



Sussex Branch Newsletter



February 2015

AUCTION 16TH April 2015

Preparation of the catalogue for this event is now under way, so get your redundant tackle, unwanted Christmas presents and any fishing related items ready now. Entry forms can be downloaded from the website www.sussexflydressers.org.uk (hard copies available on request) and should be submitted by **16th March** either by post to:

Roy Gurney
29 Capel Avenue
Peacehaven BN10 8NB

or by e-mail to
fdgsussex@capel29.plus.com

More about the Auction

We will be holding our Spring combined Fishing Tackle and Fly-tying Material Auction on the evening of 16th April 2015 at the Patcham Community Centre as usual.

A start has already been made on the catalogue which will be available about two weeks prior to the event, and we invite you to enter your entries of either sort for sale, by e-mail to fdgsussex@capel29.plus.com or mail to Roy Gurney, 29 Capel Avenue, Peacehaven, BN10 8NB

Please get your lots in by the closing date which is **16th March** (or earlier if sufficient lots received) as the catalogue is produced on a "first come, first served" basis.

When listing your entries, please lump smaller items together, so that, in theory, nothing should sell for less than £5. The costs of running the auction means that we need each lot to sell for over £3 just to break even. One of the ironies is that books do not reach their real value (in recent auctions the average price has been £1-2) so be warned! It is however good for buyers!

To get the best price for your items it may be necessary to restrict the number of lots in each category to achieve a balanced auction.

For those who have not used our auction before, the Branch deducts 10% of the hammer price for members. Once items have been accepted for the catalogue, we will send you pre-written labels with lot numbers and description of the lot, and you should label your lots accordingly and bring them in on the auction night between 6 pm and 6.45 to enable viewing at 7 pm.

One final point – we are a small club of some 80 members, so we need to attract both members and non-members to make the auction viable. With that in mind we will be contacting fisheries and clubs throughout Sussex to publicise the auction.

However, you can help by telling all your angling friends to come along for an entertaining evening with some bargains to be had!

Now get rummaging in your tackle box (or room) and weed out those surplus items of tackle or fly-tying materials and get some cash to buy some more and help the Branch at the same time.

Ally's Shrimp *et al*

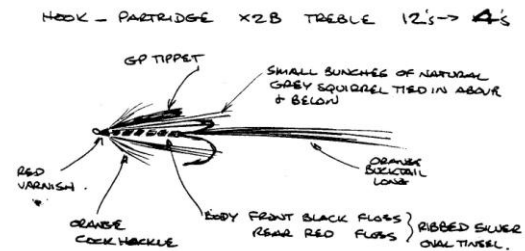
Here's one for you salmon fly addicts!

I came across a copy of a letter to dear old Albert Horne from the originator of the Ally's Shrimp, Alastair Gowans, some 24 years ago which may be of interest to anyone keen on authenticity (or just going fishing).

Luncarty, 22-08-91

Thanks for your letter regarding the dressing for Ally's Shrimp fly. It was first used on the Tay here at Scone and saved a blank by catching the only four fish of the beat that day – if has now become the only fly that many locals use. Several tyers are simplifying the dressing by putting in the grey squirrel only on the top & using an all red body. My original dressing is as shown on the next page and can be produced in a variety of colours although the original orange is best with red & purple perhaps next followed by black.

ORIGINAL DRESSING ALLY'S SHRIMP -

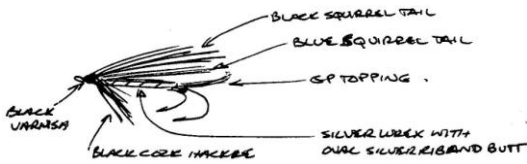


I have enclosed a sample (tied on a Wilson double because you're using doubles) which may be useful although I do not consider myself to be a fly tyer – just a fisherman.

Can't help you with Blue Elver – never had any success with it here and don't know anyone who has – except in Iceland. If

you can't get feathers suggest you do Collie Dogs they're probably better anyway!

I have just got another dressing which may be another alternative - "Patsy Mary"



Please excuse the scribble, hope this helps Kind regards
Alastair D Gowans

45th Sussex FDG AGM

The 45th Sussex FDG Branch AGM took place on the 8th January 2015 with 27 members turning out.

The Chairman highlighted the iFISH Show and its contribution to both Branch membership and funds, together with the Auction evening and its valuable benefit to the Branch, its members and attendees. He also acknowledged that the Branch has the only five awarded Gold Level accreditation in the country. This is a testament to the commitment of all who participate in the Branch tying programmes.

The secretary advised the balance of this year's programme of events and advised that shortly the newsletter will have all the outing dates available for the membership to attend. These start in February and run through to December 2015.

Our Treasurer stated the healthy position of Branch funds, the income from iFISH and Auctions bolstering these figures. He advised that we would not be charging for tying nights through this season and a result of this position. He clarified that the largest spend is our speaker nights which remain fairly well attended. Our membership has dropped and there was a request for all members to try and promote the Branch to new people in their travels, at shows and at every opportunity.

Items discussed and actions that came out of the AGM were:

- Andy Steer and Wayne Duerden stood down from Committee. Andy will remain as our newsletter editor
- John Cooper, Nigel Winter and Seana Clougher-Hopper volunteered to join the Committee
- Options would be looked at to run the Annual Dinner again
- The Hog Roast in July would have vegetarian options on the menu
- John Plowman has offered tying workshops on the spare Thursday night tables – advice to follow
- The members voted Ray Love be awarded the Jonathan Glover Trophy
- Alan Middleton was the recipient of the Albert Horne Memorial Trophy

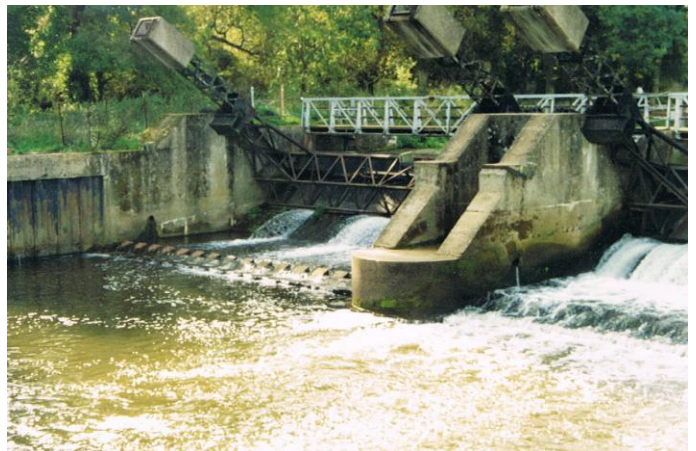
The Committee comprises Tony Woolnough, Paul Bond, Roy Gurney, Bill Black, Seana Clougher-Hopper, John Cooper, Paul Davis, Nigel Duckworth, Ian Dunk, Tony Harrison, Jon Mouncey, Dave Painter, Bill Smith and Nigel Winter

Chairman's Chat

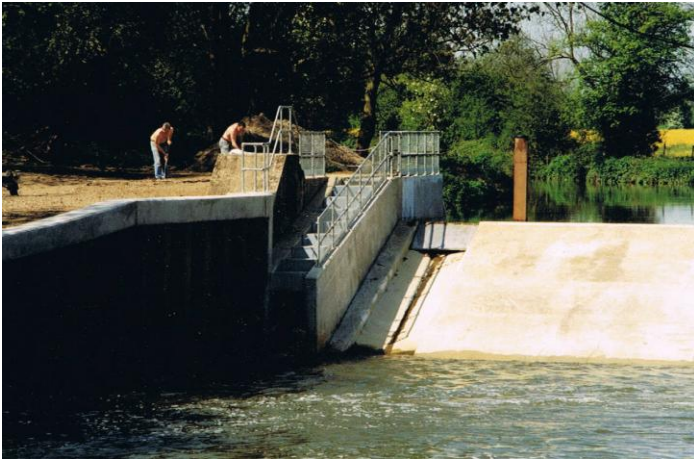
Many of our projects involve the refurbishment of old structures which are in need of updating. As with most things, a simple replacement is not appropriate, the basic requirements have changed. An example of this process is the refurbishment of a water level control structure on the River Medway, which we worked on a few years ago.

The structure was designed to maintain water levels upstream for boating and navigation and open when floods occurred. The control structure contained radial gates with counter balances which were undershot when in operation. Radial gates have the benefit of the hinges being accessible above water making maintenance both easier and safer. The disadvantages are that when the gates open (raise) flows beneath the gate can draw debris in jamming the gate open. In addition the debris problem required constant maintenance and often specialist lifting equipment to deal with floating trees. As flows recede the partially open gate leaks water causing low water problems upstream. In addition the high velocity jets beneath the gate prevent any fish which were able to ascend the downstream slope of the structure from migrating upstream. No provision was made for canoe passage. It follows that the structure formed a complete block to migrating fish, in this case sea trout and elvers.

The solution was to replace the gate by a weir to carry out the water retention duties as well as providing flood flow capacity. The weir allowed a fish and elver pass (as you expected !) to be provided as well as a facilities for canoes. The canoe chute also acted as a by wash channel, allowing smolts and kelts to migrate to the sea downstream in safely. A temporary cover is on the upstream end of the canoe chute.



The completed fish facilities show a Denil fish pass and resting pool with a brush elver pass following the line of the fish pass but at a higher level.



The low velocity of the water in the pass was illustrated when fry were observed swimming up and down the pass enjoying the turbulence.

Tony W

Ian Mackenzie

Our February speaker was the ex-CEO of Fulling Mill, and is now a regular on the fly-tying circuit. He regaled us with a number of his flies which were outstanding in their combined simplicity and realism.

However one pattern of his, the Grey Boy (which also reminded me of the Footballer), triggered a recollection from the past of a “Grey Boy”. Research found the following article from a previous newsletter, but the timing seems right to repeat it.

The author is of course our star Beginners Instructor and the tale emphasises the way patterns develop, and how entomology plays such a role in our sport.

The April Silver (The Grey Boy)



by Alan Chamberlain

In April of the 2002 season, whilst fishing at my local Society lake, I was chatting with a fellow angler who had earlier caught, killed and spooned a rainbow trout. He had deposited the result of the spooning on a nearby fence post. What caught my eye when I examined the debris of insect parts were two small nymphs, still alive and struggling in the intestinal ooze. Unlike most nymphs that I had seen with body colours in various hues of brown or green, these had silver-grey bodies with prominent orange wing buds and, unlike the *Ephemeroptera* family, were arched down-wards.

I took one home, still alive, and made an actual size drawing, noting the colour and shape. I also made two flies copying the natural as nearly as possible. These were deposited in a fly-box where, despite subsequent visits to the lake, they resided until one early Spring morning in April 2004 when I revisited the lake, full of excited anticipation.

Two desperate hours later, after trying every likely fly in my box, I began to wonder whether the delights of knitting or perhaps Morris dancing might provide a more satisfying way of passing time. A further plunge into my flybox revealed, buried under a mess of fur and feathery things, the still virginal 2002 nymphs.

I tied one on as a dropper, leaving a pheasant tail on the point. I cast, and the take was immediate - a brownie of about a pound had taken the 2002 nymph. Over the next hour or so I landed and released 2 further browns and 3 rainbows all on the same fly and this despite a number of changes to the point fly. My next trip produced much the same result although I lost both flies - one to a trout and one to a tree. Thankfully my drawings and notes were still intact and I was therefore able to replenish my stock.

That should be the end of the saga, but it isn't – sorry!!

I was working on our stand at this year's South of England Show (2004) with Peter Buss and Roy Gurney (well, somebody has to) and was boring them with the foregoing yarn. I showed them my nymph, whereupon Roy took it to a neighbouring Entomology Stand run by Dr. Richard Osmond. Much entomological investigation as to the species ensued over the remaining Show days and was continued afterward between Richard and Roy over the e-mail. Finally the veil was lifted. My little nymph turned out to be the pupa of the Grey Boy midge, part of the *Chironomus Plumosus* group of aquatic flies which hatch, often prolifically, during the day in April and early May.

Furthermore, Richard found reference to it, with fine photographs of the larva, pupa and adult fly in John Goddard's “Waterside Guide”, a copy of which I now own and recommend to every flytyer.

In thinking about a name, it seemed appropriate in all the circumstances to dub my nymph The April Silver. Try it early

next season, fishing it almost stationary. I'd be really interested to hear how you fare.

The tying is simple and the materials are as follows:-

Hook: Mustad Shrimp/Caddis Size 12
Thread : Black or red
Tail: 2/3 Pheasant tail fibres tied short (3-4mm)
Body: Silver grey floss
Ribbing: Black or red tying thread
Wing-case: Orange goose biots
Thorax: Peacock herl

Note: The short tails are hidden behind the blue clip in the photograph.

RG

OUSE VALLEY SUSSEX FLY FISHERS

Some of our members are already in the OVSFF, but others may also be interested to also join a welcoming & local fly fishing club

We meet once a month or so for a fishing day or for a fly tying or speaker evening (*the latter unfortunately usually on a Thursday evening!*).

Our fishing excursions are many and varied taking us to waters such as Arlington, Bewl and Powdermill, to small waters in Sussex, Kent and Hampshire, to the sea to fly fish for bass and sometimes further afield to rivers such as the Itchen for grayling and larger stillwaters such as Hanningfield and Eyebrook.

We also have other regular social events including an annual Christmas dinner.

Our members have a wide range of experience ranging from beginners to ex-England Internationals.

With the emphasis on camaraderie and the enjoyment of a varied fly fishing calendar, our members are dedicated to helping each other by sharing ideas and knowledge.

Membership is only £12 a year, which includes a regular newsletter.

For more information please contact our membership secretary Martyn Gray at ovsf@live.co.uk or the club secretary Des Watson at desw@sussex.ac.uk or on 01273 813103).

Guild Bank Competition

Also attached are the details and entry forms for the Guild Bank Competition at Elinor. This was detailed in the *Flydresser* and if any of you would like to go and perhaps make up a Branch team of three, let Roy Gurney know on

01273 581519 or at fdgsussex@capel29.plus.com so he can put you in touch with others to co-ordinate entries.

Outings for 2015

We have now finalised most of our outings for this year and request that you fill in the entry forms attached and get them to the organisers as soon as you have got them in your diaries. Some great days ahead and your full support to the organisers will be appreciated.



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