer Special:

Hook: Size 18 Partridge GRS15ST
Thread: Black 6/0
Body: Medium olive Fine and Dry dubbing
Post: White Hi-Vis
Hackle: Medium blue dun

Mahogany Klinkhamer Special:

Hook: Size 18 Partridge GRS15ST
Thread: Black 6/0
Body: Isonychia beaver dubbing
Post: Orange Hi-Vis or Z-lon
Hackle: Medium blue dun



Flies and photograph by Ed Ostapczuk

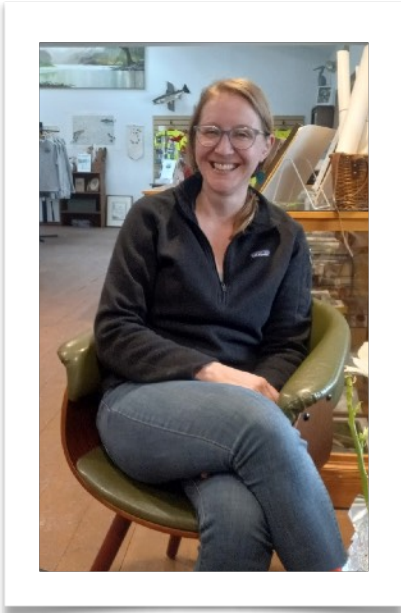
The New Team at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum By Ed Walsh

When COVID disrupted activities and events at the CFFC&M, difficult decisions had to be made: doors closed, staff reduced, programs altered, and income disrupted. The same was happening at many nonprofits during the pandemic. Recovery was laid at the feet of a new board of directors, lead by

president Anthony Magardino. This group wasted no time developing a plan to get the center up and running again, with the first step being the hiring of a new executive director.

After posting the job notice in local and regional professional publications, four candidates were found to have the desired credentials. All were interviewed. The best candidate became apparent, and an offer was made. Enter Ali Abate.

Before accepting the position, Ali requested to spend time at the center, meet the small staff on board at that time, and gain a firm description of the positions, responsibilities, and the center's goals. She accepted the position shortly thereafter and has been onboard since last summer.



Executive director Ali Abate

Fortunately, Ali knew this area of the Catskills, because a good friend from college has a summer residence in the area, which allowed her many weekends here over the years.

Ali brings extensive experience to her new job. After graduating from Amherst College with a BS in psychology, she became a teacher, and while pursuing her MS in social work at Columbia University, she began looking at opportunities in the non-profit industry.

Ali spent time with Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City and Partnership with Children before accepting the position of director of education at the Queens County Farm Museum, in Queens, New York.

Ali recalls her time at Queens County Farm as a wonderful experience. She learned to create educational programs for both adults and children and work with a wide range of permanent and volunteer staff members. She was also part of the team that wrote applications and pursued grant funding. That experience will serve her well, as those avenues of funding are a significant aspect of the center's future growth.

After nearly a year on the job, Ali suggests she now feels very comfortable. She was a little concerned early on that her lack of experience with fly fishing might have an impact, but with so many staff members and volunteers offering help, that is no longer a concern, and I am told she is going to take the women's fly-fishing class offered at Trout Town Flies in the spring and start enjoying all that this wonderful sport has to offer.

Most of her time is spent focusing on the center's goals, which include education, heritage, and conservation. She is interacting with clubs, associations, and businesses within the sport of fly fishing with the intent of developing and strengthening relationships. From the people I've met and spoken with, Ali is making a positive impact in all of the above communities.

During our conversation, Ali mentioned how thankful she is to Jill Borenstein, who was the programs and events director when she first arrived. Jill provided much insight and guidance and was always available when any questions arose. And even though Jill resigned from her position to spend more time with her young daughter, she has always been available to support Ali.

An important position needed to be filled after Jill's departure. As luck would sometimes have it, a very experienced local businessman and fly-fishing guide was looking for a similar opportunity. Todd Spire, former owner of Esopus Creel Fly Shop, was hoping to continue his active guiding business and locate a position that would take advantage of his management, environmental, and marketing experiences. Todd accepted the CFFC&M position of program and events coordinator.

Todd, educated at NYU, The School of Fine Arts in Manhattan, and Rutgers University, began a career in graphic arts in the city and started his own graphic design business before relocating to Beacon, where he developed a community artists studio.

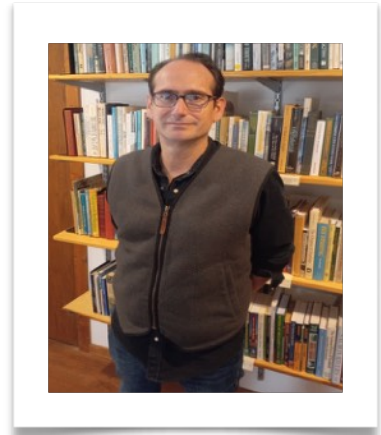
He moved to the Catskills in 2002 and started fly fishing soon thereafter. After joining the Ashokan-Pepacton Trout Unlimited Chapter, he was befriended by Ed Ostapczuk and Mark Loete, both chapter board members at the time. It wasn't long before Todd knew he wanted to pursue fly fishing as a career and started looking for options in the eastern region of the Catskills. He opened the Esopus Creel Fly Shop in 2018.

Unfortunately, COVID hit his business hard, and although guiding provided a source of income, he needed to spend more and more time running the shop. The pandemic won the battle, and he closed the shop at the end of last year.

As they say, *one door opens when another door closes*. That was certainly the case with Todd and the position at the CFFC&M. He accepted the job of the programs and events coordinator in April, and will balance the responsibilities of that position with an active guiding business for the time being.

We wish Ali and Todd all the very best of luck and success in their new positions. From my perspective, the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum has made two great hires.

I encourage any guild member who's visiting the center to introduce yourself to both Ali and Todd if they are available. You will be met with a smile and a willingness to answer any question you might have about themselves and the CFFC&M. I also ask our members to consider supporting the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum (where we hold most of our guild meetings) by becoming a member. You can find membership information on their website at: WWW.CFFCM.COM



Program and events coordinator
Todd Spire

And the Winner is...



Sarah Baker

Catskill Fly Tyers Guild member Sarah Baker won the seven dozen flies that were tied by guild members and donated for prizes at the April 14 showing of the 2023 Fly Fishing Film Tour (F3T) at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum. Sarah is in the process of becoming a registered NYS fishing guide and is a full-time EMT. In a conversation with Sarah a few weeks ago, we talked about how important fly fishing is in her life and why she wants to become a guide.

Sarah tells me, "I want to become a guide to work with first responders and returning military personal to show them how peaceful and relaxing the wonderful sport of fly fishing can be."

Listening to her response makes me realize that those flies could not have landed in better hands.

—Ed Walsh

Evolution Of A Fly Tyer

There seem to be two fairly common beginnings for fly tyers. There are those who started very young, as children, using their mother's sewing thread and whatever scraps of materials they could scrounge. The other group began later, often somewhere into adulthood, after purchasing the basic vise, scissors, hackle pliers, and bobbin, along with a sparse assortment of feathers and fur. At some point in time, these folks sought a book showing techniques and fly patterns and began to tie existing flies—something with a reputation of effectiveness and a model to judge proportion and appearance to help build their skills. In talking with many fly tyers and browsing internet forums, it seems that a majority still think of tying in terms of published patterns. I'm a little bit different.

When I began more than thirty years ago, there was a great deal of information available, along with a wide selection of natural and synthetic materials. Fly shops had become fairly common, at least in areas that featured good trout fishing, and were a magic kingdom for the budding fly tyer. I took an introductory class at one of those local shops, and bought that first book. More books were added to my collection, along with packets of dubbing to match the mayflies and caddisflies I found along the stream, followed by hackle capes and feathers of all descriptions. My collection grew steadily. I took advantage of another expanding sector of the sport, too, attending shows and exposing myself to tyers from various countries. I learned some new techniques and enjoyed sharing ideas.

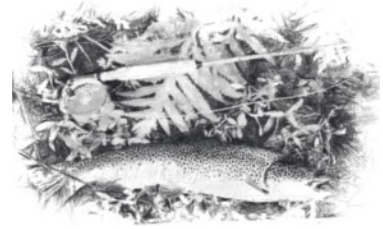
Somewhere along the line, I recognized a couple of things that shaped my future as a fly tyer and angler: there were too many thousands of fly patterns out there to choose from, and, all of those wonderful, pre-dyed materials very often didn't match the flies I plucked from the surface of my favorite stream.

I was always an observer, and sort of naturally took advantage of my time along the streams to catch a bug, then go home and tie a fly to match it. I took a pinch of two or three different colors of dubbing fur and mixed them with my fingers until I achieved the color of the bug I needed. I noticed that Mother Nature doesn't paint her children with solid colors, whether insect, animal, or human being—she uses blends of colors.

Once I started down that road, I followed it as it wound along the riverbanks. I was influenced by other fly tyers, principally Ed Shenk and Gary LaFontaine, and I learned to look at nature and draw my own conclusions. The concept of capturing an image of life on a fish hook grew from my influences and observations. I still tied some standard fly patterns, though I often modified materials and colors to match the flies I saw on the water. I used blends of fur dubbing and added a little Antron dubbing to bring light reflections into play, and I discovered these soft, lovely little feathers called Cul-de-canard (CDC).

Once you leave the books on the shelf and start observing and blending colors, you begin to make other changes to your flies. I began to think that a certain kind of wing wasn't the best imitation, or didn't provide good visibility on the water, and tried something different. Different feathers, synthetics, varying styles of wing construction, it all became fair game. Before I knew it, the flies I tied on when there were trout to catch weren't Adamses or Quill Gordons or whatever—they were mine.

Casting Catskill Cane



With Mark Sturtevant

I have always loved the history of fly fishing. That history attracted me to live and fish in Pennsylvania's Cumberland Valley and here in the Catskills, the regions responsible for the greatest advances in American dry-fly fishing. There is much to be learned from that history. Reading Theodore Gordon's notes and letters, and studying his flies in the Catskill museum got me thinking about his motivations. Gordon was foremost an imitationist in my view, and he pursued that directly: catch a bug and tie a fly! He studied the English books and Frederick Halford's flies, but he embarked upon his own path.



The majestic Green Drake. Photo: Mark Sturtevant

I had experimented with different styles of wings on my dry flies, and I really liked the imitative approach of Gordon's single clump feather wing and his canted style of tying it. I considered his fondness for wood duck flank feathers, rather than a gray feather that seemed to be a better imitation of most mayfly wings. The barring in the wood duck flank gives the illusion of motion, and the varied colors and translucency of the fibers look very lifelike. I had designed a small fly for olives and sulfurs on the limestone spring creeks using a canted wing of Antron yarn and outrigger legs of CDC fibers that fooled the most difficult fish: those that ignored my usual offerings. Watching that canted-wing fly drift toward a rising trout, I recognized its more

natural posture when compared with standard upright or parachute-post wings.

As I spent more and more time fishing here in the Catskills, I became obsessed with the Green Drake hatch. I tied a lot of CDC patterns for the big drakes, as I have always believed the larger the fly, the easier it is for a trout to distinguish it as a fraud. My CDC patterns worked, and they evolved, but I kept studying the duns as they drifted past, picking them up and pondering the colors and appearance of the flies with their strikingly tall, canted wings.

I started with yellow dyed mallard flank feathers and tied a single-clump, canted wing. I hackled some using Vince Marinaro's thorax style—wrapping the hackle in an "X" pattern fore and aft of the wing—and they were effective. The fly's balance wasn't perfect with the forward mounted wing and thorax hackle, so I tried wrapping the hackle in a modified parachute style, around the canted wing base. With the barbs deeper in the water at the rear, they supported the weight of the hook bend better, and the fly simply sat on the water more naturally. When I found a big brown trout that refused to take my CDC flies, I threw them the canted-wing dun. Success!

That initial pattern evolved. I liked the natural coloration and shine of wood duck flank better than the dyed mallard, and I moved from dubbed bodies to turkey biots and quills. The success with the Green Drake imitations led me to tie patterns in the same style for March Browns and then Hendricksons. As I fished these designs over large, educated wild trout, I became convinced that this style of tie was simply a better mayfly imitation.

I continue to experiment every season, working to improve the translucency of fly bodies by turning again toward history and natural silk. I modify certain flies for conditions, using synthetics, such

as Puglisi's Trigger Point Fibers for the canted wings of some of my mayfly patterns when I'm fishing under light conditions that compromise visibility. I have not purchased a fly-tying book in a couple of decades, but I do read a lot of classic angling books and converse with a few gentlemen I consider to be historians and scholars of the art whenever I find the opportunity.

The path I chose so many years ago still interests me daily and keeps me tying and fishing. I continue to tie a lot of flies using CDC feathers. Years of observation convince me that trout often key upon movement of the natural flies they select to eat, and I still have not found a better material to impart some subtle movement into a naturally drifted dry fly. I mix colors with CDC, too.

Many of my flies are tied with barred hackles, as opposed to the solid colors specified for many standard patterns. As with the barring and translucency of the wood duck feather, barred hackle helps provide an illusion of motion—an image of life.

I encourage all of the members of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild to study the history and craft of the Catskill school, and to become familiar with the classic patterns. Think about these flies when you tie them, and ponder why they have taken untold thousands of trout for a century or more. At the same time, I encourage you to think about the lessons you have learned on the water, to observe, sample and record. Most heartily, I encourage you to experiment, using all of the knowledge and influences acquired during your angling lives!



The author's Green Drake with javelina quill body and mix of CDC. Tie and photo by Mark Sturtevant.

Mark Sturtevant can be followed on his blog, *Bright Waters Catskills*: <https://brightwatercatskill.art.blog>

Cane Rod Builders and Collectors: Dennis Menscer **By Ed Walsh**

Dennis Menscer got his start in the world of rod building during his high school years when he took a part-time job at the local hardware store in his home town of Point Pleasant, New Jersey. He became intrigued when he saw the store owner repairing saltwater spinning and casting rods. The owner noticed his interest and started teaching him the art of rod repair.

As a young man, Dennis pursued full-time work as a lobsterman but continued rod-repair work as time allowed. He also began fly fishing and would spend as much time as possible traveling to, and fishing, the wonderful rivers in the Catskills. He got to know the area and the folks who fished there, and he noticed that many were fishing with bamboo rods.

It wasn't long before he started to repair cane rods. As his skills grew, so did the amount of work being sent his way, and much of that repair work was with bamboo. Dennis had acquired many tools for his own wood-working shop, and they fit perfectly with the repair work he was doing on cane.

Although he had been repairing cane rods for some time, it wasn't until the late 1980s that he decided to build rods from scratch. He built his own forms and purchased a hand planner at a flea market. As with most cane rod builders, it was trial and error, with many early attempts finding their way to a potbelly stove or fire pit. But persevere he did, and his early rods got better with each finished product.

As his reputation grew, so did the demands for his rods. He built rods for friends and donated many to nonprofits to auction off to raise money for their causes. But as his life as a lobsterman was coming to a close after thirty-three years, he knew that building cane rods full time was just around the corner. Dennis continued fishing in the Catskills, and it wasn't hard to determine where he would relocate when leaving the Jersey Shore. After looking for the "right place" he found his home with a separate workshop building in Hancock, New York, on the banks for the West Branch of the Delaware River, where he's lived and built wonderful cane rods since 2000. His shop is well equipped, and he prides himself on being able to build all the necessary parts (reel seats, guides, ferrules, etc.) for his rods, although he does purchase eyes from a highly rated distributor.

Even though Dennis's passion for rod building is without question, I got the feeling that he's even more passionate about rod repairs, especially when it comes to repairing a rod made by anyone who is one of the great masters of the past. He was quick to show me his inventory of old parts that he's collected over the years. He would visit yard and estate sales and flea markets if he suspected there might be fly rods, or parts thereof, available for sale. He said he would often find a drum filled with pieces of broken rods, and he would purchase them for a few bucks just to remove parts that could be used in a repair. After he showed me the many items he's collected, all I can say is his inventory of old parts is substantial.

Dennis will tell you his is "self-taught," but he credits F. E. (Fred) Thomas with influencing his rod building and taper design characteristics. Thomas was employed by the Hiram Leonard Rod Building Company, of Bangor, Maine, and he later formed his own firm along with Eustis Edwards and Ed Payne. It was this partnership that crafted the "Kosmic Rod" design.

One thing that was obvious during our meetings was that he's not afraid to venture into new territories. He was asked to design and build a 2-weight, 7 1/2-foot rod. He knew that such a rod would test his skills and experience, but after a bit of trial and error, he finished the rod and has since built a few more of the same taper. I had the pleasure of casting one of his 2-weights, and it was a joy to behold.



The one and only Dennis Menscer

To date, Dennis has built more than 400 cane rods and repaired countless others. He presently has seven rods in various stages of construction and suggests any new orders will require a one-year wait time.

You can contact Dennis at the info listed below. I do suggest looking at his website and watching the trailer for “Chasing the Taper.” It’s a documentary about many of the fine cane rod builders working today, including Dennis.

Dennis Menscer is a unique individual, and I say that in a most complimentary way. He doesn’t have an email account, and even though he does have a cell phone, I’m not sure that he would respond to a text message. He wants to meet and talk face to face. And if your conversation turns to talking about cane rods, you won’t be disappointed. He’s the real deal.



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Summertime and Shrinking Mayflies

Work has limited my traveling to the Catskills, even more this year than last. When I do get the chance to head uphill to the mountains, it seems like I missed a whole section of the season.

While here at home, the daily grind goes along very predictably—open the shop, organize the day, complete the tasks, and close up—but in Sullivan County things change fast! Last time I was up, I had March Browns and ISOs, this time it was size 20 sulphurs and tricos!

It seems that the low-water conditions have stayed the same, however. I watch daily for the weather up there, tune in all day to a Catskill radio station while I’m working, and watch the daily river reports that the fly shops post on the Internet. They did get some pretty significant rain last week, but it didn’t last long enough to really charge up the groundwater storage. We are used to this, though. It’s summer conditions, and if we watch the water temperatures, hope for some rain, and get some free time to fish, there are still trout that will be eating bugs — even the small bugs.

On my “off from fishing” weeks, I have some time to rethink my fly selection. I start limiting the number of giant variants I would be using in



A bright Sulphur. Photo: John Bonasera



heavy flows, slimming down the March Brown selection, and start looking at the smaller end of the bug choices: little orangish and yellow-shaded parachutes in sizes 18 to 20, olive-green wingless dries in small sizes, and even a half dozen Trico spinners that I always carry but haven't yet used.

The leaders get longer, like close to twenty feet, and even then I wonder if that's too short. I believe that in low water we spook way more fish than we know, and long before we know it.

I was walking the road on a small stream, and when I got to one of the bridges, I slowly peeked over the rail, and before my chin cleared the railing a half dozen trout were darting all over the place, totally spooked and in panic mode. I think the only thing they saw was the brim of my hat before all hell broke loose.

Conditions like this pretty much limit the fishing to that awesome window around forty-five minutes before it's too dark to see. Even in clear, low water, trout will feed more fearlessly in the waning light of day. The sulphurs becoming active right before dark has a lot to do with this, too, no doubt.

I brought up one of my old-school Sage rods: a two-piece 590LL. Those early second-generation graphite rods are really cool, and I have some great memories with this particular one going back ten years or more. I had a spot in mind all week that I hoped I would be able to fish. It's easily accessible and gets tons of traffic from April on, but somehow, the local fishermen seem to taper off after early June, and I don't see the spinning-rod gang and balls of mono on the banks after the middle of the month.

I walked down to the slow water at the bottom, staying far off the edge to where I can't even see the water. Remember, these summer fish spook easily! Making my way towards the water, I just ease up near it, no need to step in at all, and stand there, real still and watching for a long time. This really is an exciting time, where it's nearing dark, the clock's ticking, and you're not sure if there's even a taker down here, and in nine hours I'm going to be in my truck heading home. So it's pretty much "go time."

Above me and to the right, about seventy-five feet away, is a narrow riffle that in normal flows makes quite a racket, but now it's a soothing murmur that fits the scene beautifully. My focus, though, is across and down from me. While this whole section looks mighty fishy, the prime spot is about sixty feet down and across, where there is a huge flat rock projecting out of the cliff on the far bank that's close to the water's surface. The flow is slower there, not quite slow enough to be an eddy, but half the speed of the channel's flow. And to really seal the deal, there's a maple limb in full foliage over the top of the rock.

There are some sulphurs around now, and just as I'm following one with my eyes, a bulge occurs by the rock. It's there, right where I'd be if I were a trout. I move down a bit, sloth-like, to shorten the cast to around fifty feet. I want to make this a one-cast, no-drag, get-it-right-the-first-time deal. I have time, too. It's not in any rhythm—it's not that kind of water. These fish will eat when they get a chance, but they don't tolerate sloppy. I had a little brown trout chase a dry fly that I was skating after it dragged for three feet before it finally clamped down on it! I couldn't believe it. But I do know the fish under that



Sulphur parachute. Photo: John Bonasera

rock isn't a little brown that chases dragging flies. If it sees something that it doesn't like—then it's all over.

I check the leader, blow on the fly for some weird reason, pull a bunch of line off the reel, and take one long look at where I want this cast to go, with maybe just a little upstream mend in the air. The fly lands a little closer to the rock than I wanted, but in the correct lane. I can see some slack in the leader so it's got room before that tightens up. It's moving back, the ring from the fly touching down is gone, that fish has got to be looking at it by now.

All I hear is a dull slurp and down it goes, with hardly a ripple on the surface where the fly was. I almost don't lift the rod, but when I do, it certainly surprises my fish. It gives me three heavy shakes of its head, dives towards me and down, and I could feel the leader scraping rocks. I get it in close, and get a decent look when it turns to change direction. This fish has to be nineteen inches—*at least* nineteen. I have the net pointed at the water, I'm down on one knee, and the brute is coming in reluctantly. Just as I'm about to complete the scoop—off it goes. The fly is still on, but I notice that the hook started to open up at the bend, and just like that it's over.

Long leaders, low water, and tiny flies. It's definitely a finesse game, and I still need more practice. But like I always say, the netted ones you sometimes remember, but mostly forget. The lost ones, however, they stay with you forever.

Dues Reminder

Thank you to all who have responded to the email sent in late May to members who had not renewed their dues for 2023. The rate of renewal from that group has been brisk, but it takes longer for mail to arrive from those who prefer paying by check, so we're extending the renewal deadline from July 15 to July 30. Anyone not on our membership roll after that date will not be receiving further communication from the guild. Dues can be paid online through our website at: www.catskillflytyersguild.org. Click the join/renew on the website menu. You can also renew by sending a check for \$20.00, payable to the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild to: Catskill Fly Tyers Guild, P.O. Box 663, Roscoe, N.Y. 12776

If you have any questions about your membership status, you can contact me (Ed Walsh) directly at: walsh78946@gmail.com.

Guild Hats and Logo Patches

We've sold many guild hats and logo patches since they've again become available. They're sold at all in-person meetings and events (cash or check only), or by mail. Payment by mail is by check, or you can make the payment online if you have a PayPal account. The hats (mesh only) cost \$15.00, and the patches are \$3.00.

If you want to order an item by mail, contact me at: walsh78946@gmail.com. I will check with our local post office to find out the exact shipping cost to your address and get back to you ASAP. You can make payment for ordered items by sending a check made out to the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild to: Catskill Fly Tyers Guild, P.O. Box 663, Roscoe, N.Y. 12776. You can also pay for ordered items using your PayPal account. Once payment is received, the orders will be shipped.

July 15 Meeting of the Guild

Come on out for the next in-person meeting of the guild, on Saturday, July 15, at 10:00 AM in the Wulff Gallery of the CFFC&M. After some brief announcements and business, we'll be tying flies for the summer with a focus on terrestrial patterns. Summer is a great time to use terrestrials. In addition to the patterns presented, we're hoping that our members will share (as they always do) how to tie their favorite terrestrials with everyone present. There will be coffee and snacks, and we know that the conversation will be lively and interesting as it always is when our members get together. Look for email reminders regarding the meeting as the date draws near.



Guild member Ron Nimitz caught this nice wild brown using his beetle pattern and a beautiful bamboo rod.

Volunteers Needed for Summerfest

As you read in Joe's President's Message, the guild will have a table during the museum's Summerfest taking place on the grounds of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum. Summerfest is a great event held every year. There will be many organizations represented, numerous vendors present, and the Hardy Cup bamboo rod casting competition is held during Summerfest. The event is on August 5 and 6, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The guild needs volunteers to staff our table and tie flies, answer questions about the guild, sign up new members, and sell hats and patches. We'd like to be able to do three shifts each day with two volunteers per shift. Please contact Ed Walsh at walsh78946@gmail.com and let him know on which day you could volunteer and share your preference for morning or afternoon. Once we have a pool of guild volunteers, we'll work out a schedule. This is an important event, and we're hoping that many guild members will be able to help. Due to our focus on Summerfest, there will not be a regular meeting of the guild in August.



Check the museum's events page at <https://cffcm.com/eventscalendar> for more info.



Please write for the *Gazette*! This newsletter depends on all guild members for its content. Our many and continued thanks go to our regular contributors who faithfully write, and there is also plenty of space for additional members to add their musings to these pages. Items from nonmembers are welcome at the editor's discretion. Your articles, cartoons, paintings, photographs, reports of information, and bits of whatever else is interesting and fun are vital to this newsletter. Send submissions to Chuck Coronato, coronato3@verizon.net or 412 Highland Avenue, Wyckoff, New Jersey 07481 (201) 723-6230

Members Sharing Photos



Livingston Manor's Trout Day Parade.
Photo: Judy Van Put



Three legendary members of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild being inducted as Legends of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum. From left to right: Dave Catizone, Bruce Concors, and Tom Mason.



Ed Ostapzcuk sent us this photo of a 10-inch wild brookie, still in the water, with the wings of an Ausable Wulff showing in its jaws.



A beautiful wild rainbow, wet and in the net. Photo: John Bonasera



A Green Drake plucked from the Beaverkill.
Photo: Chuck Coronato



Tying a black ant pattern for terrestrial time. Tie and photo by Ron Nimitz.