



established 1932

tight lines

Newsletter of the Red Tag Fly Fisher's Club
February 2019




2019 Red Tag

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President's Message

2019

Tony Ryan

Welcome to 2019, I hope everyone has had an enjoyable break and spent some time on the water.

Our first Activity Meeting for the year is on Tuesday 5th February at the EIBC on the oval and our guest speakers/demonstrators will be Jo & Rick Dobson from **Aussie Angler** at Briar Hill, great sponsors of our Club. The activity will commence at 6.00 pm for a 6.30 pm start and will include a **discussion on small stream casting** to be followed with hands-on demonstrations of various line weights and how they affect your casting, so bring your rod and reel and test the various line weights on your own gear.

There will a **free BBQ**, so you can grab a sausage before the demonstrations commence.

Our Syllabus for the year is already filling up with some great speakers already locked in. Our trips dates are being co-ordinated with some new adventures being planned including Tasmania and New Zealand.

Snowy Mountains/Corryong area and north east Victoria.

There is a weekend at Millbrook Lakes already booked for May, watch for details shortly.

We will be having another master class day/weekend on European Nymphing techniques and a similar weekend with guided assistance in north east Victoria on general dry fly and nymphing techniques.

Saltwater fly fishing will be part of our activities this year with dedicated fly tying nights and trips included in our Syllabus.

Our fly tying nights will continue twice a month, on the second and fourth Tuesdays. We will be organizing special demonstration nights by highly respected fly fishing identities during the year.

Casting at our pool will continue with coaching available at two sessions a month, check the Newsletter for details.

Rod building - are you interested in building your own rod ? Let us know and we will organise a discussion night with a rod builder.

So we are off to a great start with lots happening, if you have any ideas for activities or destinations you would like to see included in our Syllabus, let me know or anyone on the Committee.

I hope to see you next Tuesday.

Club Trip

Red Tag 2018 Tasmanian Fishing Trip

Craig Bolch

The best thing about organising a fishing trip quite far in advance is that anticipation builds long before the adventure arrives.

Being a proud Tasmanian, I wanted to share some of my favourite trout spots and was glad that seven Red Tag members took the opportunity to join me. Fishing with other keen fisherman is much better than fishing alone. You can try different techniques, locations, keep the costs down and best of all, share the experiences.

We were lucky to have ex-club member and local guide Norm King join us on the trip. Norm is good mates with Vin and has been fishing Tassie for years. He has a wealth of knowledge and learned a lot from him. He offered guiding with his very well fitted out boat for a very affordable rate, which most of us took advantage of.

We stayed at the Great Lake Hotel in the fishermen's cabins. These 2-3 bed rooms were small, but we also had a large common room where we could spread out and socialise. It included a kitchen and wood heater, which pumped out so much heat we had to open the door to cool down the room, even when it was snowing!

Staying at the hotel enabled us to go to the bar to have a pub meal and a few beers, which most of us took advantage of. For those, like myself who wanted to cook, the common room kitchen was fine as well.

To give you an idea of costs, the hotel only charged us \$140 per person for 7 nights, which was very reasonable. I travelled to Tasmania on the ferry, which for a share of a 4 berth cabin plus car, was about \$490. On the way over I shared the cabin with one other person. I slept fine but I must have been snoring as he left the cabin in the early hours of the morning.

We had a real mixture of conditions and fishing locations, which is the advantage of 7-day trip. We had 3 days of cold, windy weather including an afternoon snow session, followed by three days of warm sunny days.

I think it is very important to use the conditions to your advantage and adjust your techniques to the weather. This is where local knowledge helps. It enabled us to fish every day and catch fish regardless of the weather.

This is how the trip went...



Day 1 Saturday 1 December

Picked up Bill from Launceston Airport and was on the road by 8:30am. Stopped in Longford to stock up on supplies and arrived at the Great Lake Hotel around 10:30am (it did not open until 11am). Saturday was a beautiful day and I was reminded again how scenic the Tasmanian landscape is.

The other guys who travelled by ferry and arrived that morning were already out fishing. After checking in and unpacking, we had lunch and discussed tactics with Norm and Vin, who had now arrived.

As it was a bright sunny day, we decided to fish Carter lagoon, part of the 19 lagoons west of Great

Lake. We tried polaroiding (using Polaroid glasses to search the shallow margins of the lake) in the crystal-clear water. Unfortunately, fish were sighted, but not caught.

Back at the hotel we caught up with the other guys who had mixed success at Little Pine Lagoon. Once again, lots of fish sighted.

Not beaten, Dan, Bill and I decided to have an evening session at Bronte Lagoon. We arrived in front of the shack area and walked down to the lake. This area was sheltered from the wind and the trout were rising to black spinners.

We talked to two other fisherman who said the fish had been rising solidly. I did have a take on the

black spinner, but failed to connect. Within half an hour the fish stopped rising, so we walked further along the shore to prospect with woolly buggers. I had another good take, unfortunately I got over excited and stuffed up the strike and missed the fish.

By this time it was getting dark so we walked back and found the fish rising again in front of the shacks. I snapped off a fish with an over enthusiastic strike. Frustration was setting in, so we decided to call it a day.

Day 2 Sunday 2 December

Today we all decided to fish Penstock Lagoon. The weather was overcast with patchy sun periods and a cold blustery SW wind. We parked at the southern end of the lake to fish with the wind at our backs.

I walked along the wall to fish the eastern side of the lake. There were many Duns emerging but I did not notice any fish taking them. I thought about this and decided the fish may be feeding on the nymphs below the surface.

I tied on a brown seals fur nymph and started prospecting along the shore finding some sheltered bays. I cast out the nymph and used a slow figure 8 retrieve. Within a few minutes I had my first take. This was so strong it pulled the line out of my hand. I struck late and too hard and snapped off the fish.

I was becoming suspicious of my Rio tippet, so I replaced it and tied on another brown nymph. Half an hour later I had another good take and this time the fish stayed connected and I managed to land a beautiful brown trout.

One thing you can say about the Tassie trout is they fight hard. By this time the trout had started taking the Duns from the surface, but I persisted with the brown nymph, this time casting directly to the rising fish and dragged the nymph past the rise. This technique worked well with a couple of takes and another fish.

I decided to walk back to the wall to see how the others were going. Dan had caught some good sized fish, suspending a team of nymphs under an indicator. His leader was around two meters which meant he would be fishing close to the bottom.

I decided to fish the western side of the lake around the reeds. There were fish taking the duns so I decided to cover both options and used a possum emerger with a brown nymph dropper about 30cm below.

I cast to rising fish and had instant success with a gentle take. The fish still took the nymph, so I decided to remove the possum emerger and just use the nymph under the indicator. This worked just as well and was easier to see.

I finished the day with 3 fish, plus another few hooked but lost.



Day 3 Monday 3 December

The weather had deteriorated, with colder wind and frequent showers. Bill and I got up early and tried Little Pine. We did spot a few fish tailing and I missed one, but after an hour we were both freezing so called it quits and headed back to the hotel to warm up.

We decided to try Penstock again after breakfast. I fished the brown nymph under the indicator and managed to catch one good fish, but it was tough going. By mid-afternoon, we decided to head back warm up and have a few beers instead.

It looked like snow weather and I said to the group I bet it snows tonight. Ed took me up on the bet and we had a \$2 wager. We dined in the pub, with its roaring open fire and a great atmosphere. I was looking out the window and sure enough the white fluffy stuff had started falling from the sky. We went outside to confirm; and Ed conceded I had won the bet, and paid up my winnings.

Day 4 Tuesday 4 December

The weather had improved so I decided to fish Woods Lake. The area I fish is the Western end, a shallow marshy area where the river flows into the lake and where there is excellent fly fishing. Unfortunately to get to this area requires a long walk with some bush bashing but it was worth it.

I arrived in the area to see trout moving in the shallows. They were moving very slowly through the weeds and the water was dirty so they were difficult to see. You would see a ripple in the water but could not work out which way the fish was moving. This was very frustrating and I spooked fish.

My luck changed, I saw a nice 3lb fish about a rods length in front of me. I froze, wound in my line leaving about a meter of leader out from the tip of the rod. I dropped my damsel fly nymph in front of the fish.

I thought to myself this fish is just sleeping and would not take the fly, but to my surprise once I twitched the nymph past the fish's nose it opened its mouth and sucked in the fly. I lifted the rod and the fish was hooked. It must have been my lucky day as the fly line smoothly left the rod as the fish charged out of the shallow and after an exciting five minute fight I managed to catch and release the fish.



I continued to fish for the tailing trout but with no further success. I tied on a green woolly bugger and waded out past the reeds to fish the deeper water. This technique worked very well. When a fish rose, I cast to the fish and dragged the fly past. This often resulted in the fish charging the fly, coming up and taking the fly as it went back down into the water. Very exciting fishing and I ended up with another four fish using this method.



Day 5 Wednesday 5 December

To our surprise the weather had improved, it was a blue sky day and perfect for polaroiding in the Western Lakes. Dan decided to join me to try this style of fishing and after fishing the cold, blustery conditions of the previous days, it was amazing to fish in good weather and our confidence was high.

We wanted to fish O'Dells Lake and Lake Flora, which according to the map was an easy 3-4 km walk along a defined track. Assuming Dan had the map, this would be easy going. My assumption proved to live up to the saying it makes an ASS out of U and ME as Dan "*assumed*" I had the map! Anyway, we parked at what we thought was the right spot as we could see a lake off in the distance.

We fished the first lake without much success, so I asked some other anglers if they knew where Lake Flora was. They vaguely pointed over to the next hill, so as you do, we walked to the next rise to see what we could see.

We saw some other water ways that looked promising, so walked over for a look. We fished some perfect looking water without seeing any fish so continued on and came across the Pine River, which eventually runs out of the Western Lakes through O'Dells Lake and Lake Flora and into Little Pine.

The river was only narrow but was too deep to wade. The grass is always greener on the other side and we saw a nice lagoon which part of the river flowed into. We thought there must be fish in there.

We eventually found a spot that was possible to leap across, so I suggested to Dan to give it a try. He took up the challenge and leaped across in a single bound and looked back at me and said you should be fine. I am probably 20Kg heavier and 20 years older than Dan so I was dubious, but gave it a go and landed on the other side, half in the river and half on the bank. After dragging myself out and checking I had not lost any gear we progressed to fish the lake.

I spooked a fish and saw some more rising to small Caddis so at least there was fish here. We moved along the shore and found an area where the fish were moving. There were some big fish cruising the shallows and we stalked them to get in range of a cast but with no luck. These Western Lakes fish were smart.

Just when I was about to give up, I saw a beauty sitting still in about a metre of water. I cast my possum emerger and let it drift over the fish, but with no reaction. I thought to myself I need to get the fly to sink so it is closer to the fish, I cast a couple of meters up wind of the fish and managed to get the emerger to sink. I jiggled it past the fish and it woke up and took the fly.

Sometimes you just get lucky, this fish looked massive in the water and I was

shaking throughout the fight, I badly wanted to get a photo of this one. I asked for Dan's help and he came to rescue netting the fish and I got my photo and successfully released the fish to fight another day.

We decided to continue on to find Lake Flora and found another angler who also vaguely pointed to the south over the next hill. So we continued on to the next rise only to see another. We decided to give it one more go and went to the next rise and sure enough in the valley was Lake Flora. After another 20 minutes walking, we arrived at lagoons off the main lake. I went down one side and Dan the other. I struck it lucky walking onto to a small lagoon with a number of fish tailing in the shallows. I don't think these fish had seen anglers as they were not easily spooked but I like to think it was my good angling. I managed to catch two in ten minutes.

Excited by my success I found Dan and took him to the lagoon so he could also catch a fish. Dan saw a beauty swimming in less than 30cm of water and heading straight towards him. I watched Dan and I could almost see him shaking, his nerves were getting the better of him. Seeing a fish coming towards you and wanting to make a perfect cast certainly puts the pressure on you. Unfortunately, this time was not a success, but I believe Dan learnt a lot from the experience and next time the fish won't be so lucky.

Walking back to the car always seems harder and after what felt like an eternity, we made it back and collapsed weary and foot sore into the car.



Day 6 Thursday 6 December

Another perfect day and this time I took the map and found the right track and within 40 minutes I arrived at O'Dells Lake.

As I surveyed the lake, I saw a massive trout trying to take a large grasshopper which had blown into the water. I quickly cast my fly but it was not interested. I fished along the edge of O'Dells Lake with no success. The fish were there, but because the water was cloudy, I did not see them until it was too late and they were spooked.

Lake Flora was completely different, crystal clear. I searched the edge of the lake and could see the fish 20 metres from me, so had plenty of time to prepare and send out longer casts. The fish did not want to take the emerger so I tied on a brown nymph dropper and this was immediately taken. Out of the four fish I caught that day, three were taken on the dropper and one on the dry. This just proves you need to keep trying to you find a technique that works.

Day 7 Friday 7 December

Today we decided to go back to Penstock Lagoon as the conditions were perfect for a Dun hatch.

I think everyone else had the same idea as there were over 20 boats out on the lake but the fish were rising and it was looking good. Fishing to these trout was frustrating, one minute they were taking nymphs then Duns and back to spinners.

What was happening was when the wind dropped the spinners would move over the water and the fish would start feeding on them then the wind would get up and the duns would start emerging. I kept changing flies and became so frustrated with this, I used an orange spinner dry with an emerger dropper to cover both bets and managed to catch a couple.

By the afternoon the wind had got up and the hatch was over. Bill and I returned to fish the evening rise and sure enough the fish were rising to the spinner however they were being difficult and we had no success.



Day 8 Saturday 8th December

Unfortunately, the trip had come to an end and it was time to go home. Bill had a 6pm flight and I did not have to be back at the ferry until 7pm so we all decided to try Four Spring's Lagoon, which is only 1 hours' drive from Launceston. I had never fished this lake and Norm suggested we give it a go as it had been fishing well.

After a short stop to wait out the rain at the Cressy bakery, where I was treated to a very large vanilla slice and excellent coffee, we arrived at Four Springs Lagoon. The lake looked very fishy, with perfect reed beds and a mix of open and forested shore lines with easy angler access.

I found a nice looking weed bank and waded out so I could fish the edge. As I was wading out, I saw lots of Damsel flies and Mud eye cases. I tied on my trusty damsel fly nymph and hoped for the best. The fish approved of my choice and over the afternoon

I managed to pull four fish out of this location all on the same fly.

What a great way to finish the trip. I had a satisfied feeling as I walked back to the car. The week had its ups and downs but we managed to fish every day and catch fish. Next year the World Fly fishing championships will be held here in the same week.

We met the NZ team, who were also staying at the Great Lake Hotel. They had come over to get a feel for fishing. We managed to lead them astray with some mis-information but I think they worked it out for themselves.

I will probably come back to Tassie around mid-December after the competition has finished if anyone else would like to join me, keep it in mind for December 2019. I am sure those Kiwis won't catch them all.

Fly Tying

starting out and intermediate

4th Tuesday of the Month.

The Coch-y-bondhu

Similar to the red tag fly, this pattern emulates a beetle pattern.

This wet fly hackled pattern is useful in lakes and streams.

Can be used for drowned terrestrials, waterboatmen, beetles etc.

Wet flies are a staple of winter fishing, however fly placement is crucial as fish aren't likely to chase them.

Davie McPhail: *Youtube.*

Tied by Tony Ryan



Fly Tying

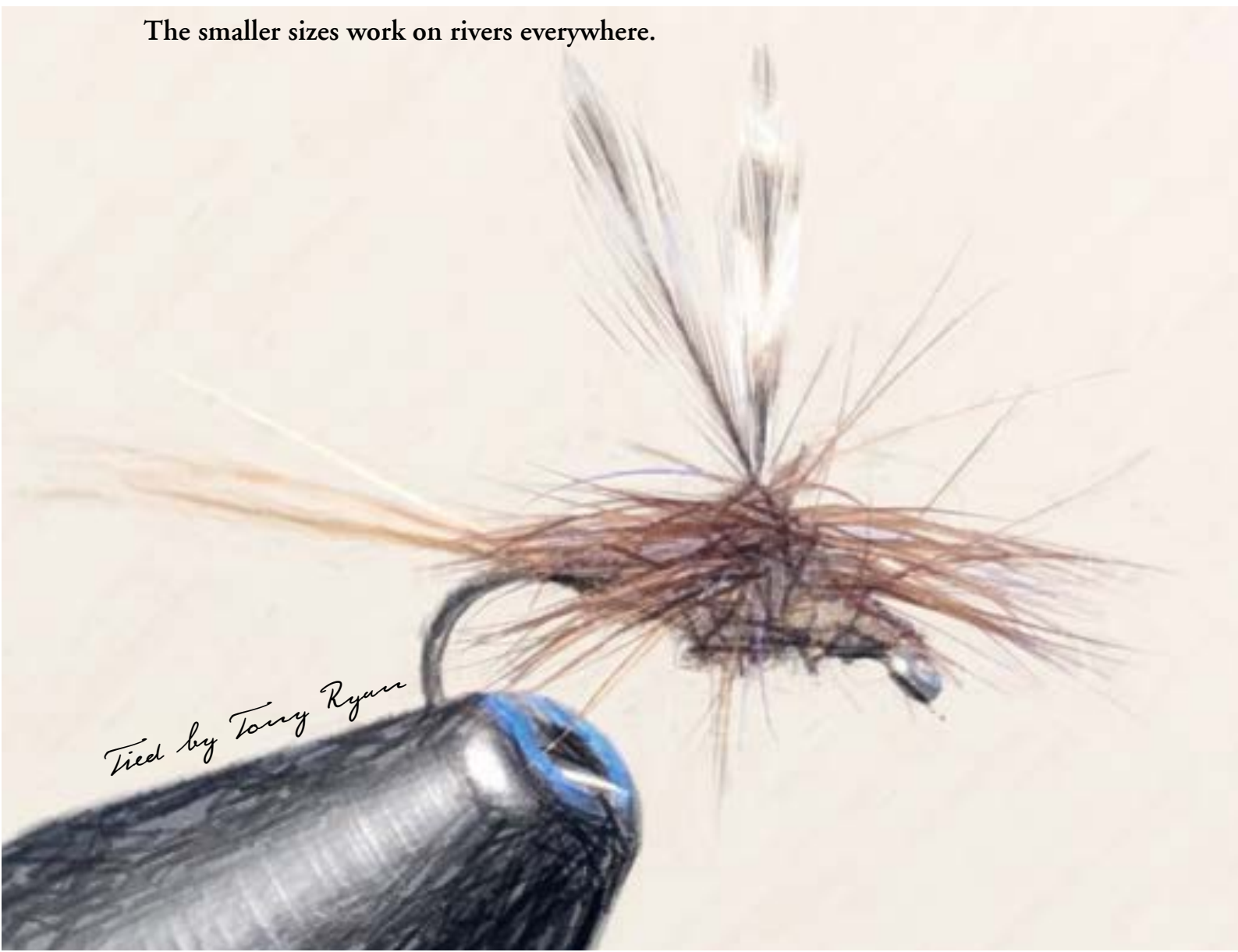
Intermediate and advanced

2nd Tuesday of the Month

Bushy's Emerger

Rust coloured duns are around all season long and the size range is important. The #10 is a great fly for lakes both here and Tassie. It's a bit like a March Brown, but much better.

The smaller sizes work on rivers everywhere.



Tied by Tony Ryan



Glossary

Time for d?

David Honeybone

Damselfly



an important stillwater aquatic insect most commonly imitated in the nymphal form; usually hatches in early to mid-summer. Adult looks like a dragonfly, but folds its wings along its back when at rest.

Deer Hair

most commonly used of the hollow hairs for fly tying; used for the Humpy and the Muddler Minnow styles of flies.

Delatite River

The Delatite River rises in Howqua Gap, between Mount Stirling and Mount Buller, of the Great Dividing Range. The river flows generally westwards, initially through rugged national park and state forests and, as the river descends, through more open woodlands. The river is joined by nine tributaries, passing north of the town of Merrijig before reaching Lake (Wikipedia).

Excellent fishing in the upper reaches (accessed from wayside stops and tracks off the Buller Road), good elsewhere (Weigall, 2014).



Devilish

See Deer Hair, trying to tie flies with...

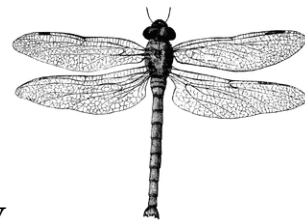
Double Haul

a cast during which the caster quickly pulls and releases the line on both the back cast and the forward cast, used to create greater line speed, enabling the caster to reach farther or cut through wind.

Drag

(1) term used to describe an unnatural motion of the fly caused by the effect of the current on line and leader. Drag is usually detrimental, though at times useful (such as imitating the actions of the adult caddis).

(2) Resistance applied to the reel spool to prevent it from turning faster than the line leaving the spool (used in playing larger fish).

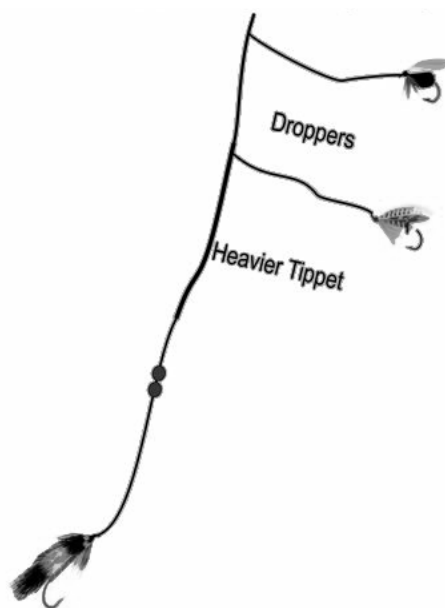


Dragonfly

important stillwater aquatic insect most commonly imitated in the nymphal form; usually hatches in early to mid-summer. Unlike the Damselfly, the Dragonfly adult holds its wings straight out (like an airplane) when at rest.

Dropper

anything added to the main leader or to the fly at the end of the leader, most often a second fly or a weight such as split shot. The most common practice is to tie a piece of tippet (from four to 18 inches long) with a clinch knot onto the bend of the hook of a fly already attached to a leader, adding a second fly to the extra piece of tippet. The term “dry-dropper rig” usually refers to an arrangement where a nymph is attached to a high-floating dry fly in this manner.



Dry Fly

any fly fished upon the surface of the water; usually constructed of non-water-absorbent materials; most commonly used to imitate the adult stage of aquatic insects.

Dubbing

material used in fly tying, typically used to create the body of a fly.

Dun

first stage in the adult mayfly's life cycle; usually of short duration (1 to 24 hours); this is the stage most often imitated by the dry fly.

Sources

Delatite River, Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delatite_River

Fly Fishing Glossary, Orvis Fly Fishing Learning Centre, <https://howtoflyfish.orvis.com/glossary/beginners-fly-fishing-glossary#D>

Weigall, P, 2014, Fly Fishing North-East Victoria, FlyStream, Melbourne, Victoria.

Dropper Image from Flyfishing.com via Pinterest. E.Macri

Library Report

2019 and beyond

David Honeybone

This month's new book is **Greenwell's: A Review** by Des Walters.

Des is a long term member, former President and Treasurer of the Greenwells Fly Fishing Club in Albury, NSW, and whilst the majority of the book is devoted to a history of the Greenwell's Glory fly there are sections devoted to club history and memorabilia (noted author Les Hawkins was the inaugural President).

From the Foreword by Mick Hall

"Sadly, today this great fly is rarely mentioned let alone carried and I have no idea why; I think it has simply fallen out of fashion, as many good fly patterns seem to do. For many years I lived in the Victorian highlands near the village of Eildon and a local guide shop used to advertise their current up-to-date fly range by saying, "you won't find a Greenwell's here". In reality this was a little short-sighted, as great fly patterns are classified as good because they work. They did way back when and they will do so today."

Just to give an idea of how patterns change and develop over time here are just two of the many detailed in the book:

Greenwell's Glory

from A book on Angling, 4 ed. 1876, Francis Francis

Hook: 12-13 (smallest possible)

Body: dark olive silk

Ribs: Thickly ribbed with very fine gold wire

Hackle: legs, a small dark Coch-y-bondhu hackle

Wings: Woodcock

Greenwell's Glory

from English Trout Flies, 1969, W H Lawrie

Hook: 10-16 down eyed

Body: Primrose Pearsall's Silk well waxed with cobbler's wax

Ribs: Ribbed with fine gold wire

Hackle: Dark Furnace Hen

Wings: Hen blackbird



Bon Voyage

Mike Ogden

All the best to Red Tag member Mike Ogden who is off to Germany at the end of this month. As part of his Bio-Science PhD Mike is spending 12 months at the Max Planck Institutes in Potsdam where he will be sampling beer and fly fishing...and continuing his research into identifying the genes responsible for sensing nitrogen in the soil, which then drives plant growth. So now you know. Germany has some stringent regulations with regard to fishing (an 8-week course followed by an exam...) but as a current member of an overseas club Mike should be able to circumvent these and jump straight in. We look forward to the photos of lederhosen and trout Mike.



Editorial

Here we go again.

Cover Page: The upper Murrindindi, provided a great challenge over summer. The water level was low and warm, and the only fish I saw for the brief time I had on water was a small brown that was beyond my skills to cast to, I gave it a fair shake!

Needless to say, I spent some time after that trying to get the bow and arrow cast working with my tenkara rod to be ready next time. Note to self, next time don't take a bored teenager along for the ride...and I'll get more than 90mins on stream.

A big thank you to Craig Bolch, for such a fantastic report. I'm looking forward to hearing from more people out and about and contributing to the newsletter in 2019.

NB Reports can be shorter than the one featured in this edition. 😊

The Red Tag events calendar is also being rolled out to members, to embed into their phones. Knowing months in advance of upcoming trips may make it easier to plan around and set time aside for a club trip, so expect an email with a google calendar link. For anyone not quite tech savvy we will run some, "how to" sessions at an activity meeting.

Tight Lines.

Andrew Rodda



