

Jerome Torres in Smithsonian - then at U.I.
all *Splanerella* are *Livaria*

381-5129

Get Banks on Mayflies of Illinois

Write for pub. EPA-670/4-74-006
of Dec. 1974 -

Taxonomy + Ecology of *Stenonema* mayflies
by Philip A. Lewis

National Environmental Research Center
Office of Research and Development
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Cincinnati, Ohio 45268

X-gnathos

Sparkles / Sources of light

Afternoon, mild + gray.

Stream gray + flat.

Sky gray + fuzzy.

Rapped land of blue + rare ~~see~~ between water + sky.

Pheasant flushed across stream, wary,
outrageously beautiful + bright.

Rainbow taking nymphs deep, sparkling at
the surface, head of bright water.

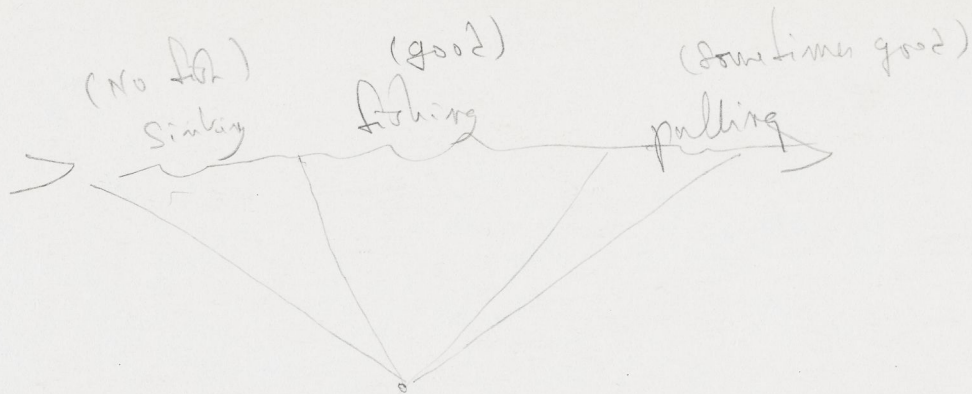
Rainbow rising in the snow.

I don't know why trout in winter want
nymphs or streamers. What they want ~~does~~
must be connected to ~~that~~ something —
availability of natural food — but
what? It's not like summer, when
they get used to eating whatever is on the water.

Winter

open? Water has wondrous properties,
~~including~~ among them its ability to
run all ~~winter in the~~ winter around
here, when you would think it would
freeze solid.

Cast:



Does sunshine slow them down? (also down the water.)

Sometimes take enormously well, esp. in W. Galatia.
underpins, skinning. You just get the fly to them (deep +
fairly drag-free); strike fast. Not subtle —
more like good worm-fishing.

Ah, but that's *Shit* fish. Except that trout take too.
I release them all.

Fish-eating w/o guilt. Feel good at evening the trout *W. Galatia*
balance.

Not beautiful, but not bad - no uglier than a Walleye
+ prettier than a carp. When you know a fish
tastes good, your salivary glands make it look better -
Walleyes aren't pretty, but they look good coming up.

Shes well-fed, have nice body-shape. Sorry about the
head.

Fighting: not creative. Hang down in the current + lay
till exhausted. But can be sharp when well-conditioned,
in E. fallation.

White box

You want deep. Any one often talks of bottom-sourcing but seldom do it: you want bottom-sourcing, literally. May lose less fire if split shot are bouncing instead of firing. So weight fly some, but add shot a foot up the leader. Enough to bounce.

You want a float, not a "strike-indicator". In addition to having 5 times more syllable, "strike indicator" never always floats, but float on the start + best (s.i's.) add, say, one little plastic fold-over float per split shot; maybe 2 of each. What the world's best float; just the easiest to use. (You often see White eyes, which look like a bubble, rather than release top + bottom).

Flies: buggy-harrier (pulled) or pt + h.c. No legs, hackles, split tail, other doodads. Mid-size. Too big mine for. Too small catches them but hard to unhook, + do not fly well w/any but light tippets.

Care for warmer weather

Leader: short butt, long tippet, float at top of tippet. (.006" - .007"). Whole leader shorter than rod.

Rod: long, light.

Winter fishing - tailwaters

There are things I'd rather do.
Fish in spring, for example. Or hunt
in fall.

But there are also things I'd rather
not do, like watching TV, criticizing
my wife's cooking, + helping my teen-ager
with his math homework.

Trout are still trout in winter.

Wait till it's over 40° + first warm + sunny day.

Neoprene gloves

{ One Whitefoot method: destructive. (foot shuffling)
{ Big catches are possible.

Unpredictable weather, + trout.

Sometimes real surface fishing, on tiny
midges.

unweighted nymphs or madison

San Juan R. - see my 1968 inter. Rec
possible. Snails.

Why fish in winter? What's better?

Bear: Dan & he agreed that Yellowstone R. was ^{most enjoyable} best
in ^(sometimes) Jan/Feb/March - maybe into April. Even better
summer. fished mostly w/ big streamer/woolly ^{Worms.} ~~bugger~~.
John McDonald used to fly out in February.

- Big Horn - midges good.

- Madison -

Green - good in winter below the dam in Colorado.

San Juan

D Late season, Low water

Shen. Slide Show

- 22 - always fish behind something,
- 23 - or over something,
- 24 - or both. if you're casting over water, lots of luck | early morning or rainy days best.
- 25 - Unless you can get a rock in there, some where.
- 26 - Some cast from other side. Would be better if no line were on the water. | prefer rods under 8' + #4 lines, long tippets.
- 27 - An ideal proposition.
 - Avoiding drag is the main point.
 - also ~~make~~ ~~begin~~ avoid splashing of line.
- 28 - Remember the old wooden bridge on the Rapidan? The best pool on river.
- 29 - Just cast a deep nymph upstream + hook a couple of fish every trip.
- 30 - Then take them below bridge + play.
 - Caught a 12" brookie there once, but after got stocked with trout too.
- 31 - I fear they're not stocked now, but they were fun for the kids.
- 32 - I don't recommend this w/ bamboo rods.

E a good time for camping

33 - Good time for camping.
Escape oppressive heat; & there are few ^(biting) bugs at higher elevations.

34 - This is actually St. Mary's camp, South of the Park.
Rainbows have taken over most of it, or had them.
and a few wild brown.
Good for a kid with a worm.

F Autumn

- 35 - old Cael check box, when fish for fun had to prove itself.
State of VA angry at Tu then, for blocking a pay-as-you-go fishery
for stocked rainbows. Warden were fining Tu members on slightest
escape.
- 36 - Could be a good time of the year, w/ a little rain.
These days I've found some decent hunting so don't go fishing much.
- 37 - Trout in peak color, though conditions decline just when they spawn.
- 38 - Scenery at its best.
- 39 - Fish take well (if water high enough)
- 40 - Most rainbows were skinny + dark, but a few maintained condition.
- 41 - Lower Popocatepec good again.
- 42 - Some of streams even ~~outside park~~ below Park are ok for smallmouth.
- 43 - Spinning good.
- 44 - Weak old picture, but the best bass of the year.
- 45 - Camp Hoover: history. Some Presidents have better taste than others.

Intro - lights on

Shenandoah Park - less than 50 slides.

Welcome interruptions.

will try to focus on tactics: difficult to describe
in writing.

Main point may be locating trout - way ahead of the
game when you can.

will give some ideas - looking at season, water level,
trout condition.

They do move here. Must, to survive. Prime springtime spots
dry by July.

Slow down + fish carefully for the better trout.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
COMMANDANT'S OFFICE

Memorandum for—

A

Where to Go

- 1) Lower reach of stream, late spring. (Easiest approach)

Not a Where-to-go show: too many people on my stream anyhow. Start in Rapidan, then get list of all streams + topo maps + try them all — at the right time. Will give tips on that. Haven't found a bad one yet at the right time.

- 2) I like to go down from skyline drive, though it's a harder hike.

Keeps me away from the crowds — + crowds are a problem on Rapidan sometimes.

Appeal for small parties. No Vans or foot-races.
"We have met the enemy + he is us."

B

Spring - the right time for easiest fishing.

Early Spring - more or less till April 15 -

- ③ ~~①~~ } Grey, winter colors + big water; looks like real rivers.
- ④ ~~②~~ } Usual catch more regular fishing, but often catch my best on a duff.
- ⑤ ~~③~~ Fish with a high rod, close, + some obstacle between you + trout.
almost dropping. Slow - Shovel dry work so well!
- ⑥ This is often the hot spot. - Didn't work this year, w/ low water.
- ⑦ Can be quite predictable - which is how ~~we~~ we got this shot
- ⑧ Fishing can be good, but it can also be slow.

Bright cold days, perhaps the worst

Soft, grey, wet, wannish days the best.

- ⑨ Sometimes do get the better fish. I never get one ~~in~~ much over 12",
+ few of these.
- ⑩ It's Quill Gordon time, + they do help - but seldom a good hatch.
- ⑪ Try HWRG, or anything else w/ split calf tail wing - for visibility.
I now use ~~more~~ smaller flies than I used to: maybe 16 or 18
mounted ~~eg~~ ~~terms~~ 94840 terms.

c

Late Spring

- 12 } The best time. More or less April 15 to mid-May, but highly
13 } variable. Fort. Shile water is ample — and here you
want (reasonably) high water. Hard to grasp for Montana boys,
who wait till August for the water to get low enough.
You can tell by the trilliums.
- 14 - Short-sleeve time now. But bright, hot days can be poor. Clouds/showers.
- 15 } You can fish almost anyway, + it all works.
- 16 } Fish seem to be everywhere, + feeding all the time. Beetles.
- 17 }
- 18 - They also get in top condition now. "flew-like" a cliché, but accurate.
- 19 - Lots of flies, but ~~not~~ still very few serious hatches. (Lt. Cahill)
- 20 - One exception: black gnats. Small. ~~Simulid~~ Simuliids or empids, or both.
Only time I've seen ~~them~~ fly fish selective.
- They do rise freely + frequently, + may reject big flies.
- 21 - But beetles usually work. Almost always some in stomach.
Some guys report ~~good~~ decent hatches of parapsophesia.
I've seen lots of flies — but seldom in fishes' stomachs.

Home

Words

Datus C. Proper

1914 N. Johnson Street

Arlington, VA 22207

THE HACKLED BEETLE

The trout in Thompson's Spring Break act like ruffed grouse: mostly they flush before you are in range, and even if they don't, they are hard to reduce to possession. The grouse, however, have to learn to fear humans. The brown and rainbows and even the brook trout in Thompson's seem to be born wary. It's private water and they are not pounded much, but for some reason they are easier to frighten than the hard-fished trout in Armstrong's and Nelson's spring breaks. I don't understand, but I know that I always lose arguments with trout, so last August I kept a very low profile as I was stalking around the Gallatin Valley after Thompson's trout.

The meadows were full of grasshoppers, and sometimes their imitations work for those trout.) On ^{the} my first day, ^{my imitations of them} the "hoppers failed: the trout either fled as the flies hit the water or made nervous rejection-rises. Clearly, ^a smaller fly was needed, but the Tricorythodes hatch was over for the day. I tried the shallow nymph that I think of as the Invisible Hackle Fly: pheasant-tail body with a turn or two of fine, stiff hackle to retard sinking. It lands very lightly. After a while, it

About 675 words

Jan / June / July
Datus Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, MT 59714
(406) 388-3345

Levels

CHANGE LEVELS

Angling is a game you can't lose, if that's any consolation. I mean, the trout may refuse your fly on 99 casts out of a hundred, but you always get to try again. You might even catch a fish, in time, and the fish will never catch you.

Suppose that you have waded into the best position you can reach near a rising trout, made your best cast -- and watched the fish reject your fly. There is a good chance that some vagary of the current made your fly drag. Perhaps you could not see its slight unnatural movement, but the trout could. The next step, in this case, is not just to change from a little gray dry fly to a little tan dry fly. Instead, pick a new design, one that fishes at a different level. Try an extra-high-floating dry fly or a near-surface nymph, for example. Either of them might let you get away with a little drag.

This is supposed to be fun, so experiment with the high-floating design first -- the kind that drifts with the whole hook out of the water, point and all. The flies called variants, spiders, and skaters all float high because they use big hackles. Better still, try the fore-&-aft design, which has a tightly-wound hackle at each end -- small in the front and just long-fibered enough in the rear to cover the point of the hook. Trout take this fly with more confidence than the big, bushy kind.

The advantage of any high-floating design is mobility. When it threatens to drag you can give it a twitch, let it resume a natural float, and twitch it again. You can even dance it over the water like a crane fly in a mating ecstasy. Trout may wake up and pounce. Unfortunately, they may also slash at the fly, miss it, and then repent their reckless behavior. Fish are not very adventurous, when you get down to it, and they don't want us to enjoy ourselves either.

All right, then. Try a near-surface nymph next. Trout feel safer assassinating nymphs. On my own home stream, easily half of the events that look like rises are really the tips of tails coming out of the water -- a sign that the fish was tipping down at the front for subsurface food.

This is finicky fishing. You cannot get away with strike indicators, split shot, big hooks wrapped with lead wire, or any of that heavy-metal stuff. Instead, use a tippet three feet long and .005" in diameter. At the end, tie on an unweighted nymph in size 16, 18, or 20. A slim body of pheasant-tail herl or hare's

ear almost always works, and you want just a wisp of hackle or a few fibers of hair at the front to keep the fly from sinking too fast. Grease the tippet with fly-flotant down to within a few inches of the end, but then soak the nymph in your mouth. (What's good enough for a trout is good enough for you.) Get the fly in the water a yard upstream from the rising fish, and watch as if you had a Scots accent -- verrry carefully.

If the trout moves at all, or opens its mouth, tighten your line quickly and gently, because a violent strike will pop the leader. Do it right and you get to chase up and down the stream for five minutes after a fish that is trying to break your two-hundred-dollar rod. All of us anglers agree that this is fun.

If you eat the trout, which is good for your health, remember to check its stomach contents first. Not always, but usually, you will find that a fish feeding on the surface was also taking natural nymphs that happened to drift by a couple of inches deeper. And because those insects were floundering, the trout was willing to accept an imitation that may have been dragging slightly.

8/21/86

Trout

One ab (released) signaling fear to other.

Cerebral cortex not the great dividing line.

Ducks don't have it but seem "intelligent,"
"personable."

Trout don't + are pretty ~~but~~ stupid about
most things, but are really good at
a few.

2 Q test creases unless they feed for what
a fish is good at. Discrimination between food.
Definite "learning ability."

Season? midsummer night, Spring equinox, fall moons.
Winter fishing, white fish, deep nymph.

Spring hook

Beginnings

Why

Season

Decoying in the papp - but also Seneca.

Stent w/ phalarope?

more trees would be nice.

Lora Thompson, + the Buffalo Seneca.

May flies

wedges too hard to deal with

red gear, canoe fish not important — do more + fast

Shake quite

Life in the Zoo

The highest ~~point~~ ^{Spring} (drice + high nymphs)

Values (+ the use of stream fishermen to see "thin")

mosley (+ the use of stream)

Do blame it on the English, but ...

I use deep nymphs + streamers, but MIMBY.

I've spent (so much for it in Lake) but
am not sure.

Rules

How it Began

Trout (No shortage of the ones that got away)

Travel w/ Huckleberry

← Decoying - Stand w/ phalarope.

Honrietta Creek? My tree fix. good group.

"You can fish anywhere you want." Thunderdown. 8/23/84

+ Bug-Zapper

See 7/22/83

May flies (+ others)

Most people hate bugs, per. 1st - Egg. American.

- Recall memories of mil. bus. of being eaten by them?

(We all are eventually + usually eaten). Japanese overcome.

- More likely modern squeamishness; phob. to wasps culture.

Cite African birds worried by them.

Bugs. favorite eggs, etc.

(I still gag at the idea of eating insects)

Bug Zapper in Burlington.

Expensive gear, more in habit - but all

bug killers, in case. (Tone that DC area has had ones)

Tried to get far from zapper in mt. (no spraying, either)

Exception: Everyone loves butter pie, a little, + fishermen love may flies a lot.

- Beauty/Fragility. Ephemeral. Hard to kill. Fly, like birds.

- Usefulness.

- History

- Order. Few enough to be comprehensible, (unlike ^{water} midges)

Diff. " " identifiable.

Want to know what was doing,

on my stream.

Do better than anything but midges, better.

grow in comfortable, fertile water (unusual);

hatch when air temp comfortable. (Don't lay 2 in water?)

Don't hatch when it's windy, too cold, too hot. (8/27/84)

Spring break cont. (Contrasts)

Looks peaceful + civilized - kind of.

Reminds me of the portrait of an elegantly dressed
Brit officer who died with Gordon at Omdurman. (?)

Here I mean not life + death of tiny bugs, but
things that happen to me.
Violent for.

So quiet you hear them swimming.

Hare's article (8/9/87)

Started w/ "This is heaven," in English.

Fish take ~~to~~ - except, alas, the big ones
or snails - just the ones I want to put
back.

Biggest for do not always feed on top.

|| Fish speaks when above w/ long stem (cut by meerkat?)
floated over. Leader - day! (8/13/87)

Selectivity: they never rise at Hinkle down, now
abundant in water.

Her 2 to se-cater fir-chipper found.
Spring back I fish only enough to
catch 2-3.

~~Page Wellman~~

Seaverport: "awake on"

Page Wellman: good for ducks.

First fish 8/11/82 - looking to buy. Beets

Region: living in a zoo is nice.

Contrast

pasture (overgrazing a problem, + water rights)
mountain sing.

geology. (See more prot.) Mallatin lake.
Valley of flowers: unidentified ludians.

Quiet: hearing fish singing 6/85 + 88

Dry food for fish + w. 1/1/16

weather - max 70°, min 38° per h. temp.

Cover from water table (complex building)

Best brown 7 lbs.

Best rd 22", est. 5 1/2 lbs (L. 1000), very fat
long varices to even: horizon? (also oxygen)

Weather: pray for rain

Good day at best: 8/30/82. Sherr Bush.

from impossible (hard, bright windy day) to possible, barely.

Weather: hot day, cool night: fawn square insects, and
the blue that eat bird trees.

Not doing.

"Woods" - no one

knows what they are,
but the way they do.

See 6/28/81

ground water 50° - 51°
+ stream start there

even on Aug. morning.

See 8/16/82 see

max + min w/ temp
max 66° w/ temp
in low 90's

|| You need a stream to live, + one you can lean on is
almost as hard to find as the right woman. Rapidan +
he try let me down; [Dy] I didn't; was Benoitte.
You can fish anywhere you want (Benoitte a.)
I want to go to the water often but not live in them.
Big brown after a rain. Want more animals.

Diff flies often needed - red/grey shimmers (8/15/86),
I was fly, big number wet. Suppose you sleep
rough would be good too, but I get tired
of it. Ants 8/23/86

Sculpins 8/28/86 looking like a stock
Cooled up on bottom in fast water, a fly that
really imitate them would be a loser.
Must not be too tough for a trout that
spots them.

Drilling hamburger (easier than fish)

4 kinds of trout. Release cutts (skinny anyhow)
+ browns, with which they get along well.
Kill the late (food eating) + br early.

Phunt reason - Best July 1 - Aug

12" brookie, fat + hump-backed (9/26/81-)
Best in a stream since Argentina.

8/6/87 Caught in rain; waited it out under spruce

Seasons

See 6/21/85.

6/22/85 - Can't recall a better evening's fishing.
Shot five on stream bed, as usual.

Wild brown.

Flies (cont)

8/14/86 - Selectivity: 17 1/2" Snow refused alder,
though they were on the water, & took a beetle.

8/15 - Shattering trees (for golden stone? Crane fly?)

8/16 - Tricea, then beetle, then nymph w/ "induced take".
↳ alder trice?

The aesthetic of signature stroke indicators in shattering red.

8/23/86

Ants

8/24

- 1 ant out "hatch"

8/24/86

Millions of Tricea over Madison

8/10/86

Spouse Hatch/Grey by better.

Higher Lynt (3)

Real point ~~of~~ is visibility, not dryness. Fly itself pretty on the water, + take of the fish dramatic. Vision of world usually invisible.

Trout-watching will never catch on, except in a few special places. Trout are too small, Camouflages. Far better at hiding than we are at seeing.

|| Are any para on drier + the English language.

Difficult. Refined in the liberal sense. Ergo swallow? Primitive. Obscure. Mundane.

Real bit in pie is not dry/wet but visible/invisible.

Near surface pie just as much fun.

Indeed talk. Not more skillful, but a bit skilful.

8/25/86

re may Dies?
Huels?

Anthropomorphism

Learning is comparison. The sun is
[x] times the size of the earth
~~the sun~~ [] saurs were a third
the length of a football species. Except for
experts, learning the habits of new

animals means comparing them to man,

Whether or not we say so. Bob White
raises children as a couple, but Mrs.
Osgrey flies the nest and leaves

her mate with the job.

When we speak, the comparison
is called anthropomorphism. [Define].
But writing ought to be understandable,
+ good writing ought to pay the through
people think, even if they are selfish
about it.

Not quite as silly as it seems - Huels

see "higher spot" - note attraction of dries to beginners. They want to move up.

See 8/15/82 on trouble of beginners.

Dries unusually difficult but visually accessible, when you learn to see them (a tough step).

Were the most upward-arching (climbing) of people, but also swiftest. a tough act to balance

Fishing open would be a good way to hook fish + good way to land them. 8/12/84.

The Latin problem

Trilob, olive (Bacter (Centrop?), Ephemerella (wide sound), Callibaetis.

John Bockett - see 8/16/84, 8/25/86.

New books, rods making it too easy. Flies better too, but perhaps not better than those I've used.

John Beever, Practical fly-fishing, founded on nature ... with instructions

See UK spinning 6/29/85

Low thought content; not "according to nature" (cite in old Boit Book; see Head Catalog

Nature

8

1949

10

10

the most useful flies...

Shenandoah Story

Sun + shade,
next page

Trout
movements

Best pools are those which have both a deep, sheltered area + a shallower one (often fast, but not always) for feeding. In some cases, fish seem to move entirely out of pools into shallows some distance away for feeding - but one hypothesis when they get both together. Like my 5/18/85 experience on dry branch: no trout for half an hour, then one by himself, then 4 (3 caught) in one pool. Concentration of this kind common, w/ laminar water in between (except for smaller fish that can hide out in small places) (+ have to)

I.e., 2 needs:

- shelter, which ~~may~~ depends on size of fish, but is fairly far as to understand, hard for front to find.

- good feeding area, which can ~~be~~ not so easy. Apparently have these characteristics:

- + view of both top + bottom. Not over a food or no dip. Need view of both top + bottom?
- + slow but definite current. Sometimes a backcurrent. Brings food w/o too much \neq cost in energy.

Trout definitely move as water levels change, + perhaps as their energy rises. (I.e., in faster water in May than April)

often move far from really good-looking spots (to us) for a good feeding lie. Characteristics must be important.

Note one waterfall ~~was~~ w/ pool below crumpled by fish - movements interrupted.

Sun + shade

Prob. ^{Brookies} will take shade all the time if they could get it, but they will take sunshine readily to get the other characteristics they want in a lig. Suggests that the lig's ~~physi~~ other physical characteristics are very important.

This goes up a great factor: Stay in deep shade + scrutinize sunny spots carefully, if water ~~falls~~ ~~goes~~ seems to have right characteristics. On 5/18/81, I spotted w of 5 keeper ligs that in Dry Branch. Then (at very ~~slow~~ gaspfully, over a rock or dipping, + wait a long time for fish to rise & sp in the lig.

Strike just as I do, — when fly goes back disappeared into water, but for few fish turn to go down. He may eyed fly just.

Looks peculiar, but fish are com. well looked in the lig.

Cooking fish
(Sole + John Scott)

Our intent is to bring out the flavor of food, not camouflage it.

~~In classical French cooking~~ My Encyclopedia Larousse has _____ recipes for filet of sole. ~~Some of them~~ They remind me ~~very much~~ of the elaborate, traditional Salmon pies of Victorian(?) times. Sole _____ has _____ ingredients, while the John Scott has _____. Neither has much to do with fish. Salmon takes a fly with a squirrel tail wing as readily as a John Scott, and Sole _____ does not taste like sole. The fillets serve a vehicle for cream, _____, _____, + _____. The real point, I suspect, is that both Sole _____ and John Scott allow their talented creators to charge a high price -- because much time and skill are involved.

Between Sole _____ + (JS), I favor the fly as an expression of craftsmanship. It will, at least, catch

fish as ~~well~~ well as the single pieces. There's
Sole — will never taste ^(much) like sole. [and the (P's)
Don't ~~give hard~~ build up plaque in my arteries.]
~~If you don't they wouldn't~~ Sole filets are low in taste
~~taste~~ even without the interfering flavors — and
sole filets are a good way to die are sometimes
fileted when they are too old to ~~serve~~ ^{sell} "on the bone."
You can tell how old a sole is if you buy it
Sole, but it's very difficult to tell how old a
~~filet~~ filet is.

midger, euryd, - fr.
not used.

Datus C. Proper

American Embassy

APO New York, N.Y. 09679

For publication

± 3000 words

BLACK

Back insects are not glamorous, just numerous. Here's an introduction to the Fancy Black and a few other flies that work with the odds.

This is not one of your romances about a color that causes trout to make fools of themselves. The trout of my acquaintance seldom go all giddy over any fly, let alone a color; and if they show a preference once in a while, it seems to be for the color of whatever creature they are eating. Often enough that creature is black. This, then is about a few black flies, common and exotic, and about

the materials that seem to work best for the clumsy copies we fishermen make.

Black insects are not glamorous, just numerous. You can get a long way through a guide to mayflies and caddisflies before you come to black. Most of these popular aquatic flies run to olives, browns, and greys, with an occasional touch of yellow or orange to brighten up our fly-boxes. The same is true of stoneflies, though some big ones from dark bottoms can be imitated in black. Hellgramites and fishflies are black, at least at first glance, which seems to be all a fish needs. In terrestrials and a few neglected aquatics, black becomes the rule rather than the exception.

Three examples follow. (And that's without even getting to the beetles, which are a story in themselves.) Ants come first because everybody recognizes them. Black Gnats come next because everybody doesn't. And then there's the Fancy Black, about which the only thing I know for sure is that it catches trout. The interesting thing about the Black Gnat and Fancy Black are that they work in America

but are outside our tradition. I would not have learned about them if my work had not taken me to Ireland for four years.

- 1) ANTS. Every kid knows one when he sees one, but as artificial flies they still seem to be used mainly by specialists. Maybe ants look too small. They are easier to fish than they are to see. During a fall of winged ants in Yellowstone Park's Grebe Lake, my six-year-old son caught his first several trout and grayling on a dry fly, "casting" with both hands and flailing a black ant out about twelve feet. Most days, ants engage in crawls, not falls, and the rises are lonely: perhaps a sip under the grassy bank of a limestone stream in July. And since ants are not aquatic, they thrive around freestone waters, too. The brookies in my favorite little Virginia mountain stream will eat almost anything in April, but they want a small ant when August brings low water. I won't tell you the name of the stream, but you will recognize it by artificial ants festooning the trees. Hemlocks come running for my ants. The trout don't. In the course

of a day, though, a few big old brookies usually make mistakes. Big old trout here are anything over eight inches.

- 2) BLACK GNATS. Till I had my consciousness raised in Ireland, I thought these were an ancient pattern imitating nothing in particular. In Ireland and England, "black gnats" were real diptera of at least three families: Bibios, Empids (Hilara), and Reed Smuts (Simulium). The things they had in common were a glossy black body, conspicuous black legs, short wings which folded flat along their backs, and a liking for the vicinity of rivers. Some purists like to think that a Bibio is the "true" black gnat, but I'm inclined to suspect that the label has always been loose. The old boys called some of these flies "curses". They were blessings if you liked to fish fine after the competition had gone off cursing to the pub. The wee black divils could be counted on to give me my best days of the season, which is saying a lot in Ireland. Back in America, I have not found the same predictable concentrations, though they must exist somewhere.
- (Reed Smuts, alias Black Flies, are what suck you dry

in Maine.) Readers may be able to fill in some gaps. I have never fished the Red-Legged March fly, for one American example of a Bibio. My smallest Irish Black Gnats did work well for eastern brown trout sipping summer miscellany in the pools. A little surface-seining would usually show that there were, sure enough, some moribund diptera which could be called black gnats without feeling insulted. Then in Yellowstone one July I found a "black gnat" present on several streams in useful quantities. It was actually a Net-Winged Midge (Blaphariceridae). The trout were taking solidly, and an Irish fly in size 16 did the job. Charles Cotton's pattern might have worked as well.

- 3) FANCY BLACK WET FLIES. This is an Irish idea going back centuries. On a breezy day, the custom is to drift and fish the big Irish limestone lakes with a cast of three shallow-swimming, fancy wet flies. It did not make sense to me, so I spent a lot of time fooling around with sinking lines, greendrake nymphs, corixas, and all that scientific stuff. None of it

worked as well as an old Black Pennell on the top dropper, just under water or bumping along the surface. Eventually I changed the body from black floss to black seal's fur. Then back in Yellowstone late one August, I was fishing the Madison for its famous lake-run browns. Fishing was so poor I thought the run had not started. Finally I tried one of my Irish lake casts and started turning up the good fish. Out of curiosity, I left the black fly on my top dropper and tried a number of the approved streamers and stonefly nymphs on the tail. All of the lake-run fish took the dropper, which was tiny by comparison. There were seven or eight of the good trout in three days, the best over four pounds. It could have been a fluke. You never know what non-feeding fish will take on that run upstream. Just for the hell of it, though, try a little black dropper next time you are dragging a gigantic Muddler around during the run of browns.

* * * * *

Black ants and black gnats are easy to understand, but the success of the fancy black wet fly is puzzling. Here's

all I know. In Ireland when I opened trout and seatrout from lakes, there were usually some black diptera in the stomachs. Some were chironomids and some were terrestrials. Another bit of evidence comes from a small swimming pool near my home. It contains no aquatic insects -- too much chlorine -- but there are plenty of trees around to shelter terrestrials. Every time I dived in this summer, there were several insects kicking on the surface or drifting waterlogged to the bottom, soon to be filtered out. Some small trout could have made a living (except for the chemicals). Dark diptera were most common. I suppose well over half the insects could have been represented by a black or peacock-bodied fly. As an explanation of the success of the fancy black fly for lake-run fish, this may be stretching, but it's the best I can do.

The same explanation may serve for the trout sipping tiny flies in rivers. Those summer fish seem selective, but their stomachs often tell a different story. They typically contain a miscellany of very small insects of many kinds. Most are terrestrials. As in the case of my swimming pool, black is a common color. Sometimes a green jassid or pale midge works better. All this is a wild generalization, but

how else to deal with a million assorted bugs blown out of the woods?

Scientists these days are concluding that a great deal of the energy available to inhabitants of a river is generated outside the river -- from tree leaves and land insects, for example. This may not say much about an individual trout in an individual river. A twelve-inch Cutthroat in a river in Yellowstone Park is likely to have a stomach stuffed with aquatic insects. The water is unpolluted; the hatches are good; and the conditions are poor for terrestrials (too much cold weather and too few leafy trees). In my narrow, wooded, infertile stream in Virginia, conditions are almost the opposite. In a bigger Pennsylvania freestone stream, both terrestrials and aquatics are important. Terrestrials deserve some specific imitations like the ant and some more general flies like the black gnat and the beetles. If you have a lot of time for fly-tying, you can carry dozens of terrestrial imitations. Some of the Pennsylvania boys do. If you would rather spend your time fishing than fly-tying, half a dozen terrestrials should do the job, and black is the best bet for three or four of them.

* * * * *

Now, as to materials for the flies: There are some peculiarities about black imitations. The basic point is that the "color" black is not really a color at all, but rather the absence of all color. Or, if you prefer, it is an achromatic color, lacking all of the hues of the spectrum. What this means for fly-tyers is that no fussy blending or dyeing is needed to get exact hues. You cannot worry about matching a hue that does not exist. Questions of color intensity (saturation) also cannot arise.

What remains to be considered is the value of a given black: in other words, whether it is really black or merely dark grey. (Please excuse these technicalities. They don't hurt for long, and they combat the syndrome known as Fly-Tyer's Futile Fiddling.) Philosophically, there is a difference between black and dark grey. Piscatorially, the trout don't give a damn. Or so it seems to me. Maybe it's because true blacks are scarce in nature when you look close enough. They are certainly scarce in natural materials for small flies: the blackest of animals seem to have underfur

that is only dark grey. The blackest hackle I have seen is the crest plume of a lapwing -- a traditional feather, but not one that just every local fly-fishing shop has for sale these days. I have some because lapwings are legal game in Portugal, where I am stationed these days. But mostly I use natural black rooster hackles. They are more expensive than dyed hackles and "less black", but they are more durable and pleasant to use.

Since we are dealing with a "color" that is easy to imitate, we can concentrate on other features: The shape of our flies, for example, and their texture and sheen. Terrestrial insects often have harder and more distinctive shapes than aquatics.

Trout seem to recognize the silhouette of ants as easily as we do. Above all, then, our artificial ants need to display front and back lumps, with a clear waist in between. It is my impression that the lumps need not be perfectly shaped to trigger trout recognition. The ant chosen by Aldam a century ago looks much like today's Royal Coachman. Vince Marinaro improved dry ants when he moved

the hackle back between the lumps, supporting the heavy bend of the hook better. (Be careful, though, not to use so much hackle as to fill up the waist.) No one has made any major changes since, but specific body materials are worth considering.

Marinaro originally recommended black horsehair (or golden-brown hairs for a cinnamon ant). This material has good sheen and color, but the right shape is difficult to achieve. (The hair slips.) On the smallest ants -- say, size 24 to 28 in Mustad hooks -- waxed black thread is a fair substitute, though it is still slippery. For me, extra-fine dubbing is easier to handle. The trout seem to like it too.

Size 18 and 20 hooks (Mustad sizes) are usually more practical. The larger gape hooks reliably, yet the ant still ties up in a size small enough to fish well in thin August water. In these medium sizes, dubbing is certainly the easiest material to use. But the dubbing still has to be fine to produce a sharp outline. Dyed black beaver underfur is easy to get and fairly good. There is an alter-

native which seems unknown in America: crow herls. Strip a few fibers from a large wing feather, combine them with a piece of heavy, waxed black thread, spin them together, and wind the lump. The color will be dark grey. And you always thought the crow was a black bird, didn't you?

For ants of about size 18 or larger, there is also an interesting natural-black dubbing. It comes from the tips of the ears of the European hare. (Some have a fair bit of black and some don't.) This also comes out as a dark grey. It is a more attractive material than the limp dyed fur, with just the right length and texture. It will make a distinct lump, but there will be lots of fine ends available to catch air bubbles and make light patterns. I wish I could find a fur this good for the smaller ants. Maybe you know of one. European hare will never catch on for the professionals, as each animal will tie only a couple of dozen small ants.

For the biggest ants -- say Mustad sizes 16, 14 and even larger -- it is possible to use black seal's fur, like the stuff of old salmon flies. Though dyed, it is unparalleled

in sheen and texture. The lumps will be obvious (but not neat), and the fly will fish well. Probably peacock herl would be as good.

From a fisherman's point of view, all of these ants are really the same fly. All represent the adults of closely related species. I don't even bother with wings, though perhaps I would if I encountered more swarms on the water. Color, of course, can be changed from black to cinnamon.

Black Gnats imitate a wider range of insects, both terrestrial and aquatic, so more variations are needed. A couple of them will at least serve for starters, and to illustrate the uses of black materials. In the smallest sizes -- say size 20 and 22 Mustad hooks, for Reed Smuts and little Empids -- a simple hackle fly may be the most practical. A crow-herl body is easy and effective. A black cock's hackle is almost the only thing small enough. For 18's and perhaps even 20's, the best of all may be that lapwing crest. Shiny starling body feathers are also traditional and easier to get, but their fibers do not look as much like shiny black legs.

There is a variation which is easy enough to tie in the larger sizes, rather fussy in the small sizes, and very effective. It is just our usual spent spinner, with hackle flattened in bunches at the sides, but with the addition of a short wing protruding back from the thorax. The wing should lie flat along the abdomen, of course. The fly has a tendency to float on the wing, abdomen under water. Trout taking hatching midge pupae will therefore take this fly well, if you can tie it small enough. I like a crowherl abdomen and a hare's-ear-tip thorax. The best-looking wing is from fibers of a shiny dark-blue-dun hackle, trimmed to shape. You should make up a few of these flies. Try a couple in green-olive while you're at it.

Finally, there's that wet-fly for your dropper. Without a floss body, it's no longer a Black Pennell. Let's call it the Fancy Black -- really a description, not a name. The size is bigger than the imitative dry flies we have been discussing, but a lot smaller than the usual minnow-imitating "fly" dragged in front of big browns. (If they grew up in lakes, they may not be as "cannibalistic" as their reputation.) A size 12 or 10 single hook will do the job. My preference,

however, is for a size 10 Partridge double. This is a smaller hook than you would think from the printed sizes, but it holds well and may hook a little better than the single. The small points are hidden in the thick dressing, so that your fly will look good even if it fails to swim upright. Droppers do funny things.

The Fancy Black is just a straightforward hackle fly, but with materials chosen for maximum translucence and brilliance. Start by tying in a piece of medium oval silver tinsel at the bend. (The new mylar may keep its shine longer.) Spin a thick body, tapering larger at the front, of real black seal's fur. Wind the tinsel in the opposite direction to secure the body better. Then pick out plenty of loose ends of seal's fur through the wraps of ribbing. Finally, wind two of the shiniest natural-black hackles you can find at the head. They should be of conventional size and wound bright-side-forward.

Judging from results, this thing must look pretty good to the trout, whatever it is. Try bobbing it along the surface occasionally, using the two lower flies on

your leader as an anchor. The dropper strands should be short. A long rod helps. This fishing is more fun than streamer-drifting: on a day when trout make the occasional boil behind a bobbing fly, the old hormones really get moving. When fish are sluggish, the fly works also well fished fairly deep in rivers.

No fly guarantees success. Black ones at least work with the odds.

Photo Captions

Title of story: BLACK

Author: Datus C. Proper

- 1) A fall of black ants helped this six-year-old catch his first trout (and here a grayling) on a dry fly.
- 2) Big browns don't always want big flies. This one passed up a stonefly nymph for a "Fancy Black" on the dropper.
- 3) Size 20 ant with beaver dubbing.
- 4) Size 16 ant with hare's-ear-tip dubbing.
- 5) Size 14 ant with seal's-fur dubbing.
- 6) Black gnat with lapwing hackle, crow-herl body.
- 7) Black gnat with hackle-tip wing, crow-herl abdomen, hare's-ear thorax, and "spent" hackle.
- 8) The Fancy Black.

Blue Crane (S. african Native Bird)
from Ed Herbst.

for Black article.

looks better than crow



Selectivity II

Demolish the "presentation or imitation" debate this way.

Every modelist knows that he must always remember which character he is speaking for, & maintain a consistent in-character viewpoint.

When we address selectivity, the trout is always speaking. No one else can make the selection for him.

Now: suppose the trout sees ~~a fly~~ that a fly is well tied, of the correct pattern, and perfectly presented. Will he take it? If you answered yes, you missed the point. Trout won't take any artificial. If he sees that it's presented at all, he won't take it.

What trout can see is fly behavior - which includes presentation and design.

From trout's point of view, everything is imitation.

Selectivity to Color (?)

ask Bachman about a stream where trout were
fed mealworms + became confused when ^{color?} legs were
changed. ~~Spence~~ back had artificial stream?

Selectivity II

2 kinds of selectivity:

- Efficiency (cite the kokoiwas)
- An acquired response to earlier negative stimuli. (cite the Rye water fish).

Why are some trout more selective?

- "Natural" selection -- by humans -- over many generations. Brown in Europe. Same thing happening to brookies in Shenandoah park.

- Lack of competition. e.g., cutts in Yellowstone before & after fish-for-fun.

(-- But the genetic capacity for selectivity has to be there. Most fish other than trout never learn this defense mechanism.)

Selectivity & Wariness.

Both are defense mechanisms, & one can substitute for the other, to some extent. John Kings thinks trout are either selective or wary (Phoupsin).

Sections on flies + tackle
prompt from Shenandoah Park / steep headwaters story.

Could do a story on
flies + tackle for small streams.
"let fishing"

Flies

Now, as to flies, it should be said at the outset that anything plausible will usually work on the steep water. Fly-fishermen love flies and ^{love} spinning ~~the~~ intricate webs of philosophy ~~on the headwaters~~ webs about them, but here you do it ~~xx~~ for ~~love~~ and not because you have to.

To keep myself honest I do kill a trout now and again for a stomach check.

What they have in them is everything: salamanders, small trout, minnows, ^{am?} crayfish, ~~to start with the big stuff.~~ ^{Insects are more common:} ~~big~~ stonefly nymphs, a few adult stoneflies, ^a lot of beetles of many kinds, ~~fewer~~

~~ant~~ ants late in the season, bees, diptera of the housefly type, ^{butterflies,} mayfly nymphs, a few sedges, caddis larve, and you name it. Just occasionally

in the early season, there will be a number of ~~xxx~~ adult mayflies (often

Quill Gordons in Shanandoah Park) or black gnats. The mayflies will ~~create~~ ^{fast} stir up

~~fabulous~~ ^{seldom} ~~ix~~ fishing but will ~~not~~ cause a selective rise. Black gnats (mostly

[?] Simuliidae, I think) will cause fair fishing and will come as close as anything I know to creating a selective rise in these little streams. If you

gently
see a good fish rising on a black-gnat day, by all means use the best little imitation you have on a fine tippet.

For the most part, I use general flies which ~~have the same three~~ are, however, tied to be:

- visible,
- ~~high~~ collapsible, and
- ~~float~~ floatable. [good floaters.]

The visibility part may be the most important. ^{The shade makes} These are small, dark streams; and though the trout will take small, ^{dark flies as well} ~~flies~~ as well as anything else, you ^{may} ~~will~~ not see ^{disappear} them. It will also be hard to see whether the fly is dragging.

Thin wings of white calf-tail are the best ~~thing~~ I have ever found for visibility. They have a ~~xxx~~ unique sheen, ^{and by here} Coming next are white calf body-hair, and pale hackle tips, /white poly yarn. The synthetic yarn is ^{much} easier to ^{use} tie but loses its shape ^{and sheen} quickly.

These materials, tied sparsely, are also collapsible. That is important for small, shy trout, ~~especially~~ in the late season. I cannot think of a natural fly that has a long, stiff tail or a high, stiff wing. Trout ^{get} ~~are~~ used to sipping the naturals, ^{and} ~~and these shy little trout~~ may reject anything that ^{unnaturally} ~~snags~~ on the way in. Anglers ^{they get "refusals,"} ~~may~~ normally change to a smaller fly when ~~that happens~~ but you can often stay with a ~~xx~~ large hook if you eliminate the ^{protrusions} ~~extraneous~~. Deer hair in tails and in upright wings seems to ^{be an offender} ~~cause a portion of missed rises~~. If tied low along the body, sedge-style, deer hair is all right.

The flies ^{should float dependably but} need not ~~stay~~ float ^{ride} very high, ~~if they stay where they~~ but they should stay high enough to be seen. I^N early season, ~~like~~ upright wings ^{provide} ~~for~~ ^{the best} visibility, and they float the fly ^{well} ~~better~~ if tied in a broad Vee. If the fly also has a Vee-tail of hackle fibers, it almost has to land upright and float ^{squarely} ~~level~~. The tail and wings wedge it into ~~the right position~~ a poised position.

The ~~xx~~ patterns used matter less than these principles of architecture.

In the very early season, ~~xxxxxxx~~^a~~quill~~ body of stripped peacock quill always seems to ^{perhaps} works well, because ~~ixx~~ it resembles that of ~~anyxmayflyixxxxxixxlikelyixxixxxxx~~
~~xxxxxxx~~ Quill Gordon and [?] duns. Soon the beetles get moving, and from that time on nothing ~~xxxxxxxixxx~~ works any better than thick, unstripped peacock herl. Trout seem to have a special fondness for it. It must look like something, and beetles have been ~~ixxx~~ the logical guess ^{by} authors over the last couple of hundred years.

Great!
The following ^{dry flies} flies, then, are my proposal, beginning with the early season and moving to the end~~ix~~. All ~~xxxxxxixxxixxxxxixxx~~ hackles of a bright natural ~~red~~ red (which by no coincidence ^{is} the ^{color} cheapest available).

- Quill body, white Vee-Wing, ^{full-circle} ~~full-circle~~ hackle, ^{vee} ~~vee~~-tail.
- Herl body, ^{short} ~~same wing~~ otherwise the same.
- Herl body, white calf-tail wing tied flat along the top of the body. Tail not essential.

- Herl body, short stub of fluorescent red floss for wing, outrigger legs of hackle fiber along the sides of the body. The [?]outriggers are Leonard Wright's idea, ~~and~~ they make a very small fly that ~~still~~ floats ^{and is collapsible.} well. Hook on this one is about size 18 ~~ix~~ Mustad ~~xx~~ or 15 Partridge.

- Small black gnats and ants.

These dry flies are all easy to tie, because I have to tie them. Non-flyers need not be depressed. ^{Coachman} ~~Six~~ Smallish Royal Coachman, ~~plain coachman~~, and Adams will work fine. The Coachman's plain and fancy should have a ~~xxxxix~~ calf wing (not deer); the grizzly hackle-tips on the Adams ~~xxxxxxxixxxixxxxx~~ are visible enough under most conditions.

Just mm. long,
In early spring, you need a nymph: almost any old nymph, ~~but not too small,~~ and with a little bit of lead under the wrappings. A peacock or hare's-ear body always seems to be good enough. The nymph is ~~much~~ easier to fish than the dry fly, since ~~a slight (and sometimes a great)~~ drag does not worry trout under ^{so much}

(catch more fish on nymphs)

big in dries - can fish them more carefully, drag line.

water. ~~It is more difficult to hook trout with a nymph, since the take is rarely visible. The concentration required is about the same.~~

~~One way to fish is the occasional one in early spring when you can fish downstream with a nymph -- or a wet fly or streamer -- Then trout may hook themselves. But they at the end of a long line. ~~They will rarely take it as well as they will in upstream fishing.~~~~

If there are any of the bigger rainbows or browns in the water, they may well prefer the nymph. ~~Sometimes the brook trout will take the dry fly, even when the water temperature is 39° in March and there is ice on the logs. When the water drops, the dry fly seems to be distinctly better. For one thing, it is certainly easier to present gently at a distance.~~

~~re dry flies~~
In addition, those stomach samples ~~presented~~ contain a lot of floating flies. It figures. As the season advances a large part of the available food comes in the form of terrestrial insects. Though not infertile, these streams are a small environment compared to the acres of trees that surround them -- and produce insects. Some biologist years ago found that trout took ninety percent of their food from the bottom, or some such figure. It must have been true when and where he took his sample. The figure has appeared in a lot of articles since then. In my headwaters during the trout season, stomach samples tell a different story.

✓ Bachman ~~found~~ came to a similar conclusion in a detailed survey of Spruce Creek, which is a fertile spring creek -- and might have ~~than the steep headwaters. Bachman found, however, that~~ been expected to contain more aquatic insects. In addition, Bachman concluded that trout ~~have~~ find it much easier to locate floating flies than underwater food. (Trout magazine, .) One Colonel ^{F.W.} Harding came to a similar conclusion in England in ~~I did not pay much attention until Bachman confirmed it.~~ but without scientific confirmation.

Tackle

(To match the tackle,)
As to tackle, ^{the gear} the less of it the better: ~~xxxxxx~~ remember the hike. ^{Only} And it need not be very expensive. ~~But~~ one item is critical: the soles of your shoes. Unless you like skating better than I, a non-slip substance is recommended. Carpet and felt work ~~xx~~ well and make less noise than hobnails or chains. Wading wet is comfortable in late season. I, ^{the spring,} or if you really dislike ^{copperheads,} ~~snakes,~~ boots are recommended. Ben ~~Schley~~ ^{Schley} used to wade wet even in April, when the water temperature ^{was} ~~is~~ in the low forties. Not me. I ~~xx~~ can get an ache in my knees just by riding my bike on a cold day without leg-warmers.

From water-line up, the idea is to look like ^{a chestnut oak,} ~~a Hemlock tree,~~ or maybe ~~after~~ a fern if your tastes run in that direction. My wife has a special dispensation ^{+ red shirts.} to wear white jeans. I think they scare the trout, but they look fetching.

Rods, now, ~~xxxxxxwherefishermenxxx~~ make some fishermen all ~~weak-xxxxxx~~ ^{knobby} trembly. Even more than wet white jeans. In an open stream of any size, you can use a brand-new graphite rod, at least nine feet long, with a ^{a tiger-maple} ~~xxxx~~ real-seat and your initials carved on the butt (the rod's, not yours). In a ~~xxxxclosed~~ tree-tunnel like the ones I fish around here, graphite has its shortcomings. One is its way of breaking when the thin tube takes a thin nick. Fiberglass and cane ~~do not do that xxxxxxxx handle the brush better xxx~~ do not share this weakness.

Nor are they as likely to explode when they wiggled in a fast cycle with no line-
We have
load. ~~xxxxxx~~ to do that in the brush.

^{A slow old rod}
^(rod)
Fiberglass ^{is} ~~is~~ doubtless the most practical, and on short casts it has a soft, pleasant syble. I use an eight-foot bamboo ~~xxxxxxstillxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ with three tips, and so far I am still on number one. Bamboo has enough weight to load itself, and it too feels good on the short casts. ^{Eight feet} ~~is about the greatest length I can swing in the trees.~~

My only patent is ~~xxxx~~ a small circle of cork which is glued on the end of the butt, right over your ~~initials~~ sterling-silver initials. The trade-off is worthwhile. The trout cannot read your initials anyhow, unless he gets within three feet, and the cork makes the world's best hook keeper. Its ~~advantage~~ ~~xxxx~~

flattens the hackle on the bottom of your fly so that it will float better. More important, the cork keeps ~~almost~~ a foot of extra line outside your guides (compared to a keeper at the front of the handle). This helps to get ~~back in action~~ ~~fast~~ the line back in action quickly when you reach a new pool. You know how a short section of fine line, let alone leader, always gets ~~wound~~ itself ~~wound~~ wound around the ~~tip~~ rod's tip.

~~Of~~ Of course, you will also help by using a short leader. Six or seven ^(of more moment) feet is plenty in the brush, ^{as} long as half of it is in fine material. ^(and) Fifteen-heaviest sections.

thousandths of an inch is thick enough even for the ~~but~~ ~~long~~ ~~heavy~~ ~~butted~~ ~~leadery~~ ~~you~~ ~~use~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~big~~ ~~river~~, long,

④ Think of the ~~long~~ ~~but~~ ~~long~~ ~~heavy~~ ~~butted~~ leaderyou use on the big river, and then do everything ^{the other way around.} ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~way~~. The formula does not matter much ~~if~~ if ^{just} you adjust the tippet to match your fly. ^{just} long enough to provide lots of ^{curves} waves, thereby delaying drag, but ^{just} short enough to avoid wild-knots. Fly-fishermen make ^{gainful} Fly-fishing is one compromise after another, ~~unlike~~ ~~your~~ ~~other~~ ~~occupations~~ ~~just~~ like ~~the~~ ~~rest~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~politics~~ ~~other~~ politicians.

The point ~~is~~ ~~that~~ ~~nylon~~ ~~is~~ ~~too~~ ~~light~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~of~~ ~~much~~ help in casting, so it has to ^{be kept short enough to} ~~move over~~ and leave plenty of room for the ~~heavy~~ heavy line. A short leader and a ^{slow} ~~self~~ ~~loading~~ rod can make casting almost a pleasure, even when ^{the tempo} ~~it~~ is twenty-five feet ^{away} through the trees and over a boulder.

Well, ~~the~~ ~~leader~~ comparatively heavy. On an open river a ~~number~~ ~~four~~ ~~weight~~ line is a pleasure for upstream fishing. In the brush, the same rod loads better with a five-weight. Even a six lands quietly enough when the water is high.

^{But a line} Heavier than that, ^{six-weight} and the line might frighten trout on the long casts. ~~No line~~ ^{if you fail to land} will frighten trout when ~~it~~ ~~all~~ ~~of~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~on~~ ~~top~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~boulder~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~roll~~ ~~and~~ ~~rock~~ ~~cast~~.

A ^{ON} ~~really~~ long leader has a miserable way of letting your line slide backwards through your guides and land in a pile at your feet, just when you are trying not to frighten a trout feeding eight feet away. ^{under your elbow.}

There is one helpful gadget which can be added
to any brush rod: a small circle of cork glued to
the butt-cap.

^{the gear}
The rest of it is sparse: ~~some flies in a plastic box, xx floatant,~~
^{a fly-}
spare leader material, a knife, and oddments. ^{also the} It would really fit in my
in
pockets instead of the ~~xxxxx~~ cool, green, fish-net vest, which only
my wife ~~xx~~ refers to as a see-through. A ~~wisxxxx~~ long-billed cap and polarized
clip-on glasses are almost as useful as felt soles. ^{show} ~~if the weather is what it was~~
~~xxxxrainxxxxspringx~~
^{every weekend in the spring of 1983,}
~~xxxxdidxxxxeveryxxxxxx~~ for ~~straight trips this spring,~~ a raincoat is
handy~~xxx~~ worth its weight in boron fly-rods. All raincoats should be
either very short, for use with high waders; ~~xxxxveryxxxxxx~~ or medium long,
for use with hip-boots in the brush. All ~~waderxxxxxx~~ raincoats you can actually
buy when you need one are ~~xxx~~ medium-short so that they can funnel ~~all~~ the water
^{inside}
down your hipers.

^{use}
[Finally you want a car that lets you ~~xxxxxxx~~ ^{use} either foot on the
accelerator pedal. This is important because aerobic fishing ^{results in leg-} always ~~gives you~~
^{Otherwise you are not doing something right.}
cramps on the long drive back home; ^{After a really good day you can even achieve}
toe-cramps. ^{may} You have to stop the car ~~ix~~ and hop in circles around it, straightening
out the afflicted limb and alternately cussing and grinning. When you do
get home you sleep well. ~~Between cramps.~~ ^{and you will still hear}
rock music, ^{between cramps.}]

About ???? words

Simple

Fishy

Datus Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, MT 59714
(406) 388-3345

KEEP IT SIMPLE

The less you fiddle,
the better you fish.

You are ready for this when a member of your family calls from the car to ask if you're through fishing yet, and you haven't started. You jumped out of bed early, loaded the minivan, drove two hours, strung up your rod, rebuilt your leader, tied on a fly, and sneaked up on a trout. With time enough and luck, you might have caught it before your gallery wanted lunch.

I shall provide expert advice on dealing with this problem, because it is the only problem in the world on which I am an expert. Witness my rucksack. The whole of my equipment fits into it and can be hiked upstream, beyond hearing range, within two minutes.

The problem (say I, with authority) is not that you have too much tackle. You're just mixing it with too much water. You fell for the widespread assumption that fishing tackle is for fishing. This may be true of spinning and bait-casting tackle. Fly-fishing

equipment, on the other hand, is for buying, selling, trading, auctioning, collecting, debating, creating ambiance, developing fine motor coordination, and avoiding work that might contribute to the gross national product.

That's during the off-season, however. For actual fishing (in water), tackle is best when it is least. Stuff most of it into a closet until the next technical season. Leave out just two active-duty rods -- one for fishing and other for when you break the first, which may not take long if you fish in brush with an ultra-fine graphite tip.

The rod is not the most important item of tackle, mind you. It's just the first, because you need it when you go shopping for a vehicle into which the rod will fit -- full length. A quick-draw rod can give you an extra half-hour of fishing each day: fifteen minutes getting set up and fifteen taking rod, reel, and terminal tackle apart, then looking for the containers in which they fit.

The third item of tackle is the vest, and the hard part is finding one without too many pockets. Nature abhors an empty pocket.

I had a vest custom-made. It started with a nylon mesh shell, to which were added enough pockets for two fly boxes, some loose spools of leader material, a clipper, and very little more. This vest pulls the pointer down to [], fully loaded. The scale is the same one I use for fish, so you may have confidence that the weight is not understated.

With luck, your rod, car, and vest will never get close to the trout. (If they do, check to see whether you have fallen in.) With waders, however, we are getting to the important stuff. The bad thing about waders is that they smell like you. The good thing is that it's no coincidence. You use waders. In the 500-year history of angling as we know it, no one has ever made a wader collection.

I recommend nice, thick, hot neoprene waders for unmarried anglers, who have too much time for mischief anyhow. It does them good to spend a few minutes changing into special pants, sprinkling talcum on them, easing the waders up, pulling gaiters over feet, lacing on separate wading shoes, and fastening the gaiters over the shoes. Opera singers go to just as much trouble with their costumes and they don't even have to walk on algae.

For me, however, the best waders come with boots attached. The trick is to avoid the molded plastic kind, which come with square feet and no ankles. Hand-formed rubber hip-boots are made for walking. If equipped with felt soles, they will also keep you upright on slippery rocks. You won't have to run back to the car to change into dry clothes and learn that the kid has picked Saturday to come down with appendicitis.

Simplicity gets you beyond the crowd. You stop peering into faces and pockets and boxes. You start looking through the surface, into the place where the trout lives. It's a private act, conversation without words.

You get beyond this century, too. The intensity peels you

back. What you see, you want. You cease being an aesthete. You become a hunter.

This century has been the most savage in history, if you see through the surface to what we actually did, and the most peaceful if you listen to our intentions. We've been in denial.

Fishing has always been a kind of hunting

Fishing is more fun than fiddling

[One of my favorite people made it to Falling Springs Creek every weekend with the stuff that dreams are made of. He had a stack of tubes with rods in them, hand-made reels in leather cases, fly-tying materials in a varnished chest, and a leather-bound canvas case for the fly-boxes that would not fit in his vest. The rest of us would drop by for a visit. We'd drink coffee, have a tackle-show, and do some casting practice. Our host was a happy man because he had learned what he enjoyed doing: tackle-collecting.]

I have been happier myself since learning what does me good. In my case, however, the best part is fishing -- at least when the weather is good -- and the simpler my gear gets, the more time there is for trout.]

Till then, forget about casting and entomology and all other trivia that fascinate and terrify. Most of it isn't for the fish. It's for the angler.

The problem at core is that the world is too much with you. You tried to escape the workplace but brought along enough equipment to provide another set of problems.

[If your spouse objects, here is the clinching argument: a vehicle that will accept a nine-foot rod will also be long enough to accommodate the dog's cage behind the kid's row of seats. You can thereby take the whole household on your fishing trips: spouse, kids, dog, and fishing rod. And with the rod all set up, you can be hidden in the brush before anyone misses you.]

My wife finishes her novel while I'm still sitting on the tailgate, getting corseted up.

This is about fishing, not sports cars, which I used extensively before concluding that fishing was more fun.

The line is different. [Suppose you want to cast small, insect-imitating flies (dry, wet, or nymph) so that they drift down the current naturally. Some of your casts will be upstream over the fish. The tip of the line may drop right on top of the trout. A 4-weight line is a good choice, landing lightly and casting well, even into a moderate wind.

There is a method that is radically different, even though it too is called fly-fishing. You cast cross-stream, or across-and-down. You let the current catch your line and swing your fly over the trout. This is the usual method for minnow imitations -- streamers and such. These big flies are easier to cast with a 6-, or even 7-weight line.] On upstream casts, the line may land right on top of the trout. A 3- or 4-weight double-taper will at least land lightly. On the other hand, a heavier 5-, 6-, or 7 weight will do a better job of casting a big streamer downstream. My graphite rods will generally handle two or three lines sizes, but it saves time to carry two rods all rigged up to handle light and heavy fishing.

You can buy every other item of tackle, but ready-made leaders are seldom right to begin with, and even if they are, repairs and alterations are soon needed. You know how to make them if you tie your own leader to begin with.

Tackle is ideal as an excuse for retreating to the basement and closing the door.

[The fine-tipped, stiff-butted rods are splendid tools, mind you, for casting.

Casting is a great sport that I mean to learn one day. Meanwhile, most of my fishing is in streams where casts over forty feet spook [] more trout than they catch. A rod that is slow in action, as graphite goes, makes the timing of short casts easier, improving accuracy. Such rods always have thin butts. The tips, while not thick, are sturdy enough to survive the occasional whack against trees.]

[Nine feet is as good a length as any, for casting, and better than anything shorter for holding the heavy part of a line off the water, thereby improving the fly's drift. You might prefer a rod as short as 7½ feet, however, if you live where the trout streams are three feet wide and overhung by brush.]

For that matter, our graphite rods still come with reel seats of cocobolo wood from Central America. We make such gestures to show that we feel badly about what happened to rods made of bamboo from China.

There is, however, no way to avoid streamside fiddling with the leader. It is the single most troublesome piece of tackle. A guide who has seen everything tells me that some of his clients have hundreds of flies but cannot tie one of them on in less than five minutes. To such an angler, some knot-tying practice in winter could be worth more a battery of new rods.

You want a vehicle in which the rod of your choice will fit when fully assembled.

Most fly-fishers [] still dismantle their rods and stow them in attractive aluminum cases with brass caps. We had to do this, in the days of bamboo, but the

An ancient Ford Fairmont wagon, for example, can accept a nine-foot rod between the seats. An Isuzu Trooper has space beside the seats, on the side where my wife slips in. The Ford Explorer would fit any rod that either of us could lift with one hand.

-- mainly a toolbox for repairing other stuff.

when each of them is filled with gear, thirty-two pockets make you look like the tenor in the last act.

Dry flies -

Why they work

Why they ⁺ fascinate.

See diary of May 2, 1986 (Rose River?)
+ 3