

# RISEFORMS

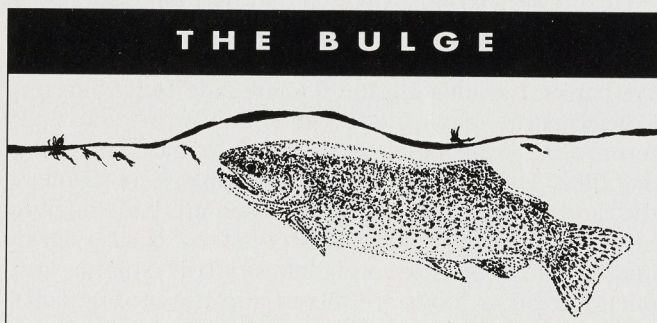
E. NEALE STREEKS

**R**ISING TROUT HAVE INTRIGUED ANGLERS for centuries, turning peaceful rivers into strategic fields of quiet battle. Even in medieval days streamside figures were studying trout, refining gear, and conjuring fly patterns to meet hatches. Associating riseforms to hatches became part of this game.

Today many of us seem to spend more time fussing over an endless array of equipment rather than studying trout behavior. But the trout still give themselves away to those of us who observe.

## Trout Personalities

BEFORE GOING MUCH FURTHER, remember that all trout don't act the same. Riseforms to the same hatch can differ from fish to fish and river to river. Wilderness trout are less suspicious than urban trout. Fastwater fish are swifter risers than spring-creek fish. On some rivers trout porpoise routinely, while on others they seldom do. You must study every river as a separate entity, not applying regional rules across the country or to rivers on other continents. Of course, there will be similarities, but the angler who has learned to make thoughtful observation a habit will always be the most adaptive and usually the most successful.

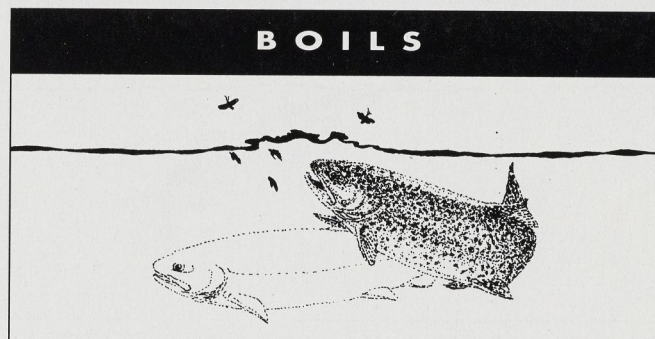


A "BULGE" RESULTS FROM TROUT taking subsurface insects and disturbing the water above in a manner visible to the angler. The trout are primarily intercepting small emerg-

ing aquatic insects. Quiet, steady bulges usually show that trout are taking either mayfly nymphs or midge pupae just before the insects reach the surface to hatch. Look closely at the water for mayfly duns or midge adults to confirm the situation. There could be both.

Your first fly choice should be small nymphs fished just under the surface with a dead-drift presentation. Often fly size is the most important factor to success. You should always carry some #16 to #24 nymphs. These should include midge pupae, streamlined mayfly nymphs, and small caddis emergers fished on 5X to 7X tippet. They can be fished alone, with a strike indicator, or on a two-fly system. (Use a tiny inconspicuous dry fly for a strike indicator, with a nymph trailing 8 to 14 inches below.) Takes will be subtle, so pay attention and strike lightly with the fine tippet. If a dead-drift doesn't get their attention, try a slow swing or lift, adding upward movement to your fly.

More erratic and lively bulges should be treated as "boils."



BOILS ALSO SHOW that trout are feeding just beneath the surface. Some of these will be quite violent and erratic, proving that the fish are making more determined lunges for larger and more active food items compared to those in a bulge. The insects might be large mayfly emergers that quickly take flight when they hatch. (As opposed to mayflies that ride on the surface a long time before taking flight.)

Boils also occur during caddis emergences. Since most caddis are quick to fly off from the surface when hatching, trout commonly go for the subsurface emergers. On late-summer evenings this can be expected. Watch for the flies that are taking off before you make your determination. This can be difficult at times, due to the speed with which some caddis species fly off, but you should be able to see whether they are mayflies or caddis. A steady series of boils indicates a hatch, while isolated boils usually show a fish chasing a single large food item.

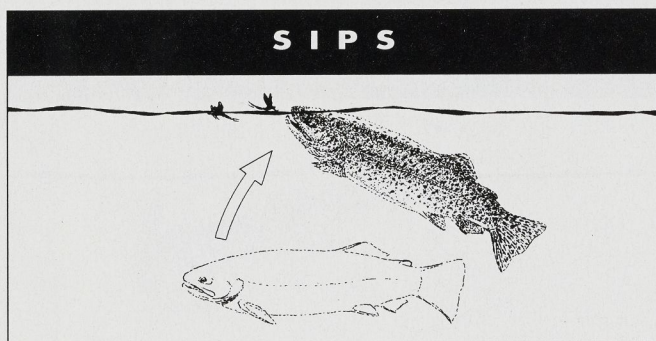
Boils indicate emergers. Soft-hackled patterns are proven takers of fish, as are antron or sparkle emergers. Often a down-and-across presentation will work better than a dead-drift. Fly movement can trigger strikes. Flies will commonly be in the #12 to #18 size range. It's

*Learning to recognize the riseforms that trout make to different foods can help you to quickly choose an appropriate fly to match the hatch. E. Neale Streeks photo. Rod Walinchus illustrations.*

## TROUT GIVE THEMSELVES AWAY TO THOSE OF US WHO OBSERVE.

sometimes wise to go with a slightly stronger tippet in such cases, as the takes can be swift and strong. If you were using a 5X for dry-fly work, you may want to go to a 4X for swinging emergers across the currents. The fish may become bold when they are feeding on emergers during a profuse hatch; they lose caution and boil within ten feet of you. The fly pattern needed can be annoyingly critical at times. Check with local fly shops to learn the hatches and times. But the information only goes so far onstream if you don't have the right patterns for the emergence.

Boils are also seen when fish chase damselfly emergers and minnows. Both fish foods are swimmers, and some wild feeding displays are seen from time to time. If you are fishing lakes, you should always carry damsel nymphs; streamer patterns should be on hand for river fishing.

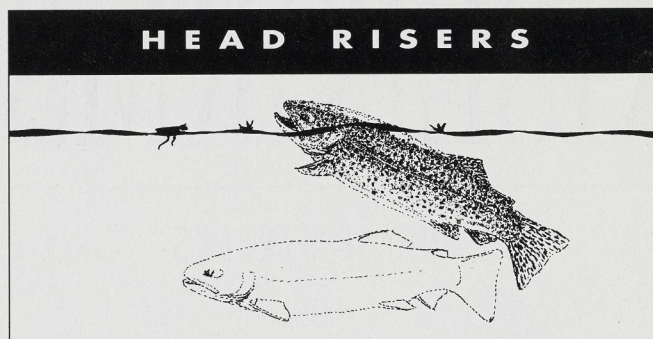


AGAIN I STRESS that trout in different rivers can make varying riseforms to the same hatch. This is very true of "sips." A sipping trout, or sipper, in one river might be a porpoising trout in another. For the most part, though, sips usually occur when trout are feeding on small surface flies and slower emergers in the surface film. This includes midges, small mayfly duns and spinners, and ants, especially when they are present in sparse to moderate numbers. (Large quantities of insects, or blanket hatches, often lead fish into more energized feeding, which we'll discuss shortly.)

When you find sipping trout, expect them to be more cautious and easily scared than either boiling trout or steadily rising fish. Approach quietly and check the surface for evidence. A long light leader and tippet will likely be needed; it should taper down to 5X to 7X. If you can't determine what the fish are eating, try a midge dry, floating midge pupa or mayfly nymph, or small mayfly dun or spinner. Beetles and ants are good choices, too. Take your time. *Cast quietly and infrequently.* Change patterns quickly upon a refusal. Many sipping trout will be found in quiet edgewater, pools, and eddies, where such caution is most important, as the fish are keeping an eye out for danger. But they can also be found in swifter currents, where spent-wings are often the targets.

If the trout sip steadily, you can usually approach them more closely. Steadily feeding fish are less spooky and quicker to return to feeding after a fright. Hatch-

matching patterns will probably be needed. Very large trout can sip without making much surface disturbance, too. Yet on some rivers during a hatch sippers might denote smaller fish, while the larger specimens porpoise or make "head rises."



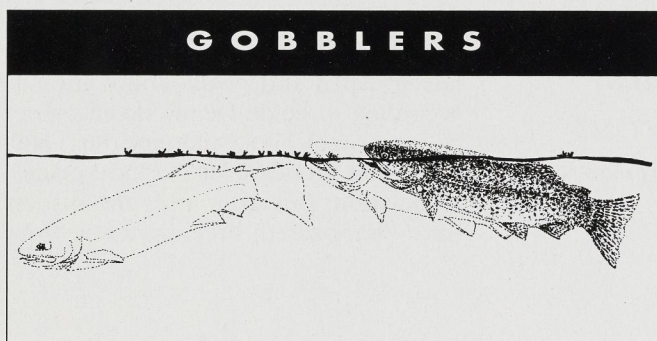
IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY, you can often see a trout's nose or entire head protrude from the surface when it rises. This is called a "head rise." It is common, though anglers with poor eyesight have difficulty seeing it. Head risers are almost always rising to surface food, be it a Trico spinner or a hopper. And they are generally large mature fish. Small trout sip or splash at the same food items. The trout fins just beneath the surface, angling its head up and out of the water in a capturing motion. It doesn't clamp down its jaws on the meal either. Instead, the water passing through just filters the flies into its gullet, with the mouth opening and closing slowly. Big fish seem to make an art out of head rising with a smooth, slow, and graceful rhythm. This means that the larger the trout is, the longer you must wait to strike, for it takes the fish longer to settle back under water and close its mouth.

Most head risers encountered are fully engaged in a major hatch or spinner fall. Suspect mayflies or midges as a first choice. Head risers may be schooled up in an eddy line or scattered across a flats. They are thrilling to watch. Some fish won't be spooky, but they can be very choosy. Others will go down on the first bad cast. This is likely to be a match-the-hatch situation, though on unpressured waters they can be more gullible.

Head risers along banks can show more latitude in feeding attitudes. They see a variety of terrestrials plus hatches. On windy days food can be blown up against the banks, too, making the feeding lane rich in variety. Consequently, bank feeders may fall for attractor patterns, terrestrials, spent-wing flies, or hatch-matching dry flies. They are always exciting prospects. Some of the largest fish we catch each season are bank-hugging head risers. These tend to be brown trout caught during midday while they are eating leftover Trico spinners and whatever other foods are mixed into the feeding lanes. They've been fooled by everything from hoppers to Irresistibles to Parachute Adams to Tricos. Constant watching up and down the river banks can reveal such challenges. As with any riseform, you must find it first.

This takes time, practice, and patience.

Head risers are often confident feeders. While the proper caution should always be exercised, these trout sometimes allow you to approach closely and cast to them for long periods of time. The more food there is, the more they concentrate on feeding. A fish that is not feeding might scare with one cast, but the same fish may let 100 casts go overhead when a hatch is on. It is here that casting skill and your choice of fly pattern become crucial. The trout has established a feeding rhythm and must be intercepted by the right fly at the right moment. Repeated casting, perfect presentations, pattern changes, and steady head risers become the essence of this pure sport. When a hatch that causes head rising becomes thick enough, another feeding pattern prevails: "gobbling."

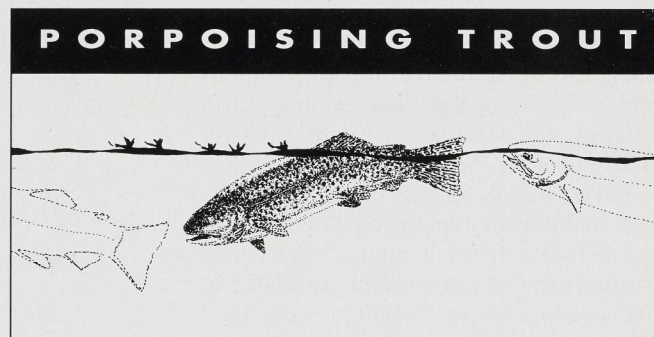


TO THOSE THAT HAVE NEVER witnessed this, it may sound facetious. But given enough surface fare—especially spinners—trout will gobble them up. A fish may head rise every second for, say, ten seconds, then stop to swallow the flies collected in its mouth. Then it will repeat the act. It is humorous to watch. Other fish may keep a steady pace of perhaps one rise every three seconds. A group of trout may rise and feast together, each with a different time signature. Not only can you see the fish doing this, but you can hear them, too—and from a distance. As the fish do their gobbling head rises, the roof of their mouth slaps down on the river's surface each time, making a minute little splash and plopping sound.

Rather than sipping the spent-wing flies, as might seem appropriate, gobbling trout continue head rising for long sessions. I know of some fish that keep it up much of the day all summer long. They make great targets but can be exceedingly picky and spooky. They return quickly to feeding, however, as they hate to miss a good meal. They often require exacting drag-free presentations, whether upstream or down-and-across with a slack-line reach cast.

When you see gobbling trout, you can assume they are taking spent mayflies, usually Tricos, in #18 to #28. Trout that have formed the gobbling habit might also be taking midges, *psuedocloeon*, *Baetis*, or other small flies that hatch in great numbers. Use long fine tippets down to 7X and expect to make repeated perfect casts, some 25 to 50 or more casts per take. Since the fish are feeding so steadily, you can carefully work yourself into a comfortably close casting position to work on them.

Their "window," or view of the upper world, is smaller in these situations (when they are hovering just beneath the surface), and their attentions are diverted to feeding. Even though they will move into calm shallows to feed, they tend to let their guard down when it comes to predators like birds and otter. Such is their desire for food. Gobblers are the most continuous and infatuating risers you will see.



PORPOISING TROUT are exciting to watch. Their head, back, fins, and tail are exposed in a slow parade. This can exaggerate their true size, and can inspire fishermen to new heights of concentration and perfection. Porpoising trout are often feeding on subsurface fare, as are bulging trout, but some will be taking both surface and subsurface food. The slower the porpoise, the smaller the food item is likely to be, and the sparser the hatch. The trout in some rivers, like the Bighorn, routinely porpoise to midge adults and mayfly duns, too.

As a general rule, porpoising trout should indicate the presence of slowly emerging, smaller flies. Midges are often the targets. A two-fly system that uses a small mayfly dun or Griffith's Gnat as a strike indicator and a midge pupa as a dropper is a good place to start. Use 5X to 7X tippet, with the #18 to #24 pupa trailing 8 to 12 inches below the #16 to #20 dry fly. In this way you can begin to determine what the trout is taking. If you repeatedly see a bubble left after a porpoising rise, or the trout's head protruding from the water, the trout is taking part of its meal from the surface. Whenever a trout rises, it usually leaves a bubble behind; air that is taken in during the rise escapes through the trout's gills as it descends. At this point you might just fish a small dry, although the two-fly setup can be more productive in the long run. If the fish never shows its head or leaves bubbles (showing just its back, fins, and tail), it's definitely on emergers.

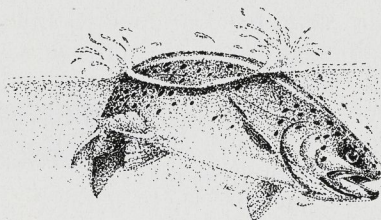
Porpoising trout can be selective. You'll want to have an array of midge pupae and adults to the smallest sizes, plus mayfly emergers and duns. Porpoising trout can feed on midges for long periods, especially early and late in the season. You can usually approach them closely and work on them for extended sessions. Look to calmer currents, edgewater, and eddies for such fish, especially in rich spring creeks and tailwater rivers. Since these are usually large mature trout, they're worth going out of your way to locate and pursue.

*Continued on page 82*

**A**LTHOUGH CICADAS HATCH in many locations throughout America, they seldom hatch under circumstances that provide ideal fly fishing: clear water, spring weather, and a river loaded with large trout. On the Green River immediately downstream from Flaming Gorge Dam in northeastern Utah these circumstances come together to provide some of the most exciting, challenging, and fascinating big-bug dry-fly fishing in North America.

Three kinds of big black bugs are seasonally available to the Green's surface-feeding trout. Cicadas create the spring flurry of excitement, and later in the season large dark crickets and grasshoppers provide more big-bug surface fishing.

Cicadas (Order: Homoptera) belong to the same family (Cicadidae) as their cousins the 13-year and 17-year locusts



*A special hatch  
that serves up  
Big Macs  
for big trout  
on Utah's  
Green River*

doesn't mean you can hook every trout that takes a swipe at your artificial cicada. Far from it. Although a fair percentage of the rises to cicadas are exuberant and splashy, as they sometimes are to giant stoneflies, more often the trout simply swirl at the insect and then take it in underwater, as they might a large caddis. This creates frustration among fishermen who can't get the hang of timing the hook-set correctly. Sometimes a splashy rise is an actual take and sometimes it isn't.

### Green River Seasons

THE GREEN'S CICADA HATCH usually starts late in April and peaks about June 1, according to guide Denny Breer, owner of Trout Creek Flies Outfitters, (801) 889-3735, and president of the local guides' association. But even after the insects have disappeared, Breer says, the trout

# CICADA MADNESS

REX GERLACH

common in the eastern United States. At the Green River cicadas lay their eggs in the twigs and stems of trees and shrubs along the river below Flaming Gorge Dam. (The gorge gets its name from crimson-colored, pre-Cambrian rock formations on its walls.)

After the eggs hatch, the young cicada nymphs drop to the ground and burrow into the soil until they reach plant roots, where they feed—for some species up to 17 years. After molting several times underground, the nymphs emerge from the ground and crawl up the trunks of trees, where they cast off their last nymphal skins and become adults. The adult insects produce distinctive singing mating sounds. After mating, the cicadas lay their eggs to repeat the life cycle.

While they are out and about, adult cicadas often fly, hop, drop, or are blown into the water. This stirs up the trout—and fly fishermen who are aware of the great dry-fly fishing that can result when conditions are right during this hatch. Some years the hatch is good; others it is not.

Trout go after cicadas with the same recklessness they do grasshoppers and large caddisflies. But that

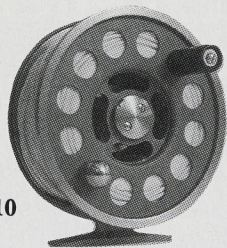
continue to hit cicada artificials throughout the summer.

"From mid-April on," Breer says, "the Green River's trout are looking up." They also start moving toward the river's edges. Fly patterns then, in their order of importance, include *Baetis* and midges (#16-#20), cicadas (#10-#6 3XL), Golden Stone nymphs (#8-#6), Elk-hair Caddis (#8-#6), Small Black Stone nymphs (#10 3XL), and scuds and nymphs that are effective during the winter season.

Mid-June through August is also prime dry-fly time on the Green, although nymphing and bottom-bouncing scuds continue to be effective. Hatches of Pale Morning Duns (#14) occur. Yellow Pheasant-tail Emergers fairly represent their nymphs (#16-#14). Joe's or Dave's Hopper patterns (#10-#6) in black and dark colors are deadly at hopper time. Sporadic flights of Flying Black Ants (#10) occur. At times smaller cinnamon or black-ant patterns (#20-#16) are effective. Cicada and cricket patterns continue to produce. Nocturnal hatches of crane flies take flight, the fish responding best to long-shank variant patterns (#8XL).

By mid-October the weather in the Green River area begins to change abruptly. But many fish stay near the

## TITANIUM FLY REELS



NRC 910

We at Nestucca Reel Company saw the need to design durable reels that would sustain a lifetime of continuous use by serious anglers.

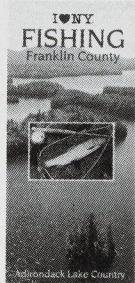
Our answer is the NRC 910.

The NRC 910 has a strong and lightweight titanium frame, shaft, and spool, and is built with 100% corrosion resistant materials. The heavy-duty disc drag and stainless steel ball bearings are sealed to give years of reliable use with minimum maintenance. The large diameter line arbor provides both faster line retrieval and more uniform drag. And the foot isn't *attached* to the frame, it is *part* of the frame, so there are no rivets or screws to come loose.

Of course, all our reels are covered by a limited lifetime warranty. To confirm for yourself that our reels offer a set of features that you will not find on any other fresh or saltwater reel at any price, call or write today.

Nestucca Reel Company  
21550 N.E. Kings Grade Rd.  
Newberg, OR 97132  
1-800-452-1544

## 200 Lakes 9 Major Rivers



### The best of the ADIRONDACKS

The Saranac Lakes, Tupper Lake,  
Chateaugay Lake, Salmon River, Deer  
River, Raquette River & St. Regis Ponds

### Franklin County, NY

For FREE Fishing Guide write Franklin  
County Tourism, Dept. F1, Malone,  
NY 12953 or call 518-483-6788

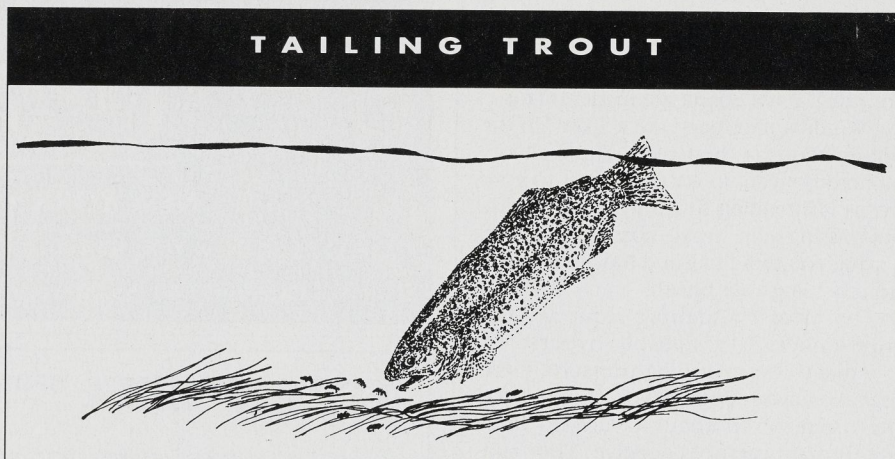


Adirondack Lake Country

## READING RISEFORMS . . .

Continued from page 63

### TAILING TROUT



ROD WALUNCHUS ILLUSTRATIONS

### Tailing Trout

THIS FEEDING METHOD is uncommon on many rivers. Here the trout is rooting through weedbeds or along the bottom, trying to dislodge food. The trout moves into a vertical position, with its head down, and its tail occasionally waving in the air if the water is shallow—quite amusing to watch. This behavior is most common on spring creeks and can also be seen in rich lakes with weedbeds, where the fish root for shrimp, cressbugs, and damselfly nymphs. If trout are performing these maneuvers in slightly deeper water, their tail might only displace water at the surface, appearing as a bulge.

If such a fish is located, try a #12 to #18 scud pattern or small streamlined mayfly nymph (like a #16 to #20 Pheasant Tail) fished deep on a long fine tippet. A mini-split-shot might be needed to get the fly down in front of the fish. Some trout will root through an area, then come back through it looking for dislodged food. Your fly should dead-drift or twitch in front of the fish as it cruises back through. Since such fish can usually be seen in clear waters, you'll want to watch its mouth opening and closing on the take and strike immediately. An obtrusive strike indicator can scare off cautious spring-creek trout.

### Splashy Rises

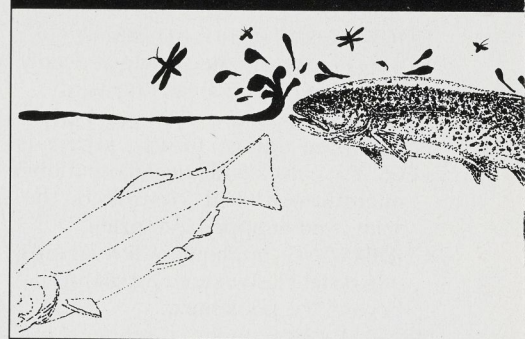
A SPLASHY RISE CAN INDICATE many things, depending on the river. On some waters, especially in Montana, it usually means whitefish or juvenile trout. The larger specimens will be sipping, head rising, or porpoising to steady hatches. The exceptions include rises to quickly emerging flies such as caddis, and to larger midday delicacies like stoneflies, hoppers, damselfly adults, and spruce moths. Stonefly hatches and hoppers are renowned for bringing smashing rises from trout in the right mood.

Other cases where trout splash occur on swift streams where they must rush for their surface prey, and when trout are wary about rising in midday hours, so they rise quickly. These trout are generally fair game for attractor patterns such as Wulffs, Trudes, Humpies, and hoppers—trademark summer patterns on many Western rivers, where trout rise well through much of the day. Elk-hair Caddis are good bets, too, as trout are accustomed to seeing caddis, which can hatch sporadically throughout the day and evening.

Splashy rises at twilight are usually to emerging or egg-laying caddis, or to some quick-emerging or ovipositing mayflies. Caddis patterns are good bets here, and twitches or even dragging the fly can solicit thrashing takes. Fly movement can enhance rather than detract from your presentation. This was once the realm of Bivisibles, spiders, and skaters.

If boils become more prominent than splashy or slashing rises at this time, be

### SPLASHY RISES



quick to switch to a soft-hackled caddis emerger pattern, swung down-and-across the current. Mayfly spinners are likely to be mixed in, or may even become the dominant food source.

for cicadas next to the shorelines. When cicadas are active, these free-wheeling individual trout seem willing to attack any large dark dry fly resembling a cicada. The entrepreneur trout can make your day; if it's gonna get made, that is.

"Window shoppers" are a "pain" in the presentation on the Green. These snooty salmonids swim up encouragingly to your fly, as if intending to sip it in, then without missing a fin stroke, coast right on by, leaving you twitching and blue in the face from holding your breath.

The most maddening trout are the "tire kickers." Presumably hyperselective due to heavy fishing pressure, these bravados swim aggressively up to a fly, the threat of an attack clearly in their eye. But appearances deceive. They simply bump the fly with their nose and swim off to disdainfully "kick" your companion's fly.

The "White Jaws of Death" are what trout dreams are made of . . . 20-inch-plus fish that wolf down cicadas like a muskie gobbles a duckling. When their white-lipped jaws open, it looks like a baseball would fit inside nicely. We hooked several of these larger fish in rapids, landing several 22- to 24-inch rainbows and cutthroats, and a nice 24 1/2-inch brown. We also hooked a few larger fish that preferred to be unhooked without being overstressed.

## If You Go

THE GREEN RIVER can be reached by auto via Highway 191 out of Vernal, Utah, or via I-81 out of Rock Springs, Wyoming. Commercial airlines serve Vernal from Salt Lake City, and there is an airstrip in Dutch John (elevation: 6,561) for private airplanes.

More than a dozen outfitters provide guide services on the Green. Contact the Green River Guides' Association at P. O. Box 416, Dutch John, UT 84023.

## LOW-RIDING FOAM CICADA

HOOK: Mustad 93831, #10- #8.

BODY: Black foam, tied down at evenly spaced rear, middle, and forward locations to form a slight rear-body extension and two forward segments.

LEGS: Two black and one yellow rubber microfilaments laid crisscross on the shank and wrapped into place.

UNDERWING (optional): A few strands of Krystal Flash extending slightly beyond the hook bend.

WING: A sparse bunch of light gray elk hairs, same length as the underwing.

HACKLE: Furnace, dressed sparsely.



REX GERLACH is a freelance writer from Garden Grove, California.

# A Commitment to Excellence



NEW YORK • BUENOS AIRES

118 E. 25 St., New York NY 10010 • 1-800-255-5488 • Fax 1-212-473-4020

Catalog \$3.00 (\$5.00 worldwide) refunded with first order.

## EFINGER SPORTING GOODS COMPANY

Since 1909

### Only the "Best" Fly Fishing Tackle

PATE - MUSTAD - PARTRIDGE - COLUMBIA - HOFFMAN  
WULFF - MARRYATT - TEENY - REGAL - THOMPSON  
A.P.I. - TIEMCO - ABEL - BARBOUR - CORTLAND  
FIN-NOR - G-LOOMIS - HARDY - J.K. FISHER  
RENZETTI - METZ - ORVIS - POWELL - ROSS  
SAGE - SCI-ANG - SIMMS - STH - WINSTON  
CUSTOM ROD BUILDING  
COMPLETE BOOK & VIDEO  
SELECTION & MORE!



CATALOG \$2.00 (REFUNDABLE)

PHONE & MAIL ORDERS ACCEPTED

513 WEST UNION AVE. (RT. 28)

BOUND BROOK, N.J. 08805

MON. TUES., THURS., FRI — 8:30-9:00

WED. & SAT. — 8:30-5:30

(908) 356-0604

FAX (908) 805-9860

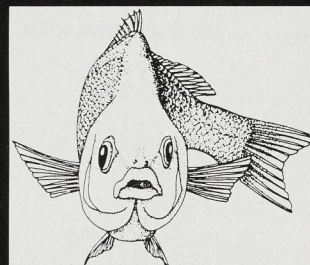
AMERICAN EXPRESS, VISA, MASTER CARD ACCEPTED

More species of fish exist than of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians combined. This book describes the evolution and classification of fish, their appearance and structure, the behavioral patterns that allow them to flourish, and the wide variety of habitats in which they live.

\$25.00 cloth, color & b/w illustrations, at bookstores  
or order toll-free 1-800-822-6657.

## University of California Press

Berkeley Los Angeles  
New York London



## FISH

An Enthusiast's Guide  
PETER B. MOYLE

Illustrated by Chris Mari van Dyck



The Global Flyfisher brings you the essentials for the traveling fly fisher. For your free *all new* 1993 full color catalog call 708-291-3474 or fax your name and address to 708-291-3486.



## BELIZE

- Nice sized bones, big permit and tarpon on miles of beautiful, hard coral flats
- State-of-the-art Dolphin Flats Skiffs
- The most personable and knowledgeable guides in the Caribbean
- Pristine location, comfortable accommodations, all the modern conveniences

### TURNEFFE FLATS

P.O. Box 36, Deadwood, SD 57732  
(605) 578-1304

Watch for them dancing in the air and for steady sipping or head rises. You should carry a variety of spent-wing and parachute patterns (which can double as spinners). Parachutes with black or fluorescent wings can be more visible as daylight wanes. Midges might begin to hatch as well, with the riseforms changing to sips and quiet bulges. Be ready to change to midge patterns if the riseform indicates you should.

## Just Watching

REFRAINING FROM FISHING in favor of just watching can be a great education for trout fishermen. For many fly fishermen the act of fishing becomes a distraction from learning. Many stick to their favorite patterns and don't observe what the trout are showing them. They gravitate to favorite parts of a river and don't explore varying water types which often have larger trout. Walking and quietly observing miles of river will show you where, how, and why trout rise. You might discover that you've been walking through the very shallows in which larger trout like to rise; or that the best hatches occur in a riffle up around the bend and not in your favorite picturesque pool. While non-stop fishing is good casting practice, close observation will make you a more knowledgeable fisherman.

Rising trout will continue to intrigue anglers for generations to come. Those lucky enough to spend many hours onstream, and who are observant, will learn and relearn what the trout are telling them through their varied and fascinating riseforms.

## A Trout Rises

THE RISE OF A TROUT connects it with the "upper world." Its nose breaking the surface puts it within the realm of man's vision, thus in-spiring the major-ity of the world's fly patterns.

As a prelude to the rise, the trout can be seen hovering just beneath the surface, body swaying, fins alert. The fish adopts a "looking" posture.

Seeing a potential meal ap-proaching on that shimmering ceiling above him, he glides upward on a tilt of the fins and a lift from the current, moving into a closer

*Continued on page 84*

## FLY FISHING and DUDE RANCH VACATION

Fish the famed rivers of the West: Montana's Madison and Gallatin, Yellowstone's Firehole and Gibbon, Idaho's Snake to name only a few. Even our "on ranch" Grayling Creek.

We're a *guest* ranch excellent food and authentic Western accommodations. And Yellowstone's just next door.

We cater to fly fishers and offer superb riding and fun to the rest of the family. Enjoy our rec room and hot tub, too!

Fly Fishing Schools will be conducted at Parade Rest Ranch by Jim Danskin, a renowned fly fisherman of 44 years.

For other fly fishing guides, call the following shops:

Jacklin's	(406) 646-7366
Madison River Outfitters	(406) 646-9644
Bud Lilly's Trout Shop	(406) 646-7801

### PARADE REST RANCH, WEST YELLOWSTONE, MONTANA

7979 Grayling Creek Road  
(406) 646-7217 West Yellowstone, MT 59758

## BROOKS LODGE • KULIK LODGE • GROSVENOR LODGE

*Located in Katmai National Park*



Alaska's Premier Sportfishing  
Since 1950

*Katmailand Inc.*

4700-B Aircraft Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

• 907-243-5448 • Toll-Free Reservations 800-544-0551 • Fax 907-243-0649 •

## Tired of turtle-slow service?

You should have shopped  
**FLYFISHER'S PARADISE**  
2603 E College Ave.  
State College, PA 16801  
(814) 234-4189  
**FAX (814) 238-3686**  
Full line catalog \$1.00

## THERE'S PLENTY MORE WHERE THIS CAME FROM!



**FREE ELKTROUT VIDEO**  
RESERVE A COPY OF OUR LATEST VIDEO NOW, IN TIME TO BOOK YOUR STAY FOR THE 1993 SEASON.

- 5 MILES OF PRIVATE COLORADO RIVER
- 13 PONDS - 9 SPRING FED
- PRIVATE ACCESS TO BLUE RIBBON WATERS
- DRY FLY ACTION - EXCELLENT HATCHES
- EXPERT GUIDES AVAILABLE

**ELKTROUT**  
A DRY FLY PARADISE ON THE COLORADO RIVER

P.O. BOX 614-FF  
KREMMLING, COLO. 80459  
(303) 724-3343





## "Deluxe"

Salmon, Trout &  
Steelhead Reels &  
Matching Bamboo Rods.

**J. Saracione**  
P.O. Box 372  
Sandy, Oregon 97055  
**(503) 668-3014**  
FAX: (503) 668-7013

## FREE FLY FISHING CATALOG

Since 1938, Dan Bailey's has offered the world's finest hand-tied flies, fly fishing tackle and great products for fly fishers. Our new FREE CATALOG shows more than 300 flies in full natural color plus hundreds of recommended products for fly fishers.

**Send for  
your FREE  
copy today!**



NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

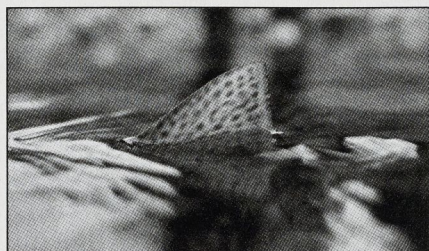
**Dan Bailey's**  
PO Box 1019-N, Livingston, MT 59047  
1-800-356-4052

## READING RISEFORMS . . .

*Continued from page 83*

inspection position. A cautious trout on a heavily fished spring creek might make a long and thorough inspection, perhaps dropping downstream several feet to analyze the situation. This is especially true when there is no hatch occurring. Trout feeding during a heavy Trico spinner fall, however, sometimes surge forward to intercept the fly rather than drop back to inspect and then take it. They develop an efficient rising rhythm and are practiced at scooping the spent Tricos off the surface.

Having picked a target, the fish eases its nose and head up out of the water to capture the dead, unmoving mayfly.



*Trout feeding on bottom in shallow water or rooting through weedbeds trying to dislodge food occasionally wave their tail above the surface.*

The roof of its mouth will come up and over the fly. The fish's eyes actually lift up and out of the water, into the bone-dry upper world. So much for his "window" of vision now. Many fish perform this act.

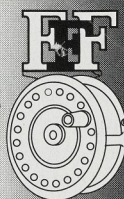
As the trout engulfs the fly, a tiny splash ensues, making that plopping sound that anglers find so engaging. The splash is visible. This is also the moment when the trout takes in a mouthful of air, which it vents out as it descends back into its comfortable watery sanctuary.

As the trout sinks out of sight, the air it took in when rising escapes through its gills, leaving a bubble or two on the surface, sparkling in the ring of its rise. The bubble is evidence to help an angler identify the riseform.

This particular riseform has a wedge-shaped look. The trout continues to surge forward in its Trico feeding. Its head is clearly visible. The bubble appears. A fisherman who can see this clearly and understand what it means will find his pulse quicken a notch or two—he knows such head risers are usually larger mature fish.

E. NEALE STREEKS is a freelance writer and guide from Great Falls, Montana.

Federation  
of Fly Fishers  
presents ...



# 1993 international FLY FISHING SHOW

— formerly the FFF Conclave —

**WHEN:** Aug 11-14, 1993

**WHERE:** Livingston, Montana

**WHAT:** The biggest, most comprehensive, and most truly international show devoted exclusively to fly fishing.

- 72 seminars & programs
- 24 workshops & casting clinics
- Trade show
- Free 2 day youth program
- Oral & silent auctions & raffles
- Continuous fly-tying demonstrations by 100 of the world's best!
- Authors' autograph session
- Banquet, BBQ, outreach activities, photo contest ... and more!

**WHO:** Over 100 experts:

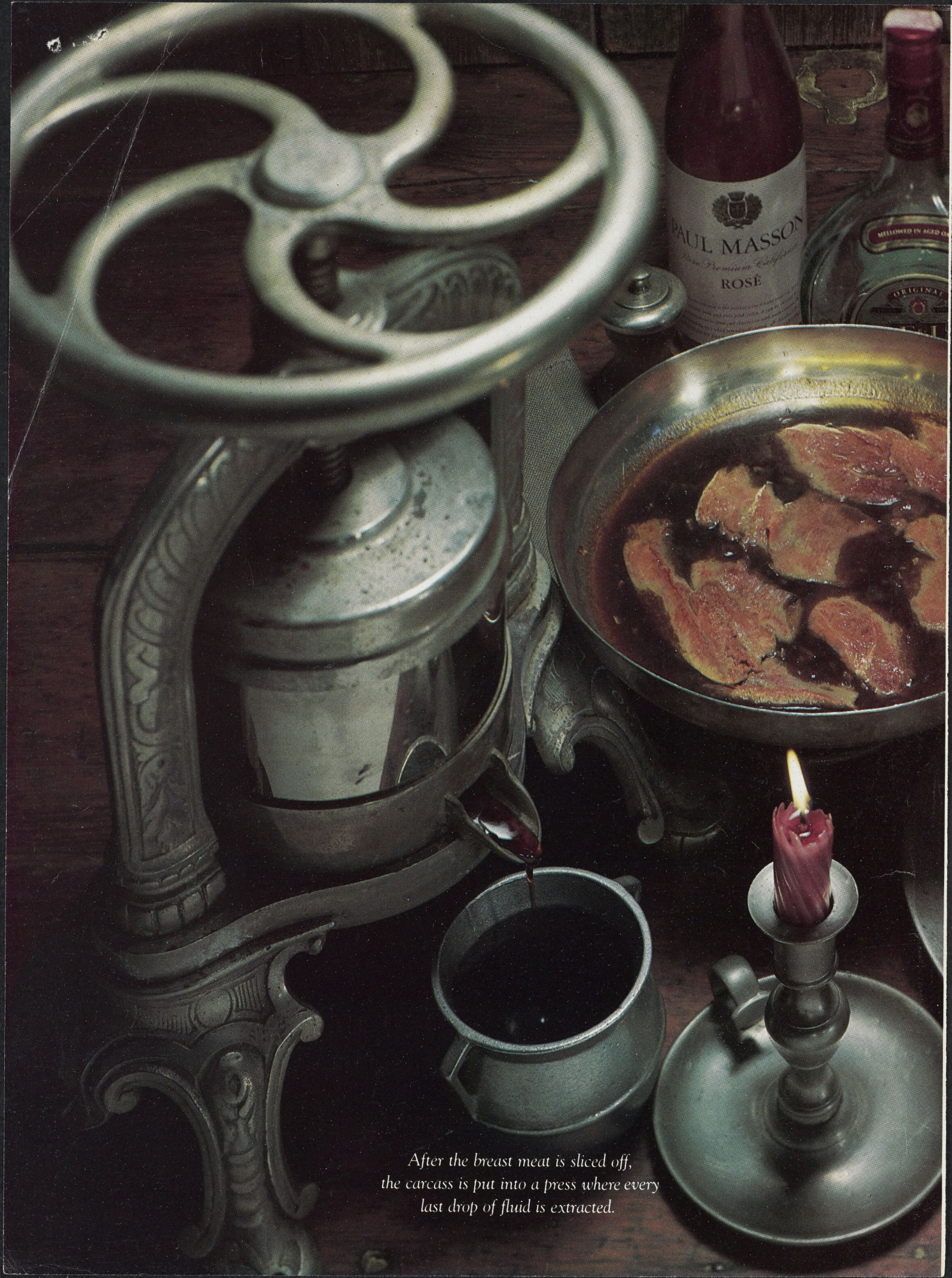
Lefty Kreh • Gary Borger  
Dave Whitlock • Trey Combs  
Mel Krieger • Stu Apte  
Doug Swisher • Joan Wulff  
Jack Dennis • Bob Marriott  
Dave Engerbretson  
Mike Fong • Brian O'Keefe  
Mike Wolverton • Jim Green  
... and many others!

**HOW:** For information contact:



Federation of Fly Fishers  
P. O. Box 1088  
West Yellowstone, MT  
59758  
(406) 646-9541  
(406) 293-4094  
FAX (406) 646-9728

**FEDERATION OF FLY FISHERS**  
Conserving — Restoring — Educating Through Fly Fishing



*After the breast meat is sliced off,  
the carcass is put into a press where every  
last drop of fluid is extracted.*

# Adventures With Elk

*Everyone knows elk are big, beautiful and smart. But 25 years of stalking them with gun, camera and bow has taught me much more.*  
by Bill McRae

---

Talk of your cold! Through the parka's fold, it stabbed like a driven nail. If our eyes we'd close, then the lashes froze till . . ."

"What did you say?" Elroy Nelson asked.

"Just recalling some of Robert Service's poetry," I said. "Say, Elroy, if I should freeze to death on this mountain, I want you to 'cremate my last remains.'"

My friend usually smiles politely at my attempts at humor, but now he just stared at me with a concerned look.

"Your face is freezing," he said. "A white spot is forming on your right cheek. Hold your mitten over it and it'll thaw."

We had no way of knowing the temperature in the mountains of Montana's Sun River country that morning, but when we left our homes on the nearby plains at 4:00 a.m. to hunt elk, my thermometer was shrinking toward the 50°F-below-

(Continued on page 118)

*A rutting bull with a cow should always be respected; he may charge any perceived threat, be it another elk . . . or a hunter.*



Bill McRae

# Reading Riseforms

*Let the trout help you choose a fly and a technique.*

CARL RICHARDS

THE SOUND OF THE BROWN TROUT'S RISE exploded in the gathering evening darkness. I was mid-June Saturday fishing Michigan's Au Sable River. The winter of 1982-83 had been the mildest in memory; spring was late, cold and very wet, and we were experiencing the first three days of hot, dry weather. The major insect hatch dates had been completely upset, and looking for a specific emergence at the normal time had become a joke.

By 9:30 that humid evening the light level was so low you could not see a small dry fly on the water, and, predictably, at that exact time small pale-evening dun spinners started hitting the surface. The riseform for this *Ephemera dorothea* spinnerfall is a quiet dimple rise, almost invisible and inaudible over the sounds of the river. I quickly attached a #18 Dun Cream Henspinner to my 6X tippet. Looking for a spot where the pale fading light provided enough visibility, I discovered a pod of decent fish feeding quietly but rhythmically to the spinners.

After I had hooked and released brookies and brown trout up to 12 inches, it was dark and only a faint star-shine on the current gave hints of trout feeding positions. It had become difficult to cast effectively to those taking spots and totally impossible to know where the fish silently fed. Then at 10 P.M. (I checked my watch) I was startled by the splash of a large brown or rainbow trout. That fish could not be taking small spent spinners! But what? There was nothing else on the water. I unhooked my two-celled flashlight from its belt sling and played the beam on the water. The light instantly put down the small feeding trout and revealed a flat pool carpeted with tiny spent spinners. Nothing else. The trout had taken something large off the surface. Perhaps it was just a once-a-night occurrence, perhaps a big night moth.

I could see no large fly to match, so I slipped downstream to the next quiet run, hoping I'd find another pod of nice brook trout before the *dorothea* spinnerfall ended. Suddenly I heard another loud splash-rise, and then another from a different spot in the flow. Something important was happening and I knew I must find out fast what it was or miss some rare fishing—or, more important, perhaps miss the discovery of what caused those huge fish to feed so ferociously. I'd never heard such a noise, even during a *Hexagenia* rise. Besides, it was too early in the year for the Hex

hatch. I searched the stream with the light but saw nothing except a few tiny spent spinners; the *dorothea* fall was about ended.

Our lodge was nearby so I slipped downstream to the dock, which has a big mercury-vapor light capable of lighting a large area of the river almost as bright as the mid-day sun.

I switched on the light and rested, watching from the bench overlooking the river. After several moments numerous species of aquatic and terrestrial insects fluttered to the intense beam, but nothing appeared large enough to create such explosive riseforms. Then a large humming-bird-like form appeared, fluttering on the water's surface. It was a familiar form, but I could scarcely believe it! We have large stoneflies (*Pteronarcys*) in Michigan, but it was too late in the season for them, and the stream was not the type to support them in large numbers—or so I thought.

I looked down at my waders and two more of the big flies crawled up my legs. Out on the river a half dozen skimmed the surface. As I sat on the dock, dozens more floated down the stream, and I could hear large fish feeding splashily in the distance.

The fly was the same huge stonefly that is called the salmonfly out west. Our Michigan counterpart is a different species (*dodsi* instead of *californica*) but every bit as large, and in the midwest and east it is nocturnal.

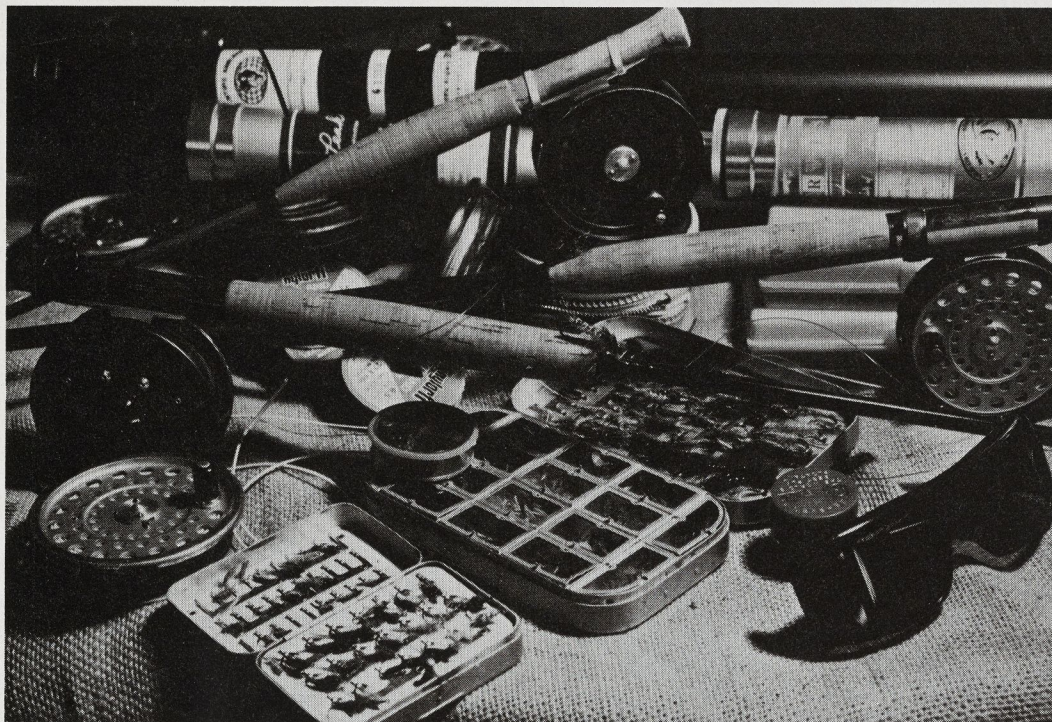
Hurrying back to my room, I found a box of imitations tied for the Bighole and the Madison rivers in Montana. I selected a fluttering version, tied it on and proceeded downstream to hook and land browns I wouldn't have believed existed in those heavily pounded waters.

I had witnessed extremes of feeding that night; first, quiet, sipping rises with the fish feeding on small spent mayfly spinners then loud, splashy surface rises made by large trout striking huge egg-laying stoneflies. The night provided a dramatic lesson in why a knowledge of how trout take a natural insect can put many more fish in your net.

## Reading Riseforms

TO MY MIND THERE ARE TWO main deductions that can be drawn from observing riseforms. First, and perhaps the most fundamental decision to be made: Are fish taking an insect on the surface or just under the film (but close enough to the surface so it disturbs the film)? You must be able to distinguish between a surface feeder engulfing winged

CARL RICHARDS, with Doug Swisher, is the author of *Fly Fishing Strategy* and *Selective Trout*.



DAVE WHITLOCK PHOTO

*'A crisp graphite nymph rod gives me the touch of a safecracker.'*

nymphing leader needs. Aeon is a bit shiney, so I dull its surface with extra fine, wet sandpaper. I also prefer to lightly tint the nymph leader and tippet with two- to three-inch variegations of Rit olive, gold and brown. So camouflaged, the leader does little to attract the fish's attention in bright light and clear water.

Weighted or unweighted nymphs do not require a dynamic leader taper to "turn them over and straighten them out" if that is how you want to present a nymph. For the majority of my nymph presentations I want them to fall on the water and sink *under* a very slack leader and tippet. A straight leader greatly inhibits a nymph from sinking and usually causes immediate drag in flowing water. The tuck cast or slack-leader cast works well for getting my nymphs down effectively.

I use the open Duncan loop or Uniknot for 90 percent of my nymph fishing to tie my nymph to my tippet. It helps my nymph to sink faster and move much more naturally in the water than either the more popular turtle or improved clinch knots. The Duncan loop does not affect the balance or "swim" or nymphs tied on turned-down, turned-up,


or straight-eyed hooks, but actually enhances their performance. When I use a large nymph with a very light tippet or encounter strong strikes in stillwater I leave the loop size about  $\frac{1}{3}$ - to  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch long. This extra large loop acts like a miniature shock absorber for excess strike shock. I simply adjust the knot's tension so that it slips on itself at about  $\frac{1}{3}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  the tippet's breaking strength. Once a fish is unhooked the loop can be re-opened easily. I am so sold on this special nymph knot that I consider it a most significant part of my nymphing method.

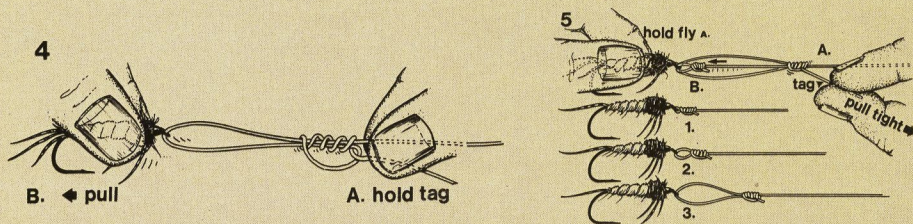
## The Nymph Reel

A MEDIUM-SIZE QUALITY SINGLE-ACTION reel that holds the nymphhead plus 150 yards backing and has sensitive audible click drag with an exposed rim, will do very well as a nymph reel. During the past three years I have found that small, quality multipliers such as Shakespeare's Speedex series, do a superior job in keeping the fly line and fish under control. The multiplier has saved me a lot of time and fish, especially several big fish that I would have surely lost with a slower retrieving single-action fly reel.

## The Nymph Rod

WHEN I BECAME A STUDENT of nymphing, a nymph rod was supposed to be a long, very willowly, slow-action rod of either glass or bamboo. I still own a fist-full of such rods, but time and experience has shown me that the slow action of traditional nymph rods was a handicap for pickups, casting, presentation, mending, strike detection, hook setting and handling fish. I now prefer a light  $8\frac{1}{2}$ - to  $9\frac{1}{2}$ -foot medium-fast or crisp-action graphite rod for nymphing. Such rods cast, present, mend, pick up and fish nymphs far better than slower rods.

They allow a smoother, more positive pick up, less false casting, more distance, tighter loops for "tuck" or slack-leader type nymph presentations and extremely positive line control or mending once the line is on the water. Though the key component of my nymphing method is the nymphhead fly line, the fly rod controls all the functions is this method. I mend much more when fishing with nymphs than even dry flies. Long, deep natural drifts where horizontal and vertical currents drag affects the nymph's path and speed require twice the mending that surface-floating flies require. A crisp graphite nymph rod gives me the touch of a safecracker. I can feel the fly line and nymph in the water better with the light stiff graphite rod. And striking with the rod is much more efficient and positive when a fish takes hold of the nymph because of the graphite's response. 



*Coming in the next issue of FFM: The flies and how to fish them in the Whitlock Nymphing System.*

## Riseforms . . .

duns or spinners, and a subsurface feeder gorging on nymphs before they reach the film. If you can do this, you have an idea of whether to fish wet with a nymph or with a dun or spinner. That is about as basic a decision as you can make.

Second, after you have made your discovery as to subsurface or surface feeding, there are various forms of each type of rise which may suggest exactly what the fish are feeding on. It could be small insects, large insects, fast emergers, slow emergers, flies trapped in the surface film or flies also caught in the film but which can escape quickly.

Fish act differently when feeding on all these various stages of widely different insects. There is no problem if there is only one species of flies, say Hendrickson duns, on the water and you have decided the fish are taking the duns. But suppose along with the #14 *subvarias*, you have on or in the water #18 Bluewinged olives (*Baetis vagans*) and #16 Slate Wing Mahogany flies (*Paraleptophlebia*) plus two different size caddis species (a #16 and a #22), all probable on a rich limestone stream such as the Au Sable. In such situations you may have problems deciphering which stage, which species and at what level the fish are feeding at any particular time. And what may be more frustrating: Once you figure out one feeding location and land some nice fish, the next spot downstream exhibits completely different feeding characteristics. You must re-analyze what the devil the fish are doing.

### Surface Feeding

THE MOST IMPORTANT discovery to make is: Are fish feeding on the surface? Just under the surface? On the bottom? A sure way to decide is to notice if the trout leaves a bubble after the rise. If it does, then the rise is most surely a surface take.

The bubble is created by the way a trout takes a natural on the surface. As a trout ascends to the surface, it opens its mouth, allowing the surface current to flow into its mouth and carrying the insect with it. The water exits through the gill openings, and as the fish closes its mouth, the insect is swallowed and a bubble of air is expelled. That

bubble can be spotted in the middle of the ring of the rise.

If you cannot see a bubble, but still suspect that the trout are surface feeding, careful observation can help. At such times when I observe trout seemingly feeding on the surface I watch the naturals floating down into the trout's feeding lane. If the trout rise, but no emerged dun is taken and time after time the fish boil around the surface flies but none disappears, such signs can only mean the fish are taking nymphs just subsurface and in fact not feeding on the winged duns at all.

There are numerous classic riseforms, both surface and subsurface, forms which have been studied and given various names by legendary English and American anglers. For most anglers, except the very experienced, recalling the myriad and confusing names can be a chore, so I will simply list the common forms and give important information for each.

One general rule will help you clarify the whole complex situation: The smaller or the less likely the insect is to escape quickly, the quieter the riseform. The larger or the more quickly the insect is likely to escape, the more showy the riseform.

It must be clearly understood that this is a *general rule*. It does not say all small insects elicit only quiet riseforms. A small caddis that can pop off the surface rapidly may cause a splashy rise, and a large spinner completely spent in the film in quiet water may be fed on heavily by good fish producing only quiet rings.

### Subsurface Riseforms

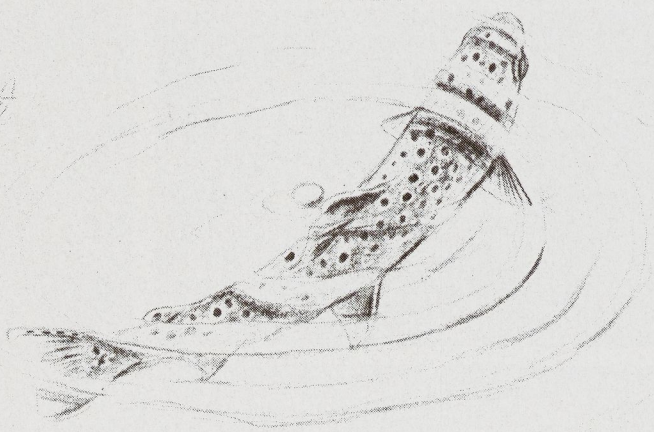
**Fish flashing.** Deep in the runs I often see situations in which an abundance of mayfly duns are on the water but few fish rise. If I notice flashes deep in the runs of the main current, it's an indication the trout are taking nymphs on the bottom or just as the nymphs rise from the bottom. A weighted nymph will take trout very easily at such times.

**Tailing.** These are trout standing on their heads, rooting on the bottom for skuds, shrimp, nymphs or other bottom foods. Thus the tails break the surface occasionally as the fish feed. Such feeding probably occurs more often than is realized by fishermen but the riseforms are not seen because water conditions must be almost perfect to see them. Tactics: Fish a sunken nymph on the bottom that matches the hatch of the natural the trout are feeding on.

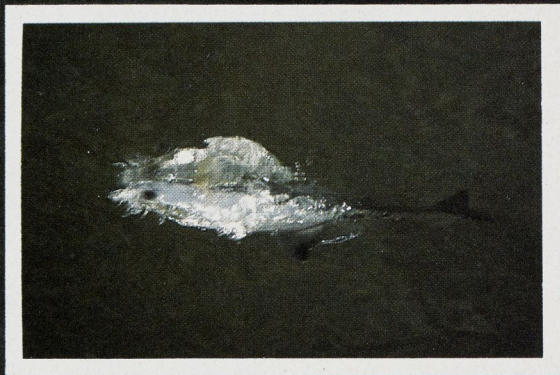
**Splashy rise, no bubble.** These are fish taking subsurface insects such as caddis pupa which are likely to fly away very rapidly. Tactics: Cast a pupa or nymph imitation of the natural upstream; let the fly sink and lift your rod tip as the fly floats downstream toward you, thus giving the imitation a movement to simulate swimming to the surface.

**Big showy swirls, no bubble.** Quite often these are medium to large fish taking a large nymph such as a Brown Drake or a Hex nymph just before emerging. Tactics: Fish a large unweighted nymph dead-drift below the film.

**Bulge or hump rise or hump roll.** Large fish will roll slowly with their backs breaking the surface to take a small nymph in shallow and smooth water. I have seen them do this repeatedly when the flies were small but numbered in the millions along the placid edge of Henrys Fork in Idaho. Tactics: Fish an unweighted nymph matching the natural hatching. Fish it in the film or just below it. Also try a matching



A bubble left in the ring of the trout's rise indicates that the fish took an insect off the surface. DAVE WHITLOCK ILLUSTRATION



*A sipping rise, with no bubble, usually means the trout is taking an emerger in, or just below, the surface film. Inset: Head and tail rise indicates that fish are feeding on spent caddis or mayfly spinners. BOYD MARTS PHOTOS*



MAURICE MAHLER ILLUSTRATION

*"Tailing" trout are rooting the bottom for such foods as scuds or shrimp.*

soft-hackle fly fished in the same place and manner.

**The hog-wallowing nymph.** My own name for a phenomenon I have seen repeatedly on big spring creeks of the West, it describes a situation in which an enormous emergence of small mayflies is in progress, and big rainbow prowl the shallow quiet water near the banks and wallow, feeding in water just deep enough to cover their backs. The trout move very slowly, with their dorsal fins, backs, and tips of tails breaking the surface, but not their mouths. They are feeding on nymphs just under the surface, often taking ten or more at one gulp. Occasionally one fish will lift and take a surface fly, but very rarely, and by far the majority of insects are taken subsurface. Tactics: Also fish the unweighted nymph of the same size and color as the natural, fished in the film or just beneath it. In this case you must lead the moving trout in an attempt to cast the fly just ahead of where he will be when the fly lands.

## Surface Riseforms

(Please recall that there will usually be an air bubble present in the ring of the rise, and, if you look closely, you should see floating insects disappear, the tip-offs for surface rises.)

**Quiet dimple or soft swirl.** Almost noiseless, dimple riseforms associated with small, spent spinners or spent microcaddis caught in the film and fish feeding in quiet

currents. Tactics: My technique is to use a hen-spinner that matches the hatch in progress or quad-spinner that matches it. Fish the fly flush in the film.

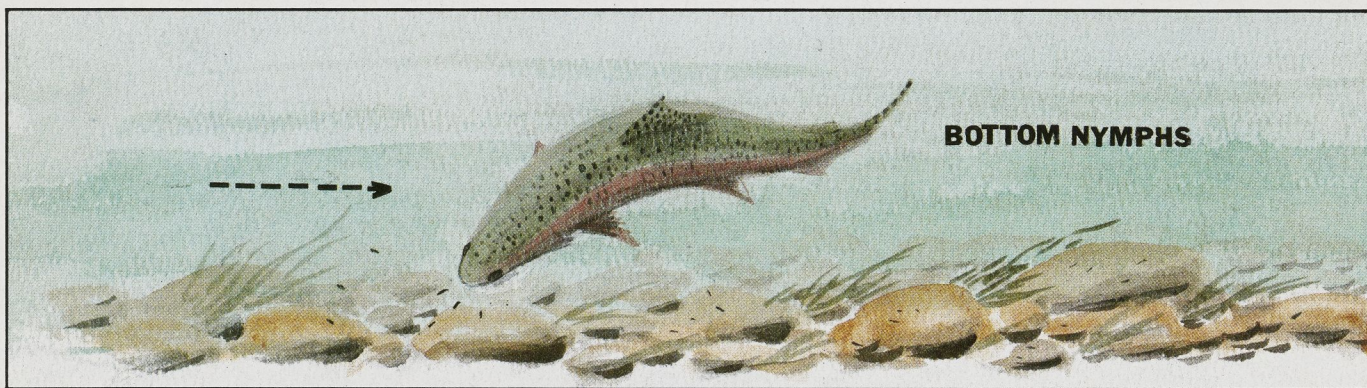
**Big, showy swirls.** Typical of large duns being taken by large fish. Tactics: Use an imitation of the natural, such as a large paradrake. Fish the imitation dry.

**Splashy swirls.** Often fairly small fish make a lot of noise, disproportionate to their size, when they dash up, take an emerging caddis, turn and dash back to a holding position. Large fish moving out of a station to feed on a sparse emergence will also exhibit this riseform. Tactics: I prefer a heavily hackled pattern, such as a hackled caddis or a Henryville, fished dry.

**Head and tail rise.** Usually seen when medium to large fish are feeding in slow water on flies such as spent caddis and mayfly spinners caught in the film. Tactics: Again, I use the hen spinner pattern or quad-winged caddis, fished in the film.

**Jump rise.** Typical of trout feeding on fluttering, egg-laying insects such as stoneflies or caddis, and also on emerging caddis that burst rapidly off the water. Tactics: A Henryville or heavily hackled stonefly or caddisfly pattern is called for. In the case of the caddis I prefer hackle palmered from the tail up.

**Porpoise roll.** Often seen when large fish feed leisurely in slow currents on big spinners. The roll also occurs when trout feed on large spent caddisflies (after egg-laying) and



DAVE WHITLOCK ILLUSTRATION

As the trout feeds on bottom nymphs, its flanks will often "flash" reflected sunlight.

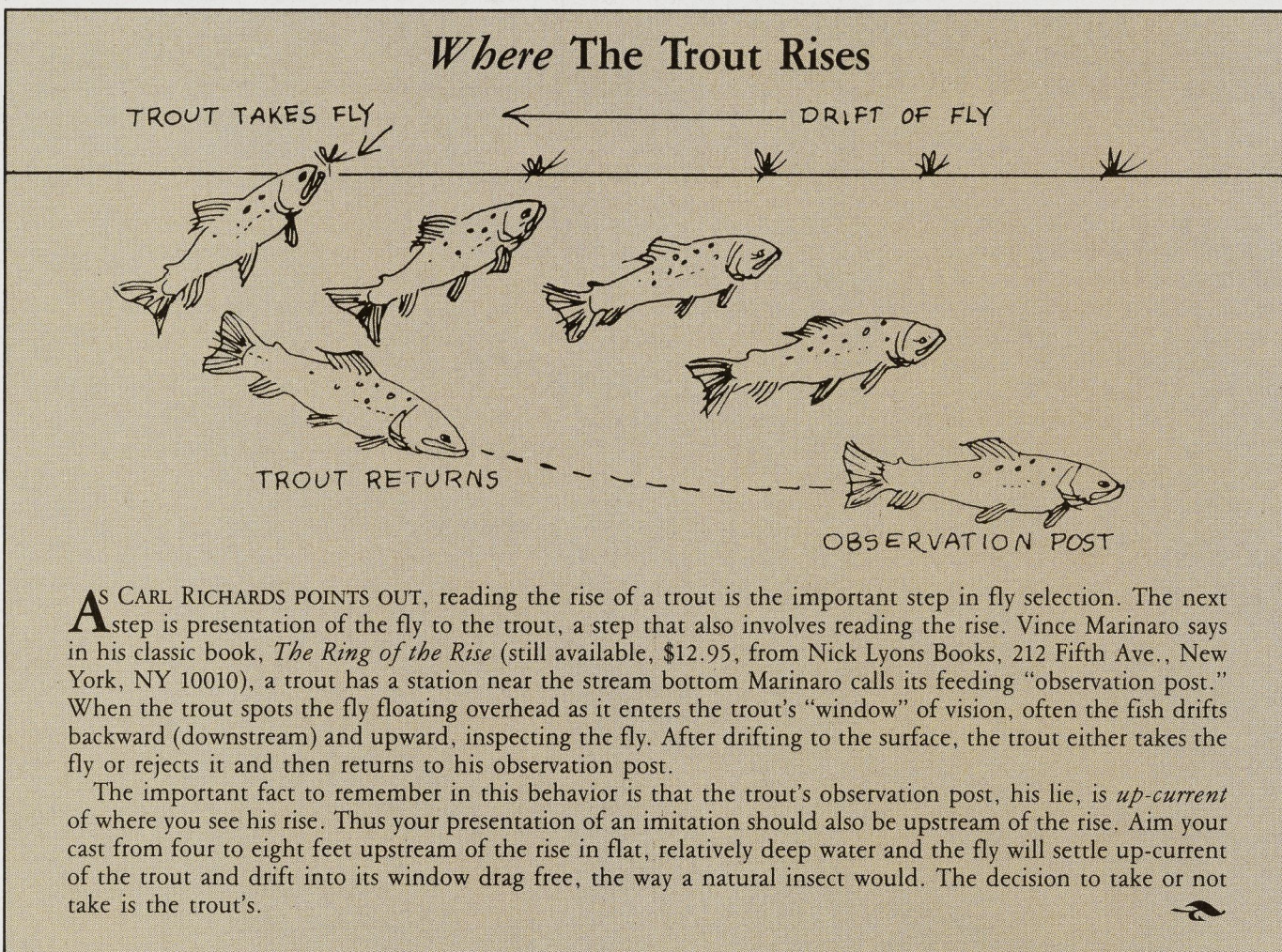
mayfly spinners. Tactics: The old standby quad-wing cadis or hen spinner pattern tied to the appropriate imitation and fished dead drift.

**Refusal rise.** These are fish coming up to look at your fly, sometimes even splashing it, but on closer inspection, refusing it. If this happens to you a fair number of times, change flies quickly to something a little different and more realistic. Tactics: I should note that I prefer fishing no-hackle patterns when trout are feeding on mayfly duns no larger than #12. When the trout are feeding on duns larger than #12 I use the Paradrake patterns. I might add that I almost

always wade downstream and fish down and across when dry-fly fishing. It's so much easier to cover water and in fishing long, drag-free floats.

Knowing the riseforms has allowed me to recognize the changes in feeding and, most important, the changes during a complex hatch where four or five insects are on the water all at the same time. It has allowed me to get a reasonable idea of which stage of which insect the fish are taking. There are many instances when a thorough knowledge of riseforms has helped me put more fish in my hand. I'm sure it will do the same for you.

## Where The Trout Rises



AS CARL RICHARDS POINTS OUT, reading the rise of a trout is the important step in fly selection. The next step is presentation of the fly to the trout, a step that also involves reading the rise. Vince Marinaro says in his classic book, *The Ring of the Rise* (still available, \$12.95, from Nick Lyons Books, 212 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010), a trout has a station near the stream bottom Marinaro calls its feeding "observation post." When the trout spots the fly floating overhead as it enters the trout's "window" of vision, often the fish drifts backward (downstream) and upward, inspecting the fly. After drifting to the surface, the trout either takes the fly or rejects it and then returns to his observation post.

The important fact to remember in this behavior is that the trout's observation post, his lie, is *up-current* of where you see his rise. Thus your presentation of an imitation should also be upstream of the rise. Aim your cast from four to eight feet upstream of the rise in flat, relatively deep water and the fly will settle up-current of the trout and drift into its window drag free, the way a natural insect would. The decision to take or not take is the trout's.

## Rise Forms

merge w/ previous chapter?

See Skues

Harding

Mariners

Clark + Goddard

Tavernier.

# The millionaire's fly-box

THE GLOOMY STORIES started circulating well before the season opened. The river was falling faster than the pound. There was no fly-life. No weed. Fish were dying upstream.

I tried to shut my ears to these tales because it was years since I last had a rod on a chalk-stream and I had been looking forward to opening day for months.

I arrived at the riverside to find that the gloom-mongers were absolutely right. The river was so low that one angler was fishing from a mid-stream beach that is usually covered by 3 ft of water. To make matters worse there was a cold wind blowing that made fish-spotting difficult, and there was no sign of a rise.

What was to be done? I decided a hatch pool would be the best bet. Hatch-pools provide depth, cover, and oxygen in times of drought, and traditionally every one holds a monster.

I sat down beside a hatch-pool I remembered from years ago. Just as I was tackling up, the keeper appeared.

"There's a four-pounder and a couple of three-pounders in there," he said.

He departed on his rounds, leaving me to contemplate the great draught of fishes that lurked invisibly in front of me.

☆ ☆ ☆

After a few minutes the wind dropped for a moment and I spotted a large pale-coloured trout of about 2 lb on the far side of the pool. Behind him, and lying deeper, were two more fish that looked even larger. Perhaps the keeper was right. I watched the water carefully for a while. None of the fish rose, but they did have an 'on-the-fin' look about them, so I tied on a nymph. Unfortunately, it was ignored. I rested them and tried again. Then I tried a different nymph. Still no success. Suddenly I remembered the story of the millionaire and his fly-box.

The millionaire, as I expect you remember, created a rise by

ordering his chauffeur to drop hundreds of expensive artificial dry flies on to the water from a bridge. The trout were fooled into believing that a real hatch was taking place and were soon rising merrily.

History does not relate whether the millionaire actually caught a fish, but the story reminded me that trout will always come up to the surface if they think there is something worth eating there.

Unfortunately, I am not a millionaire and I don't have a chauffeur, but what I did have in my fly-box were a couple of brand-new Sedge flies.

Most anglers associate the sedge with the last part of the evening rise in midsummer, but I

**by**

**RICHARD BARDER**

have often found that it is a highly successful fly in daytime. It has the great advantage of beating the drag problem. Trout actually expect it to slither and scutter around on the surface and you can often cast repeatedly to the same fish without putting it down. Furthermore, a sedge is large and succulent-looking — just the sort of morsel in fact that will bring up a fish that isn't rising.

I dipped my sedge in flotant and cast it on to the calmer water on the far side of the pool. The push of water through the hatch caught my fly-line and swept the fly round to the tail of the little pool. I cast again, this time a little closer. Several casts later there was a sudden explosion. I struck. Back came my sedge. I went home for lunch. After lunch I tried again. This time I was successful. There was another explosion and a few minutes later I netted a lively rainbow trout of 2½ lb.

The next day I returned to the fray. Once again I couldn't find a rising fish but two large shapes were still just visible beneath the ripple of the hatch-pool. The nymph failed again, probably because the turbulence in the

hatch-pool gave it an unnatural movement. Out came the sedge. This time I modified my tackle by making up a very long leader. This meant I could keep well back from the pool and keep dropping my Sedge where I liked without having fly-line on the surface which might scare the trout.

I cast the Sedge several times, occasionally scuppering it across the water. Nothing happened. Then, suddenly the wind dropped and I was able to see that the bigger of the two shapes was a much larger trout than I had realised. As I watched it swam leisurely to the surface and gulped down a fly. At the sight of the giant trout I had forgotten about my own Sedge and I glanced round to see where it was. Then I realised. It was my fly the trout had taken!

I was so overcome that I didn't strike for at least a second, which was probably just as well. The fish worked powerfully up and down the pool. Then he shot downstream into the shallows. This was lucky for me because there are some wicked-looking wooden stakes in the pool. The fish appeared to be tiring, but every time I brought him near the net he tore out into midstream. Eventually, however, I landed him — just over 4 lb. My lifelong ambition, a 4 lb brown trout from a river on a dry fly was realised at last.

☆ ☆ ☆

Two hours later I tried the pool again. The other trout I had seen earlier fell for the same technique. This one weighed 3 lb 3 oz.

The capture of these two fish was particularly satisfying in view of the conditions, but I was somewhat surprised to be told by the keeper a week later that there was a very large trout in the hatch-pool. The keeper left before I could tell him I'd caught it last week, but the fact is that there certainly is another giant trout in the pool. Unfortunately, though, he seems to know about the millionaire's fly-box trick!

# GRAYLING — on the fly . . .

**REG RIGHYNI** considers the abortive rises these fish make and decides a small fly

THE GRAYLING's sporting habit of rising repeatedly to a well-presented floating artificial until it is finally hooked has been appreciated by anglers since the inception of sophisticated dry-fly fishing.

From time to time it has been asserted that the fish bungles its first few efforts to intercept the fly and that this is because it has poor vision. Clearly this view also makes the implied assumption that the grayling has been totally deceived by the artificial and each time was making a serious attempt to seize it.

This is probably untrue, as will be shown later, but in any case, few anglers today would subscribe to the idea that any wild creature suffers any general deficiency in respect of those of its senses which play an essential part in its everyday life. Even so, some of the items in the catalogue of evidence suggesting other explanations for the behaviour of the grayling are worth considering because they tend to give a rather novel view of one aspect of its character.

First, consider the photograph taken by Roy Shaw of a grayling at spawning time (*this page*). A trout of

some 2 lb has been intruding, and a grayling of perhaps 1½ lb has rammed it amidships with its snout. It can be seen that the force of the impact has bent the whole of the trout's body into a curve and the snout of the grayling is embedded deeply in the soft flank of the trout. This suggests that a grayling's snout is its most effective weapon.

The probability that grayling literally do tup items of possible interest, or annoyance, with their snouts is shown by the number of fish that are hooked outside the mouth, often quite close to the eye.

☆ ☆ ☆

The most notable catch I ever made on the Upper Wharfe — eight grayling over the pound mark in a little over an hour, best fish 1 lb 9 oz — was remarkable for the fact that not one of the fish was hooked properly inside the mouth. It may have been significant that despite their splendid size and condition — it was mid-November — they fought very poorly indeed.

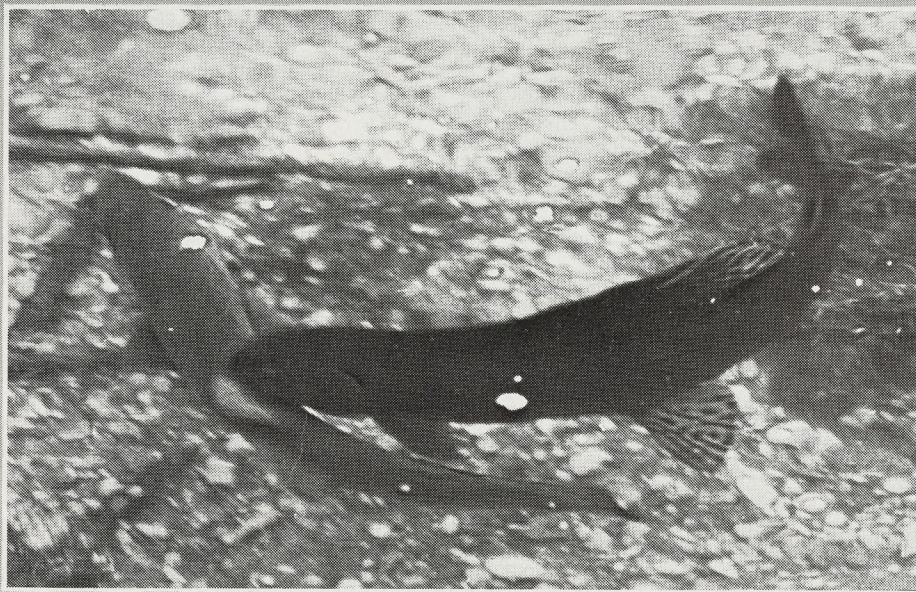
In the same area my friends and I have had similar and smaller grayling that have put up a fight as strong

and determined as that of any trout. Perhaps lack of hunger and a lethargic response to the rod are linked.

Does the grayling recognise the artificial to be a fake when it simply gives it a tup with its mouth closed, or 'kisses' it, as I used to say before I began to realise that the action was, in fact, quite the reverse to one of endearment? But first, for the most convincing evidence concerning the ability of a fish to detect that an attractive artificial differs from a natural fly, or, equally important, from a bit of natural rubbish — which it ignores — we must turn to the rainbows of the Derbyshire Wye.

These magnificent wild-bred fish get great feasts of duns to go at, and often they become very selective. When in cautious mood, a fish will back down with the flow watching a natural dun struggling on the surface from a position just 3 or 4 in below it. Then, when it is satisfied with the inspection, it lifts gently, sucks in the fly, and swims away at an obviously calm and unhurried gait.

When soon afterwards the object of interest on the surface is a reasonably suitable dry artificial, floating high on the hackle points and drifting



A TROUT savagely attacked by a male grayling. The latter could be seen to be 'biting' at the moment of impact.

## . . . and on

OR SOME PECULIAR reason trotting a worm for grayling during the winter months is a 'respectable' method of fishing and does not seem to offend the strange ethics we fly-fishermen frequently impose upon ourselves.

This acceptance of trotting could, of course, be a residual hangover from the days when grayling were regarded almost as vermin, and any method of reducing their numbers was considered legitimate. Fortunately, more enlightened times now prevail and I would like to think that modern practitioners of the art do so in the realisation that it is not an alternative to fly-fishing, but the only

re

Rises

## all fly is the answer

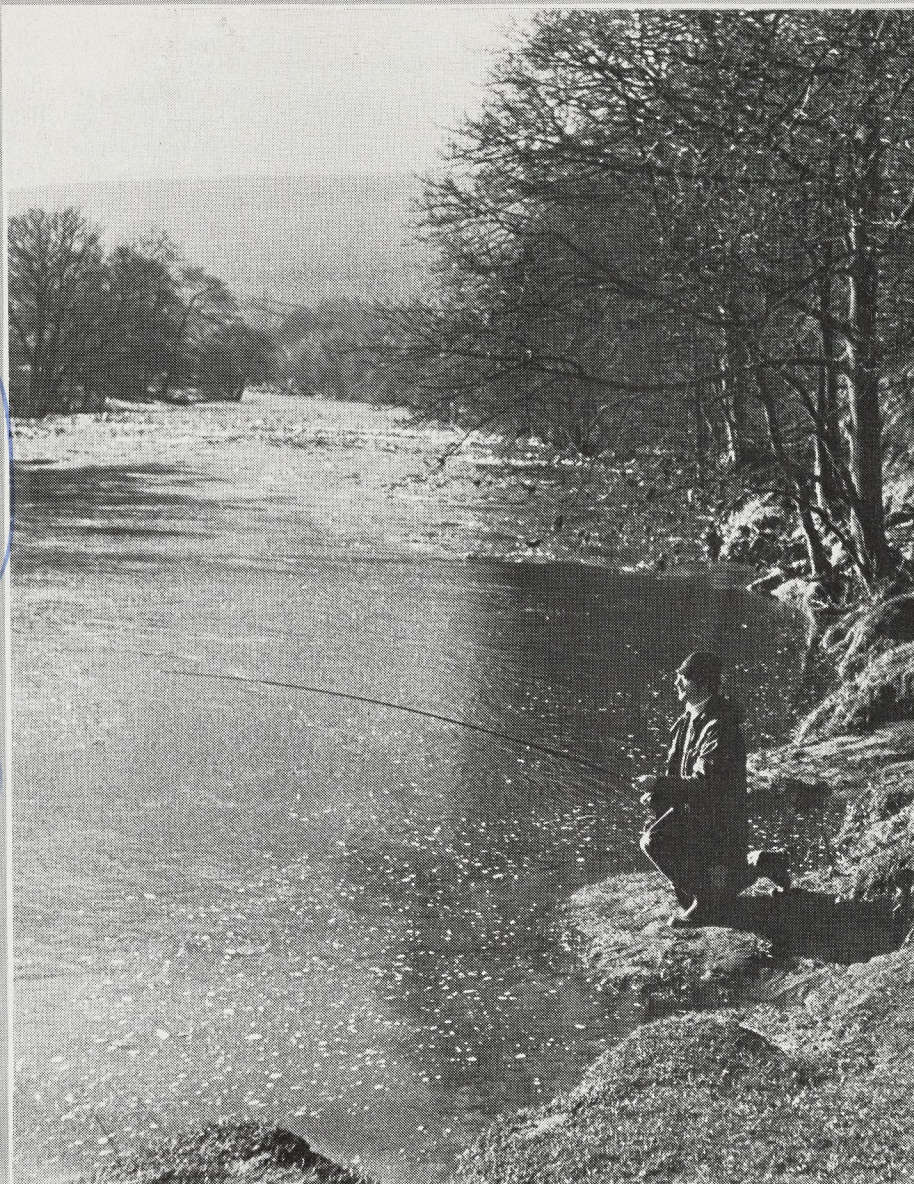
free from any noticeable drag, the rainbow goes through exactly the same drill as before up to the moment when its nose touches the fly, but then, like an explosion, it flashes away across the top of the water as if the devil were after it.

Once it is established that this kind of performance is the order of the day, the only thing to do is to strike instantly, and then there is the chance that the fish will be hooked right on the point of the nose. But the fact requiring to be isolated at the moment is that the different responses of the rainbow seem to show without doubt that it recognises the artificial to be false, and — very important — that it has an irresistible urge to display its animosity towards the imposter.

☆ ☆ ☆

In a lighter vein I have claimed in the past that this shows that the wild-bred rainbows have a sense of humour — you could believe that they were actually teasing you — but there is much evidence to suggest that all game fish have this same tendency to show their contempt for

*Continued overleaf*



THE WINTER RIVER the fly-fisher rarely sees . . .  
A grayling-fisher on the Wharfe.

## on the float

sensible technique in conditions prevailing during the depths of winter on certain rivers.

Perhaps doubts still linger that it is not quite the thing, as we sometimes find fishermen playing with the technique. Possibly they feel that if they show an ineptitude in their application, then nobody will make the dreadful error of mistaking them for converted coarse fishermen.

I cannot pretend to have much patience with this point of view; if you are to use a certain style of fishing, then you might as well accept the challenge of trying to do it properly. From a practical aspect, too, if you are continually getting

into a mess through using indifferent tackle, then your concentration on the fishing begins to wane and the sudden realisation of the surrounding winter chill makes the beckoning of the fireside almost irresistible.

So let us say right at the onset that a favourite cane dry-fly rod or lightweight trout spinner, often used as a makeshift trotting rod, simply will not do. It is most important to have a rod especially designed for the purpose, with a tip action. Frequently such rods need to be 12 ft or more in length, if they are to perform properly. There is no need to spend a fortune on a carbon version, as those made of glass-fibre are moderately

priced and perfectly adequate for the purpose.

The rod must be light enough to fish with comfort all day, flick out a small bait effortlessly, have the necessary length for any line-mending involved, but, more importantly, have the ability to strike effectively when the float is a long distance away.

The need to fish at long range for grayling has given rise to the term 'long trotting'; from one vantage point, the fisherman may quickly search a considerable distance down-river for the grayling. On many a northern river which holds gray-

*Continued overleaf*

## GRAYLING ON THE FLOAT — cont

ling, there may often be long stretches containing numerous favourable lies for the fish and it is important to discover quickly which are tenanted. In winter the grayling may have shoaled-up and be feeding only in one of the many lies, and the day is too short to be wasting time in finding them. Fly-fishing with a sunk line and leaded flies would probably be far too slow for this purpose.

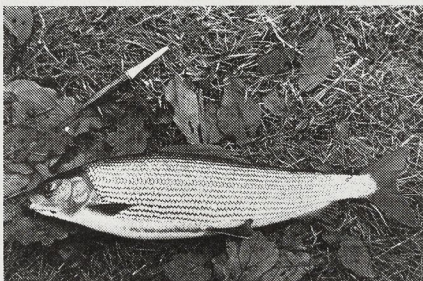
Once the fish have been located there is no particular virtue in fishing for them from far off, but it may well be that, due to an awkward set of the current or bankside obstructions, a closer approach is impractical. Some people believe these distances to be exaggerated but two winters ago while fishing the Welsh Dee one day, I paced out 120 yards from where a friend stood to the spot where his grayling was fighting strongly.

When you may be called upon at times to fish at such a range as this then it becomes obvious that the float should still be clearly visible, and few on the market are suitable. I have little hesitation in condemning the 'bob' float, so commonly associated with grayling fishing in northern rivers. It is difficult to see from far off; it is not long enough to hold its place in the current, nor can you make it sufficiently sensitive for those occasions when the grayling are feeding with restraint. Here you must fish close enough to be able to detect every variation in the float's behaviour, whether it is a momentary hesitation in the steady progress, a slight lifting up from the

surface, a brief sideways tilt, or a slow dip under the surface.

I know of only one float which will match all the criteria required in grayling fishing, and that is the one designed and advocated by R. V. Righyni in his excellent book *Grayling*. I have used such a float in varying sizes for many seasons now and unhesitatingly recommend it.

Many of you will already have a fixed-spool reel for spinning and so,



A NORTHERN grayling taken on one of Reg Righyni's floats.

quite familiar with its use, will not have to learn a new technique. Moreover, such a reel is reasonably efficient for our purpose with a 3 lb or 4 lb b/s. nylon line. It does have its drawbacks in that too much line may be pulled off at times which makes for some slackness and a consequent delay on striking. In addition it may be difficult to trap the line sufficiently firmly against the rim to prevent its slipping while striking if the float is a long way off, as the pull from the line can be considerable.

For those reasons the true enthusiast prefers the centre-pin

reel. It is much more efficient to use while trotting, but at the same time a good centre-pin reel may be fairly expensive and you will have to weigh-up whether the amount of trotting you do justifies it.

No doubt I will be severely taken to task by those more experienced in float-fishing when I say that I suspect the complicated arrangements in the distribution of the weights between hook and float may be unnecessary. Three points are worth bearing in mind however. The combined weights should be such that the slightest pull will take the float under. No weight should be nearer the hook than 12 inches, and, lastly but very important, the distance between the hook and the heaviest group of weights should be less than that from the weights to the float. Then, when the cast is made, there will be less tendency for the hook to catch up around the float.

I find worms to be more effective than maggots in most circumstances, and the use of the maggot is being banned on more and more rivers, due to the tendency of groundbaiting to bring trout on the feed. The yellow tip of the small gilt-tail worm, found under lawn mowings, is sometime held to be more attractive to the grayling than is the ubiquitous brandling. I subscribe to this view myself. A one-inch gilt-tail, lightly nicked through the skin near the head by a size 16 hook, makes a delicate morsel which grayling often find irresistible.

**Barry Lloyd**

## GRAYLING ON THE FLY — cont

unconvincing offerings, but do not often demonstrate it so openly.

In the case of the grayling it is true that eventually, after giving the fly nothing more than a nudge on three or four occasions, it will probably then take it as if truly feeding. This does not necessarily mean that the artificial did not arouse maximum suspicion during the preceding sightings. It must be remembered, of course, that the grayling rises all the way from the bottom every time, no matter how deep the water, and always returns to the bottom whether the fly is seized or 'missed'. It could be that the doubt concerning the genuineness of the item on the surface does not arise until the grayling is well on its way up.

In this context of intriguing but suspect items appearing on the sur-

face, and with particular reference to brown trout, it has often been postulated that repeated sightings of the same pattern of dry fly can create a sense of familiarity which eventually leads to the artificial being 'sampled' as a potential item of food — hence the pleasantries one hears about "creating a hatch of Greenwells."

This idea would seem to be even more applicable to grayling than to trout. If one wishes to exploit this principle — which would probably be good basic strategy on many occasions — it should be remembered that the smaller the fly, the more likely it is to achieve a deceptive image.

Some well-known chalk-stream fishers assert that size 14 hooks and even 12s are the best sizes for dry

flies. Even in those lush surroundings of the Hampshire water-meadows, there is a growing band of anglers who prefer to pin their faith on the North Country view that, apart from during the dusk period, flies on 16s are the largest that grayling should be expected to take readily and without first making a lot of abortive rises.

At the same time, the grayling can usually be relied upon to be the angler's best friend in the realm of game fish. He is very forgiving and if you are prepared to mend your ways and offer him something more to his taste, he will usually overlook your earlier efforts to put him down with objectionably large concoctions.

There will be no sulking, and a small fly will bring you the sport you desire, just as if you had deserved it all the time and had not been guilty of a lapse which a trout would have considered to be unpardonable.

I SHOULD THINK that no less than half of all the letters and queries I receive from readers of *Trout and Salmon* are concerned to elicit lists of infallible artificial flies that the writers might use. And clear inference of their letters, is that there is a magic attaching to some patterns, and that if only this secret can be obtained, then trout after trout will enter the net in some remorseless piscatorial procession.

Nothing, in my experience, could be further from the truth. The secret of fairly consistent success in fly-fishing does not lie in boxes of magic feathers, or in roomfuls of expensive equipment. The secret to a modest fly-fishing success lies inside the angler's head: in other words, in thought and commonsense.

When, a couple of years ago, I was asked to write a book on fly-fishing, I thought long and hard before agreeing. And the point which exercised me most was a desire not to produce simply another book on flies, and tackle, and knots. In the end, I produced *The Pursuit of Stillwater Trout*, which has just been published to coincide with the start of the current season. In it I have tried to apply a fairly average amount of commonsense to every relevant aspect of still water trout fishing as it affects the ordinary man: as it affects, in other words, the likes of you and me.



I was reminded of all this, when I received recently a letter from a reader, Mr Thomas, of Leeds, concerning his frustrations in trying to catch fish that 'sip' in their food, with that audible kissing noise with which we are so familiar. (In the main, this rise form — not the most common, but by no means rare — is more a phenomenon of the small stillwaters, than it is of the big reservoirs, although I have seen it there, as well).

And because this reader's query centred upon what fly to use for 'sipping' fish, rather than on things that would be of greater help to him, I thought it would be valuable, at the start of a season when many anglers are likely to meet the problem in the coming months, to enlarge upon the answer I gave him, and which I expand upon in *The Pursuit of Stillwater Trout*. Although in the pages of the book I attempt to analyse every form of rise in similar detail, it is possible here to touch upon only the 'sipping' fish.

In approaching a fish which is sipping in its flies, the first step is not to rummage through the fly-box, and throw out the nearest thing to hand.

# The secret of the sip

by BRIAN CLARKE



*THE SIP: One of a remarkable series of photographs in Brian Clarke's new book, The Pursuit of Stillwater Trout. In this picture, the trout is pointing directly towards the camera, and the crinkle of white is the reflection of light on a small point of water which, together with the food trapped in it, is curving down to the mouth of the fish in response to a brief but powerful suck.*

The starting point is the question: "What can we deduce from this form of rise?"

As we know, there are two quite distinct characteristics to this rise: the first is the kissing noise we hear; and the second is the very small, pinpoint — and often almost imperceptible — disturbance at the surface. What can the angler learn from these? Let us consider the noise, first, because it is so unusual.

Why should a fish taking flies, make a kissing noise? Put another way, what must a fish making that noise, be doing? A simple question, to which, very quickly, commonsense provides a simple answer — and that is that such a noise can be made only by a fish not

simply sucking in food or flies, and with them some water, but also (and this is the key) a little air, too. If you don't believe me, go and sip some hot soup, off a spoon. There is no other way that such a sound could be made.

What does this piece of observation and thought tell us? It tells us that the fish we are pursuing, must be feeding right at the surface film, because that is where the air is. With one fell swoop, therefore, in wondering what kind of fly to use, we can reject from the reckoning all nymphs and pupae, all corixae and beetles, and anything else below. We know for a fact that the fly we want is at the surface — and we haven't laid a hand on the fly-box yet.



The second thing we noticed about the rise was the tiny, pinpoint, disturbance of the surface film: in other words, that the fly was taken very softly, and gently, and precisely, without any heaving about of the water as we see in other forms of rise. What can we learn from this gentle precision? We can learn two things.

The first is that because there is no heaving about of the water, the fish must be travelling slowly (we know it is right at the surface, because it is taking in air: and if it were travelling quickly right at the surface, is it not obvious it would be making a disturbance?).

The second thing we can learn from what we see is that the fish is very sure indeed of getting the flies it is after: (why else, after all, would it be travelling in such a leisurely, unhurried manner?). In addition, because the fish is sure of the flies it is after, and because it is rising in such a pinpoint manner, then the flies it is taking must be completely still and the fish must know for a fact that they cannot get away.

Now comes the last, simple, key question: what flies lie motionless at the surface, and cannot get away? Answer: only flies that are either trapped in the surface film, or are lying dead upon it — almost any other creature would be capable of flying off.

After that, it's all comparatively easy. We look at the water to see what dead and spent flies are there, and only then reach for the box, in the comforting knowledge that we can choose, if not with certainty, then at least with a great degree of confidence. All, or almost all, the guesswork has been taken out of it by a combination of observation, and basic commonsense; and we know for cer-

tain, forever after, that fish which are sipping are taking in spent and dead flies from the top; and that provided we put up something like the creatures we can see, and fish them on — but mostly in — the surface film, we will quite often take the fish we are after.

It is possible to go through a similar process of deduction for all the other forms of rise we see; for all the forms of offer or take we experience; for all

the kinds of creature we see in the water, and find in the stomachs of trout. In other words, it is possible to make practically everything that we see and observe by the water work for us, and tell us things we need to know in our pursuit of trout.

This thinking, not surprisingly, is what gave *The Pursuit of Stillwater Trout* its name. And it was the theme of the letter I sent to Mr Thomas, of Leeds, whose letter, you will recall,

started all this off. Commonsense is the key to fly fishing for trout. It doesn't mean you'll always get them, Heaven forbid — and certainly I get my own share of blanks along with everyone else. But it's the finest basis to the sport I know.

□ Brian Clarke's book, *The Pursuit of Stillwater Trout*, is published by A. and C. Black at £4.50. — Editor.

## That small, fixed fin...

IN HENRY WILLIAMSON'S unforgettable book, *Salar the Salmon*, is a sentence which reads: "There was a small fixed fin, like a pennon, aft of the dorsal fin, which served to prevent turbulence or eddy when he was swimming forward."

The function — or lack of function — of the adipose fin in salmonids has always intrigued me. Many years ago I wrote a book in which this question was briefly considered. The work is long out of print, and in the intervening years I have watched *Trout and Salmon* as closely as I have been able for some authoritative news about this fin. This news may have appeared, and escaped my notice; but in case there has been none, it might perhaps be worth while reviewing the question again.

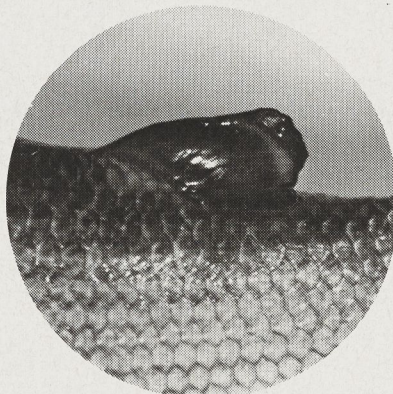
A. Laurence Wells, in his *Observer's Book of Freshwater Fishes*, has this to say: "The most persistent feature of all the various species (i.e. of *Salmonidae*) is the small, rayless adipose fin placed on the back near the tail. So far as we know it has no particular job of work to do, as the other fins have."

☆ ☆ ☆

This assertion is in direct contrast to Williamson's, though it may be qualified by 'so far as we know'. My copy of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* falls firmly between two stools on the subject: "In the mid-line of the back, in the tail region well behind the dorsal fin, there is a small flap without rays, known as the adipose fin, of uncertain — if indeed it has any — function. Such an adipose fin is a peculiar, superficial characteristic of certain primitive groups of fishes, as of the trout and salmon family in this case."

So we have one categorical statement, one contradicting it, and one non-committal description. I

imagine that Williamson may have reached his conclusion that the adipose fin prevents turbulence by some study of the theory of flight as applied to piston-engined aircraft. The vacuum which forms on the upper surface of the wing in motion, and which gives upward lift, is made much less efficient by air turbulence caused by the forward motion. *Salar the Salmon* was first published in 1935. At that time it was customary to place a strip called the slot just above the leading edge of the wing, and this greatly reduced turbulence. But I wonder what happened as aircraft were modified in design to cope with much higher speeds. A fast jet may pass through air which has assumed some of the characteristics of water, which is the element



Sign of breeding: The adipose fin of a game-fish — in this case a grayling.

of the salmonid. One would welcome expert comment.

On the face of it, Williamson's statement appears to make sense when considered in relation to the dorsal fin. But the adipose fin is by definition non-erectile, and, therefore, must move, however slightly, with the movements of the fish's body. This would cause a constant series of swirls to pass over the tail fin: turbulence, in other words. And that seems to bring us full circle.

The salmonids may be primitive fishes in the evolutionary scale, but they are efficient creatures. I cannot myself see why a creature which has had all time since the Eocene to perfect itself should still find itself lumbered with a functionless fin, unless the adipose is merely the remnant of a second dorsal fin such as the mackerel possesses, or the coalesced remains of a mackerel-type series of finlets, which seems unlikely.

☆ ☆ ☆

I have heard the theory advanced that the adipose fin might act in some way as a torque-absorber, damping down the tendency to twist which results from the lateral undulations of the fish's body as it swims. Here again one would like to know whether there could be any foundation in fact for this theory.

When the lateral undulations of swimming take place, together with the movements of the adipose fin — which may or may not have anything to do with turbulence — the movements of the fin will be perceptible to the fish, and will thus serve to indicate speed of movement or speed of current. But I cannot imagine why this should be needed when the fish has other means of achieving this kind of feedback.

All these theories are mere conjecture. The only positive use that I have seen for the adipose fin is as a point of attachment for a tag, and that method is outmoded! But I make no apology for re-presenting the matter, and hope that someone eminent in the field of ichthyology will come forward and settle the question of that 'small fixed fin' once and for all.

**W. H. Canaway**

one to keep, and one to give away, because the larger the circulation, the better the Journal can be made, and the easier it is for the Editor to be cheerful.

Dr. Ward has kindly sent us a report of his lecture, and those who heard the lecture and those who did not will alike be grateful to him, for no more interesting and instructive lecture has ever been given at the Club.

We hear from Dr. Ward that a cinematograph operator has been working "in his pond," and that Mr. Sherringham and Mr. Skues have been testing the appearance of the fly as seen from below the surface of its water, so it may be we shall hear more of that water of wonders.

As noted elsewhere in this Journal, several members are now wanting Nos. 1, 2 and 3 of this Journal.

In the Angling Press we see announced a new work by Mr. F. M. Halford. The title, "The Dry Fly Man's Handbook," suggests that it will be a comprehensive work embracing the whole science of dry fly fishing.

A.C.K.

### FISH LIFE UNDER WATER.

AT the request of the Editor I have pleasure in contributing a few remarks on my lecture before the Flyfishers' Club on February 27th.

As I had no notes for my lecture I cannot be sure that I shall put down exactly what I said on that occasion, but I will do my best to keep on the same ground, and I hope any members of the Club who may read these remarks will excuse me if I do not do so.

Thayer, the American artist and naturalist, has recently brought into prominence the value of counter-shading in concealment in the animal world. That is to say, as a general principle, birds, beasts, fishes, and insects have a dark back, a lighter side, and white belly. When seen as in nature, the light from above lightens the dark back, and the shadow beneath the beast darkens its white belly, so that the whole creature is brought to a uniform shade, and this when seen against a uniformly coloured background makes it difficult to detect the animal.

With fishes, however, counter-shading, though it is an important factor, is quite secondary to reflection in concealment. Take as an example the salmon. In the skin of the salmon and also on its scales are innumerable mother-of-pearl-like spicules known as iridocytes; these, when welded together in the skin, convert the salmon into an almost perfect mirror, and as the silvery salmon swims about, he is concealed

by exa  
being  
from a  
Th  
colour  
to keep  
the ba  
gleam  
A  
incons  
habit  
weeds  
and re  
top of  
mainly  
T  
stripes  
in the  
shadin  
bring  
a unif  
shaded  
perch  
unifor  
throug  
eye is  
to be  
the pe  
T  
also  
establ  
the st  
who h  
a dark  
the re  
same  
minut  
causin  
white  
iridoc  
light  
I  
under  
theory  
brown

by exactly reflecting the shade and colour of his surroundings, only being revealed as he turns on his side when he catches the light from above.

The dark back of the salmon, which is due to numerous dark colour cells in his skin, reduce the reflecting power of the back, so as to keep him one shade, for if these dark cells on the back did not exist, the back of the fish, being towards the light above, would, of course, gleam out and reveal the salmon.

A fish that is rendered of a uniform shade as described, is only inconspicuous against a uniform background. Where fish are in the habit of moving amongst rocks, stones, on the one hand, or reeds and weeds on the other, they are concealed not only by counter-shading and reflection, but by the addition of marks upon their body on the top of the counter shading. These marks, broadly speaking, are mainly blotchy in character or stripes.

To explain the principle of concealment let us take a fish with stripes across its body, namely, the perch. When this fish is swimming in the water with a background of reeds behind it, the counter-shading and the power of reflecting the shade of its surroundings, bring the body of the fish, except where the dark bars are present, to a uniform shade. Now if the perch had no bars upon it, the uniformly shaded body of the fish would interrupt the scenery beyond, and the perch would become conspicuous; the bars, however, break up the uniformly shaded body of the perch, and so when the fish is viewed through the water (of course, looking at it from below the surface) the eye is not arrested by the form of the fish, and the bars do not appear to be on the fish at all, but to be part of the reed scenery beyond, thus the perch escapes detection.

The arrangement of colour cells in the skin of the fish is also an important factor in concealment. It is now a well-established fact that the colour cells in the skin of a fish contract on the stimulus of light received through the eye of a fish. Every angler who has kept bait knows quite well that if they are kept for a time in a dark can, when taken out they are almost black, this being due to the relaxation of the dark pigment cells in the skin, but that if the same fish are put into a bath or white vessel of any sort, within a few minutes they are quite light, the light through the eye of the fish causing the contraction of the dark pigment cells, thus permitting the white skin of the fish to show through, and also exposing more of the iridocytes in the deep layers of the skin, which would then reflect the light around.

I would now refer to the appearance of the brown trout as seen under the water, and I would suggest that the following is quite a new theory in the concealment of this fish. It would appear that in the brown trout only certain of the colour cells on its body are under the

influence of the eye, but that all the cells contract on muscular exertion. The result is that when a brown trout is resting on the bottom, in a bright light, or is terrified, it becomes intensely blotchy, with four broad dark bars across it (these do not appear to be parr marks), one in the region of the head, the second below the first dorsal fin, the next beneath the adipose fin, and the last just in front of the tail. This extreme blotchy appearance assists in concealing the brown trout when it lies upon or among pebbles or stones. If the trout swims away from this position, the light blotches, which are due to the contraction of the pigment cells, in consequence of the stimulus of light received through the eye, remain light, but now the muscular action of swimming causes all the other pigment cells on the body to contract, and I have seen a fish, which was almost black and white in appearance, swim round in my special observation pond, and in three minutes come back to the same place from which it started, but now this fish was of a uniform light shade. After it had rested for a matter of two or three minutes it was again intensely blotchy.

Another point in the concealment of the brown trout is the fact that when the brown trout is resting on the bottom in dark surroundings, the pigment cells under the influence of the eye are of course relaxed, so are the pigment cells which only contract on muscular exertion, and so the whole trout is dark in appearance. But when a brown trout is swimming in dark surroundings all the pigment cells over its body are, to a great extent, contracted, even including those which are under the influence of the eye. The iridocytes now are the chief factor in concealment, and the fish becomes a mirror, thus reflecting its dark surroundings as it swims; it appears dark, and only reveals itself when it turns on its side, for then the reflecting surface of its body catches the light from above. As confirmation that the above is probably the case (when a brown trout is swimming in dark surroundings, it appears dark by reflection as explained), should this fish rapidly swim into light surroundings it now immediately appears light by reflection. On the other hand, when a fish is resting on the bottom in a bright light and is blotchy in appearance, if this fish now starts to swim, keeping in light surroundings, it will be two or three minutes before the dark patches have disappeared due to the muscular exertion of its swimming.

So it will be seen that the trout is amply protected wherever it is, being blotchy in appearance when resting amongst stones on the bottom, and being a mirror able to reflect the colour of its surroundings when it swims about.

The spots on a trout would appear to be a more important factor in protecting it when it is swimming, giving the body of the fish a more or less mottled appearance so as to fit in with the general background.

For  
paper in  
I now, b  
extracts  
below th  
addition

In t  
construct  
and desc  
of observ

Now  
trout, the  
what dep  
three fee  
but wher  
up quietl  
surface o  
his own  
rose to t

Wh  
come leis  
rushes a  
feet from

A t  
takes it  
near the  
position  
hungry  
and swa

future,  
Trout! )  
into his  
two or  
opportu  
seize the  
be seen  
slips do

Th  
that if  
with a  
method

For my notes on feeding fish I refer my readers to my illustrated paper in the *Fishing Gazette* of March 9th, 1912, from which, however, I now, by Mr. R. B. Marston's kind permission, give the following extracts relative to the feeding habits of trout, which as seen from below the surface of the water is exceedingly interesting, and in addition it may be of practical value to the angler.

In the *Fishing Gazette* of November 11th, 1911, a special pond constructed for the observation and photography of fish was illustrated and described, so there is no need for me to again describe my methods of observing fish and of obtaining photographs.

Now as to the methods of feeding revealed. With the brown trout, the manner in which this fish rises to a fly depends greatly at what depth he is hanging below the water. When he is, say, two or three feet below the surface, he invariably rushes at the floating fly; but when he is hanging in the water near the surface he usually comes up quietly, sucks down the fly, and as he ducks down again breaks the surface of the water with his tail; he then swings round in about twice his own length, and takes up the position in which he was before he rose to the fly.

When taking food in mid-water, though the trout may occasionally come leisurely up to the rising nymph or sinking worm, as a rule he rushes at it, his mouth being wide open while he is still two or three feet from his food.

A trout appears to seize a worm by any part of it, whether he takes it leisurely or whether he rushes at it. If the worm is seized near the end, the fish frequently spits it out to seize it again in the position in which it can be easiest swallowed. When the trout is hungry he appears to care little whether the worm is alive or dead, and swallows it right way. (It will be interesting to see if, in the future, an attempt will be made to apply the new Act to Mr. Trout!) When, however, he is not hungry he often takes the worm into his mouth, bites it and spits it out, and he will repeat this two or three times before he finally swallows it. This is often an opportunity for another fish in the same water to rush up and suddenly seize the worm that has been spat out. At another time the trout can be seen to chew the worm for two or more minutes before the food slips down.

The inference to be drawn, from a fisherman's point of view, is, that if the trout is fished for with a worm (I see the reader shudder with a righteous horror!) "Stewart" tackle is obviously the correct method of capturing your fish.

FRANCIS WARD.

# COLIN STOKES & SON (Footwear) LTD

15 QUEEN STREET, MARKET DRAYTON, SALOP  
Telephone: 2104

## HARDY DISCOUNT FISHING TACKLE:

			RETAIL	CASH
● FIBALITE FLY	No. 4	7'	31.62	25.50
	No. 5	7½'	32.82	26.46
	No. 6	8'	34.19	27.50
	No. 6	8½'	34.66	27.99
	No. 6	9'	35.87	28.99
	No. 7	8½'	34.13	27.55
	No. 7	9'	35.87	28.95
	No. 8	8' 9"	37.07	29.89
	No. 9	9'	40.27	32.54
	No. 10	9' 3"	40.27	32.54
	No. 3½	6' 3"	30.99	24.99
	No. 6	3pce. 9'	37.53	30.27
● FIBALITE SALMON FLY		12½'	55.49	44.75
		14'	65.61	52.99
● ESK INVINCIBLE SMUGGLER No. 6			40.48	32.65
			37.41	30.20
			42.85	34.55
● PALAKONA FLY		6'	60.52	48.80
		6' 8"	62.31	50.50
		7' 2"	64.10	51.75
		7' 6"	65.00	52.50
		8'	76.55	61.75
		8' 6"	78.60	63.50
		8' 9"	81.28	65.50
		12½'	144.45	116.50
WYE L.R.H. SPINNING		9½'	99.29	81.00
● GRAPHITE CARBON FLY (Including Alum. Anodised Tube)	7'	3/4	79.31	63.99
	7½'	4/5	81.81	65.99
	8'	6/7	83.70	67.50
	8½'	6/7	86.01	69.30
	9'	4/5	86.85	70.00
	9'	5/6	86.85	70.00
	9'	6/7	86.85	70.00
	9'	7/8	89.19	71.95
	9'	8/9	89.78	72.50
	9'	9/10	90.36	72.99
	9' 3"	7/8	90.50	78.00
	9½'	8/9	90.91	73.50
	10'	9/10	92.00	74.50
● R. W. FARNBOROUGH		9'	87.92	70.95
● F. B. DRIFTER R. W. SUPERLITE R. W. LITTLE LAKE			41.31	33.50
			37.03	29.99
			36.28	24.50
● FIBALITE SPINNING		6' 1½"	19.49	15.75
	No. 1	7'	24.27	20.95
	No. 2	7'	24.27	20.95
		8'	26.72	21.55
		8½'	28.97	23.50
		9½'	32.52	26.25
	No. 1	10'	34.33	27.75
	No. 2	10'	34.33	27.75
		10'	33.24	26.99
		10' 10"	35.24	28.50
MOOCHING B.C. TEN TEN				

POSTAL SERVICE ONLY AS THE  
ABOVE GOODS ARE DESPATCHED  
DIRECT FROM OUR WAREHOUSE.

## Letters

Television programmes, which were entirely unscripted, much to his producer's consternation in the early days when it was quite unknown for any spoken word to go out on the medium without careful rehearsal with an accurate script.

The Bare-hook Nymph was of course both demonstrated and advocated. Only recently I found on sale in Lionel Sweet's shop at Usk patterns of Kite's Bare-hook Nymph.

Presenting fly or nymph to a feeding fish is of course a very practical proposition, as Kite was always careful to demonstrate. He writes on page 116 of *A Fisherman's Diary* that when fishing on the broad shallows of the Upper Avon in his latter years he once cast a Bare-hook Nymph to a feeding trout some 120 times before being taken on the 121st chuck.

The reference to catching fish blindfold evidently refers to the television series *Kite's Country* when one programme was devoted to casting a nymph upstream to grayling. This Kite did while blindfolded, subsequently hooking and landing numerous fish with his consummate skill. I personally thought that this did Olly more harm than good, as most of us cannot catch such fish without a blindfold!

Dr Richard Jones

Netheravon, Wiltshire

## Tail-slapping trout

LAST YEAR while fishing a dry-fly only water I was standing in a hollow casting 8-10 yds into slack water under a steep bank about 5 ft higher than the river. The day was bright, the fly a Daddy-long-legs on a size 10 hook. There was a boil at the fly and the tail of a fish appeared and slapped the water. I tightened immediately but felt nothing.

This happened repeatedly and on the third and fifth attempt I tail-hooked a brown trout. Curious as to why I missed so many fish, I moved to lie on the bank above the river and cast again. Three times a trout, which I could see quite clearly, rose but made no attempt to mouth the fly; instead it turned just below the surface and slapped the fly with its tail.

These fish were not topping and tailing, but seemed to be attempting to drown the fly, although no attempt was made to take it when it was knocked below the surface. Have any readers observed similar behaviour? I might add that I am not a theorist on fishing, just a fisherman who has fished for fun — coarse, sea and game — for over 50 years.

A. I. Stephenson

Hull, Yorkshire

## The ultimate wading staff

A FEW CONSTRUCTIVE tips of a technical nature from an engineering teacher will, I hope, make life a little easier for the D.I.Y. man who is inspired by that most useful article written by Norman Simmonds — 'Making your own wading staff' (February issue).

Given the choice I would use a cane shaft, with its nodules cleaned down and whipped with nylon or 'Terylene' thread. Each whipping should be solidified with something like 'Durofix' and burnished with a wooden file. Then it should receive six coats of alkyd resin varnish, the last three coats all over the shaft and metal fittings, before the rubber foot is put on.

The thumb-crotch would be better made of beech or birch which are more closely grained than mahogany, walnut, or other woods except lignum vitae, ebony, boxwood, or Australian ironwood. Of those I would choose boxwood as the easiest to acquire, but my ultimate preference would be for horn or bone.

Fitting tubes to cane perfectly is simple but the best method

Trout and Salmon

# Letters

## Silk lines too good?

I WAS interested in Mr H. Arnold's treatment of tired 'Kingfisher' lines and would like to add another method used for many years on Vancouver Island. In the past, until about 20 years ago, we had a year-round steelhead fishery, big rivers fished with two-handed salmon rods; a fishery almost extinct now.

When the dressing of a silk line got in poor condition we soaked the line in warm linseed oil, as Mr Arnold did. After a couple of days the line was stretched in the air on a hot day and left until the line became tacky. Then we made a mixture of spar varnish and graphite powder to a consistency of glue. This mixture was then worked into the line, using a chamois and plenty of elbow grease, and allowed to dry for a few hours until tacky. Following that a final polishing was given with a clean chamois cloth until the line became smooth and shining.

The end result was a line that would shoot far better than the original. My lines are over 30 years old and still more than serviceable.

It is too bad that 'Kingfisher' and 'King Eider' were taken off the market. Perhaps the lack of built-in obsolescence had something to do with it.

W. L. Chisholm

British Columbia, Canada

☆

☆

☆

THE ASPIRING fly-fisher in 1978, wherever he fishes, has a bewildering amount of tackle to choose from. The choice of rod, reel and type of line is almost without end. In the pursuit of trout, be it rainbow or brown, it seems the modern angler has little chance of success unless he acquires at least a bachelor's degree in science, and of course as much fishing tackle as his bank balance will allow.

One has only to stand on the bank of any reservoir to witness the great casting contest, a profusion of fly-rods that would be better suited as pole vaults, with lines half the thickness of baling twine. How many anglers these days have ever used a silk fly-line? It seems that Kingfisher and Corona, the legendary names of the past, have no place in the new "plastic-coated" era. In spite of the claims of some modern line-makers, no plastic fly-line ever approached the suppleness and delicacy of presentation of pure silk.

I hear there are many anglers like myself who mourn the passing of the fine silk fly-line. Well perhaps some day a tackle manufacturer will yield to popular demand and bring back the silk. Until then, those of us who have silk lines will guard them jealously, and those fly-fishers who have only plastic lines will never know what they missed.

William Davies

Oban

### Catching fish blindfolded

I WAS RATHER puzzled by the questions posed in the letter from Mr Harold Horne (April issue). Oliver Kite was indeed a trained professional man, careful with his words. This was perhaps most vividly illustrated by more than 230 Southern

## GET HOOKED! ON ... TIDELINE BOOKS!

A NEW  
EDITION!

ADVANCED  
SALMON  
FISHING

by Reg  
Righyni.

A reissue of this classic book for the experienced Salmon fisherman. An 'in depth' appraisal of the fish, tackle, water conditions, temperature and expert methods of taking salmon when other methods fail. Illustrated. 139 pages. Price £4.95 incl. P.&P.



BRAND NEW!

G. E. M.  
SKUES — THE  
WAY OF A  
MAN WITH  
A TROUT

by T. Donald  
Overfield

A new book, not a reprint, on the great G. E. M. Skues and his sensitive and thoughtful methods of catching trout. Seventy-one articles and thirty letters. "The World's Best Rod", nymphs, etc. 12 photoplates. 288 pages. Price £8.65 incl. P.&P.

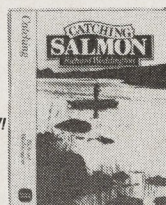


BRAND NEW!

CATCHING  
SALMON

by Richard  
Waddington.

By one of the most respected writers on salmon, with a lifetime's experience. The fish, migration, waters, rods, reels, greased line fishing, flytying, traditional and recent developments in methods of taking fish. A thought provoking new book. Illustrated photographs. 159 pages. Price £5.95 incl. P.&P.



BRAND NEW

THE SUPER  
FLIES OF  
STILL WATER

by John  
Goddard

The author's choice of the 60 most successful flies, nymphs and lures. The materials to use, methods, conditions and times to fish. Well illustrated with 60 colour photos of actual flies, plus many drawings, plus 98 pages of text. Price £4.00 incl. P.&P.

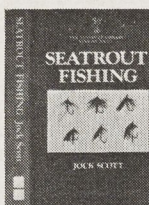


A BOOK  
BARGAIN!

SEA TROUT  
FISHING

by Jock Scott

Lonsdale Library. How to catch sea trout in river, loch and saltwater. Day and night fishing. Tackle, flies, worming, spinning, dapping. The fish, habits, scale reading etc. 50 figures and photographs. 216 pages. The former edition published at £5.50 + P.&P. Our Price £3.95 incl. P.&P.

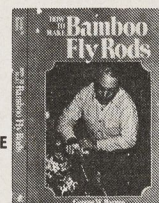


BRAND NEW!

HOW TO MAKE  
BAMBOO  
FLY RODS

by George W.  
Barnes.

At last a very well illustrated book on this neglected subject. How to split, straighten, plane, glue and whip your own cane fly rod. Fitting and shaping grips, whipping rings etc. Adjusting actions, repairs and more. 110 pages. Price £7.15 incl. P.&P.



A BOOK  
BARGAIN!

WHERE TO  
FISH

1975-76

Edited by  
D. A. Orton.

A large 470 page book plus separate folding fishing map of British Isles. Packed with articles, information, places to fish (home and abroad), clubs, permits, fishfarms etc. Colour fly plates. Normal price £4.45 incl. P.&P. Our Price £2.45 incl. P.&P.



The latest 1978/79 edition  
Price £7.65 incl. P.&P.

THE CON-  
FESSIONS  
OF A  
POACHER

edited and  
with a  
foreword by  
Geoff R. Worrall.

The biography of a poacher in the 1880s. His clever methods of taking trout and salmon, pheasants, partridges, hares, rabbits, grouse, using purse, long and clap nets, snares, lurchers etc. Illustrated with full page plates. 150 pages. Price £3.30 incl. P.&P.



TICK BOX BY BOOK REQUIRED.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Post to :

TIDELINE BOOKS, Freepost, P.O. Box 4, Rhyl, N Wales.

Telephone Rhyl 54919. No stamp required. TS/6/78

Break-up  
needed  
anecdote as story

CHAPTER VI

Fly Behavior: Clues from the Trout

too many  
conclusions, follow  
too rapidly  
but solutions - incorporate  
conclusions in other  
chapters to spread  
them out.  
material is of  
on substance

A late-June evening on the Nore is an exercise in trout hieroglyphics. The rise may begin while the warm sun is still on the water, for there are a lot of hungry, medium-sized trout, averaging from a half-pound to a pound in weight. Kilkenny limestone makes the water fertile enough to produce good hatches, but the stream looks more like a typical fast-water river. The banks are wooded in long stretches -- which is unusual for Ireland -- and an American would expect a substantial fall of terrestrials from the leaves.

much of  
this appears  
or is repeated  
in other  
chapters

He would usually be disappointed. Believers in "a good general pattern of fly" might also want to try one. It could be presented to perhaps a hundred rising fish in an evening. If one in the hundred should take, the angler would be doing well.

At this time of the day and year, the fly that brings the browns up is the B.W.O. -- the famous Blue-Winged Olive of chalk-stream literature. Anyone familiar with the fly would know where to start, but a bit of local knowledge is a help.

At first, most of the scattered rises do not break the water, though this can be remarkably difficult to

## CHAPTER VI

### FLY BEHAVIOR: CLUES FROM THE TROUT

#### In the Shape of Rise-Forms, Plus Advice on the Futility Of Chasing Tails

This was back [in the days] when [I thought] a rise-form was something in which Mom baked fluffy cakes. [I was fishing a small <sup>the</sup> stream <sup>was a small one</sup> in Central New York State. A fish was making [deep, authoritative swirls <sup>gurgles</sup> on the surface of a shaded pool, <sup>but never when my flies floated</sup> and I was floating flies over him. He was paying no attention. Without exaggeration, you could say that I was impatient; with slight exaggeration, you could say that I was <sup>ready</sup> in a mood to levitate out of my original Hodgman Wadewell boots. ~~and drop a bomb on the trout.~~

~~But to explain.~~ You must understand the antique features of this tale in order to make sense of it.

-- First, this was also in the days of my brief flirtation with the "calendar" approach to fishing. I would find what insect the experts said was supposed to be hatching, then tie up an imitation (from the experts' books) and go fishing. The virtue of this system was that it inspired quiet confidence: surely the trout would not dare disagree with the printed word of Authority. The defect of the system is that I

did not catch very many fish with it. My bookish flies resembled the naturals as King Kong resembles Linda Lovelace. Further, the correct naturals did not have the good taste to inhabit nearby streams in any quantity. (A peek under the rocks eventually told me that.)

- Second, as you can tell, I was not yet talking to the trout very often.
- Third, this was one of those streams about which fisheries biologists say: "It's got some smart old browns, but the fishermen are too dumb to catch 'em." Translated, this means that the good young fish were caught in the first two weeks of every season, leaving a few elderly trout who were rarely accessible to sport fishing, but who were vulnerable to the biologists' electro-shockers. There was an unwritten code to the effect that biologists were not allowed to corrupt their minds with any knowledge of fishing beyond the hardware stage. (This may not be as antique as I should like to think. When in 1977 I suggested that two Pennsylvania fisheries biologists see what had happened to the insect life of Big Springs, one replied in horror: "I don't think we'll start managing invertebrates!")

-- Finally, and this is really an antique, my waders were not leaking. With my knees dry, I could fret about the trout: a pleasure I have rarely had in recent seasons.

So there I was, in a high dither, thinking in low language, catching nothing. The scene is still vivid. I was afraid the Cornell crew coach would throw me out of the first freshman eight for going fishing during practice again. (He did.) It wouldn't be so bad if I could catch another seventeen-inch brown, as I had when I missed practice on opening day. The rising fish might well be that big.

I seem to recall that my fly was a Grey Fox; the name made it a favorite. And the opulence of my dressings rivaled a peacock's posterior. The remarkable thing is that the trout was not terrified.

The reason he was not terrified, it turned out, was that he was not looking up. His tail was making the disturbance. To find out, I had to sneak around through the trees and crawl to the bank, waders dragging on the pine cones. (No wonder I spring leaks.) From close up, I could not avoid seeing what I should have noticed from a distance: a broad tail emerging occasionally as the trout grubbed on the bottom for -- what? Snails?

Stonefly nymphs? Ephemerellas heading for the shallows? Not that I would have had an imitation. My only nymph at the time was one of Hewitt's, and it had the single virtue of sinking fast. The trout took it after several casts. I struck too slowly and merely pricked the fish. He shot off upstream.

Instead of a tailing trout to console me for my demotion from the first boat, I had to go looking for a certain coed. And the hell of it is that I can't even begin to remember her name. The only thing I really learned is not to mistake a tail for the real thing. Never. Well, hardly ever.

\* \* \* \* \*

If you can stand a more edifying example, we could look at Ireland again. I would not know where to duplicate this one in America, but it works any warm summer evening on the good Irish limestone rivers.

A late-June evening on the Nore, for example, is an exercise in trout hieroglyphics. The rise may begin while the sun is still on the water, for there are a lot of hungry, medium-sized trout, averaging from a half-pound to a pound in weight. Kilkenny limestone makes the water fertile enough to produce good hatches, but the stream looks more like a typical fast-water river.

The banks are wooded in long stretches -- which is unusual for Ireland -- and an American would expect a substantial fall of terrestrials from the leaves.

He would usually be disappointed. Believers in "a good general pattern of fly" might also want to try one. It could be presented to perhaps a hundred rising fish in an evening. If one in the hundred should take, the angler would be doing well.

At this time of the day and year, the fly that brings the browns up is the B.W.O. -- the famous blue-winged olive of chalk-stream literature. Anyone familiar with the fly would know where to start, but a bit of local knowledge is a help.

At first, most of the scattered rises do not break the water, though this can be remarkably difficult to

see -- especially if the angler has been misled by the sight of a few scattered duns and spinners on the surface. The rises are in fact to B.W.O. nymphs, and the trout may continue dashing around after them for more than an hour, with increasing frequency. The right artificial nymph, fished an inch under the surface, is accepted readily. When the sun is off the water, however, the angler may get several refusals in a row. If he looks closely, he will then notice that the rises are actually breaking the surface. They are small but quick. I think of them as "excited," but that supposes I know what is in the trouts' minds. I do not.

I do know, however, that a delicate red-brown-bodied spinner is now coming down the stream, pale wings glinting and tumbled at all angles. The best representation of the sherry (B.W.O.) spinner seems to have sparse, flat, wings made of spread hackle-fibers in the palest blue or ginger. This is the best fishing of the evening, and the artificial is taken solidly by unsuspecting fish. The angler may find, all the same, that he must cover a fish several times, till his fly catches the trout in the right part of its cruising pattern and rhythm.

The sherry spinners end too soon, like other good ephemeral things, and the daylight with them. But

there is still time to change flies. If the rise is now a deeper, less frequent swirl, the best guess is a B.W.O. dun -- especially if a few of them can be seen struggling along the water and flying heavily for the sheltering trees. On the other hand, if there are several violent rises that throw up small spouts of water, it may be better to knot on a bulky sedge at once and hope for the two or three best fish of the evening. Of the rise-forms that have common names, the "slashing" rise to the sedge is one of the most apt. Trout do not always rise to sedges in this way, but when they do, it is easy to recognize.

#### Rise-Forms

For a fisherman, one of the most important things about insects is the way trout take them. It would be fascinating to work on a complete catalog of rises. G. E. M. Skues is again the pioneer thinker along these lines; Eric Taverner added to his ideas. Marinaro's latest book (In The Ring of the Rise) is by far the best contribution yet. It is based on unparalleled observation, and proves its points with the most remarkable trout-fishing photographs ever taken. Marinaro has opened a new door, and there is a big room behind it.

Skues' work helped me mainly by giving something to think about; most of my trout seem to make rise-forms different from those he described. Or perhaps a "kidney-shaped swirl" does not look the same to me. In fact, trout in different rivers appear to make different rises even where the insect is the same. Certainly the rise-form varies with the size of the trout, the depth of the water, and the speed of the water -- as well as with behavior of the trout.

Nevertheless, watching the rise-form is a help.

At a minimum, it tells whether or not an individual trout accepts an imitation with confidence. If the trout changes its rise for the artificial, the deception was not complete, and the angler can start thinking again. Was it a bit of drag that put the fish off, or is the imitation weak or the tippet too stout? When there is any consistent variation between the rise to the natural and artificial, a lot more trout are likely to be missed, so the question is not merely academic.

The rise-form can tell more than this, however. On a familiar stream, rise-forms are likely to be quite consistent. Even on a strange stream, experience allows

some good guessing. Often some of the following four questions can be answered:

- 1) At what level was the insect taken? If very deep, only a flash under water may be seen. If a little shallower, there will be a visible disturbance. (Occasionally the trout's back-fin or tail may break the surface, and as we have seen, the tailing "rise" is deceptive.) Even when the trout's nose is involved, it can be hard to see whether the rise is just under the surface or in the surface film, but some small break in the water should tell the story. If the insect is riding high, the break is more conspicuous and may leave a bubble. On rare occasions when the trout comes well out of the water for an insect, the result is obvious.
- 2) Is the insect small or large? Usually a very small insect is taken by a gentle "sipping" rise if it is taken on the surface at all. The trout can afford to expend more energy for a large insect, and the rise is likely to be more conspicuous. But not always. One of my best friends was a prosperous trout near

Dublin who took large duns from rippled water so quietly that they seemed simply to disappear.

- 3) Is the insect moving or still? Often the movement of the trout (or the bulge) gives some clue, even when the rise is under water. Catching a moving insect takes a little more work and motion from the trout. The rise to a moving surface insect, in particular, is usually very conspicuous, though trout will occasionally take even a running sedge in a quiet bubble.
- 4) Is the insect likely to escape? Even if it is motionless when taken, there may be a clue if the fish rises "eagerly" -- as if expecting a momentary escape. A fly that can get off the water quickly may thus provoke a rise-form that is more violent than a similar insect which the trout knows from experience to be helpless.

To take a common American example, it is clear whether a trout has taken a grasshopper or an ant, even though both of them are terrestrials that are hopelessly trapped in the surface film. But this is

an easy case. For hard ones, it is worth trying to remember the four basic questions to ask about rise-forms: level, size, motion, and ability to escape.

Of the four questions, the one about level has been the most important in my experience. It is also elusive. There is no mistaking a greendrake rise for the rise at a spent midge, but it is easy to go on fishing a high-riding dun when a hatching dun is needed. This is an excellent way to bore fish completely, or to get only splashy rejection-rises. If a doubtful artificial fly is fished at the right level, there is at least a good chance of catching one fish for a stomach check.

The question of insect size is straightforward and usually easy to see.

Motion is also easier to see than level, but less important in my experience. Trout have no sporting instincts and take a sitting target whenever they have the choice. Sedge pupae and fully-hatched adults can move fast, but cautious trout seem to prefer individuals caught in the surface film. Mayflies move far less: some nymphs (like the greendrake) are active before hatching, but more are not. Duns cannot move much unless there is a high wind, in which case trout are likely to take

them hatching. Ovipositing spinners are taken occasionally, but spent egg-layers are reliable. It is certainly worth watching for motion, but the response to it is a "minor tactic." (Note that this discussion concerns only motion along the water -- not just movement of the body parts of a trapped insect. We cannot imitate that, unfortunately.)

The rise to a fast-escaping insect is also unimportant on the average -- but who cares about the average when faced with a difficult fish? Some sedges, in particular, seem to leave the water like a submarine missile. On a dry, breezy day, even duns get off the water in a hurry. Spinners are agile. When faced with targets that suddenly disappear, trout learn to move decisively. Perhaps this is why a fly placed right by a trout's eye will sometimes induce a rise from a stubborn fish. Personally, I find this approach risky and do not like to try it except as a last resort. Given a few casts, however, I am likely eventually to land the fly too close to the fish by mistake, and sometimes it works.

Some American anglers like to follow a rise through its "natural progression" from nymph to hatching nymph/

dun to fully-emerged dun. This is a very tidy and appealing approach. Unfortunately, it has not worked very often for me. The theory is that trout are induced to look toward the surface by the upward progression of nymphs. In my experience, the fish are just as likely to feed on an insect in its single most vulnerable stage and ignore the rest. It is common, for example, to catch a trout containing only nymphs or duns. Flies which descend to the water, like spinners and terrestrials, are as quick to bring on a rise as flies which ascend from the bottom and hatch. On the other hand, of course, some insects are vulnerable at two or more stages of their life, like the B. W. O. described at the beginning of the chapter. Such "natural-progression" rises are delightful but not to be counted upon. Better to watch the trout for clues instead of counting on any neat rules.