



Sussex Branch Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2009

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGES

ANNUAL DINNER – now **18th April**
STILLWATER CHALLENGE – now **26th July**
SEE STOP PRESS ON BACK PAGE

EVENTS & OUTINGS 2009

As you will have noted from the programme sent with the last newsletter, Paul Davis has once again arranged a superb programme of fishing outings for the coming season. Application forms for these outings arranged for this Summer are enclosed. Please complete and return to the respective organiser as soon as possible as, unless he has your details, he cannot assure you of a place!

Please note cheques will not be presented until 10-14 days before the event

It is essential that the organisers know what support they have for their particular event, so let them know of your interest by April 16th for all events, even if you cannot positively confirm at this time. This is essential, as fisheries need to have cancellations in good time if there are insufficient entries, and we will have to bear the cost if we let them down. Keep an eye on the web-site and newsletter for any dates changes or updates.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

As Membership Secretary I have received several queries regarding the payment of the Branch and main Guild subscriptions. Some confusion has arisen due to the switch by the main Guild to anniversary renewal dates. Having changed our own fixed renewal date some time ago to the 1st September (to coincide with the main Guild!) they are no longer aligned.

Those of you who already pay their subscriptions to both Branch and Guild through me, having joined at the beginning of our tying season, should continue to do so on the 1st September.

Those who pay the Guild direct should pay the Branch subscription only to me on 1st September, quoting their membership numbers.

Those who have a Guild renewal date “mid-season” can either pay the main Guild subscription direct when reminded, or pay it to me as a joint subscription on 1st September and I will forward it to the Guild, who will extend the existing renewal date by 12 months.

If you are still puzzled – let me know!

Roy Gurney

ANNUAL DINNER

18th April 2009 – note change of date

With this newsletter you will find an application form for tickets. Please complete and return to John Burt as soon as possible, or alternatively hand it to Roy Gurney on a Thursday evening (with cheque) in order to book your place.

As usual, we are having it at **The Dyke Golf Club, Seddlescombe Road, Devil's Dyke, Brighton**, 7.30 for 8.00 pm. Dress is lounge suit or smart casual, and tickets are **£24.00** each.

You will note that a choice of menu is on the ticket application form – from past experience all choices are first class!

Our guest speaker this year is Doug Chalmers, who is our splendid host at Ashbourne Fishery, and as usual we will have grand raffle organised by Jim White and Chris Croucher with outstanding prizes and the fishing trophies will be presented to the 2008 winners.

FLY-TYING COMPETITION 2009

Don't forget to get your entries in!

The Intermediate class is open to all who have not won a prize at Intermediate or Open, and anyone can enter for any class above his qualifying level. Closing date for entries is **19th March 2008**.

Folded Wings Made Easier

This year's competition fly is the Teal Blue and Silver which requires a folded teal flank wing. Now if you are anything like me this requires at least one extra pair of hands and even with more hands than an octopus the folding process still misaligns all the tips of feather barbs! I learnt about the following tip/technique to help overcome this problem and whilst I apologise about the quality of the photos (I'm not a photographer) I think they should give enough of an indication about the process being described.

1. Cut the fibres from a teal flank as per normal for a folded wing (three times wider than the final width of wing needed).

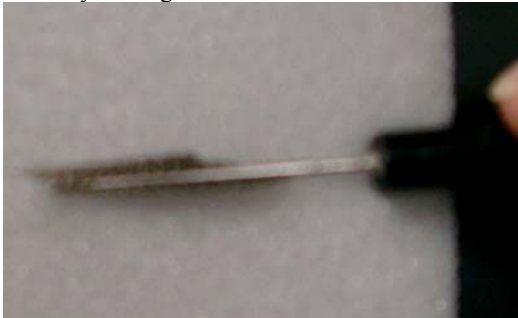


2. Lay the fibres down, with the outside (best surface) face down on a piece of sponge or foam (the soft stuff normally discarded from packaging is perfect).



3. Take a dubbing needle and press down on the feather one third of the way down its width. The foam will compress and the feather will crease naturally bringing one third of the feather on top of the rest.

4. Use your finger to flatten the feather.



5. Repeat the process with the dubbing needle on the edge of the unfolded third of the feather.



(Continued from previous column)

6. The feather has now been folded into thirds with neat creases and no movement of the tips of the feather. Pick up carefully and tie in the folded teal flank wing.

Paul Davis

FISHING RESERVOIRS

We believe that many anglers find the prospect of fishing reservoirs like Bewl Water from a boat very daunting. Following a suggestion by one of our members, Michael Brayne, we are arranging for a discussion table on **Thursday 9th April** when Michael will lead, with other “regulars” at Bewl, and give advice and guidance on things like drogue deployment, lines to use and easy line changes, motor usage and so on. It will be very informal, and will hopefully help those unfamiliar with the joys of this style of fishing to take it up and enjoy a new facet of our sport.

This will run alongside the “trouble shooting” already announced in the tying programme.

TROPHIES

If you are a holder of one of the Branch cups/trophies, would you please return it by 26th March to Roy Gurney in order that it can be engraved with the next recipient's name.

Presentations of the trophies will be made at our End of Season Gathering on 16th April and Annual Dinner on 18th April, so it does not give us long to get the engraving done

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT LINES

Line Maintenance

As a new season's fishing approaches now is the time to give all your tackle a good look over and then carry out any needed maintenance. Look carefully at how you have joined your leader to your line. You will probably use one of three techniques – a needle knot, a braided loop or a whipped loop. The weakest point is where the line is first able to flex without hindrance and here the plastic outer of the line will crack and leave the core exposed. Not only is this a weak point but it will also impair the way the leader turns over at the end of your cast. Cut back to good line and refit your leader.

Also be aware that any glues or varnishes used in joining your line will gradually become stiffer and then crack. Again, remake the joint and use as little superglue as possible.

Now take the line off the reel and give a good clean and then a wipe over with a silicone based polish (I use “Turtle Wax Cockpit, Bumper and Tyre Shine”). Next, check the join between fly line and backing and also the state of the backing itself. Finally remember that the greatest enemy of most plastics is ultra-violet radiation from the Sun so store all your lines and leader material in a light proof container

John Plowman.

Cyril Bennett

Our January speaker provided a very informative insight in to the workings and aims of the Riverfly Partnership. It was evident that their work is essential if we are to enjoy good fishing in our rivers, and indeed in stillwaters and reservoirs too.

It was nice to have a keen fly-fisherman who can relate to our sport giving an erudite explanation of the problems facing our invertebrate friends, whose well-being is essential for the environment and continued health of our rivers and waters.

Usually the first to spot any pollution or other danger to the river and environment is the angler on the water, and can often identify immediately the effect on the invertebrate life. This in turn enables the Environment Agency to follow up on any contamination, as often the toxic water clears rapidly, leaving little other trace of the damage caused.

A few of our members are already involved in the monitoring of invertebrates, but there is much more

that can be done – details of some opportunities are detailed below.

Riverfly Partnership - Anglers Monitoring Initiative (AMI) workshop - Hampshire

Location: Leckford, near Stockbridge, Hampshire
Dates: One day workshops on 16th (fully booked), 17th, 23rd and 24th May 2009
Tutors: Cyril Bennett, Warren Gilchrist, Peter Francis
Cost: £35 per person (subsidized fee)
Participants: This one-day course is restricted to groups committed to participating in the biological monitoring of their local rivers, mostly within the Thames and Southern regions. However, new members of established monitoring groups outside these areas are especially welcome, plus those interested to establish and coordinate a monitoring programme on their stretch of river. There will be a ratio of 1 tutor to 3 participants.
Booking: Roy Gurney has application forms available or you can book a place on the workshop by contacting:
Warren Gilchrist, John Spedan Lewis Trust for the Advancement of the Natural Sciences, email: gilchrist@our-home.meuk tel: 01252622803.
Early booking is advised as places are strictly limited.
If you require further information on the Riverfly Partnership and the AMI contact Bridget Peacock email info@riverflies.org

John Spedal Lewis Trust for the Advancement of Natural Sciences

“Basic entomology for fly fishers: an introduction to the identification and imitation of the natural insect”

Location: Leckford, near Stockbridge, Hampshire
Date: 4th and 5th July 2009
Tutors: Cyril Bennett, Warren Gilchrist, Peter Francis
Participants: Individuals interested to learn more about the fly life of their local rivers, their identification and the art of matching the hatch
Cost: £40 per person
Many of those who have attended river fly monitoring courses over the last 10 years have said that they would like to go a bit deeper into the identification of the natural insect, and this course aims to meet that wish. The programme includes: short presentations on the insect groups of importance to anglers, and their identification, with a chance to imitate these flies at the fly dressing bench in the afternoon. There will be a ratio of 1 tutor to 2 participants.
For further information or to book a place: contact Warren Gilchrist, John Spedan Lewis Trust for the Advancement of the Natural Sciences, email: gilchrist@our-home.me.uk tel: 01252 622803.
Early booking is advised as places are strictly limited. Places will be reserved on a first-come, first served basis, and Roy Gurney has application forms available for this also.

Regarding these courses, Phillip Ellis notes:

The River Monitoring course is extremely useful as it demonstrates the methodology to monitor fly life on rivers using a number of target species. It is perhaps more suited to people involved in managing rivers as it is a way of measuring fly life over a number of years. I have done the course with Dr Cyril Bennett and found it very enlightening.
The second course in basic entomology will be useful to all anglers as it will increase their skills in entomology and matching the hatch.
If the courses are full, there is always next year!!

Bad Dog for Char

For those that came to the excellent lecture by Steve Cooper when he spoke about fishing for Arctic Char in Iceland you may remember me asking him about a particular Icelandic fly and did he use it.
The fly in question is a Dyrbytyr (for those whose Icelandic is a bit rusty – it is pronounced ‘Dear Peeter’ and means – and this is an approximate translation – Bad Dog.
Whilst this fly really does the business for Char in Iceland it is also really successful on rainbows in this country especially at this time of year in the colder months. Pink has always been a cold water colour – I’m not sure why.
Here’s the fly and the dressing instructions – enjoy.

- Hook: Any wet fly 2X long shank hook – size 10 or 12
- Thread: Pink
- Head: Brass Bead
- Tail: Tips of pink marabou and a few slivers of silver tinsel.
- Rear Body: Silver Fritz
- Front Body: Pink Suede Chenille
- Hackle: Pink Cock Hackle.



The Dyrbytyr

Paul Davis

SALTWATER FLYFISHING

It has been suggested that we might organize an outing, perhaps to Shoreham power station or the Adur estuary, to try fly-fishing for bass. Of course this will be dependent on tides and weather, but we will be liaising with our salt water experts how to best set this up. Watch this space!

Impish Emergers

I have to admit I am a complete fly tying materials tart. I have ultimate admiration for those tyers who stay “no I don’t need this new ‘must-have’ material”. As soon as I see something different my mind goes in to overdrive and I want to get to the vice ASAP to see how I can incorporate it into a fly. I have to admit it is not just restricted to official materials for sale and I am always eyeing up my friends and family’s pets, carpets, packaging etc for that new wonder material. Fortunately I recognise the symptoms of my disease (which has been classified and named as Flytyer’s Eye*) and recognise that the cure is regular trips to the tackle shop to stock up on materials. Now fortunately (or unfortunately from my wife’s perspective) I walk past Grangers tackle shop on my way home from work in South Kensington and am only 10 minutes drive from Pete Cockwill’s shop in Albury. It was on one of my weekly visits to Pete’s shop (or if my wife is reading this yearly visit) that I noticed he had a couple of packages of Impala hide. I don’t need to say much more other than money changed hands and I left with some Impala.

Now for you older tyers (or American tyers) impala used to be the name given to calf tail hair. However this impala is from the genuine antelope variety from Africa (*Aepyceros melampus* if you want to be precise about it).

Hair of African mammals is rarely used in fly tying and this, as much as anything is probably due to fly tyers being predominately from the developed countries of the northern hemisphere and therefore their lack of access to these materials rather than their suitability for fly tying.



A female impala (Aepyceros melampus) – note the black “M” on the rump and tail – a good field identification tip.

All hair has different properties and as fly tiers we have exploited this in innumerable patterns especially the hair of species in Northern Europe and North America. Species of Deer, Elk, Moose form the staple heart of our hair based dry fly patterns and using the hair from these species to create hair wings are nothing new. The elk hair caddis being a particularly good pattern for overall shape and ‘floatability’ and the Deer hair based Sedgemoor and Halfhog (Buzz Lightyear or Hogwarts of some authors) also being particular favourites of mine.

Whilst getting to grips with the feel of the impala hair – it became clear that as a hot climate species there are fundamental differences that can be

exploited as a tyer. Firstly impala has no underfur (the down fluff-like fur that has to be combed out when using deer hair etc) – basically living in the heat on the Veldt in southern Africa doesn’t require a second level of insulation provided by the underfur.



An impala hide – notice the grading of colour from the dark brown at the spine to the light fawn at the flank.

This adaptation to warmer climate also gives the fur another property in that each individual hair is near to parallel as possible. If you look at say Moose hair you can really see the taper on individual hairs – this is again needed for insulation, with the wider at the base hairs providing a denser and warmer coat next to the skin.

It is this fine nature of the impala hair caused by it tapering very steadily that provides some nice properties to the tyer. This fineness allows the hair to take the form of the body it is tied to without the manic splaying and spinning seen in deer hair etc. This means that very precise and shaped hair wings can be created.

I have been messing about and creating various emerger patterns using fine wire shrimp hooks (Kamasan B100’s) and flexifloss for the abdomen and seals fur for the thorax. When I put the impala hair onto this as the wing the final result didn’t look too bad. Various colours and shades of abdomen and thorax were tried along with the various shades of brown that can be found as you travel from the spine area (dark brown) on the impala hide towards the flanks (very light fawn).

I have cast these flies in ‘anger’ both on the Upper Ouse for Brownies and on the Test for Grayling and both times they were very successful – especially when caddis flies were hatching.

Hook:	Kamasan B100
Thread:	Uni Thread 8/0 Camel
Abdomen:	2 different colour strands of flexifloss wound together and slowly releasing the tension as you reach the thorax
Thorax:	Seals fur blended to suit colours of the abdomen
Wing:	Impala hair
Head:	Built up with thread to give the impression of an emerging head

If you fancy getting some impala to try out this fur then give Pete Cockwill a ring on 01483 205196 or pop into his shop in Albury (the pieces I bought were about £3.50 for a 3 in x 4 in square).



A black and claret emerger with a brown impala hair



A red and green emerger with a fawn impala hair



An oblique view to show how the impala hair forms a lovely semi-circular wing

I would also like to thank Colin Spicer, Secretary of the Surrey FDG branch for taking the excellent photos of the flies.

* Extract from 'The Doctor will see you now' by Mike Harding in "Fly Fishing & Fly Tying" page 47, December 2008:-

"Flytyer's Eye (*Oculusitis mosca*): A condition whereby the sufferer finds it impossible to pass anything furry, feathery, made of wire, glass or plastic without wondering whether he or she can make a fly out of it: pearls of the bridesmaid's dress, whiskers off the cat, fur off a spaniel's ear, feathers of the budgie (we now have a flightless bird)..."*mea culpa* to them all.

Paul Davis

Editor's note:

Some time ago the Branch was presented with a complete hide of a springbok. Whilst it is not the same animal, it is not too dissimilar to the impala. I am sure there are some pieces of this hide around (I may even have some myself) so if anyone is

interested in trying out Paul's flies using this, let me know, and I'll try to track down the necessary. I would also like to thank Paul for his excellent articles (long may he keep them up!) which have brightened up this newsletter.

How about some of you others brushing up your latent talent and sending in some pieces?

POWDERMILL

In case anyone is interested, we received a report from one of the members there to say he fished on 17th January, but had to leave by 3pm, having had no success. However, just as he left, the fish came on feeding. The previous day trout to 2lb 14oz were taken on Diawl Bach. He suggests for the time being it might be best to plan an afternoon visit, fishing till dusk.

He did add a rider: don't be tempted to test the new waders you got from Santa as the water is still very cold!

Spring Flyfishing Show Newark - 28th February

Mike Wheeler is hiring a mini-bus on behalf of Surrey Branch to get to 'The Spring Flyfishing Show' at Newark on Saturday 28th February. This should be of great interest with lots of high-profile international flydressers and lots of tackle bargains as the trade dump last seasons stock! More details can be found at www.thespringflyfishingshow.com Cost will depend on numbers but would be somewhere between £17 and £22 per person. The minibus will leave from either Woking or near the M25.

As Mike is a member of our Branch too, and there are 4 or 5 seats still available, these are offered on a first come, first served basis to members of Sussex branch. Please let Mike know as soon as possible if you would like to go on this trip. A non-refundable deposit of £10 is required by the 9th February.

Mike's contact details are:

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Bullbeggars Lane,
Horsell,
Surrey, GU21 4SB
Tel. 01483 826135
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STOP PRESS

Additional Speaker **Tuesday – 24th February**

We have been fortunate to have been able to obtain the legendary **Jim Teeny**, the renowned US fly fisherman and fly-tyer, famous for his Teeny Nymphs and numerous articles on both subjects. Jim is on a brief visit to the UK and we are proud to have been able to persuade him to come and visit, thanks to the “Surrey Mafia” of Paul Davis and Peter Cockwill.

You will see we have had to book an extra evening for this, and hope to see you all – members and non-members – **ALL are welcome!**

The venue is the usual – **Patcham Community Centre, Ladies Mile Road, Patcham, Brighton, BN1 8TA**

Time: 8.00 pm sharp – doors open 7.30.



Just in case you've forgotten what a Teeny Nymph (or in this case Teeny Leech) is!

More amendments to the programme

Due to a clash of booking at the Centre, the **Second Auction** (tackle, reels, rods etc) will now be on **Tuesday 3rd November 2009.**

Thursday 9th April – as mentioned in the newsletter, there will be a discussion table on “Fishing Reservoirs” for those interested but unsure of how to do it. This is additional to any fly tying that evening.

And just to reconfirm:

ANNUAL DINNER – now **18th April** - note price is now £24 per head.

STILLWATER CHALLENGE – **now 26th July**

It may also be necessary to juggle the dates of speakers for 2009/10 to fit in with travelling schedules, etc, and this will be done by adjusting the tying evenings back or forward as necessary.