



## TALE WATERS

### THE VOICE OF THE NORTH ARKANSAS FLY FISHERS

October 13, 2020

NORTH ARKANSAS FLY FISHERS

Tale Waters

North Arkansas Fly Fishers meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at the Van Matre Senior Center located at 1101 Spring St Mountain Home, AR 72653. Membership meeting starts at 7:00 pm. All members and guests are welcome and encouraged to attend.

NAFF Board of Directors' meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 1:00 pm 1st Security Bank on 9th St. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Visit North Arkansas Fly Fishers  
Online at

[www.northarkansasflyfisher.org](http://www.northarkansasflyfisher.org)

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Tale Waters is published 2nd Tuesday of each month. Article deadline is 1st Tuesday of the month.

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### Sowbug Report Sowbug 2021 May 2021



The Covid 19 Pandemic caused us to cancel the 2020 Sowbug Roundup at essentially the last minute. It was the right thing to do. The 2021 Sowbug was originally scheduled for March 25, 26, and 27. Because we don't know what the Pandemic situation will be in March, we have decided to reschedule the 2021 Sowbug for May 13, 14, and 15. This is a one-time only date change.

In early 2021 the NAFF Board will make a final decision on holding a Sowbug 2021. This decision will be based on the Covid Pandemic situation in early 2021 and the projections for the situation in May. If the May date is cancelled, Sowbug Roundup will not be held in 2021. We have decided not to move the date to

### NAFF Elections This Month

Later in October the NAFF membership will have an opportunity to vote on several important issues. As we are not holding regular membership meeting due to Covid 19, this will be an on-line voting process. You will have the opportunity to approve/disapprove the 2020/2021 NAFF Budget (see article in this newsletter), to approve/disapprove the slate of officers for the NAFF Board of Directors (see article in this newsletter), and provide input as to whether you would attend a NAFF Christmas Party (see article in this newsletter).

We will be using the online voting service of OpaVote for the election. You will receive an email entitled "NAFF Election" from OpaVote Voting Link. The email will provide instructions for voting. It will be quite straight forward. We will send out an eblast to warn you that the voting email is coming. You will be given a week or so to respond to the voting email and to vote.

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the fall of 2021 as this would put Sowbug in competition with the FFI Fly Fishing Fair.

If you have any questions, comments, or ideas, please contact Mike Tipton at [michaeltipton@centurytel.net](mailto:michaeltipton@centurytel.net).



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**Weather Cancellation Policy**

**NAFF Activities or Meeting will be cancelled or postponed when the Mountain Home Public Schools Cancel Classes.**

**Check KTLO radio website for school closing**



**Country Oaks, One of the “other” fisheries.**

### October President's Message

As we are still dealing with the uncertainty of the Covid-19 issues, we are tentatively re-scheduling the 2021 Sowbug Roundup for May 13, 14 and 15 of 2021. I know this messes up things as to other events, graduation, etc.; but we felt it important to be as cautious as possible in light of the fact both tiers and attendees, for the most part, fall in the older more vulnerable age groups. We will continue to monitor the virus situation. If conditions warrant, based on State Guidelines, it will also be subject to cancellation. So stay tuned.

This month marks my second year full time here in the Mountain Home area. What a diverse fishing locale we have here in N. Central Arkansas, and Southern Missouri. As fly fishermen, we naturally gravitate toward trout fisheries. The White and Norfolk have a great variety of trout species that we target, either by boat or wading.

What fascinates me just as much, are the other species and waters available to us, from our local McCabe park with bream and catfish, to Crooked Creek, the Buffalo River, to still waters of Norfolk and Bull Shoals Lakes.

After two years I have barely scratched the surface as to those other fisheries. I look forward to fishing those as time goes by. When I got back into fly fishing, after a long hiatus from my youth in Reno, NV, I lived in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. I did not realize something other than trout could be caught with a fly rod. Once I had my bubble burst, I have not looked back. It is truly any species, anywhere for me. I have learned to enjoy fly fishing no matter the locale or species. It is a relaxing sport and I love the comradery of other like-minded individuals.

So if you are unsure about fishing high flows in the White and Norfolk Rivers, give the other local wa-



ters a try. You might find a species that is a hoot to hook and land. One of my favorites is bream. Pound for pound, they are the feistiest fish on an ultra-light or bamboo rod you will tangle with. If you have never stalked a carp, they are wary and super fighters. Try them. Take your rod to any body of water and see what you can find! Great way to see new water and you never know what you may catch.

**Dave Boyer**

**President**

### Membership Director

Paul Ashton is retiring as our Membership Director; so we need someone to step up and replace him. This is a BOD officer position within the Club and helps direct activities throughout the year. It is a two-year elected position. If you have a desire to be on the Board and would like to influence the direction of the club, please contact me at dboyer@glodesigns.com and we can discuss. Elections will be held in October and we would like to have the full slate of candidates to present to the membership.

Thanks,

**Dave Boyer, President,  
NAFF**

## Proposed Slate for the NAFF BOD!

The Officers of the North Arkansas Fly Fishers propose the following individuals as the Directors.

Conservation – Tommy Hagan

Property – Kevin Boddy

Education – Ceil Gasiecki

Membership – We need a volunteer!

Anyone interested in joining the NAFF Board as the Membership Director should contact Dave Boyer at (972) 670-2425.

## Christmas Party?



December is only a few weeks away. Traditionally NAFF has held a Christmas party in early December. This year the NAFF BOD had quite a discussion as to whether we should hold a Christmas party. The Board was about evenly split between those who would go for it and those who think a party would be a bad idea. The Country Club says that they could cater a socially distant party for us.

The question on the ballot will be:

Should NAFF hold a Christmas Party this year? Yes/No

Would you attend a Christmas Party? How many? 0, 1, 2

Meaning: 0, you would not attend. 1, one person would attend. 2, two people would attend.

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## NAFF Budget July 2020 to June 2021

In June, the NAFF Board of Directors met to develop a budget for the coming fiscal year. In normal times, not Pandemic years, the budget is presented to the NAFF membership for approval at the July monthly meeting. That was not possible this year. The NAFF BOD will be asking approval of the budget as part of the planned online election.

The budget approved by the board is adjacent to this article. It's fairly austere because we had to cancel the Sowbug Roundup. So many of our usual activities were not nor will not be held this year. The biggest expenses are the scholarships that we committed to two students. Everything else has been cut back a lot! We have not had any activities so far this year.

The new budget is also based on the expectation of a Sowbug Roundup in 2021. If we don't have a Sowbug Roundup, we have enough money to carry us through to 2022. NAFF currently has just over \$28,000 in the bank. If you have any question about the budget, please contact our treasurer Pat Smith at 870-404-0747.



## NAFF Current Budget - 2020-2021

7/1/2020 through 6/30/2021

Category	2021
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>\$37,575.00</b>
Christmas Party	\$1,000.00
Donation	\$75.00
Membership Dues	\$6,500.00
White River Guide Book	
Sowbug Roundup Income	\$30,000.00
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$23,151.50</b>
Activities	
Activities:Christmas Party	\$2,000.00
Activities:Other	\$200.00
Activities:Picnics	\$300.00
Conservation Expense	\$500.00
Dues - Other Organizations	
Dues - Other Organizations:Cotter-Gassvile Chamber	\$40.00
Dues - Other Organizations:IFFF Dues	\$500.00
Dues - Other Organizations:Mountain Home Chamber	\$148.00
Dues - Other Organizations:Senior Center	\$450.00
Education	
Education:Beginning Fly Fishing	\$150.00
Education:Fly Tying Classes	\$200.00
Other Education	\$200.00
Insurance-Liabilty	\$450.00
Membership Expenses	\$150.00
Membership Recognition	\$600.00
Post Office Box	\$80.00
Program Expenses	
Program Expenses:Monthly Programs	\$200.00
Raffle License	\$100.00
Scholarships	\$4,000.00
Secretary	\$200.00
Sowbug Roundup Expenses	\$10,600.00
Storage Units	\$1,358.50
Treasurer	\$75.00
Website	\$150.00
White River Guide Book	\$500.00

## AGFC Report Shocking Results in Dry Run Creek! Part 2

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's (AGFC) Trout Management Program conducted an electrofishing survey on Dry Run Creek on August 18th and 19th, 2020 to assess the trout populations. During the survey, all Brown and Cutthroat Trout longer than 8 inches and Rainbow Trout longer than 14 inches were implanted with Passive Integrated Transponder tags (PIT tags). The tags allow AGFC to monitor an individual trout's growth, survival, and movement by comparing differences in length, weight, and capture location between survey events.

Data collected during the 2020 Dry Run Creek population sample highlighted some impressive information on the growth of trout since the 2019 sample. A total of 189 trout were tagged during the July 2019 Dry Run Creek annual population sample; 415 trout were tagged this year. Of the 189 trout tagged in 2019, 16.4% were recaptured this year. A total of 234 new Rainbow Trout were tagged this year and 22 rainbows that were tagged in 2019 were recaptured. On average, recaptured Rainbow Trout had grown 2.6 inches and 0.8 pounds between samples. However, certain fish showed incredible growth. For example, one Rainbow Trout grew from 15.3 to 22.4 inches (7.1 inches), and from 1.7 to 6.2 lbs (4.5 pounds) from 2019 to 2020. A total of 148



**A BIG BROWN FROM DRY RUN CREEK**

Brown Trout were implanted with PIT tags this year and 6 were recaptures from 2019. On average, recaptured Brown Trout had grown 3.9 inches and gained 2.8 pounds since 2019. All recaptured Brown Trout exhibited exceptional growth, including one individual that had grown from 22.1 to 27.6 inches (5.5 inches) and from 6.9 to 12.1 pounds (5.2 pounds) from 2019 to 2020. Thirty-three Cutthroat Trout were implanted with PIT tags this year and only 3 were recaptured from 2019. Two of the three fish exhibited little growth overall, but one individual had grown 3 inches and 1.4 pounds since 2019.

AGFC will begin to sample Dry Run Creek seasonally and will continue to tag additional trout in the process. All trout collected during electrofishing surveys on the Norfolk and Bull Shoals Tailwaters will also be scanned for tags to see if and when trout migrate from Dry Run Creek into those systems. The growth results presented in this post are preliminary and based on a relatively small sample size, so it is

difficult to draw any major conclusions at this time. However, as more trout are tagged and recaptured in future sampling events, AGFC will begin to get a better understanding of trout growth rates as well as what factors may be influencing periods of slow or rapid growth in Dry Run Creek trout populations.

**Christy Graham**

**AGFC**



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## Combat Fishing Report Sept 14, 2020

(Sort of, no fishermen were harmed in the telling of this tale!)

Mike Enger and I were tired of trying to wade fish the high flows of the White River below Bull Shoals so decided to try our luck below the dam at Table Rock. Monday, September 14, was the designated day as the morning showed no generation scheduled. We arrived about 8:00am hoping to have the place to ourselves, WRONG. The parking lot was overflowing. Once we got our waders on and equipped with our weapon of choice, we headed for the river. COMBAT fishing for as far as the eye could see. There must have been 4,000 fly fishermen lined up elbow to elbow! (OK, slight exaggeration). The stairs ended at the river, adjacent to an outfall from the local hatchery. The outfall was about 2-foot-wide and less than a foot deep. About a quarter of those 4,000 were lined up both sides, high sticking, trying to catch a trophy trout, including a guy in a Lazy Boy (really just a lawn chair, but he was still sitting and fishing with a fly rod!). Not only that, a few hundred yards upriver was another outfall with the same type combat gathering, including another guy in another Lazy Boy (must have been brothers)! What was weird, I watched both Lazy Boy guys catch fish...Crazy!

With that, I figured it must be easy fishing, so I pushed, shoved, and knocked guys down to get into the river at a primo spot. Had to as they would not move out of my way willingly. Started with my pre-designated fly attached but after about half an hour, not a single bite! OK, decided Lazy Boy must have a secret fly, only known to him. Instead of elbowing my way back to him, I swallowed my dignity and asked the upriver guy what he was using as he was also being successful. He told me a green woolly in a size 14. "Great, I have one of those," I said. "Fantastic! I think the smallest I have is on a 14/0, a wee bit bigger." Went to grab it and found I had left my fly box at the truck! Fantastic start of the day! After again, pushing, shoving, and knocking guys down to get back to shore, I went and retrieved my fly box. Since my woolly was too big, I decided to use a green crystal buggler in about a size #8, smallest I had.

Starting back down to the river, there was a gathering of angry combat fisherman, pointing to the stairs and looked as if ready to do



harm. How rude! So, for the better part of discretion, I decided to work upstream and let things calm down. Fortunately, they had not recognized me at the base of the stairs as I was wearing camouflage like the rest of them with the same waders, vest, hat, neck gator around my face, etc. Whew, dodged a bullet there! Mike was embarrassed by my antics and not wanting to get caught up in the possible mob festivities, left me to my own devices. He went downstream to safety.

As I worked my way up to a good spot (with only a small crowd of about a hundred) I threw in my offering and WHAM, got hit immediately by an angry fish that decided I had been way too rude

downstream and would take my crystal bugger away from me. No way! We had a battle, as he tried to take it away! I WON!! It was a fat 20" rainbow and I told him to leave me alone when he disappeared. He must have informed his family as a couple of minutes later, another member decided to try and take my fly away. I guess he did not like the earlier embarrassment either. Persistent family, I will give them that, but he did not prevail either as I retrieved my fly once again. Must have been a younger sibling as he was only 18", but just as fat and sassy. The family finally got wise and quit arguing with me. In the end, I spanked four of them for trying to take my bugger away from me.

At that point I noticed a guy upriver from me was using a bobber and caught five in a row as I watched jealously. With the crystal bugger not working by then, I decided to try my hand at an indicator. Fish like that sophistication you know. Caught one on a complex twist sowbug, then nothing. Seems like the fish were punishing me for my earlier arrogance. At that point, I decided they were fearing me, so I started to work my way downriver to see if Mike was still willing to associate with me. I stealthily walked through the earlier combat fisherman as they gave me the evil eye. I just ignored them because the mob had settled down, thankfully, and as I stayed camouflaged, no one stopped me. Mike was about last in line in the Combat zone, so it took me a bit

to get down there. All the while, as I was moving/fishing, there were trout galore visible in about 6" to 24" of water. You could cast to them, but they would thumb their nose at all my offerings. I knew they feared me! Or maybe, Mike warned them to just ignore me!

Once I got close to Mike, decided to try a crackle back (a local delicacy, so say the trout) as I had overheard some of the combatants say they were having success with it. Having worn out my welcome with my earlier elbowing and not wanting to be recognized, I did not ask questions on how they were fishing it but decided to give it a try. No success on top as a dry, so let it get wet to swing it. As I went to move a step or so downstream after a few casts, looked down and about 100 fish were sitting in the lee of my legs! Holy cow, whatever happened to fishing for trout that required stealth? Wear no bright colored clothing, stay invisible, sneak up on them and all that? I think I was bamboozled growing up with the West Coast Elitists, fish and/or fisherman! Then it came to me, they saw me as a god and came to worship at my feet! That had to be it!

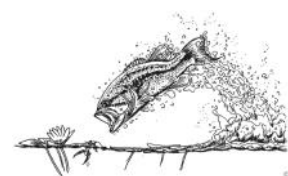
But I was humbled again as it finally dawned on me, they were swimming around my legs laughing, knowing I could not get a fly in front of them! The biggest was about 20" and was only 3" from my leg. Not only that, as I was be-

ing distracted with the supposed worshipers at my feet, they sent a newer member down to try to steal that well-crafted delicacy, my crackle back. Did not work. Caught him (an 11" bow) in the act of stealing despite the distraction. The more I think about it, the more I decided the trout below Table Rock are not as sophisticated or elitist as you would see in the West. These here are Red Neck Trout, who don't give a hoot what a fisherman does or thinks!

Then the warning siren went off, indicating they were going to start generation and increase water flows. Decided I did not want to drown in rising water so called it a day with a final count of seven thieves in hand. By then Mike was willing to associate with me again, thankfully, as he was my ride home.

Boy have I got a lot to learn: Red Neck Fish laughing at me, no stealth needed, need to be nice to Lazy Boy guys, little old ladies and guys on crutches while combat fishing! I'm a slow learner; so it will happen again! Oh well, I didn't get skunked. Till next time, tight lines.

**Dave Boyer**





## Spring River Report



Water levels are at 330 cfs, 350 avg, and water clarity has been clear. Low clear water has the bite tough on some days. Lots of bugs hatching off, mainly caddis and mayflies, making nymphs very productive at those times. Leaves are beginning to fall so an ant pattern can work some days. On the really tough days, bouncing a Y2K off the bottom will get bites.

Jim Hinkle fish hatchery has been stocking really nice sized rainbows of 12-14 inches. Still waiting on funding to rebuild the hatchery. It has been at less than half capacity since the 2017 flood. Jim Hinkle fish hatchery stocks all the trout rivers in Arkansas and we all hope rebuilding and improvements will start soon. The hatchery has done an excellent job with the limited resources over the last 3 years. With no catch and release areas and no slot limit for rainbows, weekly stocking is very

important. We catch and release all fish at Spring River Flies and Guides. We are trying to start a trend.

Wading for the first time this year has become much easier with lower water; but do be careful with the very slick river bottom. Still lots of vegetation on the river. Cold weather is what we are all waiting for. It will kill off the vegetation and get the bigger trout moving.

Tight lines and good luck,

**Mark Crawford**

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## Musings of a Fly Fishing Guide

### "Bobbers"

I know there are some fly anglers out there who cringe at the thought of indicators being referred to as bobbers. Why? Because bobbers are used by bait fisherman, while indicators are used by fly fishermen. In the bait fishing world, when a fish picks up your bait, it is called a bite, but in the world of fly fishing, it is called a take. Many fly anglers don't appreciate being grouped in the same breath as those bait fishing folks. Fly anglers try their best to separate themselves, even if it means changing and using different words that mean the same thing. The fly angling community as a whole considers themselves above bait fishermen and any kind of lingo used by bait fisherman is changed to suit the fly fishing community. Many fly anglers want to maintain some separation between the two. I've witnessed this very thing; one day, as I was in a fly shop, a customer walked through the door and asked for bobbers.

"You can find those at Walmart. Have a great day," was the owner's curt response.

Technically speaking, both bobbers and indicators are suspension devices. Many anglers think the primary purpose of using these devices is to communicate a strike, bite or take from a fish. In reality, though, the primary purpose of a suspension device is to suspend



your fly or bait off the bottom of a lake or stream bed. The depth of water you are fishing will determine the distance you set your suspension device from your fly or bait. A second benefit is achieved by watching your suspension device closely for a bite or a take then setting the hook. Another type of indicator, which I consider a true indicator, would be the sighter, a bi-color section of monofilament line tied in above your tippet. While a sighter doesn't suspend bait or flies it will visibly indicate to you when you get a bite or a take from a fish, providing you are watching your sighter material. This method is normally used when tight-line nymphing, or fishing nymph patterns within twenty feet or less from you. This method is also referred to as Czech nymphing.

Suspension devices come in all sizes, shapes and colors and are made from various materials. Some are made from hard or soft plastic while others are made from foam or some type of yarn material. Some devices are attached to your leader by twisting them on, some are pinched on, while others

are attached to your leader through a ring. Some require tools to attach them to your line while other types don't. The choice of which suspension device to use comes down to the fly angler's personal preference. Fly anglers usually have their reasons for using one device over another. Bait fisherman probably don't care as long as it is red and white in color and floats. It seems as though fly anglers are fussier about their suspension devices than most bait fisherman.

For the majority of my nymph fishing, I use the Air-Lock suspension device which comes in several different colors and sizes. They are offered in diameter sizes of 1/2", 3/4", and 1". The old style was made out of soft plastic, similar to a thingamabobber. The new Air-Locks are made from biodegradable foam. They are 30 percent lighter and will suspend 25 percent more weight than the old style. They are also easier to cast and if you happen to hit yourself behind the head, they are 38.6 percent less likely to hurt you! The Air-Lock has a plastic threaded stud or post extending out from the body with a horizontal slot on top in which to lay your leader. A rubber washer and a plastic thread-

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ed nut is used to secure your leader to the Air-Lock suspension device. Loosen the nut and slide the device up or down to increase or decrease the distance from your fly, then re-tighten the nut. The only downside to the Air-Lock is you have to be careful when you remove the rubber washer and threaded nut, because it can be easily dropped and lost. When you purchase a package of them, you usually get a few extra nuts. If you haven't used this type of suspension device before, give it a try! I think you will be pleasantly surprised by how sensitive and easy they are to use. Maybe those bait fisherman will take notice and start using indicators instead of bobbers. What will the fly fishing community do then?

**Danny Barker**

## River Fishing Report



Last month I mentioned the girdle bug was working quite well on most days. For much of September this same fly was still producing well. Various droppers from worms to midges below this fly would help pick up some bows to add to the fish count, while the girdle had a tendency to draw the better fish. It's a great fly for these bigger flows fished close to the bank or even further from the bank when boat traffic has pushed the fish further from the bank. The coffee colored fly was the go-to fly for the past few years but other colors also seem to be working well. Creativity has become the name of the game as these fish seem to wise up.

Hopper action is nowhere near what it has been in the past but appears to be best early morning before the fog lifts. Add to your collection several colors as they seem to change often from purple, pink, black to tan. Various sizes and shapes also seem to make a difference.

Over the past few days I've switched to fishing sowbugs in olive, gray and tan and my hook-up rate has increased. I'm also using big bugs in #14s and even #12s in a two fly rig fishing over gravel and grassy areas. The fish are moving to take this fly which they are not doing with the egg and worm set-

up and have slowed down taking the girdle bug set-up. I'm also fishing with less weight on the sowbug set-up.

We are all ready for some lower flows and it is getting late in the year. Personally I'd like to see some minimum flows so I can get a good look at the bottom of the river and get a feel for the fish count. Once the C-19 fear subsided, folks came out in droves and even days during the middle of the week looked like July 4th weekends. Fish have been leaving the rivers in scores destined to become freezer burned and thrown out a year from now. Night fishing has picked up and I am also seeing brown trout skins and heads at boat ramps. Personally I'd like to see night fishing go away on this river. I also know for a fact most guides, both fly and gear would also like to see the same.

**Jim Traylor**

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## Fly Tying Tip Dubbing Base

I think we have all had issues with our hair wings (like an Elk Hair Caddis) rotating on the shank of our hook as we tie them in or when we fish them. Similar happenings on dumbbell eyes where we can use some adhesive to prevent twist but using adhesive on hair wings may not be desirable or effective. They still seem to twist even though we apply head cement to the final thread wraps. Tim Flagler has a neat technique that works well on hair wings. Instead of a thread base only for the wing, use a little superfine or other dry fly dubbing and place a small base on the hook shank where you tie in your wing. (Photo#1). Once you tie in your wing (Photo#2), you will find that they are much more resistant to twisting on the shank. I have gotten used to using GSP thread for my hair wings. With the thread being so slick the dubbing provides much better base than thread alone. Tim also shows this tip for dumbbell eyes and parachute posts, but I have had less luck with those verses using the technique on a hair wing. Until I found this tip, I had a difficult time keeping wings from twisting. Give it a try, you might find it works for you on any hair wing pattern.

Dave Boyer



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2

**Tee's by Donna**  
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"In our family, there was no clear line between religion and flyfishing." Norman Maclean

## Nymph Rigging The Perfection Loop Tag

One of the reasons I am hooked on fly fishing is the opportunity to continually improve my craft. I first starting fly fishing for trout in the rivers and streams of Colorado, where I lived for 20 years. All of this was wade fishing, most of it with a nymph under an indicator. When I moved to Arkansas and tried fishing our tail waters, I was surprised and more than a little disappointed to discover that the flies and methods I used in western waters were ineffective here. After joining NAFF and developing friendships with local anglers, I began to learn from them, refine my methods, and best of all, catch more fish. Sometimes, it's the details in rigging and presentation that make all the difference.

For the past two years, we have faced high water conditions in our tail waters. Wade fishing has been limited or non-existent throughout most of the year. So virtually all of my fishing these days is from a boat using long leaders with dual fly rigs and plenty of split shot to get flies down into the strike zone. One refinement that my close friends and I have made this year is to use a drop shot rig with two flies tied off the main tippet line with Perfection Loop tags. When presented correctly, this rig has enabled us to catch a lot of fish. Each of us has several experiences catching two fish at the same time, one on each fly. I enjoyed a day



## Two Fish Hooked at the Same Time!

recently when I caught a double twice in the same morning. So, let's examine how this rig is set up and how it may vary from what others may be using.

A common system used in this area is an in-line rig. This setup has the top fly tied to the tippet main line, with a point fly tied beneath it using a 12-24" length of tippet tied to the hook bend of the top fly. Or maybe it's tied to the hook eye of the top fly, the idea here is to free up the top fly's hook making it more available to a hungry trout and permitting a better hook set. Split shot is attached to the tippet either above the top fly, or between the two flies. I have used the in-line system myself and have caught fish with it. But my success has taken a significant step forward using the drop shot rig with Perfection Loop tags, espe-

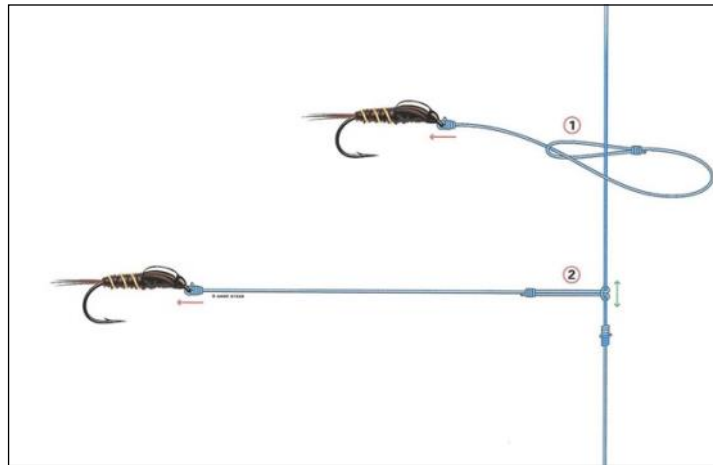
cially in catching fish with the top fly. There is a school of thought that presenting the fly on a tag rather than secured front-to-back on the main line allows it to drift and move more naturally in the current. In my experiments using the same fly pattern for both the top and bottom fly, I catch about 40% of my fish on the top fly and 60% on the bottom fly. That's pretty close my friends, and likely reflects the number of fish at different levels in the water column. The two fish per cast incidents lend further evidence to the effectiveness of this rig.

I first started assembling the drop shot rig using triple surgeon's knot tags on which to tie my flies. I would start with my first triple surgeon's knot, leaving about 5" on the downside tag for that first fly. I would position the second fly 12-



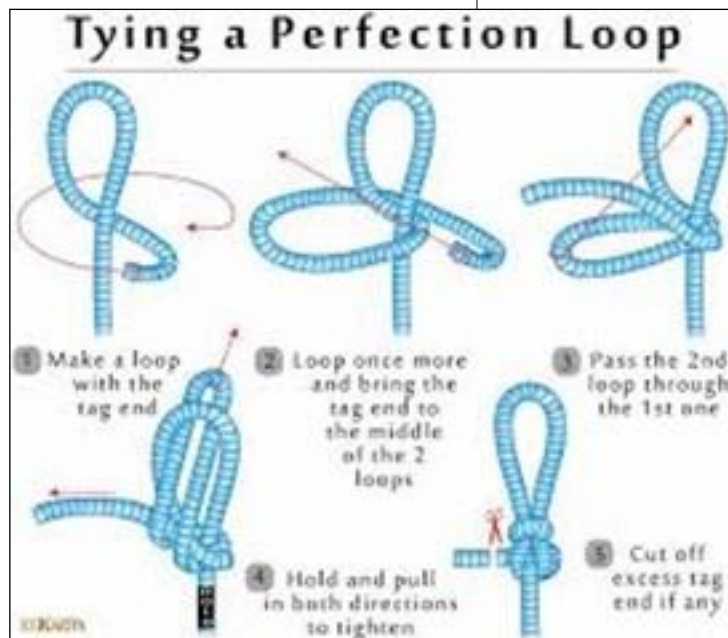
15" below the first fly with a second triple surgeon's knot and leaving 5" on the downside tag. I would leave about 10" of tippet below the second triple surgeon's knot for the split shot. Tie a simple overhand knot on the very end of the tippet, and crimp on the split shot above the knot to keep it from slipping off. This system worked, but after changing flies a couple of times, a tag would become too short to tie on another fly. The solution at that time was to reconstruct the whole thing. That was unacceptable to me and I realized that something had to change. I wanted to spend my time fishing, not reconstructing my nymph rig.

My good friend Danny Barker read somewhere about using a perfection loop tag on a nymph rig. We tried it, and it worked well. Simply position the end of the loop around the tippet mainline above a triple surgeon's knot, bring the tag end around the tippet line and through the loop. Then pull it tight, and slide it down against the top of the triple surgeon's knot. If you change several flies and once again encounter a too-short tag, simply clip off the first Perfection Loop and install another one. One advantage of the Perfection Loop tag is that it positions the fly at a 90-degree angle to the tippet main line. It will wind around the tippet sometimes, but is easily unwound between drifts.



The next issue to consider is the degree of difficulty in tying the Perfection Loop. The best way to learn it is to practice in front of a computer monitor watching a YouTube video demonstration. I have provided a diagram which shows the process, but seeing the knot tied in a video is best.

Here is another tip. Tie your Perfection Loops under a bright light, such as the one you use to tie flies. And do the tying against a black background. I use a black tablet binder or black cloth. Under these conditions, the tippet material shines under the light allowing you to see all parts of the knot and that elusive tag that is pulled between the




Danny Barker can tie a Perfection Loop quickly while fishing from a boat. But he has better eyesight than me. So, let me give you a hint that takes away the frustra-

tion. Tie up a supply of Perfection Loops at home, each with a tag about 6" long. Store these in a baggie and bring them along in your fishing bag. Here is another tip. Tie your Perfection Loops under a bright light, such as the one you use to tie flies. And do the tying against a black background. I use a black tablet binder or black cloth. Under these conditions, the tippet material shines under the light allowing you to see all parts of the knot and that elusive tag that is pulled between the two loops and secured with your finger and thumb. Another hint - do not remove your precious Perfection Loop tags from the baggie while the boat is under power or in the face of a stiff wind. It will get away from you and disappear.

We will continue to innovate techniques to better present our flies and catch trout from our tail wa-

ters. The Perfection Loop tag applied to a drop shot rig is not new to the fly fishing world. But it was new to me and has been a significant step forward in catching fish—lots of fish. Give it a try and I will wager that you too will enjoy its benefits, including catching two fish at the same time.

Dave Schisler



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## Warm Water Fishing "Throwback Thursday"



A few years ago Jr. and I started collecting "vintage" flies. The first of these were acquired at the vintage tackle show that Jerry McCoy hosts each year at the Ramada Inn in Mountain Home. Others were found at antique stores and purchased online. Most of these flies would be considered more of a fly rod lure as opposed to a classic fly like a Royal Wulff dry or streamer like a Mickey Finn. Our collection consists mostly of poppers and minnow patterns made by companies like Heddon, South Bend and Paw Paw Bait Co. These "flies" were manufactured by the same companies that made lures to be used with conventional tackle, but were basically scaled down versions suitable to be thrown on a fly rod.

So it was with a bit of "financial" apprehension that I recently decided to put a few of these vintage lures back to work. Also, the plan was to fish them only on fiberglass and bamboo fly rods. First into the water was a beautifully detailed "bulging eyed" frog pat-

tern by South Bend. Well, it floated good, popped good, it just didn't fly good, which wasn't the fly's fault. It was mine! It's a funny thing, how a 6wt (appropriately named) Butter Stick just doesn't pick up 50 feet of fly line with the same amount of "gusto" as say a Sage X! I also was reminded that "older" flies like older fly fisherman can get a little more fragile with age! Therefore when vintage fly number 1 failed to gain enough elevation during the "pick up" to clear the side of the boat, the resulting collision was, well costly!

Vintage fly number 2 was also a South Bend frog pattern, only smaller. This little popper fished on a 4wt bamboo worked like a charm! Almost immediately it was slammed by a big green sunfish that mistook it for an easy meal. Well, mission accomplished. Let's try to catch something bigger!



Next up, a "Wotta Frog" by Paw Paw Bait Co. Even though the black color of the fly didn't exactly "match the hatch" so to speak, I was hoping that the size, profile, and "pop" would still entice a nice bass to the surface! And entice it did! After just a few casts with the

Butter Stick a fat 2 lb(ish) Kentucky Bass just hammered it! Well alright then, let's get another one! And get another one I did, only this one didn't want to go in the net, or to be touched or to get its picture taken!

Yes, I'm going to end on "the one that got away" and no, there are no other witnesses, so you'll just have to take my word for it! This was honestly the largest bass I've ever had on a fly rod! I know because it did a nice "tail walk" across the surface right in front of me just before it spit my Wotta Frog out of its GIANT mouth! Amazingly I took the whole "losing the biggest bass of my life thing" quite well! I actually felt a calmness, (this was probably because I lost consciousness temporarily!) But Hey, at least I got the fly back in one piece and anyway, who needs a photo? That's just evidence as to how BIG it "really" was!

**Michael Schraeder**



**Michael Schraeder**

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## Events of Interest to NAFF Members

### Sowbug Roundup Stuff!

Sowbug 2020 is gone but not forgotten. Live Sowbug vicariously and virtually and get that Sowbug merchandise that you were too socially distant to purchase at the show (that wasn't)! We have 2020 Sowbug Roundup Pins, Sowbug insulated stainless steel adult beverage imbibers and Sowbug hats for sale.

Sowbug Roundup 2020 pin - \$5.00 + (1st Class postage \$1.00) - total \$6.00

Sowbug Roundup insulated adult beverage imbiber - \$10.00 + (Priority mail envelope \$9.00) - Total \$19.00

Sowbug Roundup Hat - \$15.00 + (Priority mail envelope \$9.00) Indicate ID number of hat desired. - Total \$24.00

Save some money and buy all three. They will fit in one priority mail envelope!

Soon we will have our web page up to purchase these items over the internet. In the meantime you can order from Patty Lueken at 271 Plane Tree Ln, Mountain Home, AR 72653.

(plueken@luekenlaw.com) If you live locally or will be in town, we can arrange to put the merchandise in your hands at a convenient socially distant location

