

WIND KNOTS

OCTOBER 1989

OCTOBER MEETING

Date: October 24, 1989

Place: The Apollo Room
Travelodge Tower
2828 Southwest Fwy.
(Kirby Exit)

Time: 7:00 p.m.
Fit To Be Tied:
The Matuka.

7:30 Main Program:
Jim Dailey, TP&WD
fisheries biologist and
fly fishing fanatic, on
fishing the coastal
flats for redfish and
speckled trout. This is
a must-attend meeting
for anyone who fishes
or wants to fish Texas
salt water.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Leonard Hulsebosch and Austin lobbyist Ken Kramer of the Texas Rivers Protection Association presented a slide show of our state's beautiful rivers and a discussion of the legislation this group is trying get through the Legislature. The legislation would protect certain stretches of ecologically and historically important streams and rivers from reservoir construction, channelization and stream realignment. The legislation passed the Senate in this past term, but was kept from a floor vote in the House, where it had a wide margin of support, by some good ol' Texas political hanky-panky. Things look better for getting it passed in the next session.

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Entry fee per angler is \$25, which includes malt beverages Friday and Saturday evenings, plus a barbecue Saturday night. Call GCCA, 626-4222, or Corey Rich, 960-1614, for more info.

TFF CASTING CONTEST AND FISH FRY

Here's an outing the whole family will enjoy. On Sunday, November 5 at 11:30 a.m. we'll gather at Forrest Hill Community Park, 4 mi. south of Conroe, for fun and games and fine, fine food.

There will be novice and advanced distance and accuracy casting contests. By 2:30 p.m. you'll be ravenously hungry and will enjoy Jim Sims's outstanding fried catfish, hush puppies, cold slaw, corn, and pops of the barley and soda variety. The cost for all this fun and excitement? A mere pittance: \$7 for adults, kids 12 and under free.

If you didn't already sign up at the September meeting, please call Jim Sims, 668-0212, ASAP. He needs to know how many catfish to gig. And he'll send you a map.

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- Mitch Whitney tells how to unstick the stuck.
- Herb Penning urges us into the front lines.
- Capt. Corey highlights the member survey results.
- Norm Crook teaches the Tri-Point Hair Wing Dun.

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OUTINGS

by *Bev Edwards*

The aspen trees turn yellow, then red in late September on the slopes of the Medicine Bow Mountains in southern Wyoming. The wind shifts to the north, and the mornings are cold and crisp. The North Platte River flows to the north out of Colorado's Routt and Roosevelt National Forests into Wyoming. Water trickles down from the Park Mountain Range in the Zirkel Wilderness of Routt National Forest and from the Medicine Bow Mountains to form the mighty North Platte as it enters Wyoming. It is a big river, clear and low in September, and it is mostly deserted.

The North Platte in Wyoming is a catch and release fly fishing stream from the Colorado border some 60 miles downstream to the town of Saratoga. It flows through the Medicine Bow Wilderness for many of these miles. It is a wild stream, clear, broad and rocky. No fish are stocked in this stretch. It is all wild rainbow and brown trout.

The song of the river was too strong to ignore this fall, so a few of our members pulled on their waders and stumbled into its waters. Herb Holchak, Lonnie Davis and Bev Edwards spent their first day on the Treasure Island section near Plattoga Ranch. This is a wide, slow section of river with deep pools. It is less than 10 miles upstream from the town of Saratoga and too easy to reach. There were several cars parked at the end of the road by the river bank. There were a few good rises in the evening, some nice strikes, but nothing to brag about.

The next day we went farther upstream to fish a five mile stretch known as the Bennett Peak Access, on Bureau of Land Management property. After we left the main highway, there

were 19 miles of dirt road to reach the river and few ventured to this rugged place. The river flowed through a big canyon, with only two places to wade into the river in five miles. Each of us landed a 15 inch rainbow and an assortment of 13 and 14 inch browns. They were strong, wild fish and good fighters. Big nymphs fished close to the bottom worked well in the morning, and grasshopper flies fished dry nailed the browns in the afternoon. The local grasshoppers were racing their motors along the hillsides next to the river all afternoon, and a few landed in the river to be gulped by the trout. This was a good day of fishing. We came out of the mountains in the late afternoon to slurp a cold beer at the Mangy Moose Saloon in Riverside, Wyoming. We met the town drunk and the beautiful bar maid who claimed she had a husband in Florida, but had no rings on her fingers. That's another story.

Each day we went higher up the watershed of the North Platte and further into the Medicine Bow Wilderness. We hiked in each morning from the end of the road with day packs containing our tackle and lunch. Deep in the canyon we discovered a big hatch of #22 Blue Quill flies at mid-morning each day. We didn't have a match in our fly boxes. We used #16 Adams and #18 Tricots as a fair substitute and started taking rainbows, but they were very picky. In the afternoon a larger hatch came off, which a #12 Adams covered. By the fourth day we were boulder climbing because we had run out of trail. The rougher the climb, the better the fishing, and no people. The only tracks I saw were mountain lion tracks. Maybe I had gone far enough. Many miles of this river have no jeep roads or trails for access. The trout seem to like that.

Finally we just got tired of catching big trout all day and eating chicken fried steak at

Mom's Cafe every night in Saratoga. We decided to head for a big town and a change. We went south into Colorado for a tour of the ski run at Steamboat Springs and then through Rocky Mountain National Park to Estes Park. We figured that this tourist town would end the fishing. We checked into the Hobby Horse Motor Inn for rest and creature comforts. The owner asked us if we would like to fish in the mega-motel's private trout pond. This one acre pond is heavily stocked for the summer tourists with 10 to 15 inch rainbows, and they are fed fish pellets daily. But the tourist season ended several weeks earlier and so did the daily feeding. The owner said the pond would freeze solid in the winter, and so would the fish. Would we be willing to catch the hungry trout for him and turn them all in at the front desk so his wife could freeze them for winter dinners? When he handed us an ice chest and asked us to fill it with trout, we were puzzled. We stumbled down to the deserted pond and started casting wet flies. They hit any dark nymph or wet fly. We turned in a full ice chest that evening, and the Montana nymph produced a full plastic trash basket of fat rainbows the next morning. This was ridiculous. We were trying to get away from trout fishing, and instead we turned pro.

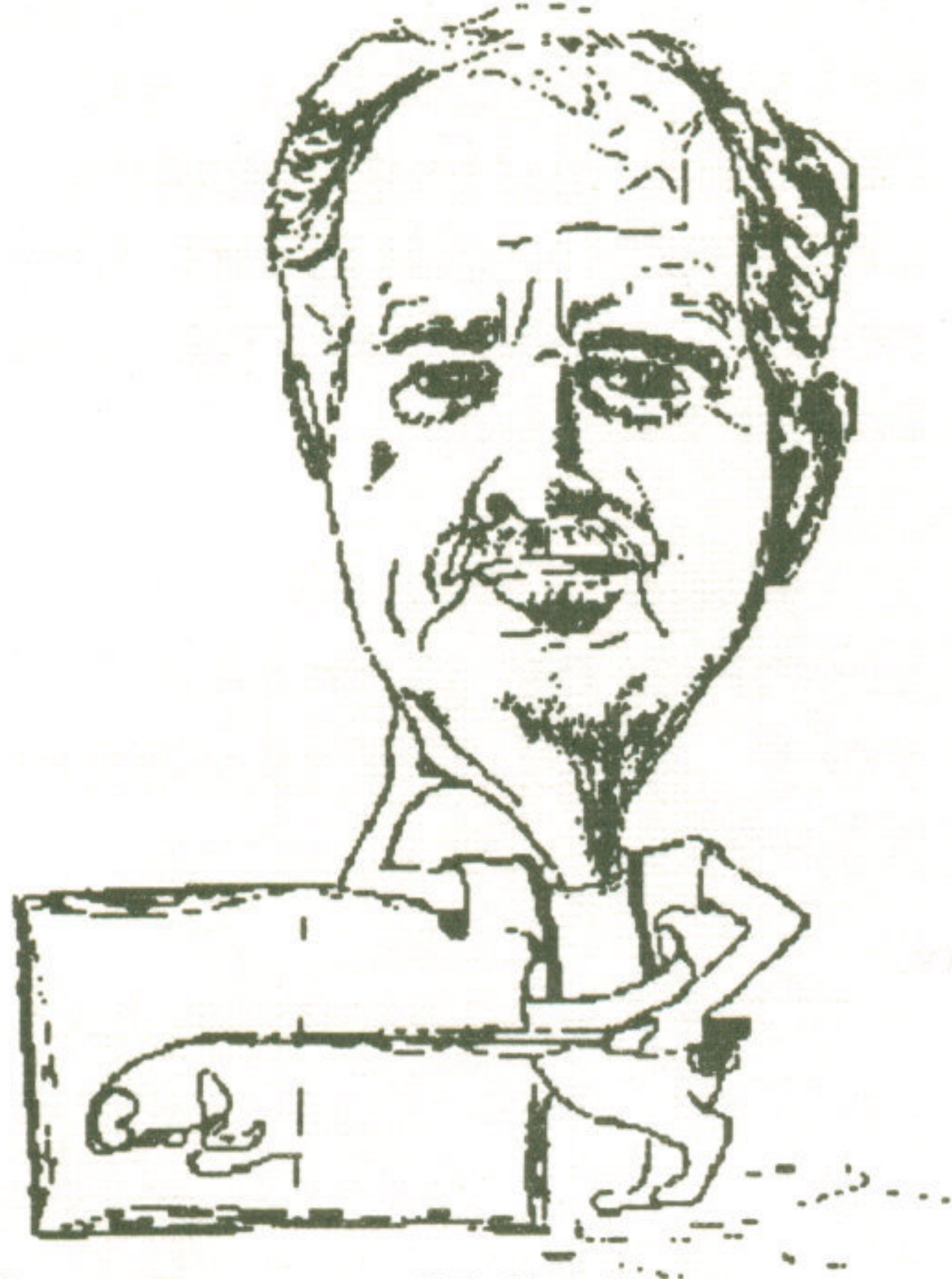
If you are a purist, try the North Platte River in Wyoming next fall. If you are a meat hog, stop at the Hobby Horse Motor Inn.

TYING TIPS

by *Mitch Whitney*

Just came off the stream and the hackles of all those beautiful dry flies are slimed and stuck together? Get a stream of steam going from your tea kettle. Hold the fly about 4" from the kettle using forceps or pliers. The hackles will fluff right back to their original condition.

BOOKS



by John T. Hannah

Quiet Magic, by Sam Cook. Pfeifer-Hamilton, Publisher.

It is a good writer who can make you nostalgic about places you've never been.

I have a few tenuous roots in Minnesota, which is the locale of most of Sam Cook's stories. My father once lived and worked in Duluth, and I caught my first fish while visiting a Fergus Falls uncle. All that was long ago and is not much of a connection with Cook's outdoor stomping grounds.

Cook says that he was lured away from his Kansas home to live in northern Minnesota -- he calls the country "Up North" and wrote a previous book with that title. He was lured there by stories and photos he'd seen and visits he'd made. But he says you can't really know a country until you've lived there, experienced all the seasons, the scenes, the scents of the place all woven together. Maybe not, but this book of sketches and yarns gives the reader a good whiff of what northern Minnesota is.

One thing it is, is cold. There are a lot of cold stories. In one, Cook mentions the "first cool day of winter," not at all facetiously, and says it was thirty below. There are warm-weather chapters, but ice fishing and

cross-country skiing tales predominate. My father thought Duluth so cold that he decided to move straight south as far as he could; that took him to Galveston.

Cook has put his finger on the word that best describes our emotions as we walk through a tackle shop at the beginning of a season: lust. The yearning that we have for all those rods and reels and other things that we don't need is almost carnal.

In another fishing story, Cook quotes a philosophical old-timer. The ancient angler makes the Yogi-Berran observation that fishing is ninety percent luck and five percent know-how. I plan to catch more fish as soon as I can find out what that other five percent is.

Cook describes much north country quiet magic: mist rising from a lake, the passage of a canoe through glassy water, the descent of giant snowflakes. And perhaps his quiet magic is best exemplified by the wonder of aurora borealis.

THE FEDERATION

by Herb Penning

The news is full of stories about breaches of ethics in government and business that place personal or professional gain above good judgment. That means getting an "edge" on others in a less than honorable manner.

If we look at the outdoor experience, the same holds true. There are hunters and fishermen who don't observe limits and regulations. There are companies who dump waste into

streams because it's cheaper than taking the necessary steps to ensure clean water downstream.

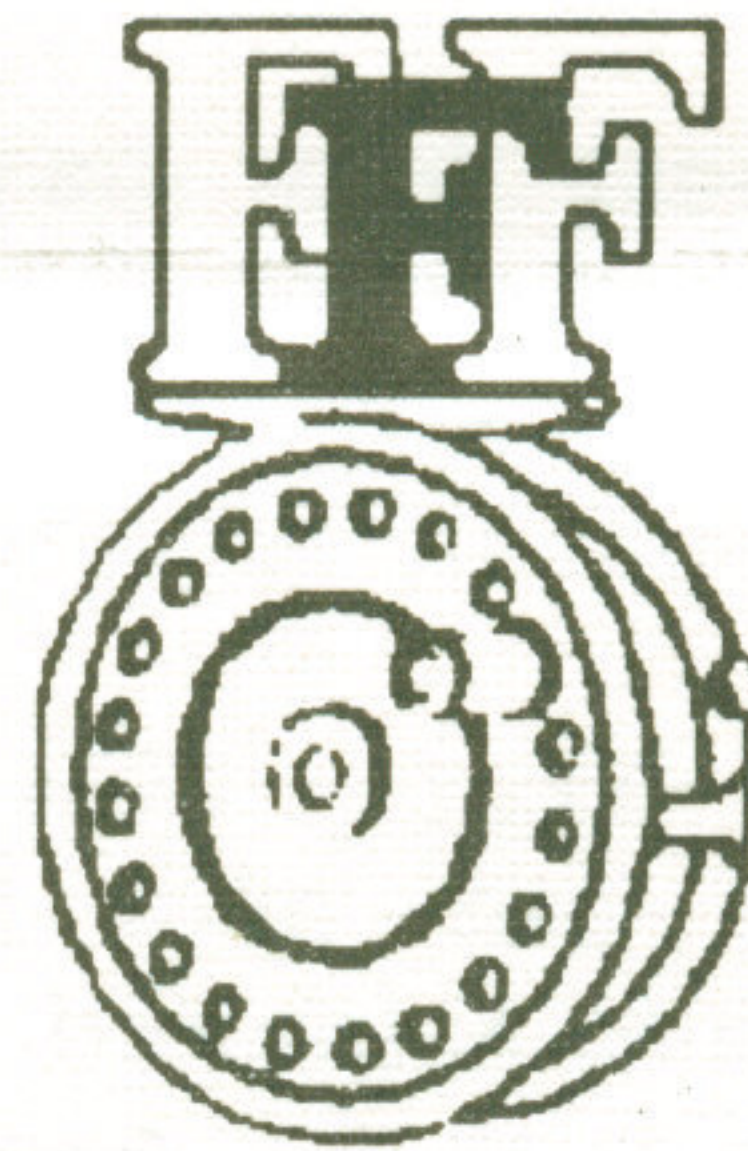
In most cases we "allow," by our non-involvement, government agencies to regulate for us. But shouldn't we be in the front line of defense to make sure timely action benefitting the environment takes place?

Historically, some TFF members have taken an active role in helping define and shape organizational policy for groups like the GCCA. I suspect there are others of us who would like to get involved, but because of time constraints cannot.

There is a solution. You can become involved, make your impact felt, help reaffirm ethics and manners streamside and contribute to a national sense of conservation. You can do it by joining the Federation of Fly Fishers. FFF is positively committed to maintaining quality water and fishing, forming partnerships with other agencies to establish catch and release areas, clean up streams and a host of other conservation and preservation projects.

You can be part of a very proactive, involved organization on the cutting edge of positive change for all of us.

Join the Federation today!



CLASSIFIED

Beautiful Atlantic Salmon Flies for Christmas. Lapel pins \$25, framed or in a glass dome, \$40. Judy Lehmborg, (409) 258-8505.

Send classified ads to Wind Knots, 4801 Woodway, Suite 350-W, Houston, TX 77056 or FAX to 960-0221.

CAPT. COREY'S COMMENTS



by Corey Rich

Club Member Survey

As some of you may know, in real life, Capt. Corey is a marketing and marketing research consultant, at least when time is available after editing and writing for Wind Knots. And fishing, of course.

Last month we conducted a member survey. The idea was to find out more about our members' activities, likes and dislikes, so our club officers can plan programs and events that will please the greatest number of us. Here are some of the highlights:

We are, for the most part, a graying (or balding) bunch. Average age is 50.3 years. 43% are over 50, and another 39% are between 41 and 50. Only 18% are 40 or younger. We are mostly "empty-nesters," with 73% living in households of one or two people.

As you would expect, we fish a great deal. Over a third fly fish more than 10 times a year in fresh cold water; over a third fly fish more than 10 times a year in fresh, warm water, and nearly a quarter fly fish more

than 10 times a year in salt water.

We like many kinds of fishing. About 90% enjoy fly fishing in fresh water (cold or warm) very much or somewhat. Over three quarters enjoy fly fishing in salt water very much or somewhat. About three quarters enjoy conventional fishing in fresh, warm water and salt water.

Trout (the cold, fresh water variety) is the overwhelming favorite species for which to fly fish, listed by over 60% of the respondents. Other favorites, in rank order, are bass, 25%; redfish, 20%; bream/panfish 10%. A number of other species were mentioned, all by fewer than 7%. (This was a multiple response question, that is, you could list more than one favorite, so the percentages add to more than 100%.)

We travel quite a bit to fish. 40% take weekend fishing trips six or more times a year. Over 15% travel more than 250 miles (one-way) to fish at least six times a year, and 85% do so at least once a year. Likewise, 85% travel to another state to fish at least once a year, and over a quarter travel outside the continental U.S. to fish at least once a year.

We have quite a navy. Almost 80% have some kind of watercraft from which to fish, and over half have two or more types of watercraft.

Nearly 80% tie at least some of our own flies. Over half have attended a TFF tying class, and three quarters plan to attend such classes in the future. Of those who have attended TFF classes, 90% rate them terrific.

Almost 60% of us have attended at least two thirds of the club's monthly meetings in the past year. Three quarters rate the meetings terrific or very good. There was widespread

interest in all the possible programs mentioned, with over 90% of us wanting programs on redfish/speckled trout on the Texas coast, bass fishing and western trout fishing.

Wind Knots is considered terrific by two thirds of us and very good by another quarter. Thanks.

Only about 40% have been on one of the club-sponsored outings. We prefer weekend trips two to one over day trips. As for other club activities, two thirds of us have attended a club seminar given by an outside expert, over 60% have attended the annual dinner, almost 60% have attended a casting clinic.

We are frisky to buy all sorts of things at the club auction. Fly tiers take note: almost three quarters would like to buy flies. And those of you with boats, fishing leases, lake or bay houses note: nearly two thirds would like to buy a fishing trip. There are buyers ready to snap up fly rods and reels, outdoor art, fishing literature and collectables, too.

About 60% are satisfied with TFF's current level of involvement in conservation and environmental issues; 40% think we should be doing more. Regarding worthy groups for our donations, two stand out above the rest: GCCA and FFF with 95% and 90%, respectively, of the members favoring contributions to them. 45% favor contributions to the Galveston Bay Foundation, 29% to Clear Clean Colorado, 11% to the Sierra Club and 10% to all others.

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If you'd like to fish with a great salt water fly fishing guide in a great place, call Terry Neal in Port Mansfield, (512) 944-2629. I fished with Terry a couple of weeks ago. He put me on lots of big redfish. More important, he's a very nice guy who really enjoys guiding fly fishermen.

Fit To Be Tied



Norm "Lack O'Hackle" Crook

Tri-Point Hair Wing Dun

Most of us for years tied dry flies in the conventional form with quill, feather or hair wings including a turn or more of hackle, depending on the waters to be fished. Our thinking was pragmatic. There was no departure from the norm, no break with tradition.

Enter, stage right, the team of Swisher & Richards with their no hackle duns. From our, the audience's, perspective, these guys were from the left, far left! They were radicals, deviants. How could these errant souls sully the name "dry fly" by insinuating their creation into the heralded ranks of the Adams, Cahill, Hendrickson, March Brown and Quill Gordon?

Intrude they did, for they were innovators with an idea that caught on. Here was a fly that rested not on, but in, the surface film, projecting a more lifelike silhouette of a May Fly into the fish's cone of vision.

Entering now, stage left, into this theater of innovation comes Chauncy Lively, bearing another hackleless creation. This time it's the Tri-Point Hair Wing Dun, a simple fly in demeanor, and one that simulates a May Fly dun at rest in the meniscus. Lively is an eastern fly fisher, steeped in the traditions of Hewett, Gordon and LaBranch, who broke ranks with the accepted. Because of this departure from convention, and not because of the fly's relative simplicity, we have selected the Tri-Point for tying today. We hope it may cause you to try something new also.

Lively refers to his creations as "fussy flies," for they require attention after each encounter with a fish. The wing and legs must be realigned to prevent the leader from twisting.

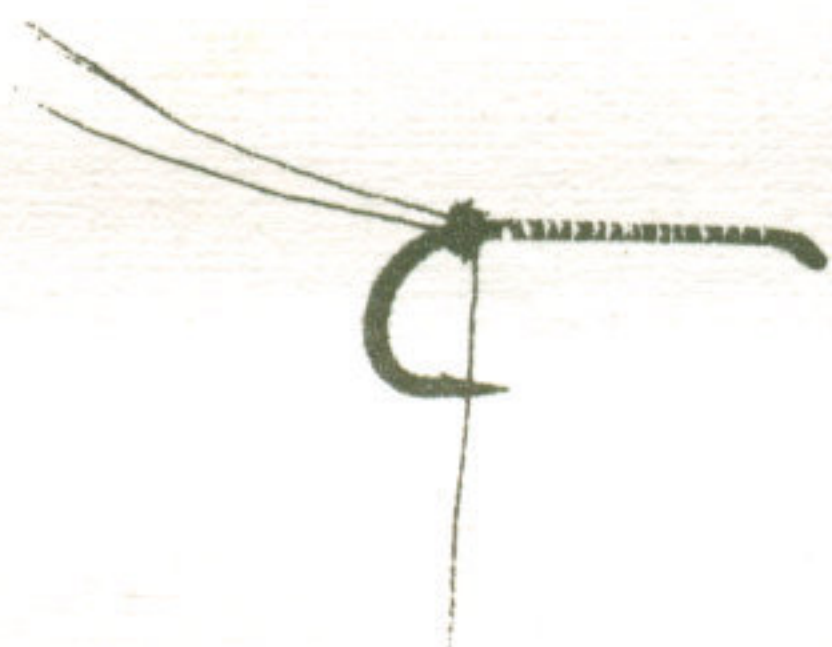
To tie this fly you'll need Mustad 94845 or Tiemco TMC 100 hooks in sizes 12, 14, or 16; 6/0 or 8/0 tying thread; natural dun deer or elk body hair; olive or cream dubbing of your choice; thinned down Goop or Fleximent. Let's start.



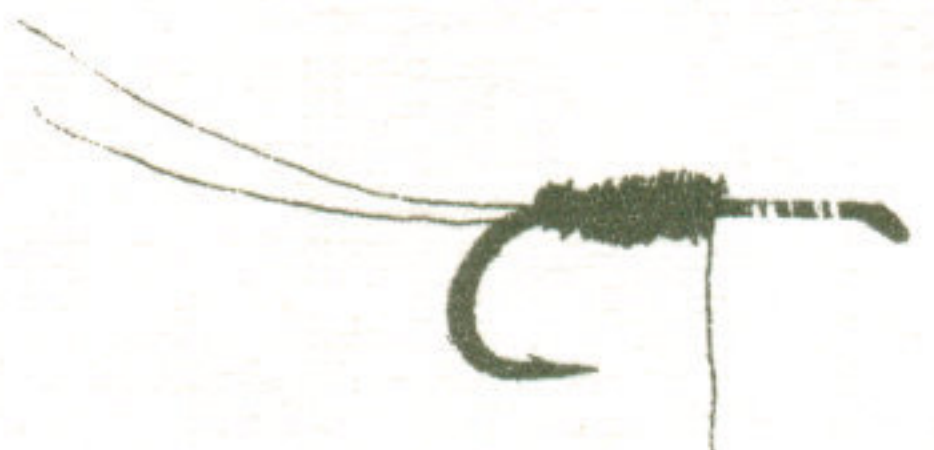
Attach tying thread immediately behind eye and wind to a point on the shank between the hook point and barb.



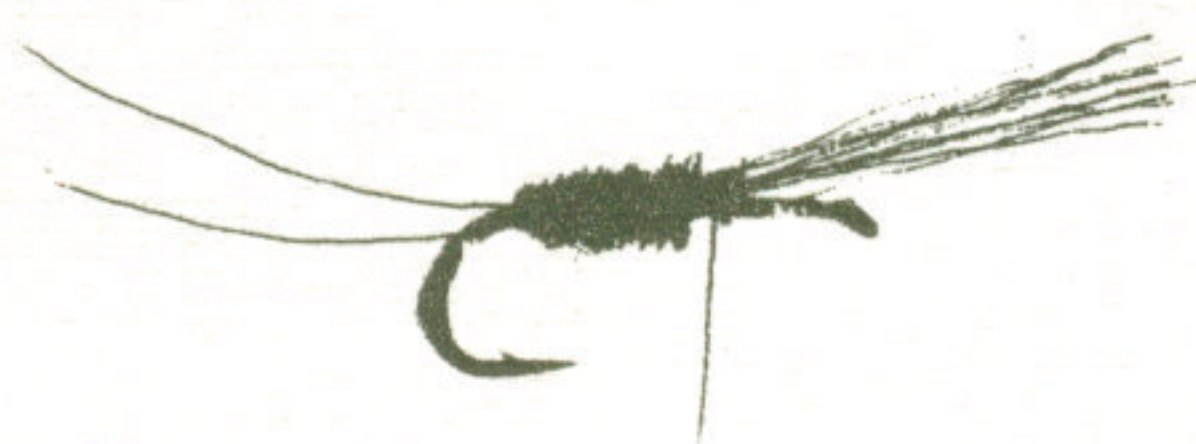
Attach a very small amount of dubbing to the tying thread and create a small collar of dubbing on the shank.



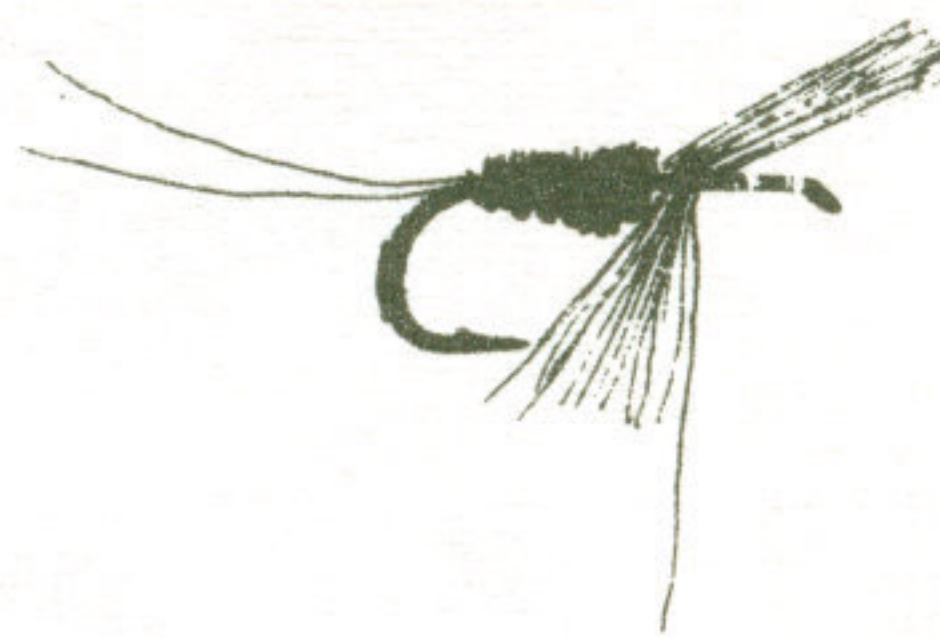
Select 2 firm deer or elk body hairs, tie one on the far side of the hook with 2 turns of thread, then tie the second one in on the near side. They should be snug up to the dubbed collar, which will cause them to flare out from the shank to form a "V." The hairs should extend about 1 1/2 times the length of the hook shank.



Dub the tying thread with the dubbing of your choice and wrap the hook shank to its mid-point. The body should be tapered slightly.



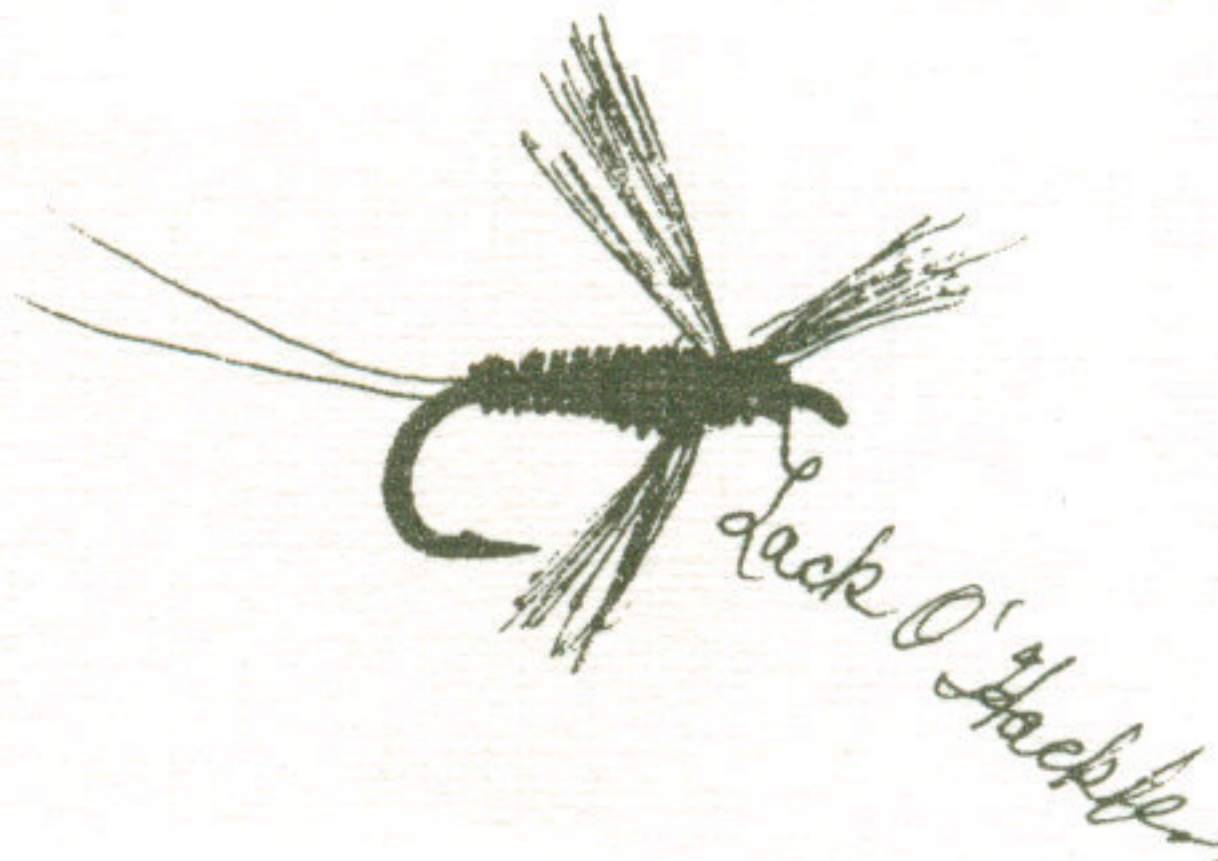
Cut, clean, stack and tie in about 30 deer or elk body hairs with the tips facing forward. They should be no longer than the hook shank.



Divide the hairs evenly. Pull half on the far side perpendicular to the hook shank. Do the same on the near side, then figure 8 the tying thread over each clump to keep the legs separated. Now add a very small drop of Fleximent or thinned down Goop to the base of both leg segments.



Cut, clean, stack and tie in a small clump (about 30) deer or elk body hairs. These should be no longer than the hook shank. Make one complete turn of the tying thread around the base of the wing and pull the wing forward to about 60°. Half hitch the tying thread and wind it back to where you finished your dubbing. Add a small drop of Fleximent or Goop to the base of the wing. When the glue is nearly dry, flatten wing and legs with a pair of flat jawed tweezers.



Redub the tying thread. Wrap behind the wing, around the legs and in front. Finish up at the eye. Whip finish and you're done.

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