



Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club.com.au

2017 May Newsletter

President – Darren Foster

Vice President – Cherie Blackburn

Secretary – Tony Ward

Treasurer – Wayne Hunt

Newsletter Editor – Jeff Yates

Grants Officer – Lawrence Blackburn

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Peter Sewell

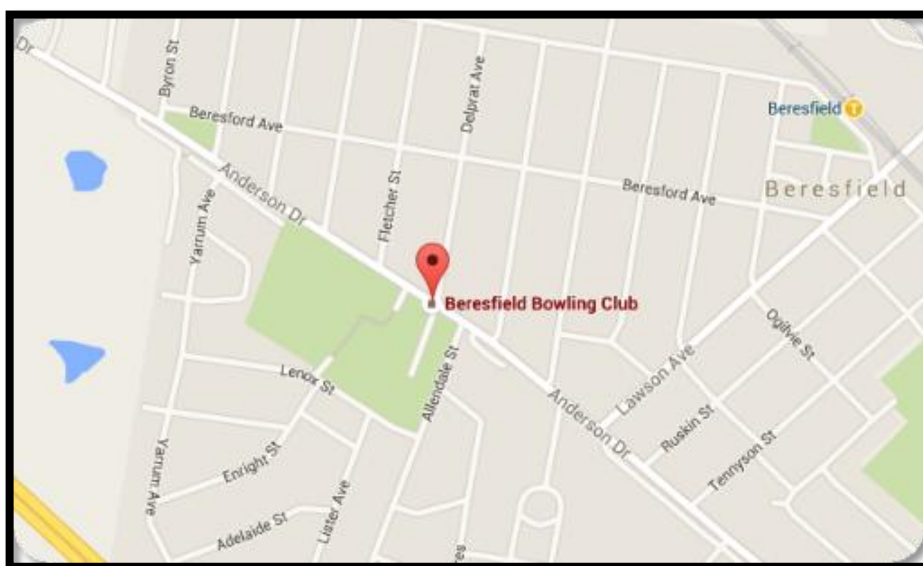
Brent Blackwell

Jeff Yates

Noel King

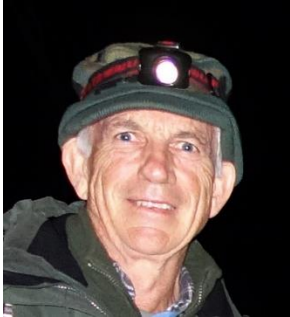
Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club meets on
the first Wednesday of each month at:-

Beresfield Bowling Club
Anderson Drive
Bersefield
At 6.30pm



Editor's comments

Jeff Yates



We have another bumper issue with a variety of articles.

See Mark Schmidt's correspondence on the vexing issue of TSR's. I personally don't trust the government. The TSR'S have been in existence for well over 100 years, and if it's not broke why fix it. I'm sure it's a land grab for the rich and money from the sale going into Sydney expressways. Put in a submission following Mark's guidelines if you have a special place you fish accessed by a TSR.

Our day trip to Morpeth was a success regardless of the weather. Just great to try a new spot that has potential for other times of the year. Thanks Darren for organizing the event. While talking of Darren, he has written an article on crabby looking critters that inhabit the tidal zones around Australia. The recent advent of using sand fleas as a fly for Whiting has started to take off, and Darren has tried to demystify the beasties.

Now, Smartphone fishing is using technology to help us catch fish, or so Lawrence's theory goes. He has written a really informative article and almost worthy of a Flylife entry. The impromptu outing he organized was a great success, and I look forward to the June and July outings to Lake St Clair, and maybe retrace our steps and repeat the success.

Rod is at his desk again with more hints and tips on the finer details of fly tying. It's great to have someone who is willing to tutor and encourage fly tyers. His swaps are still going strong, and the results can be seen with the quality of flies being tied.

President's Report



G'day members,

Welcome all to the May Newsletter. I would like to formerly welcome our newest members Shane Navin from Branxton and Ray and Fiona Meredith from Nelson Bay, we all look forward to meeting you soon, at the next meeting on the 7th June or maybe at the next outing at St Clair in June.

There is a short article on the recent Morpeth outing enjoyed by those that braved the elements, even if the fishing was extremely tough.

It is sad we have had to cancel the Bass Classic in July due to lack of numbers as we use this outing as our major fund raiser for continued stocking of St Clair. I would like to personally thank Cherie for her hard work and dedication towards making this event happen especially the liaison work done with Singleton Council, and the rest of the Bass Classic Committee that gave up their spare time to source/price/start to organise equipment for the weekend. Maybe we can move the event back to October, but using an alternative venue. The trouble is finding such a venue that can offer what Liddell did! If anyone has any ideas please bring them up at the next meeting. If you cannot make the meeting and have an idea please talk to myself or one of the committee members so they can speak on your behalf at the meeting.

I hope everyone comes along to the club outings to St Clair over June and July and maybe we can have a raffle of some sorts for our club members. An invitation was extended to Hastings, Sydney and Coff's fly clubs if they wish to still join us at St Clair. I will donate one of my timber fly boxes complete with some bass flies. If anyone else wants to join in please do so. Paul Fedeles from Sydney Fly Rodders has donated a whole heap of flies (enough to fill at least four fly boxes) for the club to raffle for prizes to help raise funds for the Bass \$4\$ Stocking program.

Please enjoy your newsletter and remember, if you have anything to share with the club, such as an article to do with fly fishing, fly tying, product reviews, somewhere you have been recently fly fishing or even a recipe, please send it through to Jeff for inclusion in the next newsletter. Remember this is your newsletter so please contribute and share your experiences and knowledge.

Neat flies and tight loops.

Darren Foster
President, HVFFC 2017

2017 Calendar



Month	Date	Venue/Event	Trip Master	Contact Number
January	21 st	Fly Tying/Fishing with Lawrence & Cherie	Lawrence B.	0432989797
February	01 st	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
February	17 th — 19 th	Hawks Nest — Saltwater	Tom Jones	0406662713
February				
March	01 st	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
March				
March	10 th — 12 th	Lithgow	Red Esdaile	0418667949
April	31 st M — 2 nd A	Swansea	Darren	0413392774
April	05 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
April				
May	03 rd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
May	Sat 20 th	Morpeth Day Trip	Darren	0413392774
May				
June	07 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
June	16 th — 18 th	Lake St Clair - Bass	Peter Sewell	0428685101
June				
July	05 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
July	15 th	Xmas in July at Bero Bowlo	Cherie	0410555019
July	28 th — 30 th	Lake St Clair - Bass	Cherie	0410555019
August	02 nd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
August	4-6 th or 11-13 th	Swansea — Saltwater - Salmon	Darren	0413392774
August				
September	06 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
September	15 th — 17 th	Hastings	Lawrence	0432989797
September				
October	4 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
October				
October				
November	3 rd or 10 th	Club AGM at Bero Bowlo	All	
November				
November				
December	6 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
December				
December				

TSR Update

By Mark Schmidt

“All that work we did on Travelling Stock Reserves has paid dividends!”

Following on from the TSR review last year, I received an email from Local Land Services today. They have begun an extensive mapping program to identify where the TSRs are, who uses them, what they're used for and how often they're used. This is a major victory for the recreational users, and I truly feel that our submissions last year forced a rethink. We should be proud of all that effort.

“But there's work to be done.”

The government now wants to categorise each TSR. The categories are

1. Used for travelling stock, emergency management or biosecurity [not relevant to us]
2. Used for travelling stock etc AND other purposes [possibly important to us]
3. Not used for stock but are important for other reasons [essential to us]
4. Not used or important at all.

Category four TSRs may be abandoned and category three may be changed into other types of reserve.

So this is where we come in. Now we need to identify individual TSRs which are used for

fishing. Since most TSRs used for fishing are not used for stock, failing to tell LLS that we use them will result in them being given category four and POSSIBLY being abandoned. We would have only ourselves to blame for this.

So can I please ask you to go to <https://trade.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=2f2a0f1efae14f7cb79cf900d012ccc3> which is the mapping tool for TSRs. Spread the word amongst your friends that they **HAVE** to write a submission to tsr.feedback@lls.nsw.gov.au, telling them that “we use the TSR called XXX for fishing approximately five times per year”, “our fishing club uses the TSR located at <co-ords> for regular bass fishing events”, “I have fished from the XXX TSR for decades” etc. DO NOT declare that you fish from TSRs west of the Newell Highway...this could get you in trouble. If you're uncomfortable making the submission, send it to me and I'll submit it myself. We have one month.

Remember two things: we earned our right to protect TSRs last year and if we don't capitalise on that success by submitting specific locations then we risk losing them forever. You may never go there to fish again, but maybe your grandchildren would like to.

Stop Press - 2017 Bass Classic

by Cherie Blackburn

Due to a lack of participants the 2017 Bass Classic has been cancelled. However, Lawrence and I will be the trip masters for a club outing at Lake St Clair for the same dates 28th to the 30th July. We hope that all those who have shown an interest in the Bass Classic will still turn up for this club weekend and are looking forward to some great fishing. Please feel free to bring along a friend or two and perhaps introduce them to fly fishing. We will get back to you all shortly with more details regarding booking sites etc.

Smartphone Fishing at Lake St Clair

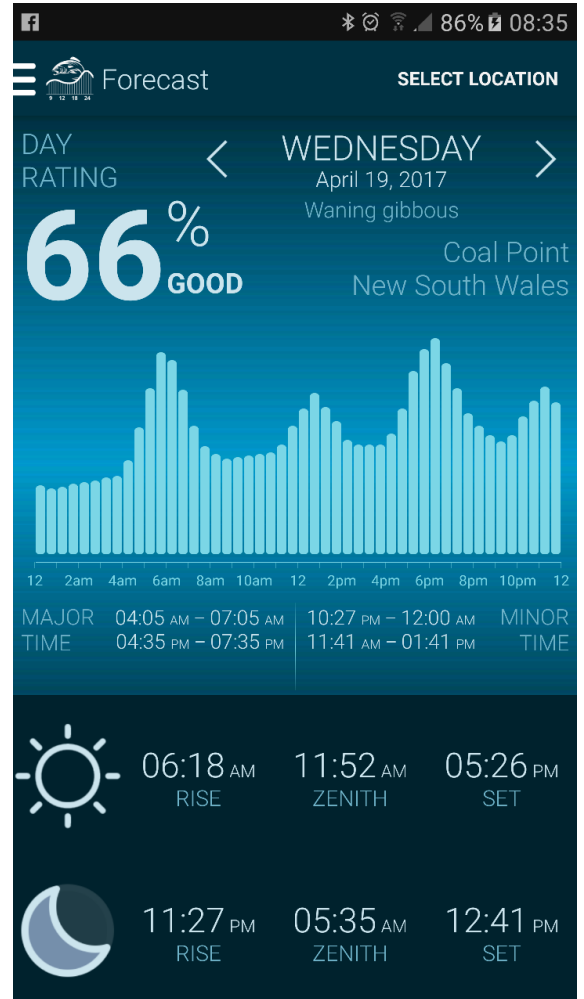
by Lawrence Blackburn

With so many different apps available for your Smartphone I thought it might be worth trying a couple out and seeing if it makes any difference to the fishing outcome. With our home renovations in full swing over the Easter break I asked the manager if I could fit in an afternoon fishing session at Lake St Clair, Cherie said yes!

So now to the phone to determine what would be the most favoured day, using my Fishing and Hunting Solunar Times app the best day was Wednesday 19th, the day was rated at 66% overall, with the times from 4pm and 8pm being the best for the day. This also ties in with our urge to fish the lake in the afternoon as the sun is setting being one of our most successful times in the past.

Now time to put out a group email and see if there was any interest with others, a few apologies came through and a phone call from Fred to say that he would have liked to come along but was unable. He had recently been fishing with Peter and had an eyesight issue where he was getting double vision, I cannot imagine how frightening that would be, one image of Peter is bad enough, but seeing two of him would be cause for a therapy session.

Team bass comprised Rod, Darren, Brent, Tony, Jeff and I, and after a quick discussion we headed off in a few different directions. I chose one of Pete's favourite locations to start, down to the left from the car park. He wasn't with us so there was a good chance of catching a fish; Jeff came with me, cool I thought, guaranteed a couple of quality photos for the newsletter (of me!).



Tuesday night was bass fly tying night, what was the 2017 bass fly going to look like. I have made variants of Trev's natural over the years and always had success, so the body and tail were going to stay the same. After rummaging through the material box I found some brown deer hair, so on went a clump; I was concerned that the fly may just want to float on the surface with the deer hair, but as it turned out a quick squeeze of the fly in the water and down it went, aided of course by the brass bead head.

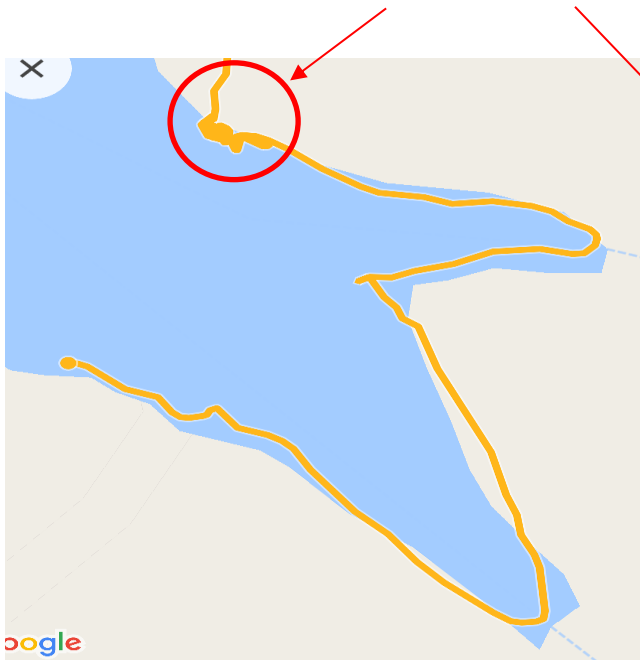
As Justin will attest to, I am very reluctant to change flies, having a great belief that this fly will work, even if Jeff did land about 8 bass to my 2 during the night, the fly worked, eventually.

Now to the next bit of tech for the trip. My Tom Tom sports watch tracks all forms of exercise - running, riding, swimming etc, using GPS technology to track your route and measure your heart rate through a sensor under the watch. From that and previously entered data it can calculate how many calories are burned, your speed and altitude changes.

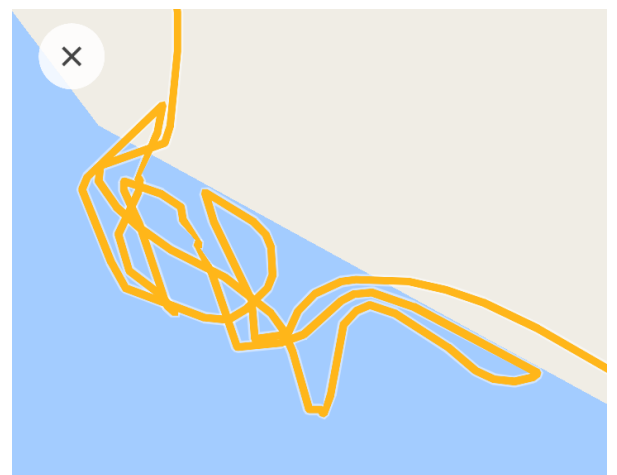
The web site provides more information in the form of statics and graphs, and most importantly shows your route which can be superimposed with satellite, terrain or map overlays, as shown to the right.

I started the recording the return leg of our journey, starting at the bottom green spot on the map and finishing at the car park - red spot. Obviously the water levels were somewhat different since this satellite image was taken as most of the time Jeff and I were walking on the water's edge.

At the bottom section of the map (which looks a bit like a 'W' on its side) we can zoom in on the action. Below you will see a small clump of lines drawn on top of each other.



Zooming in even further you can see the GPS track of exactly where I walked quite accurately, this is the point where I caught and landed my first fish of the afternoon. I had had a few hits and misses but this was the first one hooked solid, and then straight down into the weeds. I took the opportunity to wind my line onto the 6wt reel and then let the line go slack, after a few seconds the fish came out and I raised the rod tip high and began reeling in my prize.





It doesn't get any better than this.

Or does it, here's one happy fisherman, new fly tied the night before, first bass session for the 2017 season, tasty.



More fish were caught on our walk back to the car, around 6:30pm the fish were very active, I had a couple of casts and hooked up as soon as the fly hit the water, too much fun, the app worked, well might have to try a few more times to confirm its accuracy.



One of Jeff's many fish for the night, although the strain on his face is saying "Lawrence, if you drop that camera I'm going to kill you".

I was hoping to see a noticeable jump in my heart rate on the graph which would coincide with me hooking a fish, but I think my heart rate was averaging high anyway because I was walking with Jeff. Lesson for next time. My phone often pops up a message saying "Be more active. 50% of goal achieved", it was silent this trip.



It's a hard life but someone has to do it, thanks Jeff and the rest of the crew for making the evening great.

Only in America!!!



I talked to a homeless man recently and asked him how he ended up this way. He said, "Up until last week, I still had it all. I had plenty to eat, my clothes were washed and pressed, I had a roof over my head, I had **HDTV** and Internet, and I went to the gym, the pool, and the library.

"I was working on my **MBA** on-line. I had no bills and no debt. I even had full medical coverage."

I felt sorry for him, so I asked, "What happened? Drugs? Alcohol? Divorced from too much fly fishing?"

"Oh no, nothing like that," he said. "No, no... I was **paroled**."

The Bass Yeti

by Jeff Yates

A few years ago I started using a Yeti fly to target bass in Lake St Clair. The fly roughly simulates in size and colour, the native smelt that you see around the edges of the lake.

You may ask, what is a Yeti? Well, it's certainly not an abominable snowman or any other mythical creature. Its origins are from Max Christensen, one of Tasmania's greatest fly tyers. His original tied in the early 1950's used American Muskrat, but over the years this has varied, substituting the muskrat with rabbit, possum or cat.

Noel Jetson, also a Tasmanian, and one of Australia's founding trout guides, sadly passed away in 2006.



Jetson's take on the Yeti is shown above, with what looks like possum fur or wallaby wing. I prefer to use a long haired died rabbit or a moggy cat.

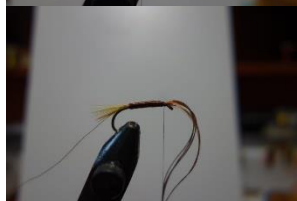
Everyone to their own choice. But the main thing is, get the proportions and colours right and it is a deadly bass or trout fly. I also prefer a slimmer tie.



Use Black Magic hooks in size 6 - 8



Tie in a tail of golden pheasant tippets and a fine gold wire.



Tie in brown floss and layer a smooth body to the hook eye.



Tie in a fine tanned rabbit or cat fur strip at the eye. Bind in from the bend with the gold wire forming a segmented body.



Add a black false hackle under the hook eye and form a head with black thread. At this stage an eye can be added and finish off with head cement.

From my Tying Bench - Part 3

by Rod Dillon

This month I will look at some ideas dealing with materials that could improve your tying. As mentioned in my last article you have a measuring device for the materials which is readily available..... the hook. It enables you to judge the tail, body size, wings, hackle etc.

Before you commence tying you may consider prepping the materials. Count out the hooks, hackles and any other materials you may be using. Should anything need trimming do it now. Then set out the materials on your tying desk in the order they are to be used on the hook. This will speed up the tying process and should make it more enjoyable. A bonus if you have a tying station is that all can be put away without the need to pack up and put out the next time ready to go.

Covering Materials

It is a good idea when not tying for some time to cover the materials to prevent dust, pet hair or whatever getting on floss and other materials. A pillowcase is ideal for this.

Finishing Fly Heads

When tying off the head of a fly consider using a drop of super glue. Start the head then place a drop of super glue, continue wrapping and when head is formed tie in a half hitch and snip thread. Apply another drop of glue where snipped and the fly will not come apart.

Another alternative is to use a drop of UV solution.

Mothballs

To prevent insect infestation on natural materials (fur and feather) place a couple of mothballs into the bag the materials are kept in. Freezer bags are good for this.

This is especially important for feathers be they on a cape or otherwise. I know that Jeff is an advocate for this. Whilst there is a smell it doesn't affect the fish catching ability of the material.

If you are reluctant to use mothballs there are many alternatives. Bay Leaves is one. For those of us who are not Chefs Bay Leaves can be found in the spices section of your supermarket.

Dubbing

A couple of tricks when putting dubbing on you tying thread:

- deciding how much dubbing is needed is a problem that we all experience. Try selecting the amount you think you will need to dub on and then divide that in half. If more is needed it can be added. It is easier to add dubbing than to take off.
- when putting dubbing on thread spin the dubbing anticlockwise. The

dubbing will continue to twist tightly around the thread when you wrap the material up the hook thereby increasing the durability of the fly.

Wrapping Peacock Herl, Pheasant tail and other similar materials

A problem we all experience when wrapping Peacock Herl is that, unless we wrap it around the thread, the herl has a tendency to separate with maybe one or two herls coming undone. Most frustrating!

The solution is as follows. Tie the bunch of herl to the hook and let the bobbin lay under the hook. Now begin winding the herl which, as you wind, will push the thread towards the eye. The thread pushing against the herl will ensure that it remains together for each wrap.

Similarly with Pheasant Tail feathers which can do the same when wrapping on the hook. By leaving the bobbin hang where you have finished tying on the feathers and wrapping pushing the

thread with each wrap towards the eye all will be good

This technique will work with all strand type materials such as Crystal Flash etc

Mono Eyes

Want to make your own Mono Eyes. Cut a short piece of say 50 lb mono and place between tweezers . Touch one end of the mono with a flame to start melting the eye. Turn the tweezers end do the other end. Continue doing this until the eyes get close to the tweezers then place the flame in the middle of the tool to melt both eyes at the same time .

Do this quickly and you should finish up with perfect eyes.

Hope these help solve some of the problems we experience in tying.

Next month I will write about tying with tubes and thereafter I will get down to the nitty gritty of tying flies.



Morpeth Day Trippers

By Darren Foster



After all the weather hype given for this weekend, the day ended up turning out to be quite pleasant. So much for the months' worth of rain over three days' hype. It may have happened somewhere but not at Morpeth.

The day started at 5.30am, up and at it, check the weather: still drizzling; check the tarp over the boat:

drain the pools of water and remove; a quick breaky and it was time to head over to the ramp.

Once at the boat ramp, everyone started to roll up: Jeff, myself, Pete, Tony and his daughter Kelly and boyfriend James and Patrick. Tony and family went bank fishing whilst we launched the boats. Out on the water and time to test the new deep cycle battery for the electric motor. All plugged in and..... nothing. Nnoohhhh. The 60Amp fuse had blown. 60 Amp? Who carries one of these? Oh well, nothing beats paddle power. Except of course an electric motor.

Not long on the water and Wayne H. turned up to continue the tradition of paddle power. He was paddling his kayak mind you (not a 4.1 metre boat – at least Patrick doesn't add too much weight to the boat). Jim and Rod D. fished from Jim's canoe (more paddling) and Bill H. turned up as well with his tinny. Tom arrived and hitched a ride with Patrick and I in the tinny-to-nowhere-fast.



We traversed up stream, headed downstream past Lake Perfume's drain hole, down to the main drain and then headed up the Paterson. Past the temptress that is the Hinton Hotel, under the Hinton Bridge and upstream beyond bountiful snags of the past but alas now barren and void before heading back to the ramp. But, you have read nothing of what was caught. What was caught on this drizzle bound turned lovely day? Memories, good times, stories shared, laughs-a-plenty, oh and a Bream caught by Peter and I caught, played and released two water dragons. Much to the amusement of Patrick whom I thought was going to fall off the front of the boat from laughing so much.



Who would have thought it possible? Catching Eastern Water Dragons (*Intellagama lesueurii lesueurii*) on fly? These lizards, which date back to about 20 million years ago (like crocodiles) are voracious omnivores and will pounce on anything that happens to land near them, often leaping into the water to claim their prize/meal. The Water Dragon's tail is two thirds the length of its body and has a flat design to help them swim cutting through the water like an oar (more paddling?) and they can sit on the bottom fully submerged for up to 90 minutes.



Now, when you first look at this popper you would assume that it has a weed guard incorporated in the tie. In fact, because this is a popper fly for Water Dragons it is actually a bite guard. This is an integral part of tying flies for Water Dragons as the bite guard aids and assists in the release of the Dragon and is very much responsible for self-release by the dragon its self. I like to use a 6-weight rod with 6 to 8lb tippet but beware, Eastern Water Dragons are known to grow to 1 metre in length and more than 1 kg in weight. Concentration is of the utmost importance as these beasts can be

extremely fast and agile when it suits, often catching the angler by surprise and racing up into the safety of the scrub. Generally, when they get that far its game over because you are not going to get your fly back now.

Disclaimer: no Water Dragons (or anglers) were injured or harmed in the making of this story. All Water Dragons were self-released.



What's in a Name?

By Darren Foster

Sand Flea? Mole Crab? Amphipod? Beach Flea? Which is it? So many questions. So many question marks. Let me see if I can clarify this conundrum a bit clearer.

To be honest, they are all correct. Considering the latest fly pattern that is sweeping the whiting on fly scene at the moment I thought I would take a few moments to explain things a little clearer. The fly pattern “Sand Flea” or “Beach Flea” can and does refer to both a Mole Crab and an Amphipod. Both important food sources for fish but two very different creatures.

Mole Crabs are small crustaceans from the family Hippidae and are so named for their ability to burrow in soft sand or mud very fast, completely buried within seconds. Mole Crabs are usually found along sandy beaches worldwide both intertidally and subtidally where they burrow just under the surface in the wash zone and feed mostly on plankton and detritus filtered as the water washes over them. They grow up to 30mm and are cream to light brown in color and have no claws but modified hooks for digging and they do not bite. They have a telson which is located at the rear which is used to help dig, protect the underbelly and help anchor in the sand. When females are in berry (fertilised and egg laden) they may have up to 50,000 bright orange eggs (a clue to tying an effective fly pattern?). Mole Crabs move backwards only (another fly tying clue?). The two most common species in Australia are *H. australis* and *H. pacifica*. Mostly overseas, particularly across the USA they are referred to as Sand Fleas. Mole Crabs (or Sand Fleas) are often collected for food as well as bait for fishing for Florida Pompano, Striped Bass or Whiting (AKA Kingfish, not our Kingfish). In the YouTube video of the young fellow tying a Sand Flea for Whiting, this is the Whiting the video refers to, not our Whiting.



Photo credit: flickr.com



Photo credit: werc.usgs.gov

Check out

Mole Crabs are an important indicator species for the health of ocean waters as they are very susceptible to absorbing toxins that may be present in the water. You can easily spot Mole Crabs as the water recedes by looking for the “V” shaped pattern in the sand made by their feelers.



MOLE CRAB-SAND FLEA-SAND CRAB

www.deepcreekflyfishers.org

Whatever name you call it. Make sure you put some weight on it to get down to the ocean floor. You can tie it with Estaz, regular chenille or pearl chenille, also with or without the egg sack.

Hook – Mustad #34007 #6-#8 or smaller, has a longer shank Gamakatsu #SC15 #6-#8 or smaller, has a shorter shank

Thread – Tan or grey 3/0 or size A (thick thread)

Weight– Lead wire, the thickness of the hook shank

Shell- Natural deer hair (long)

Egg Sack – Orange Estaz, regular chenille, or pearl chenille

Body- Grey regular chenille or root beer Estaz

Legs- Grey or tan saddle hackle feather

Shell Coating- Softex or other flexible coating



Epoxy Mole Crab

www.flytierspage.com

Fly: Kenneth Miller, Photograph: Hans Weilenmann

Note: Pacific beach digger - mole crab representation.

Hook: Gamakatsu Octopus - size 4

Thread: Olive Dun 6/0 UNI

Shellback: Natural Deer Hair

Egg butt: Fluorescent Orange chenille – Medium

Body: Dark Grey Chenille

Legs: Chartreuse and Black speckled sili-leg rubber

Coating: Epoxy – 2 ton

Amphipods are an order of malacostracan crustaceans with no carapace and generally with laterally compressed bodies. Amphipods can range in size from 1 to 340 millimetres, come in all colours and are mostly detritivores or scavengers. These are what we would call

sand fleas or beach hoppers and can be found in either saltwater, freshwater or moist and damp terrestrial environments.

Sub-order Gammaridae, Gammarids are what we call Sand Fleas. Another common name is Beach Hopper. You can find them buried under the sand along tidal edges, underneath kelp or other weed washed up on beaches or hiding on live weed beneath the surface. I have found them under rocks or logs along the water's edge at St Clair as well and have generally been brown in color.

Freshwater Amphipods or Gammarids are often referred to as Scuds and there is a plethora of Scud patterns for Trout or Grayling around the globe.

All manner of fish from both freshwater and saltwater eat Amphipods: Bass; Mullet; Trout; Bream; Whiting; Luderick; Leatherjacket



Photo credit: R. T. Springthorpe



Photo credit: Darren Foster (St Clair, Singleton)



Photo credits: www.whatsthatbug.com

The terrestrial Amphipods are often known as Lawn Shrimp or House Hoppers and are native to Australia. They are susceptible to their environment though: too dry and they dry out and die; and they cannot survive an environment too wet either. They usually like moist soil and organic matter and occasionally enter houses or garages where they promptly die.



Little Orange Scud(Gammarus)

www.flytyingforum.com

Scud hook No 16,
lead wire 0.20,
partridge feather,
thread: Danville 6/0 Flymaster cream,
dubbing mixture: orange UV and cream antron ,
ribbing: fine silver wire
back : Loon UV Knot Sense



Gammarus

<http://theonefly.com>

Hook: Demon Competition G601 BL #10
Weight: Lead Wire
Tail: Partridge
Body: Spicky Dubbing natural, SLF Dubbing Fluro Orange
Ribbing: 0,10mm Mono
Back: Stretch Flex grey and Bug Bond UV Resin
Thread: Veevus 50D

I hope I haven't confused you too much! Happy tying.

Bibliography

A Field Guide to Crustaceans of Australian Waters, Diana Jones/Gary Morgan
<http://fishingdestinguide.com/baitSANDFLEAS.html>
<http://www.crustacea.net>
www.whatsthatbug.com



*Wave rolling
up and over
Moon Island
while chasing
salmon off
Swansea
Heads
By Jeff Yates*

The Salmon aren't quite ready to play

By Jeff Yates



Well, it's that time of the year again, when we have to dust off the 9wt gear and start chasing salmon and tailor. They come into Lake Macquarie in late May and feed on whitebait and anchovies through to the end of September. These dates may change depending on the supply of baitfish.

We decided to give it a try on a stormy mid-week day in May. With thunder and lightning flashing through the sky and the occasional downpour, Peter and myself met up at Maccas for a coffee and waited out the storm. Once on the water, we did a quick recce from the bridge to the headlands, then out around Moon Island, without seeing any action. The oily seas were probably too good, so we motored back in through the heads under the bridge and into Lake Macquarie. We went past acres of mullet, which were later seen heading towards a team of pros off the northern breakwater.

In the lake we were chasing bait balls on the sounder, and the deep water off Pulbah Island offered quite a few. We

cast at them without success, but a short distance ahead a flock of gulls and shags gave the game away.

Quickly motoring up to the school, which was working at quite a sprint, we loosened off a number of shots before the fish started to breach. I was able to hook my first salmon of the year, and after a strong fight in 12m of water I finally subdued him into the boat. That was our first and last. On the way home we picked up a couple of chopper tailor for dinner.

All in all, a pleasant day and the makings for another great winter salmon hunt.

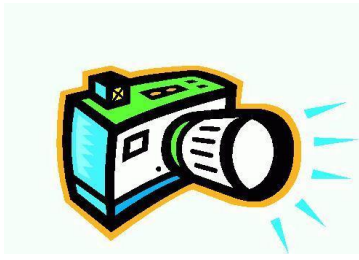




Fishy Pics



Peter caught & released this yellow finned bream on a squid thing fly
By Jeff Yates



Scape Pics



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