



The Evening

Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

March 2015

Preserving Our Streams

By Sybil Hunter

Steve Sendak, MFFC's February guest speaker from Northpoint Fisheries Management, says many people do not realize "The trout population is maintained by conservation groups, *not* the DNR. The spawning data is all done by volunteers. *We* have to do it, if it is going to happen."

Northpoint Fisheries has two employees, and took the place of the DNR when cuts by the Bush administration disbanded most of the functions of the DNR and essentially stripped it of its ability to perform routine functions. NorthPoint is privately funded by grass roots conservation groups like MFFC. Trout Unlimited is its biggest proponent.

"I was blessed to work in the DNR until bureaucracy made it stupid," said Steve Sendak providing background. "Your group is so generous to donate umpteen dollars to keep us alive. It is grass roots efforts that are keeping our rivers working."

"There was a big effort back in the CCC days in the 1930s to revive the rivers. There was another big effort in the 1950s," said Sendak, "but periodically things go haywire." Historically, after the log drives, the forests and the fish were gone. The biological function of the habitat was ignored. "Whatever component is



ignored. "Whatever component is missing from the stream throws *everything* haywire."

"The sampling data we now have, was started in the 1950s when trout management started. We have the largest trout data set in the *world*," noted Sendak. "In the 1970s, they changed the name of the DNR. In 1979, a huge effort was going on to rebuild structure and do work." Many young people got involved. At that point it was funded by our tax dollars.

"Then the staff and budgets got cut. Of the 350 people that started, we were down to 150. There was an Au Sable team, Mio staff, Coldwater staff....I was the last one to leave."

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MFFC Calendar

March 14 & 15, 2015

Midwest Fly Fishing Expo
MCC Sports & Expo Center
Warren, Sat 9a-6p & Sun 10a-4p

March 18, 2015 Speaker
Meeting Speaker: Kevin

Feenstra

Topic: Fishing The Muskegon
Clarenceville Middle School
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

April 1, 2015

Speaker Meeting

Speaker: TBD

Topic: TBD

Clarenceville Middle School
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

April 22, 2015

Activity Meeting

Clarenceville Middle School
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.



“The Au Sable Is A Jewel.”

Northpoint Fisheries Management

in what we can do.” said Sendak. “We can only recreate old things.”

“In the past, the agency worked...it’s leaner...now there are openings for citizens and anglers to come in to play,” said Sendak. “The Au Sable is a jewel. You need to re-polish it.”

There were 10 to 12 summer workers working on three projects for a total of 13 weeks. “Most were college programs. They gained beneficial skills and appreciation for this resource. All in all it is working.”

“The Grayling hatchery is happening, whether we want it or not,” said Sendak. “The limits are a little liberal,” he pointed out. “We are not going to be successful on everything.” That leads to the next project in the pipeline - a fish bypass channel to go around it.

“2015 projects are things that need to get done to keep the rivers intact,” said Sendak. “Volunteers go out and reposition fallen trees, they take chain saws, winches, and know how.” The idea is to move and rotate the trees so they do not block the functionality of the stream. Projected projects include planting cedar saplings, insect surveys, and in-stream mapping. “The one thing we want to be able to prove is the positive effects of the changes in the river over time.”

Past projects include: the sand trap at the Mill Pond dam in town (addressed in 1991); the Pollack Bridge upstream of the Au Sable (there were close to 200 structures there); and sampling data at the Pollack Bridge.

Coming up projects include Old Dam Road stream restorations, and a whole host of other North Branch projects by Anglers of the Au Sable, projected through 2022. There is a list on the Mason Griffiths homepage at <http://www.masongriffithtu.org>.

There is also the West Branch Crick Project. “The West Branch is totally buggered up by beavers. The head waters are destroyed. There is no gravel for four miles!” Said Sendak, “Hopefully we can have this started this summer, if we get the grant.”

“The Upper Manistee River Association is getting involved. They are utilizing a group of disadvantaged kids through a youth group,” said Sendak “The kids gain work ethic. They can go home and have something to be proud of.”

“All the groups provide fish cover, they are having a heck of a time doing this.”

Another fun project is through science teachers’ classroom settings. “Science teachers hatch fish with cooled tanks then put them back in the river at the end of the year.”

Sendak showed a video from their main website (<http://www.ausabletrout.com>), about restoration of the Williams Track, addressing: insect surveys; temperature samplings; fish stockings; permissions to put in spawning riffles; sediment management; substrate creation; fish cover - rafts, tree drops, positioning of trees; narrowing and improving the velocity and hydraulic pressure of the water to provide oxygen to eggs, among other things. As Sendak states it, “I’m amazed at how Mother Nature can heal things if we help her along a little.”

“The DNR did some shocking this summer... saw trout population are declining. There are a lot of questions. We just don’t have answers. We’re doing a lot of things, but we still have a lot of things to do,” said Sendak. “We need help.”

“My bottom line is that somebody has to take care of the river.”

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“Trout Unlimited cornered me when I left,” said Sendak, “I was sick of the bureaucracy.” Sendak then helped create Northpoint Fisheries Management, working with Mark Rais, putting people back on the river.

A habitat act that passed in Michigan allowed for funds to be raised, and required a monetary match as well. “Groups donated to it extensively,” said Sendak. The Northpoint Fisheries Management identifies the needs...cleans up the head waters, refurbishes old structures... The fish need places to spawn, so younger fish can hide, and so older fish can be protected. We are making absolutely wonderful changes.”

“The Au Sable needs sediment management. [It has a sand problem.] Gravel is the best substrate.” The sand needs to be purged. Sand cuts down spawning and food resources. MFFC has donated to some of the sand traps used in the river. “They are expensive, but useful over a long time.”

There are other problems too. “Beaver are notorious for screwing up a lot of the trout streams,” said Sendak. Four and a half miles of the West Branch, and Big Creek by Lovels, had 40 beaver dams at one point.

“There are three projects to refurbish the mainstream. “Very little has been done to maintain these. The EPA frames



Two Cents Worth What Cost

As I write this, in 58 days, Michigan's General Trout Season will officially open and trout waters we have come to consider our own, will once again be filled with piscators, hopeful of enticing trout (in my case, brookies) to take their fly. Some of us, me included, will undoubtedly already have wet a line in a river or lake open year around. Some of us, me included, will have been fortunate enough to have traveled to some warm climate and fished for bonefish, tarpon, permit and other saltwater species. But this is Michigan, and this is now.

As members of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club, we have something in common: we travel from all over the tri-county area to meet (some would say commiserate) twice monthly, filling a school cafeteria to talk fly fishing. We pay people to come talk to us; we take our message on the road to schools, fishing shows and even have our own ... The Midwest Fly Fishing Expo - which is the envy of all other organizations that profess to love the pursuit of trout, in Michigan and elsewhere.

We are a diverse group: we consist of doctors, lawyers, business people, shopkeepers, laborers, retirees and young people still relying on dad's and granddad's flies. But the one common thread we share is the love for that little multicolored fish that lives in clear, clean, fast moving water that flows through basins,

woods and fields that were carved out by glaciers thousands, if not millions of years ago.

We travel to these places in groups and alone, and we bring back more than we take; most of us seldom keep what we catch. We use rods with names like Orvis, Sage, Winston, Thomas and Thomas, and others. Some of us make our own with the care and precision of a watch maker. We refer to them as "sweet" and "what a beauty" and care for them better than we do other valued possessions.

The natural progression into our sport is to learn how to tie our own flies ... somewhere back when, we were told we could save money tying our own flies. And I guess you could make that case if you got your material from road kill, but as we soon find out, we have to supplement that with \$90 dollar rooster necks ... in several different colors, because, like our rods, reels and line, well, we just plain need it.

No one keeps track of the cost of these things - except our spouses - because it's not worth fretting over. After all, like bird hunting with a fine bird dog, (another way of saving on feathers, by the way) you can't use a scrub gun; you'll embarrass the poor dog. And who wants to embarrass their better half?

These things are, of course, part of the piscatorial evolution we all go through ... and there is comfort in numbers. So in 58 days as we gather in the Board Room at Gates Au Sable Lodge and remember those who now fish that sublime water with the Great Fisherman, we'll be comforted taking what's become the essence of ourselves and step into the water of our personal favorite stream to get reacquainted with Trout ... what cost? TD



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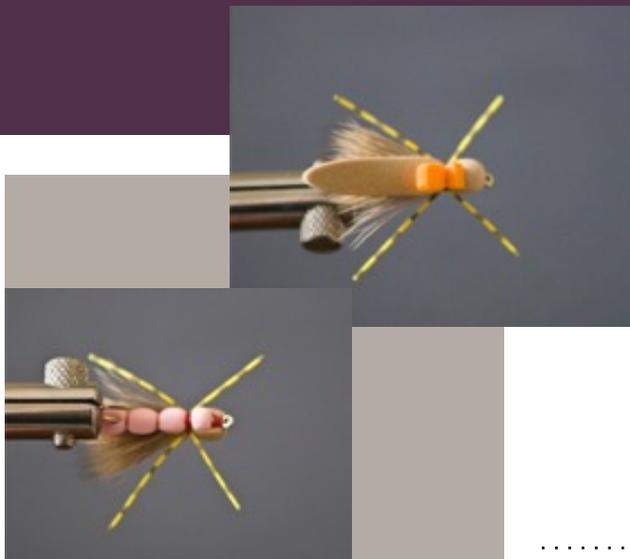
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March Fly Of Month



Featured Fly



For MI and MT

Pink Pookie

By Todd A. Schotts

For our March featured fly, it is considered one of the most deadliest hopper patterns born in the land of Big Sky country! The "Pink Pookie." This fly is one of the more popular patterns in the Livingston-Bozeman area, and was created by Dean Reiner of Hatch Finders Fly Shop in Livingston, Montana. It came about back in 2003, during the hopper season when a guide came asking if the shop had any pink hoppers. After finding out they did not, he requested a pattern for the next day. So with his partner Koichi Kawai, Dean gave it try and created this month's pattern.

As for the name, they wanted something to give it mystic - not just another fly pattern. Dean explains how the name came about, "In the course of tying many dozen flies a day, some eventually end up on the floor. My dog Pookie never paid much attention to what we were tying, but when one of the pink hoppers fell on the floor, she jumped right on it and began tossing it into the air. Not wanting her to find a hook, I took it away from her. Then she stood up on her hind legs pleading with me to let her have it. As she was standing up she exposed her very pink belly, Koichi and I thought that would

be a great name for the fly, hence The Pink Pookie."

When used, reports were, "pink was very attractive to the trout." The guides, and regular customers, enjoyed the hoppers because they floated well, not requiring much floatant. Dean said, "After a week of handing out the fly as an experimental pattern the number or requests for the fly grew to the point where we had to put it into the inventory. For the next 45 days we had guys standing 3 deep at the vise at 6 in the morning waiting for us to turn out the fly. We must have tied 200 dozen that first summer. For every year since, it has been the most popular pattern for hoppers."

Grasshoppers evolved well over 200 millions year ago, when the first reptiles appeared on Earth. The three stages of development would be: egg, nymph, and adult. Eggs are laid in the fall and hatch during the spring. The nymph of the grasshopper actually looks like an adult grasshopper, but has no wings. They tend to shed their skin many times as they grow. When they finally become an adult they develop their wings. Their actual life cycle is only up to one year. An actual grasshopper comes in many sizes and can be up to 5" in length. Their mode of transportation would be walking,

hopping, or even flying. They have five eyes and no ears, but can still hear with a special organ on their abdomen called a tympanal organ. They use the large back legs for hopping and making music, while smaller front legs are used for eating and walking.

When fishing this fly, take in consideration that July and August is Hopper Season. With the summer winds, they tend to blow the alien looking insect off the overhead brush or tall grasses into the waters below making it hard for them to fly and making them easy prey to the inhabitants of the waters. When casting a hopper pattern like the "Pink Pookie," no delicate casting is required as they usually make a loud plopping noise when they hit the water. Do not forget to drift your fly along the banks, by the brush and tall grass.

If you are heading out to Montana with the club in August, this fly would be a great asset in your fly box, or even if you decide to hopper fish around here in Michigan. The Pink Pookie just flat out catches fish!! Until next month, Tight Lines and Snazzy Flies.



MATERIALS NEEDED:

HOOK: Dai Riki 280 Sizes 8 and 10

THREAD: Gudebrod, Red 6/0

BODY: Pink foam, 2 mm

OVERYBODY/WING: Gray foam, 2 mm

UNDER WING: Elk hair

LEGS: Centipede legs black & yellow, medium

INDICATOR: Red foam, 2 mm



March Members Corner

Featured Members

Featured Member Tyer

Corey Thelen

By Todd A. Schotts

Our March featured tyer, will be none other than the tying sensation Master Tyer Corey Thelen.

The fly he brings us, is a pattern that he actually found on line quite a few years ago. It is called the Evil Weevil Nymph. This fly was originally designed by Calgary Fly Tier, Jeremy Davies in the late 1990's. Since it's inception, the pattern is fished all over North America with great success. I know from my own tying, that produces fish in the Smokey Mountains, and all over Michigan. This fly is an attractor pattern representing a water boatman, caddis pupa, scuds, mayfly nymphs, or even small stonefly nymphs - depending on the color combination.

Corey he enjoys fishing this pattern both in Michigan and out west in Yellowstone. He also mentioned that he carries a variety of sizes and colors with him at all times. To fish this, Corey advises fishing with a smaller nymph off the back or with a dropper on a dry fly.

Corey has been a member of

MATERIALS NEEDED HOOK:

curved scud hook 6 – 20

THREAD: *8/0 or 70 Denier*

TAIL: *Pheasant tail fibers*

RIB: *Copper or gold wire*

SHELL: *Plastic scud back (Brown)*

DUBBING: *Olive or brown*

LEGS: *Brown goose Biots*

BEAD: *gold or copper to match hook*



MFFC for five years and has participated in many of the club events. He was a featured tier and a club tier at our Midwest Fly Expo, plus a spotlight featured tyer at our activity meetings. He first started tying flies about seven years ago during summer camp. He took a class one afternoon, where they tied woolly buggers. Corey said he was hooked! He is a master at spinning deer hair into realistic critters and also enjoys tying trout flies. Corey, a student at The College of Creative Studies in Detroit, is studying Product Design, which probably explains his awesome job at tying. He enjoys fishing the Au Sable, Manistee, the Pigeon River Country, and of course, Yellowstone.

So if you want to learn a great fly for the weary trout, bring your vise and tying tools for our March Activity meeting and get Weeviled.

A Blast From The Past

Caroline Rushlow



I mainly fish the Chattahoochee River (Atlanta area) for rainbows and brown trout. The consistently cold water coming from the depths of Lake Lanier make this portion of the river, south of the dam, very good fishing 12 months out of the year! Georgia's coast is a treasure. The barrier islands are filled with redfish and speckled trout. Unfortunately, I don't get out as much as I like, but with retirement not too far away..... I will make plans to fish more of GA. Contact me anytime at cprushlow@yahoo.com. Thanks y'all for contacting me. Fish-On!

Do you know any members who have relocated that we can contact? If so, let me know at: evening_hatch.mffc@gmail.com.



Michigan Fly Fishing Club

Club Events



A Great Success Once Again!

new members school

SIU Terry Drinkwine

The 2015 MFFC Members School held at Northville High School was again well attended and staffed thanks to the preparations of Chairman Mike Doyle and his staff. Unfortunately, Mike came down with a case of the “gottchas” and had to turn over the reins to Bill Shannon who did a great job facilitating.

With the usual suspects manning the classrooms and gymnasium, new and old members alike benefited from the years of experience they brought and shared: from knots, entomology and related subjects taught by Al Haxton and assistants; to fly tying taught by Terry Herron; including Todd Schotts and assistants casting, taught by John Pinto, Peter Albertson, Fred Field and others.

The school was full and the staff of MFFC members were numerous enough to assure another successful club sponsored activity. On St. Valentine’s Day, no less.

Camaraderie was flowing over lunch which include chili from a member’s chili cook-off. Six entries competed in the annual cook-off with Jon Bada taking top honors.

New members who attended the school are now eligible to attend the Dick Schott New Members Outing at Wa Wa Sum Lodge on the Main Branch of the Au Sable in May. Interested new members can see Mike Doyle to sign up.





Michigan Fly Fishing Club

Featured Fotos

Photo Gallery



Learning On The Fly

all about fish



Steve Sendak training



FLY FISHING MERIT BADGE

Presented By
THE MICHIGAN FLY FISHING CLUB APRIL 18, 2015

MFFC presents a fun-filled day learning all about fly fishing, following the Boy Scout Merit Badge requirements.

WHERE: Independence Oaks County Park, 9501 Sashabaw Rd., Clarkston MI. **WHEN:** April 18th, 8:50 AM (sharp) to 3:30 PM.
COST: \$5.00, prepaid to "MFFC" – by March 30, 2015.
QUESTIONS: Bob Niemi 248-229-8920 / rniemi1@yahoo.com

Scouts will learn about stream etiquette and safety, fish cleaning, rod casting, tying flies and entomology.

Kathy & Margaret



Member's Tying Class

Michigan Fly Fishing Club
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