

hughes-dave-2015-12-14.mp4

Dave Hughes [00:00:09] Well maybe I went on a backpacking trip to a place called Big Indian Creek which is a gorge on Steens Mountain, a glacier cut gorge, and the last minute I threw a diary in my and notebook in my backpack and a pencil and I went up there and turned out to be a real October storm and I had a lot of time to write. So I would build a campfire, set up my camp, build a camp fire and write away because there wasn't any good fishing. And for four days I did that it was a real real violent windstorm. I got a lot of writing done and I filled out a notebook and when I came back I read from that notebook to a fishing club and sent it in to, send it to my publisher just to read it. And he decided to publish it. So it became a book called Big Indian Creek but to me it sort of sums up the essence of everything that I kind of like. That stream had a,

Dave Hughes [00:01:07] Because I had to backpack up, it had kind of what I call a sense of separation from all the rest of the world which seems to be something that I'm looking for a lot in my fishing is a sense of separation from the rest of the world don't always get it. But at any rate so that not much of a story but that sort of sums up what fishing means to me was going up there alone. up that creek. Spending a few days and writing the notes writing the notes became ultimately the bigger part of it. Because I'm a writer. So there it is. But that's the story that sort of sums up my relationship with fishing. What fishing means to me.

Dave Hughes [00:01:52] It is an unfair question but only at the end. The the most difficult flies to tie to me are the ones who are the most intricate and what I guess I'll say them, the least related fishing and I'm a trout fisherman so. But when I think of I see people tie realistic patterns we call them and they look exactly like the natural insect. I know a lot about the natural insects and the relationship between the natural insect and the trout. I don't think you have to tie, I know you don't have to tie these realistic things. And when people are doing this, the sport becomes the fly tying in to me any fly that doesn't relate to fishing is not is difficult to tie and also to me is actually not beautiful. And the flies to me that are the most beautiful are the flies that really relate to the insects in an impressionistic way or or a way that captures the essence of the insect is what I think is the brain of the trout and seems to have been proven over the years by being very effective. There's two aspects of the realistic flies. Number one they're really difficult to tie but they don't fish at all like the natural insect. I mean you throw them out there and they might look exactly like a real insect but they don't move like one. So I think it's much more important that the beauty of it is number one in capturing that essence of the insect, that movement. And number two the form and the third question is- the second part of the question is what are most beautiful to me they usually wind up being wet flies because I think wet flies just have an inherent shape to them. They look like something that moves and looks alive and I like wet flies that are impressionistic impression impressions of insects. I want to say impressionistic imitations but I don't want to use the word impressionistic of the insect. And to me those are the most beautiful. And the third part is what I consider the part at unfair is one fly and to me that would be absolutely impossible because to me the the fun of fly fishing is going out and collecting an insect and seeing what it looks like, and tying or in some other way acquiring an impressionistic pattern for that that fools the trout. So if I could have one fly pattern I once wrote an article for for I can't remember who, American Angler and the title of the article was how to murder a woolly bugger and what I did as I took an all woolly bugger and I showed that it's a pretty good imitation as it is for a leech. And if you cut off the tail it becomes a really good imitation for a dragonfly nymph. And if you leave a little bit of the tail on, thin it out, and then cut off most of Hackel it becomes a really good damselfly imitation. And if you cut most of the stuff off at least some of that

polymer tackle sticking out roughly it looks like a cased caddis invitation. So you can take a woolly bugger and you can murder it in many different ways and make it look like many different things so if I have one particular fly it would be a fly I could murder, although the woolly bugger is more of a lake pattern than it is a stream pattern. That's a roundabout answer to you. That's around about not answer to your question.

Dave Hughes [00:05:24] Well all the time you're surprised by flies you think should work good and they don't. And again that maybe that's when you have the insect in your hand and you're looking at your tying something a little bit too close to it or something like that. I think that if you've ever looked in the researchers trout Ray Bergman's trout look at the fly plates of the nymphs in those and they're interesting but they're the first nymphs that were tied and there what I would call plastic. They look a little bit like insects but they don't look like any parts of them would move, and I think that when flies don't work, it tends to be because we tried to capture too realistically the essence of the insect. And I think that when they do work and they surprise us is when we tie something really crude and simple and go out there and you think this thing looks too bad to work and then it does. I think that maybe the first value I see is recording an era that's gonna be gone, recording people who are soon going to be gone, recording what's out there that isn't always going to be out there because things are changing. And I think the real second value that I see as a writer and I haven't done this but I can see it as a marvelous place where I could go do research and go look in to what's been done on a subject and just find out stuff and heck maybe I could just go there just enjoy perusing things and like you just said about the flies get surprised by something that I didn't know I was going to be surprised by. Well I have access to a, I shouldn't be talking about private water, but I have access to a private stretch of the Malheur River which comes out of the Strawberry Mountain wilderness area and it's just a very short stretch of stream.

Dave Hughes [00:07:29] Turns out that is small it's remote. I have access to it. I know I'm going to be alone up there and it has solitude. I'm going to see deer and see elk, cougar walks through somebody else's camp not long ago I've seen the cougar tracks but I haven't seen the cougar. We rarely go up there that we don't see rattlesnakes. The last time I was with a friend and a rattlesnake swam behind him and got down on a rock. So those are always pleasant experiences. I almost stepped on one recently. That's also a pleasant experience if you miss it. There is in that stream that thing I talked about and I think the first question is that sense of separation from all the rest of the world. And that's what I get up there and that's why I love it it's small it's intimate. I can know it very well I can collect insects I can sit alongside of it write in a notebook. Usually when I go up there because it's a long ways from here I set up a camp and have time to sit there and relax and write in a notebook and go up at then generally I wind up hiking upstream two three miles just to see some water that I don't see and that other people don't see. So it's a lot of things. Lots of mystery.

Dave Hughes [00:08:57] Well that's a clear one for me. My dad had an old Phillipson bamboo fly rod which is actually sitting in the window right there at this moment with his Creel. My dad passed away at 95. And those are still sitting there but my dad would in around Astoria on the tiny streams he would go out with his Phillipson Rod and he would fly fish. And if the fish weren't taking flies he would put a little something else on the end of his hook. But at any rate and he was he was eclectic.

Dave Hughes [00:09:28] But my biggest memory is once in a while my dad would be in a riffle and he'd be sunstruck, and he'd have the bamboo Phillipson Rod and he'd have the old copper colored line that was on one of the first of the nylon lines, and the sun would

strike him and there'd be water droplets flying off. And there was just I don't know how many times I saw it maybe once for all I know but I have that vision to this day of my dad standing there casting with the fly. And it was so gorgeous that I had to do that. And the truth is in the end it turned out my dad wasn't a very good fly fisherman. I always wanted my dad to teach me to fly cast. He'd come home from work. I'd be out in the backyard casting horribly. I'd say would you please teach me to cast. And he'd say no and I realized a long time later it was because number one he didn't know how to cast very well. And it was probably the best thing that ever happened to me was that my dad didn't teach me to cast I had to learn on my own. But he did lead me out there. Get me out there whatever. Definitely got me on that road. Well certainly the first one easy to answer because I did a series of books, they're over here to my left for stackpoll. Probably in the late 80s and early 90s I did a series of five books and it was Handbook of Hatches which looked at the relationship between the insects and flypatterns and of course trout and Reading the Water was the second one and that made me look at the water in a whole different. Way I'd do a lot of research for these books. The third one was Tackle and Technique in which I recorded casting and tackle how to assemble an outfit etc. that didn't sell at all. And the next one was Tactics for Trout which was some sort of a summation of everything. Putting it all together into tactics and then the last one was Strategies for Stillwater which also didn't do much, it's seen by a few people, but at any rate having done these books doing the research for them, going out on the streams and that's research too, and of course gathering a pictures for them, like I realized when I came out of that, this is about a seven year period maybe eight year period of doing those books, I was just a lot better fisherman. I have fished a lot for those books. I've done a lot of research for those books, and I came out of that and I actually was fishing one time and I realized that those books had made me a much better fisherman by having done those books. The flip side of the question is how does being an angler make me a better writer. Well I think in fly fishing for trout we have to observe you know observation is one of the key points there's reading the water finding the fish getting right fly while observing is one of the major points that gets you to where you're going. So you become a better observer. I think I actually kind of comically I want to say that I always wanted to be a writer and fly fishing really gave me a subject to write about and it became the thing that brought it all together. And so I thank fly fishing for giving me a subject and when I teach writing, which isn't all that often anymore, I always say you don't want to study writing. You want to study a subject and become an expert in a subject and then you're going to learn to write on your own and you learn to write by writing and reading. But you really instead of trying to study writing you want to study a subject so that you have something to write about that not everybody else can write about. So become an expert. That's something whatever it is. Fly fishing, business, whatever it is become an expert and then become a writer because you have something you write about.

Dave Hughes [00:13:28] I do have a favorite. And I grew up in Astoria on the coast of Oregon and of course that's logging country. But when I grew up there were streams coming down and a few of them went over waterfalls. And above those waterfalls, if they were tall enough to keep the trash fish out, which was the salmon and steelhead, if they couldn't jump over the waterfall above those waterfalls you had. I call them trash fish by the way as a joke. Don't take that seriously. People have in the past I get into trouble. Above those waterfalls are, are cutthroats populations and each one of those above each waterfall has been isolated for thousands of years. So they're all a little bit different. They're all very similar but they're each one's a little bit different. And but they.

Dave Hughes [00:14:14] When you're fishing for those you're fishing for something that's been isolated and evolving in that particular environment for how many thousands tens of

thousands of years we can't get into the millions because it's probably not that long. A few millions possibly that the trout I've only been there for a few tens thousands of years. But at any rate those are my favorite fish or those their native fish they're native to that particular stream. They're not native to somewhere else. Nothing else can get above that waterfall to pollute them except in recent years because there is a higher value put on Steelhead and salmon by Fish and Wildlife Agencies. They've been taking some of those old streams of waterfalls and going up above and planting steelhead smolts and salmon smolts and you know the results of that. Once that native population of cutthroats has interbred with the Steelhead Smolts, which is going to happen, that native cutthroat population is gone. It's not going to come back. It's not going to exist again. So there is a sadness in that which I've written about.

Dave Hughes [00:15:25] I don't know if we want to seek a balance. I think I'm going to close my eyes and say we've got to we've got to preserve the natives because they evolved in that environment. There's a book called The Sixth Extinction written by Richard Leakey a ghostwriter whose name I don't remember, but one of the things I've picked up in reading Darwin of course is that what evolves.

Dave Hughes [00:15:50] Into an area, what evolves into those old streams I just talked about, is in some ways accidental but it's only going to happen accidentally one time. And if you change anything about that it's not accidentally going to happen the same way again. So we think if we restore an environment, the natives are going to come back. Well we can restore an environment and the natives are not going to come back because that happened in a long period of time in a series, and I'm calling them accidents. You can call them something else if you want. But at any rate if we don't preserve those natives that that evolved in a certain habitat, we've lost that. And you're not going to get it back by restoring the habitat, you're gonna get something else back. So in my opinion I think that's something we've got to be pretty strict about is protecting the natives. And then we make this distinction what is native mean and what is wild mean. Native means it was evolved there. Wild means it was brought there or its ancestors were and now it's reproducing naturally there but it wasn't there to begin with. So we need to make that distinction because I don't think everybody realizes the difference between wild and native. So in my opinion we're going to we're going to have a few fears fewer steelhead but we need to preserve those native cutthroats above those waterfalls. And I could give you an example if we have time. When I wrote An Anglers Astoria my favorite little stream was grassy lake Creek which I named now because it's pretty much gone.

Dave Hughes [00:17:30] It's it's had this interbreeding of steelhead Smolts with cutthroats and stream's been logged. So it's pretty much not what I grew up with. But at any rate a philanthropist who fished for steelhead, and he was a construction person, he volunteered to build a fish ladder up this waterfall so steelhead could get up there. And the local fisheries biologist came to me because I wrote a column for the local paper at the time and he knew I had a stick although it wasn't a very big one but. He talked to me first and he said well this person's wants to build a fish ladder up there. And my answer was, he wanted me to sign off on it and I said those are native fish up there. Steelhead have never been up there because they can't get over the waterfall if you put this fish ladder and you might get 100 more steelhead for people to fish for in the main stem of the Nahalem river. But. Look what you've destroyed that's never gonna come back again. And so I said I'm going to fight it. And he said okay. And I never heard another word about it which meant that I had killed it. Probably single handedly. At any rate. Again we just had to preserve those natives. What evolved there was the native cutthroat, the steelhead didn't come up there. The steelhead we found over and over if you'd open these tributaries you get a few

more Steelhead. I think if there is a dam put on a stream that block steelhead that were originally native up there, well then you're you're kind of obligated to remove that dam or you should remove that dam or make passage to get what was native back up there. But to put something up there that's not native up there, I think that's not correct. I actually can pick a favorite. It won't be one of the ones you mentioned. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. And the reason I pick them, and the Nature Conservancy falls in this category too, is that they're going out and acquiring lands, making arrangements that they're turned back over to government agencies but that they're locked up forever in their current habitat so that they're always gonna be good habitat. And of course the goal is the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation as elk habitat but not peripherally. They wind up protecting a lot of trout streams and even write about it in there. So my answer is that the organizations, Trout Unlimited which I love and the Federation of Fly Fishing I'm a life member. They're doing incredibly good work in terms of preserving and restoring and everything the habitat. But I give my favor to organizations that purchase that habitat and transfer ownership.

Dave Hughes [00:20:25] And protection forever. And then we should do that restoration. So there is a balance there but I personally am in favor of the group that that owns it. Or acquires ownership and then locks up, walks away any development from that and then puts it into other hands for stewardship forever. While I talk about this with Rick Hafele and other friends from time to time. Certainly we gain better tackle infinitely better tackle. We've gained better knowledge we have I'm surrounded by books here and DVD and etc that I can do research in. And we'd gain transportation that gives us an ability to go to places. I fish in Montana now or in the old days I wouldn't fish in Montana from Oregon. I fish in Chile and I fish in Argentina in New Zealand at times. So I have means of transportation that give me other places. So those are things that I think we've gained, and what I think we've lost and this is what I talk about with my friends is honestly speaking and I've had my three score and ten. But we have lost in my lifetime probably access to a third to a half and maybe even over half of the things that I did when I was young and could do when I was young. They just aren't there anymore. The streams that I grew up fishing on the coast the streams are still there but they've been logged and they've had or they've had steelhead and planted over the cutthroats. They aren't there in the form that I fish them and I'm not just talking about where I grew up I'm talking about the world. In the world there's just a fairly constant nibbling and constriction of opportunity. I don't see this going away. And I think it comes in the next question but there's there's quite a few people on this earth. And there doesn't seem to be any reduction in that number. And as long as we have two things we have a number of people increasing and the amount of horsepower they have. It's going to get smaller. I have my favourite stream in the [unintelligible] here that I talked about earlier and when you asked about my favourite stream, comes out of the Strawberry Mountains and out of the Umatilla National Forest and it goes into flat lands which of course is farmed. And the instant it does it turns from a trout fishery to squah fish fishery and then into a smallmouth bass fishery. And I'm not going to denigrate those other fisheries but it's the farming that causes that. There used to be salmon steelhead grew up this river which do not anymore. So. What I want to get at here is there's the rancher that owns this ranch. Kind of accosted me one time and said look there were fifty thousand Indians here in this valley before we got here, and there's not nearly as many people now. So there's a lot less effect. And I didn't really want to argue with him so I didn't say it but I thought well those fifty thousand Indians, maybe among them they had ten thousand horses. Where you've probably got ten thousand horsepower and your combines and your tractors and stuff like that. So you as one individual probably have as much horsepower as all these Indians did and there's a lot of other people here that have a lot more horsepower. So these Indians have been maybe the numbers have been reduced the number of human population, but the amount of horsepower over there to do destruction

has manifold and increased. And I explain it didn't explain that to me because number one I didn't think he'd want to hear it. Number two I thought I'd be there arguing forever and number three and just didn't want to continue the argument. Though. Well I held off this number because I knew it didn't belong and my last question in the number 7 billion which we project being on the way to 10 billion the population on Earth and.

Dave Hughes [00:24:42] That cannot do anything but reduce opportunities out there. Because we need the food that that farmer over there is growing. Who's to say that the highest and best use of that land with seven billion people on the planet isn't what he's doing instead of good trout fishing. Realistically. I want to eat. You want to eat. We build our houses out of wood so there's gonna be loggers so. So I see as long as the population increases, I see opportunity to do those outdoor things and those wildness things decreasing. It can't be any other way. Well you know what I'm doing now. My three score 10 is I'm simplifying. And a new anger I would say to look around at all the new gear and new opportunities and then new opportunities what I mean by given to you by being able to travel to places you couldn't before. Choose what you'd like to focus on at some point. Do a lot of different things but ultimately choose and simplify. I used to I have in that box right in front of James I have probably three boxes and nymphs, but just recently I bought a little box about this big and I tied it of full of nymphs and that's about all the nymphs I need. And I did another one with wet flies and another one of streamers and those three boxes for all my sons flies. So. That's. It's a real simplification simplify your gear.

Dave Hughes [00:26:21] Get a favorite rod for the thing you like to do most and the line and the leader and get it. Just simplify your gear and be able to be mobile instead of being restricted by your gear. Simplify so you can. So you when you go out there you got time to think. Make it kind of a meditation when you're out there. Reduce reduce your burden. And make fishing kind of a meditation. Why I'm quiet person and I like a quiet partner, does not have to be quiet. But I don't want to be out there with a noisy partner. An ability to fish on their own. I don't want to have to take care of somebody although was my favorite wife. I have as much fun having her catch a fish as I do myself catching the fish. So I make an exception for her and fish next to her. Give her all the opportunities first to catch fish and have a good time. But another person, in fact one time I got kind of in trouble with my publisher. She took up fly fishing. She's really really a good friend and a brilliant lady and I love her. And she was thinking about taking up fishing and going fishing with me and I said. I'm not taking you fishing till you learn to tie your own knots. She she was kind of taken aback by that and she throws it back at me once in a while now. But what I meant was that when I'm out there with a fishing partner I'd like that partner to be able to do their own thing so I can do my own thing. I don't need to take care of them necessarily unless I'm married to them and then I'll find. So I like to fish with people who are as good as I am or better than I am. I haven't really talked about whining yet but if you fished with people who are better fly tyes than you are, and they have the flies that are working and you don't you want to really learn whining. And I should have put this in in the last question about advice to a new fisherman. You need to learn to whine to your fishing partner so that they'll give you the fly just to get you to go away. They'll give you the flies and say go away Dave and then whining is a very important aspect of fly fishing. But I don't want my fishing partners to whine, I want to do the whining I don't want a whiny partner. Another aspect of that is we go on trips now. I'm thinking of Rick. Ricks my best friend. Is Rick Hafele. We've done a lot of fishing trips for a lot of years. And what I think most is how much we talk, how little we talk about fishing and I like to listen to opera. And Rick likes to listen to jazz and we hate each others music. So when we go on a fishing trip we're never listening to music we are just talking. And the older we get the more we fish together the more that talking's just about life. What's going on in the world. What we're thinking about and doing and the

less it is about fishing. So I think one of my one of my requirements for fishing partners. They they read and they think and we're going to talk about on a trip is not just fishing. I'm a loner and I think a typical writer is a loner and I think writing is something you do alone and I've co-authored less than you think to the, you might be thinking of the two books that just came out that are Skip Morris and Rick Hafle, Dave Hughes. But those are actually came from a hook now. Now that an Ezine that we did and we each wrote in our own offices. We each wrote an article and and Rick collated them those books are gatherings of those separate things that we did and those are not. They're co-authored books in one sense you might more say they're anthologies in another sense because we didn't sit down and write together and the books that I have written together have been with Rick. And honestly speaking, the advantages of of having a co author as writing with somebody that knows something that you don't. In Rick's case he knew the etymology and I didn't when we did Western hatches. So but even then we broke it. Up Rick wrote about the insects I wrote about the matching fly patterns and the tactics. So Rick wrote about the insect in its habitat. I wrote about the fly pattern and how to fish it and then we brought those together and edited them. So the advantage there was having Rick who knew the entomology. The advantage, I worked with Jim a lot because Jim was a terrific photographer and Jim did the photography and I did the writing and eventually Jim became an author on his own right.

Dave Hughes [00:31:12] Very good very good books. We used to work together where I would write a book and he would photograph it. The disadvantages are deadlines and I'm I'm a writer for a living and I've never had a job I've had jobs but I haven't had a job in a long time and I am very very very conscious of deadlines and I make deadlines and when you have a co-author you both have to be conscious of deadlines and I guess what I'm kind of working my way towards here is that I've always made the deadlines. But Rick had a really important job that he had to do as head of the DEQ lab, that's pretty important, and and he became that when we had a contract and he just wasn't able to meet a deadline. And to me a deadline is the most important thing in the world. And if you're a co-author doesn't have that as the most important thing in the world too, you can you can help troubles there. But I I tend to be I tend to write my own books now and Rick tends to write his own books. He writes his own books nice very good ones. But but the friend that I got out of it has been enormously important. So. Well it's interesting. I'm going to probably get toward the end of your question before I get to the beginning but I read the book Blink. Malcolm Gladwell. Which a lot of people have. If you haven't, go read Blink. It has nothing to do with fishing. He's not a fisherman.

Dave Hughes [00:32:49] But Blink is is the acquiring the ability to make a decision in a hurry, that's a really good decision and some of the best decisions are made in a hurry. But they're made in a hurry based on an enormity of study and research and learning number one and then number two an enormity of experience. And he used a lot of examples and I just want you to read the book but I realized as I read Blink that you learn to read water in a blink. If you're an experienced fisherman you go look at the water and you say well the trout is there and you're gonna be right. And the reason you're right isn't an accident. And it didn't happen in a hurry. You did a lot of research. Maybe you read my book. I hope you did it any rate. But what you really did is you went fishing and this is what Gladwell gets at is that, and he's not talking about fishing, but as you do something your brain records, and I'm going to use fishing, your brain records what the water looked like where you hooked fish. And pretty soon you've got this great big database. And it's not the subconscious it's the unconscious but you've got this database in your brain of what the water looks like where you hooked fish in your past. So you really learn to read water. This is the last part of your question. By experience. You go fishing your brain records where

you hooked fish what you're doing when you hooked fish and the next time you go to a piece of water you don't sit there and say oh my gosh that looks like that place I hooked a fish you know downstream a mile ago or three weeks ago. Now it looks just like that in the fish is going to be right there your brain just does that for you and you make your cast to where that water looks right and there you go. So I can't say that I go out as much as I used to consciously read water. I go out and look at the water I've got this huge database because I fish too much in my life and my brain says the fish is there and usually it's correct.

Dave Hughes [00:35:00] Well I think it goes back to what I've said about three times now. That sense of separation from all the rest of the world, uh the solitude. Even if I go with somebody else I go off (unintelligible) all the time and we love to go fishing small streams together we do it with tenkara or we do it with regular gear Western gear they call it. But there's always that separation from the rest of the world, there's always that intimacy with the stream. The reading the water part on a small stream becomes very easy you just look at the water and it's only a couple of places the trout might be. So I think that intimacy and that sense of separation are what make small streams important to me. There's one other aspect to small streams.

Dave Hughes [00:35:45] There's always corners there's always a next corner a small stream and no matter how much you've fished and how much you've even fished of this stream and sometimes how many times you've fished this stretch of stream you always think to yourself what's going to be around that next corner. And I I just keep going up streams way too far because I think it's going to be something up that next corner. And I've had so many things happen turning around corners on streams. One time I came up a little stream on the coast and there was a two buck deer came running down and they're coming right down the middle stream. They walked by me where I could almost elbow them because I was standing rigid and they thought I was a rock or something, and one of them had a trout hanging out of its mouth and nobody I've ever talked to believes that I've seen a buck deer running down a stream with a trout hanging out of his mouth. But I read a book on deer hunting one time and it said that part of the diet of deer is trout and I thought Oh my God I was right. But the most interesting thing to me about this little incident was I extrapolate these things that happened and it was a little deer without a trout in his mouth running in front of about 30 feet in front of a big deer that had the trout in his mouth.

Dave Hughes [00:37:04] And I said Well the big deer is making the little trout run ahead and stun the trout and then he's picking up as he goes which of course is very apocryphal. It's not true. But that's that's the way your imagination can work when you turn corners on streams. So I turned a corner on a stream one time and there was a really really really big bull elk drinking water and when that elk saw me it was as if a hand grenade had gone off in the pool. The elk just exploded up the hillside that just left a hole in the water. So going around corners of streams never know what you're gonna see. I went around a corner of a small stream not very long ago up in Canada and it was grizzly bear country. And I came around a corner of a stream and this thing just came running at me and it was huge coming down and I thought I'm being attacked by a grizzly bear and it turned out to be an immature Bald Eagle and it had nowhere to go but right over my head to get out where it was but right over my head and just scared the living crap out of me. It was just a bald eagle trying to get away. My favorite angling authors. Well I just talked about William Humphreys book, The Spawning Run and that's probably my favorite thing with with Norman Maclean's A River Runs Through It. It's kind of interesting you ask that question

and you haven't put it on your list but right under your tripod you'll see a stack of small books.

James THull [00:38:40] To see Art Flicks. I see Sylvester's Nemes.

Dave Hughes [00:38:45] So. So go ahead and look at them all and give the titles.

James THull [00:38:50] All right. Well we've got Art Flicks New Streamside Guide, The Art of Tying the Wet Fly and Fishing and the Flymph, by Leisenring and Hidy- Hidy. I'm not going to pronounce the name right. Fishing Yellowstone Hatches, Matthews and Juracek. Rivers of Memory by Middleton forward by Lyons. Leaf from- A Leaf from French Eddy. It's a collection of essays on fish anglers and fishermen. Let's see, Rosborough's Tying and Fishing the Fuzzy Nymphs, Fishing the Midge by Ed Koch, and the Soft-hackled Fly by Sylvester Nemes.

Dave Hughes [00:39:35] So what runs through those and the reason I just got them off the shelf and piled them there is, the most influential books in my life and writers in my life have been people who've taken a small subject, written a small book about it was tightly focused prose on that subject and they produce. You can see every one of those books is small and. And I'm not saying that those are my all my favorite authors. You asked the question Who's my favorite authors and I'm devolving that into one of my favorite books and the most influential books in my life have been the ones that are very small and a narrow part of the fishing subject very focused and obviously very good prose. I like good prose but doesn't have to be good prose. Typically you know we both knew you know Sylvester or did you.

James THull [00:40:30] I I met Hazel after Sylvester passed.

Dave Hughes [00:40:33] You met Hazel after Sylvester passed away. Well, Sylvester Nemes book The Soft-hackled Fly. I consider the best book to come out of the 1970s on trout fishing. And I used to tell Sylvester that your book was about this this beautiful subject. And very very tight subject and your outline in your treatment was very tight but also your prose was very tight and your prose was almost restricted into this beauty by the nature of the subject and the way you treated it. So I think that it's a beautifully written book very simple subject very very beautiful type book and those tend to be my favorite books my favorite authors are those who write best and I think you've met some of my favorite authors are just my friends. I made a kind of a commitment when I became an author to meet other authors when I got a chance. And I guess I should mention John Geirach because you've met John and John sort of stands up like Haig Brown did in the earlier generation. I can pick up anything by John Geirach and read any story in any book of John Geirachs anytime and love it and I tell John this once in a while that I hoard him and you may not remember John Voelker.

Dave Hughes [00:42:00] Robert Traver he wrote Anatomy of a Murder and he had Frenchman's pond. And he wrote fishing books kind of as an aside after he got really rich. He did what he called hoarding the cast and that means that he would go out there smoke his his his cigar and drink his whisky and look at the trout rising and not cast to them he'd hoard the cast until he really wanted to make a cast. And I've probably had two or three books of John Geirachs behind right now because I caught them because I read Geirach when I need Geirach. And and it might be after I've had a bad winters out on the speaking circuit or had a trip to a foreign country that I'm tired and I just need to come back and

that's when I read John is kind of when I need John. And so so I guess I'm going to call John my favorite writer.

Dave Hughes [00:42:54] Simplify and have fun fishing and fish are pretty important part of that equation. You don't. You're not going to go out to a stream. You're not going to go out there to go fishing. But when you get there, catch a few fish and then take some time to see what else is out there. So make it simple. That gets you out there more often. And enjoy what's peripheral to the fishing itself. Sometimes.