

HUNTER VALLEY FLY FISHING CLUB



2016 April Newsletter

President – Darren Foster

Vice President – Cherie Blackburn

Secretary – Tony Ward

Treasurer – Justin Smith

Newsletter Editor – Jeff Yates

Committee Members

Peter Sewell

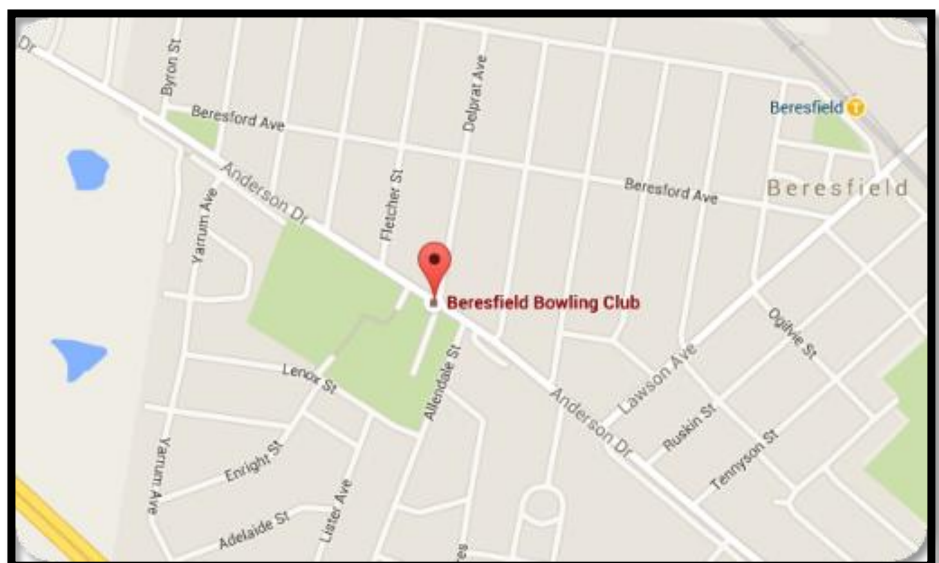
Brent Blackwell

Jeff Yates

Lawrence Blackburn

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club meets on the first Wednesday of each month at:-

Beresfield Bowling Club
Anderson Drive
Beresfield
At 6.30pm



Editor's comments

Jeff Yates



Congratulations on the club name change. I have made up a temporary banner for the front of the newsletter as an interim measure, until the committee comes to a consensus on an acceptable logo style. We have more capable members than myself who will make a great job of the graphics to put our club up in lights.

This month's issue has a top article submitted by Justin on the Barrington Tops trip. He has certainly lost his calling in life as I recon he would make a terrific journo or chef, in fact he is both. He is also prominent in another article where he lent his ear to science to show how a hook is removed. Looked painful or maybe just relief as he lost his ear's fly adornment.

I had the pleasure of joining Rod and Narelle over at Dunn's swamp and Rylstone weir chasing natives from kayaks. Had a great time with them on the water and once again appreciated the company, and the area for its scenic beauty.

I have been in contact with Rob Cooper from AGL Macquarie trying to get a handle on the closure of Lake due to the presence of "Naegleria fowleri" which is an amoeba that lives predominantly in warm freshwater. Regular testing over winter for the presence of the critter will dictate the fate of our Carp Classic. I am confident that cooler winter temperatures will kill it off and it will be business as usual.

While I'm away over the next few months Darren will fill the breach for me to keep the newsletters flowing each month. Thanks Darren, as it will be a fair commitment of your time.

President's Report



Welcome all to the club's April Newsletter. First up, congratulations to the club regarding the name change and welcome again to the Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club (HVFFC). The change of name will see the club move forward on to bigger and better things and more importantly state who we are and what we stand for as a fly fishing club.

Look out in this issue for an in-depth report on the Barrington Trip organized and catered for by none other than the original Spitmiester himself Justin "The Spitmiester" Smith. After seeing the pics on Facebook I am "*not happy Jan*" about missing out on the bountiful banquet supplied.

Also, don't forget we are still looking for a new logo for the club. So get creative and share your ideas.

Enjoy the newsletter and remember if you have an interesting story, a tasty recipe for cooking your catch or a fly recipe you wish to share please forward to the Newsletter Editor Jeff Yates (jeffandlynyates@bigpond.com)

Cheers
Darren Foster
President 2016

HUNTER VALLEY FLY FISHING CLUB 2016 Calendar

Month	Date	Venue/Event	Trip Master	Contact Number
January	TBA	Fly Tying/Fishing with Lawrence & Cherie	Lawrence B.	0432989797
February	03 rd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
February	13 th – 14 th	Hawks Nest – Saltwater	Tom Jones	0406662713
February				
March	02 nd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
March	13 th	Casting Day at St Clair with Peter Morse	Darren Foster	0413392774
March	19 th – 20 th	Clarence Town, Williams River – Bass	Mik Ewin	0407898317
April	06 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
April	3 rd	Fly Tying for Barrington – Trout Patterns	Darren/Jim	0413392774
April	16 th – 17 th	Barrington Tops – Little Manning – Trout	Justin Smith	0417478138
May	04 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
May	20 th – 22 nd	Lithgow – Glenroy Crossing, Coxs River	Rod Fox	0407195508
May				
June	01 st	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
June	11 th – 12 th	Lake St Clair - Bass	Peter Sewell	0428685101
June				
July	06 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
July	16 th	Xmas in July at Bero Bowlo		
July				
August	03 rd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
August	6 th – 7 th	Swansea – Saltwater - Salmon		
August				
September	07 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
September		Hastings ?		
September				
October	5 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
October	14 th – 16 th	Lake Liddell - Carp Classic	Lawrence/Cherie	0432989797
October				
November	11 th	Club AGM at Bero Bowlo	All	
November		Barrington - Local Rivers	Brent	
November				
December	7 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
December				
December				

Rylstone Waterways

By Jeff Yates

It's April and the autumn weather should be kicking in, instead we are being treated to 34 degree days and balmy nights. After an all-time record high average temperature for March, and no prospects for cooler weather in April, it's time to go camping at Dunn's Swamp, just ask the Foxes.

I met up with Narelle and Rod for a couple of days fishing on the waters of Dunn's Swamp and Rylstone Weir. They had their home away from home parked up at Dunn's Swamp with the solar heating warming up their evening showers, their 160w photovoltaic cells charging up the batteries and the camp stove stoked ready for the veal roast for dinner. After the city rat race they thought they had died and gone to heaven.

I missed Rod Esdaile who had been for a day visit the previous day. I arrived at Dunn's Swamp, checking my teeth fillings for damage after a horrific corrugated dirt road in through the National Park after the Nulla Mountain turnoff.

We had a hurried cuppa, keen to wet the kayaks and a fly line. The 9wt fly rod was set up with a sinking tip line and lightly weighted fly. It is important to get the fly to the fish, but also to ensure the fly moves freely and natural like.

Rod had a pillion passenger with Narelle riding in the back seat of the Hobie, peddling on Rod's commands. He was careful not to get too cheeky as Narelle also had the rudder controls.



We went down stream a short distance where I suggested we should start fishing as I have caught yellow belly in this spot on previous trips. Almost on que I had a take and landed a small fish, but welcome all the same. This was a good omen.



We travelled a further kilometre or two and covered some beautiful water but no fish. The scenery made up for the deficiencies in the fishing. As the sun started to cook us, we decided to seek some shade and have lunch back at camp.

We shared lunch with some of the local wildlife, including the resident swamp hens, which we eyed off for their great Craig's feathers.



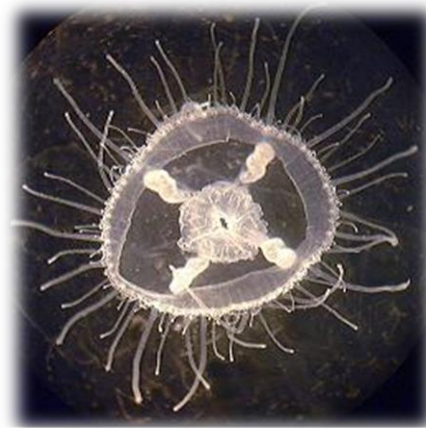
The afternoon was a continuation of the morning with the fish shut down. No use continuing today so we planned our next leg of fishing, Rylstone weir.

The next day I met the Foxs for an early morning coffee at Rylstone, before heading through the TSR to Rylstone Weir, one of my favourite native fishing spots. The track in was all 1st gear, with numerous washouts and deep bogs. A steady approach took about 20 minutes to travel the 3 klms of track.

A stiff breeze, a precursor to a predicted southerly change blew up the dam, limiting our fishing to the protected reaches of the meandering town water supply. Casting a purple and black zonker wolly bugger hybrid fly, I had a follow

from a sizable fish. Working the area over, I couldn't get any more interest so we moved on.

Closely following the fly during retrieves, I noticed what I thought were jelly fish about the kayak. They were the size of a 10c piece and had a curious cross on top of their mantle. They were delicate and lacy-looking, colourless to whitish, and occurred in large numbers.



A bit of research when I got home indicates that they are found throughout the world in freshwater, usually in man-made reservoirs. They bloom in a location and disappear after a few weeks or months, not to reappear for another 5 to 10 years at that location.

Scientists think they are transported from pond to pond on the feet of water birds. They eat small aquatic invertebrates and larvae, including mosquito larvae. Probably an important part of the food chain, because despite their small size, they are thought to have no natural predators. They don't appear to have a sting.

We pedalled to the back of the weir, turning around just short of the river source. The wind was still blowing hard, which made casting and

maneuvering difficult, so we decided to call it a day. Rod was so excited about the possibilities and beauty of the

fishery that he is planning to run a club outing over there in the future.



The Pheasant Hunter's Brasserie

By Justin Smith

And behold the seer did proclaim; "beware the wilderness of the Barrington, for there in the dark deep forests, roam the poisonous serpents and hosts of other beasts that bite and scratch and suck thy blood from beneath thy garment".

But a great host of Hunter Valley Fly Fishers heedith not the seers' warnings, and replied, "If there be feasting and fishing and a drop toilet, we will come". And behold, a great multitude ascended the mountain, to feast and fish and sit upon the drop toilet.

And there was much rejoicing.....



I can't tell the story of this club fishing trip, the first under our new name of the Hunter Fly Fishing Club, at least not the whole story...I can only recount little bits, the one sixteenth part I played, in what was a memorable and enjoyable sojourn to the beautiful Barrington Tops.

As part of our preparation as a club, to fish this area, we discussed the many challenges that are experienced by fly anglers who chase the little trout that inhabit this isolated plateau that rises ruggedly to 1500m between Scone in the Hunter Valley and Gloucester to the east. The little creeks and rivulets

remain cool enough in these higher altitudes to support small rainbow and brown trout, who willingly come to the fly delivered by a skilled and adventurous angler.

The first challenge accepted by those who attended is the time it takes to travel there and the distance that must be travelled, much of which is on rough dirt roads. Our group travelled collectively at least six thousand kilometres, there and back just to enjoy the spectacular beauty of this region and perhaps as a bonus, chase and catch these little speckled fishes as well. Some say the journey is as

important as the destination, but for me, I was happy, if despite a hiccup or two along the way, as long as everyone arrived, more or less, in the right place, safe and sound.

As one of the organizers and caterers for this club outing, my role was to bring the food and account for the planned arrival of fifteen other anglers. My plan was to arrive as one of the first, set up camp, and wait for and organise the others. As they say, the best laid plans...changed, on route when I hit a sharp rock on a dirt road at the start of the ascent into the park. I was travelling behind another slower vehicle and was deciding whether to attempt to pass, or hang back to allow the dust, which was obscuring my vision, to settle. The unseen rock on the road made the decision for me, and to the tune of some appropriate expletives, I came to an immediate stop to discover rips in the side walls of both the front and rear passenger-side tyres.

As discussed in our pre-trip communications, mobile signals are scarce in this region, so true to my own words of warning, I could neither text nor call, to seek assistance or plan for contingencies. Thankfully, the village of Moonan was only three kilometres back, and as I started my walk back to town, a vehicle coming off the mountain turned up and a friendly driver drove me to Moonan where I could become reacquainted with Moonan's only coin operated phone-booth. My first call was to Lawrence who I knew would be on the road and when Lawrence picked up the phone, I breathed a sigh of relief. All would be well. And so, to my rescue came first, Lawrence and Rob, followed by my next best friend, Doug the tow truck driver. With plan B in operation, being Lawrence and Rob taking the clubs'

Saturday night dinner and spare spit to camp, and me hoping that the local Scone tyre shop had two tyres that would fit my Hyundai, we parted ways, some three hours after I came to an unexpected stop.



2 shattered tyres

Doug the tow truck driver was a salty talkative blokey bloke, who loved his footy team, the Canterbury Bulldogs and wore his membership cap with pride. We talked about hotted up cars, and people he's towed or rescued and various jobs he'd had over the years. The time passed quickly, and fifteen minutes out of Scone, my mobile picked up a signal. My next call would determine if I was getting to the Barringtons, or staying in a Scone pub for the weekend. Don, the owner of the Scone Tyre's shop picked up the phone...."mate I said, mate...do you have a couple of R19-235-55's to fit a Santa Fe?" Sure he says, "Got a couple of seconds out the back somewhere". And Don became my next best friend there and then. A half hour later and I was turned around and heading back up the mountain with two perfectly good second hand tyres, fitted and balanced for \$80. Thank you Don, thankyou Doug and thankyou to the guy who picked me up and took me to Moonan. Yes the journey so far was indeed memorable if nothing else.

Every now and then, my closest companions get to experience a

different side of me. The side that isn't joking, the side that is anxious, the side that shows I am angry and have the shits good and proper. This side came to the fore, when I arrived at the camp site, the one I had given directions for all the members, the one that was now, dark and in disarray, wet, fire-less, toilet-less and populated by six or seven slightly disorientated anglers and various stages of setting up camp. Thankfully Brent, an experienced Barrington angler was there, because at first, given that it was the darkest of moonless nights, I was unsure we were in the right place. Brent I said, "This is the right place isn't it?" "Yep" says Brent, "here is our old camp fire spot, this is the place". I was confused....."where are the others, Jeff, Pete, Lawrence Rob, they should have been here hours ago?" I was worried, what had happened, where else could they be, how many others would be scattered or lost amongst the myriad of tracks that criss-crossed this forest park, on what was an inky black featureless night?

So, I went searching, and to my relief, not more than 300m from the original camp site, the rest of the group were bedded in around a roaring fire at what was, I found out later, the new Manning River Camp site, cleared and serviced by a brand new drop toilet. The old site was closed by Forestry and partially barricaded. A poorly worded sign, small and near invisible was posted on a random tree which 'suggested' that this site would be closed and a new one was opening.



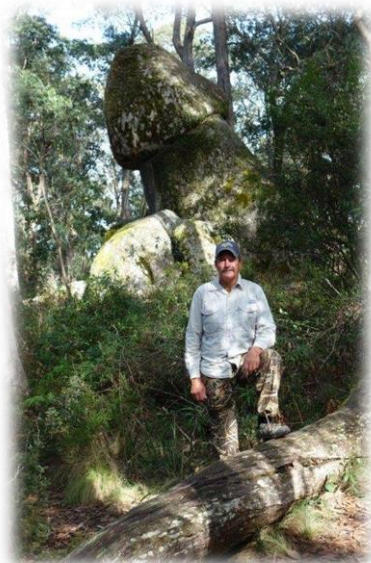
The two camp confusion



And so, the members of our group were confused and divided amongst the two sites, the old and the new, and sadly, there was nothing I could do to fix it. In my mind, it spelt a failure in my goals and plans for how I wanted this weekend to unfold. I also have a phobia of losing people I am responsible for, and this pushed many of my anxious demon buttons. But as suggested, by those wiser and far drunker than I at the time, it will be alright, nothing to be done now, just let it go. After a bottle and a half of decent red later, I was 90% back from a place near as dark as the night around us. In the morning the sun shone and pushed the cold out of both the air and the old bones of my fellow anglers and I as well. All our members congregated

after breakfast at the new camp site, and together, we planned and divided to set off to fish the many different locations available to us in this unique and special place. Many of those attending had never fished in this area, and some were indeed new fly fishers, so it was decided Jeff and I would guide and mentor these members whilst the others paired off to fish in earnest.

I had the great joy of spending time with Pat, Tallis, Bill and Rob. And together we left the main dirt road and travelled to the 'Gauge', down a steep and precarious track, guttered, steep and windy. Even though I was technically the mentor, I have to say, it was Tallis, a novice angler who taught me one of the best exercises in teaching the relationship between fly line and rod, and eventually, timing and loading, that I have ever seen demonstrated. He had learnt this exercise at the Peter Morse casting weekend organised by our club a month or two back and it had really stuck with him. When he showed us what he'd learned, all I could do was say to the others, that's brilliant, forget what I told you, and do what Tallis is doing, and together we did. How cool is that!



New member
Paul checking
out "The
Rock"

As a small group, we talked about stream craft, and stream bugs. I always get a kick when I look under a rock and find mayfly or caddis or other unknown nymphs. It reveals so much intimate information about the particular stream, not just the available food for trout, but also the health of the water and the surrounding environment. Straight away, you make a unique connection between the natural world, the food of our fish and the flies we will cast, in a way no other angling can. Without trying to sound too pretentious, I think fly fishing is a way of communicating with our natural world in an intimate and interactive way, as opposed to just taking from it. But that doesn't make it necessarily an easier way of connecting to a trout, and the many thorns and bushy overhangs conspired to prevent our newest casters from taking that next special step, and see a trout rise to the fly.

By early afternoon, we had removed enough flies from the undergrowth and it was time to head back to camp so I could team up with fellow head chef, Lorenzo, so we could prepare for the nights meal at the newly created 'Pheasant Hunters Brasserie'. Those members who were residing in the original camp, camp A, would be dining out. Those in the new camp, would be dining in. The nights' menu would consist of spit-roasted lamb, seasoned with garlic, rosemary and onion rind, accompanied by Potatoes, cauliflower and Broccoli gratin. The lamb once spit roasted over the coals for a full two hours would be rested for at least 30 minutes before being carved and served. Desert would follow, consisting of tropical fruits with traditional pound cake and custard. Our strategy for a successful evening was to serve the meal late when everyone

was well oiled and hungry, a sure winner every time.



Justin the master chef standing over his lamb rotisseries with assistant chef Lawrence having a seat

Evening banter spoke of seeing trout but not bringing any to hand, of the challenges of tight water and resorting to little bow and arrow casts or water haul flicks. Patrick sported a new limp, the result of falling awkwardly into a wombat hole. Jeff dressed a leach bite which demonstrated the effective anti-coagulating qualities of this endemic blood feeder. Despite the lack of fish caught on that first day, the mood was happy and upbeat. In ways only each individual could express, we were all just happy to be there, eating good food, drinking our poison of choice and bantering bull with each other.

I guess that's why we come, and return to this special place. It's not just the fishing, or in some cases, not even the fishing that draws us here.

It's just the Barringtons...



Epilogue:

Not all of us left for home first thing after the camp was packed up. Chris and few others choose to fish again to see if these little stream trout really did take a fly as we alluded they would.

In Chris's own words:

'Fair to say the trout were in a much friendlier mood than Saturday. Paul and Jim came down to have a look when I started and can verify my cursing when I hooked up on the second run. Unfortunately I struck too hard and sent this little rainbow flying back to me. I was unable to recover the slack line fast enough and he got away.

I continued fishing with much more composure and landed six, dropped 3 and missed a few on the strike and spooked a few more. Fishing was tight, and any cast that was not in the middle of the bubble line was ignored. You might notice in the picture of the hooked fish still in the water, you can see the log that was over the river at the campsite in the background.

I fished up and around the bend past the bridge and then decided to go and explore the Polblue area. I intended to fish but the water at the flats looked a little skinny. I drove down and looked at the falls and I think I saw fish rise on the walk down, will check that out next time. None of the fish were very big, and as you can see they all still had very clear parr marks'.



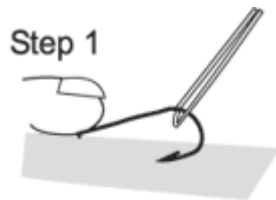
Hook Removal

By Jeff Yates

Hooks are the essential tools of the piscatorial art of fly-fishing. If the hook tip is bent by a drop of the back cast hitting a rock, the next take will be short lived. Always run the hook point over the thumb nail especially at night, and if it does not catch, then use the diamond hone and touch it up. No good regretting it later.

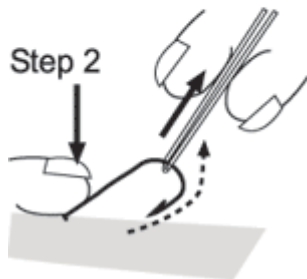
But, what happens to that sharp hook when a wayward cast, gust of wind or your fishing mate buries the hook into your flesh instead? If you fish often it is going to happen, believe me, as I've been hooked several times; through the ear, in the back, on the fingers and one in the leg. You can debarb hooks as a preventative measure and/or use a simple removal method. **Just a word of warning though, if the hook penetrates a major vessel or organ, seek medical aid immediately. Always disinfect the area after removal and consider a tetanus shoot. If in doubt leave it to the experts.**

Removing the hook can be relatively easy if you look at the 2 steps shown.



Step 1

Make a loop of nylon and pass it over the eye, and then up to the **top of the bend** of the hook.



Step 2

Push firmly down on the eye of the hook so that it touches the skin.

Step 3

With a sudden, strong yank on the line, pull up and away from the hook-eye. The hook should come out the way it went in and the barb should not catch.

The whole procedure is fairly painless if you act as soon as it happens. Leave it too long, pain sets in, and swelling begins.

Instead of nylon, you can use forceps or pliers by firmly attaching them to the bend using the same pull up and away principal. Justin demonstrates

the practical aspects with a #6 bead head bass fly through his ear, though I think he was a somewhat apprehensive patient.....



////////////////////////////////////

After dark trout tactics

By Jeff Yates

Forget about your daytime fishing for a while and experience your 6th sense while nighttime fishing. I make no apologies; night fishing is difficult, no light, relying on other senses of touch, sound, instinct and less on sight. The evening sunsets that you experience will inscribe an indelible mark on your memory, and with each sunset the hope of another great night's fishing ahead.



Know your environment: Do a day light reconnaissance of the area you want to fish, taking particular notice of shallow bays and weed beds adjacent to deeper water. The fish will come in from the cooler depths to feed in the shallows under the cover of darkness. Make a mental picture of fences and other hazards that may catch the unwary angler at night.

Preparation: Depending on the season, prepare for the nights fishing. I always carry a small day pack with a jacket, led light (plus a spare), spare reel, water bottle and thermos which I usually drop off at a suitable spot for a warm drink and rest later in the night. You may need to wear or pack thermals, ski pants, polar fibre jumper, beanie,

scarf and gloves. Waders are a must, but keep out of the water when you are fishing, as most trout will be caught within 3-rod lengths and usually quite close to the bank in the shallow water.

Gear: 6-wt stiffish rod and a weight forward fast taper floating line for making short casts. I usually fish 2 flies on a 12lb tippet using a CMC dropper to the second fly. Agricultural, but effective. If you can eliminate terminal problems it will make for a pleasant night. A net is essential. I beach 90% of my fish but there is always that big fish that needs netting from a steeper bank. Last but not least your fly boxes. Nighttime wets and dries in various sizes. Don't skimp, as you may regret it.



Techniques: Fish light before dark with smaller flies. You may run wets like Tom Jones, nymphs, Hamills, Mrs Simpson's or dries like Elk Hair Caddis, beetle patterns or Midges.

But when darkness arrives, beef your line size up and start using that 6th sense. No longer are you able to see your line, you feel it load up, hear and feel and seldom see it hit the water and feel it lighten up to know when to recast.

Lights are banned except for retying with your back to the water; develop your night eyes.

Casting now is not about distance, but about targeting where the fish may be feeding. Cast in a 180-degree pattern and move on. Keep hitting new water and pay particular attention to structure. Most of your fish will come in the vicinity of rocks, logs, weed beds or bank. The terrain around you will indicate the shape of the bottom. The feel of the mud under foot will indicate the health of the adjacent water. Oozy mud usually indicates good aquatic weed growth, whereas ridge gravel is usually barren. Muddy banks with crayfish holes are always worth a throw of a Woolly Bugger or Fuzzy Wuzzy. Shallow bays are worth exploring with a floating fly dropper and a wet fly on the point. A ripple on the water is always a good sign. Don't bypass this to go to calm waters.



Stripping the line can be as simple as a slow figure of eight to a long strip and pause. Vary your technique to suit the flies and conditions and you know its right when the fish start coming.



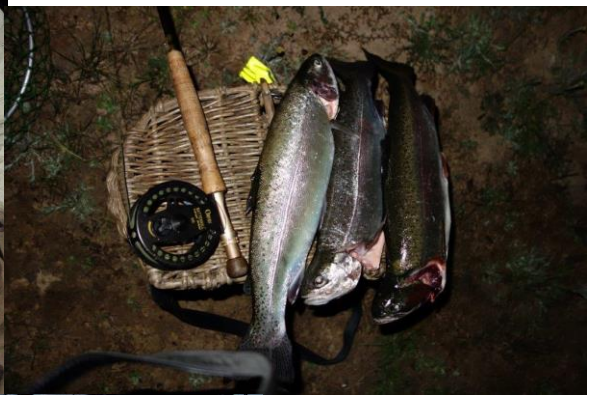
Catching: Fish generally hit hard at night. You may be in a dream and next minute the water erupts with a rainbow bouncing around on the surface. At other times they may take short or seem like they are sucking. Always have confidence in your chosen flies (use logic in your fly selection and then back that selection with anticipation). Debarb your hooks for easy removal from the fish and you.

Enjoying: You have now entered into a different dimension. Get your flash snaps of those big browns, enjoy the stars and check out the southern cross, the satellites, listen to the foxes call, or the blood curdling sound of the night heron and the ever present water rat that may want to take refuge in your waders. Hear your mate imitating the call of a wood duck (too many baked beans), or the constant banter that you keep up throughout the night for sanity. Stop for that thermos you hid in the grass on the way out and share and exchange notes.

Most of all, enjoy the surreal experience of darkness fishing with a mate or two, and see lack of light as an asset rather than a liability.



The rewards of fishing in the dark. Winners are grinners



Trudging home on sunrise after a long night

By Jeff Yates

It is one of our most successful fly patterns, and it is the true chameleon, being able to imitate smelt, stick caddis, damselfly and scud. It is the number 1 'go to' search pattern. The heavier hook, copper wire and slim profile enable it to get down deeper. The slower the retrieve the deeper it will sink (depending on fly line used). The 'Australian Fly Patterns' text by Peter Coulson, describes no less than 15 patterns of Tom Jones. The fly also has a strong following in Britain.

In 1999, the French team in the World Championships in Victoria, came second in the lakes 'one fly' event using this fly.

Anyway, what makes a good Tom Jones pattern? Basically, slim lines, short wings and the correct weight.

Hook	Kamasan B170 #10
Thread	Black 8/0
Tail	Black squirrel
Rib	Copper wire 0.35 dia
Wings	Olive Wallaby fur
Dubbing	Light olive super possum
Throat	Red hackle



AGL advises of safety risk at Muswellbrook

March 25, 2016, 12:06 p.m. source Muswellbrook Chronicle

AGL Macquarie advises the community that due to a risk of infection from “naegleria fowleri”, Lake Liddell has been closed until further notice.

“Naegleria fowleri” is an amoeba that lives predominantly in warm freshwater.

Following routine water monitoring by AGL at Lake Liddell, amoeba were found.

These carry a serious risk of harm to humans if they enter the body via the nose.

AGL has notified all relevant authorities and the nearby recreation park at Lake Liddell.

The lake will be closely monitored.

Further information can be found in the Fact Sheet – Naegleria fowleri – from Water Research Australia.



////////////////////////////////////



Fishy Pics

Chris Moloney with a Manning rainbow.





Scape Pics



*Red fungi and
Paper daises
from
Barrington
Tops
Jeff Yates*



Sponsors 2015-16



<http://www.flynguide.com.au>

Email sales@flynguide.com.au 0427904518 (John) 0417402540 (Glenn)

