



2016 February Newsletter

President – Darren Foster

Vice President – Cherie Blackburn

Secretary – Tony Ward

Treasurer – Justin Smith

Newsletter Editor – Jeff Yates

Committee Members

Peter Sewell

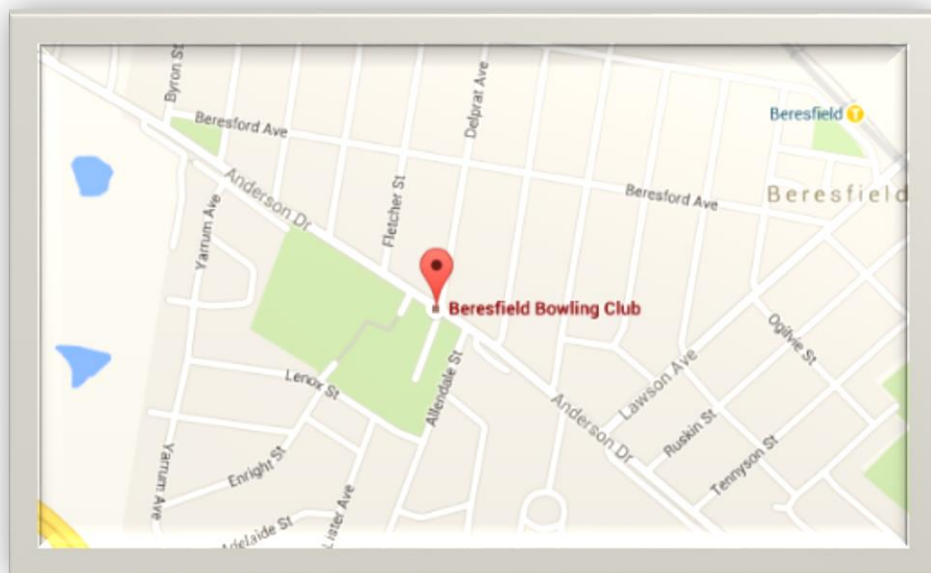
Brent Blackwell

Jeff Yates

Lawrence Blackburn

Singleton 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

Happy New Year to all of our fishing colleagues and families. I hope 2016 will bring you all memorable moments and many fine fish.

We started the new year with a fly tying day at Coal Point hosted by Lawrence and Cherie. A great day and once again our club is indebted to this pair's input to our club. I took a photo of Cherie I had intended using for the article but I think she would have killed me if I used it.

Also received an article on a new carp virus that is being discussed which could potentially wipe out the pest in our waters. I have been seeking permission to use the article in our newsletter as this step is important, some companies take breach of copyright seriously, and the last thing I want is our club being bankrupted due to an oversight. Permission has been granted as long as all acknowledgments are included.

Rod has taken the initiative of commencing a fly swap. This is a fantastic way of both new and experienced fly tiers to learn new patterns and be encouraged to tie a number of flies of the one sort. This repetition improves your skills in proportions, aesthetics, effectiveness and encourages feedback on improvements and techniques.

Les Hawkins has a new book out on the market. While researching it, I came across an ABC interview with Les that I thought the club may be interested in reading. Once again I have gone to the source to gain permission to reprint the article. Good old Aunty ABC wants \$75, so I wrote my own review, for the cost of the book.

Jimmy's Beach at Hawks Nest was revisited by the club after many years of absence, and judging by the reports it was a real success. While the fishing was quite mainly due to the records January rains which put a lot of fresh into the lake system.

Chris Moloney travelled south over Christmas and has compiled a story of his adventures, and Chris has become a regular contributor to the newsletter. Keep it up Chris.

Justin has regurgitated a fly fishing adventure article to Tassie which is still relevant. This is a must read for anyone interested in taking the step to visit the Apple Isle. I have been and loved it and must do it again before I croak.

Fly fishing in the Snowy is always difficult during summer, but a recent trip to the area showed just how hard it can get with receding water levels in the lakes and high water temperatures, as few fish were landed. A short article reviews our torment and good times over the week away.



President's Report



Welcome all to the club's February Newsletter, what a bumper edition. Congratulations to Tom for organizing a very successful Hawk's Nest outing. Due to its popularity, I think it will become a regular event, well done Tom.

A big cheerio to Cherie as she deals with a trip to the hospital. Hope the newsletter cheers you up, and get well soon as Clarence Town beckons.

Our club has a name change in the wind, so read Justin's proposal and keep suggestions flowing. Members are being canvassed on, firstly, a change in our club name and, secondly, a suitable replacement name to truly represent where we live. Keep up with the discussions on email and state your preference. All comments are welcome. The name change will help reflect the club's image in a more positive manner.

Kudos to Rod Dillon for initiating the club's fly swap which has generated a lot of interest.

I have included a report on the Bass Release for 2015/16. My boat was out of action so we released ten thousand fingerlings from the bank. Bass releases need to take place when the fish are ready, not the fishermen, so we need commitment in volunteers in future releases to transport fish over a wider area of the dam to maximize bass survival. If the fish are released in one spot, this allows for greater predation from shags, pelicans, seagulls and bigger fish.

Look out for a report on Jeff's trip to Eucumbene.

Up and coming events :-

- Peter Morse casting Day at St Clair.
- Club trip to Clarence Town chasing bass.
- Club trip to St Clair to tackle the winter edge dwellers (Bass)

Enjoy the newsletter and remember if you have an interesting story or a fly recipe you wish to share please forward to the Newsletter editor Jeff Yates. The newsletter will go out towards the end of each month.

Cheers
Darren (Dazza) Foster
President, SFFC 2016

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		Fly Tying for Barrington – Trout Patterns		
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, Coxes 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		
October				
November	11 th	Club AGM at Bero Bowlo	All	
November		Barrington - Local Rivers		
November				
December	7 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
December				
December				



Fly Tying at Coal Point

By Jeff Yates

January is a difficult month to organise an outing. Most people are over gatherings, drinking, eating and socialising, but a hardened dozen twisted twine and synthetics under the tutorage of Lawrence to produce flies for the Jimmy's beach outing in February. Those in attendance were Tom Jones, Jeff Yates, Darren Foster, Wayne Hunt, Rod Dillon, Tallis Rixon, Fred Derby, Brent Blackwell, Warwick Sommer, Les Simshauser and our hosts Lawrence and Cherie Blackburn.

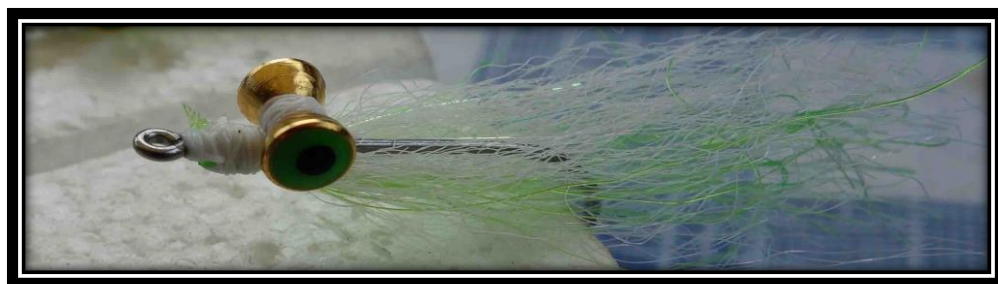
It was great to see Rod Dillon in attendance, as his expertise with fly tying is always appreciated. On another pleasant note it was good to see the club's cinematographer, Tallis, getting in on the action and tying his first ever fly, a green clouser. Can't wait to see a fish on the end of it.

The Blackburns excelled themselves again with their fantastic hospitality. Marinated pork spare ribs sizzled on the bbq, with Greek Dolmades, Tabouli, Green salad, Roasted potatoes served with a smile. This was followed with fresh cup cakes from Cherie's own kitchen with brewed coffee. Almost has a restaurant menu sort of ring about it, only better. This pair are worth more money.....





The two main flies demonstrated by Lawrence were a white and chartreuse Clouser and an Eyes fly pattern. I will include the recipes for those interested.



Chartreuse Clouser Minnow

Hook : No.4 Mustad 34007 SS hook.
 Thread : White flat waxed nylon.
 Eyes : Pseudo Chartreuse dumbbell or lead eyes.
 Underwing : White Deadly Dazzle or Unique Hair or deer bucktail.
 Overwing : Silver holographic tinsel under Chartreuse material same as above.

Tying Instructions

1. Secure eyes on top of hook about 5mm back from hook eye and superglue in place.
2. Remove hook, turn it over and replace in vise so that eyes are now on the bottom.
3. Tie in a small bunch of white bucktail or other material, twice shank length in front of eyes. The lighter colour is always the underwing.
4. On top of this tie in 6 strands of crystal flash.
5. Tie in overwing the same size and length as the underwing.
6. Finish wrapping the head, whip finish and cement.

Fly Notes

Originally developed by Bob Clouser for fishing for small mouth bass, the Clouser Minnow is one of the most productive styles of salt water flies, accounting for many different varieties of fish around the globe. It has also probably accounted for more broken graphite rods than any other fly as well, being such a heavily weighted fly whizzing by your ear and hitting your high modules rod.

The Clouser can be tied on a hook as small as a No.8 to imitate small baitfish to a No.6/0 for offshore species. It can be tied using natural materials such as bucktail/calf tail or any of the many synthetic materials (Unique Hair, Ultra Hair, Deadly Dazzle). Some of the more popular combos are chartreuse/white, tan/white, pink/white, red/white.



Eyes Fly

Hook :	No.4 Mustad 34007 SS hook
Thread :	Clear nylon
Eyes :	Adhesive 2mm black and silver
Tail :	White Deadly Dazzle or Unique Hair
Highlights :	Couple of strands of Silver Crystal Flash
Body :	Holographic tape over lead wrapped body
Finish :	Selleys All Clear

Tying Instructions

1. Wrap half the hook in fine lead, bind and superglue in place.
2. Tie in a tail with small bunch of white Dazzle 1 1/2 times shank length
3. On top of this tie in 6 strands of Crystal Flash.
4. Wrap a body of Holographic tape.
5. Finish wrapping the head, whip finish.
6. Get a tumbler of detergent and water, wet fingers and place a ball of All Clear on shank and work into a minnow shape. Place on eyes.
7. When fly is dry, coat body with clear nail polish.

Fly Notes

This fly is an imitation of the great schools of "eyes" minnows that run along the beach in winter. It will take any of our Australian fish, and is used to target Salmon, Tailor, Flathead, Bream and whatever else fancies a juicy bait fish. There is not a great need to strip, simply cast out and if you don't get a strike on the drop, try a couple of strips and let it free fall again.

Happy little chappies tying flies except for one exception guess who!/?.....



Fred surveying the tyers and wondering why they use vices and all the new fangled tools. Having seen his fly box full of beautifully handcrafted Irish flies, tied solely holding the hook in his fingers, I admire his skills. Maybe Tallis can video him in action sometime if he isn't too shy.....







Industry, environmental groups unite as approval sought for carp virus

January 13, 2016 8:35am

NATALIE KOTSIOS The Weekly Times
theweeklytimes.com.au



Breakthrough: Scientists suggest the 'carp herpes' virus has the potential to quickly wipe out the pest species.

AUSTRALIA'S waterways could be rid of carp by next year as moves to import a virus targeting the pest gain ground.

Scientists at CSIRO have wrapped up almost a decade of testing to prove the bug kills only the so-called "rabbit of the river" clogging the Murray Darling Basin, [The Weekly Times reports](#).

Applications to introduce the virus in Australia are now being submitted while an unlikely alliance between industry and environmental groups, including the National Irrigators Council and Australian Conservation Foundation, support the measure.

"This single initiative could be as important as myxomatosis was to halting the rabbit plagues," NIC chief executive Tom Chesson said.

"The environmental outcomes from this one action could be greater than those we've seen from the (Murray Darling) Basin Plan.

"This could see clear water in parts of the system where it's never been seen before."

Other Stories

Environmental watering under the basin plan is widely considered to have allowed the carp population to boom, forcing more than half of the native fish species to the brink of extinction.

Despite the efforts of carp eradication programs, the pest makes up 80-90 per cent of fish in the Murray Darling network — up from 58 per cent in 2011, according to Federal Government advice from the Threatened Species Council.

Carp suck mud from the bottom of rivers to feed then spit the sediment out — leading to muddy waterways, smothering plants and native fish eggs.

They also carry a parasite that infects native fish species and contributes to their demise.

"They absolutely dominate our natural waterways," NSW Department of Primary Industries senior fisheries manager Matt Barwick said.



But the introduction of a carp-specific virus to Australia is finally within reach.

The virus — known colloquially as “carp herpes” — occurs naturally in 32 countries, with outbreaks in Japan in 2003 killing 70 per cent of the carp population in weeks.

Eight years of testing by CSIRO’s Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre, led by Dr Ken McColl, has confirmed its effectiveness on carp in Australia and that it will not harm other plant or animal species.

Mr Barwick estimated it would take up to 15 months for the virus’s importation, with approval needed under four separate Federal Government acts.

Applications under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, and to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority will be submitted within weeks.

Applications under the Quarantine Act and Biological Control Act are under consideration.

If approved, it would be up to each state and territory to decide if and where they want to release the virus.

However, given public opinion ranks the fish among the top five pests in Australia and that it populates all of Australia except the Northern Territory, Mr Barwick is confident all jurisdictions will see the virus’s value.



Past President Lawrence having a bad hair day



Rod's Fly Swap

by Rod Dillon



While sitting down tying flies and watching a Bob Wyatt video, "Flies That Catch Fish" as you do on a rainy day, it occurred to Rod that the club has

never conducted a fly swap.

Would anyone be interested? A good number would be 10 to a maximum of 15 as that is a fair number of flies to tie of the same pattern.

For those who have never been in a Fly Swap it works along these lines. A species of fish is chosen, say Bass, and each participant ties a different pattern and the number being determined by the number involved. Say I said I would tie Clousers, then I would need to tie 13 if there were 13 in the swap and these would be sent to the Swap Master as would the flies of the others who would each be tying a different pattern.

At the completion of the Swap everyone would receive 12 different types of fly for bass plus 1 of their own back. This makes it easy on the Swap Master to sort. To enable suitable time for all to tie, this could take place over say, a 2 month period, as the Swap Master has to receive all tier's flies to enable the swap. It is usually done by snail mail with each person forwarding flies as well as a stamp addressed envelope to themselves for the swap flies to be sent to them.

Rod volunteered to be the Swap Master. To get the ball rolling, the fly everyone is tying is a Bass fly. Having said that, each person will be tying a different pattern. Rod will tie a Clouser Nymph and to give those new to tying some ideas the following patterns may help:-

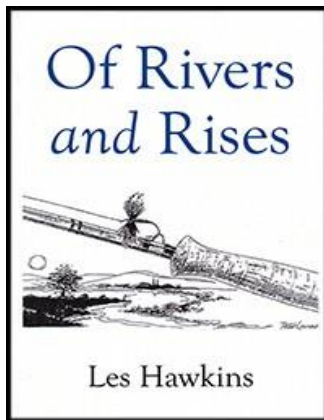
Clouser Minnow
Bass Vampire
Cicadas (many variations)
Hoppers (many variations)
Bushy Horror or variations
Chenoble Ant (pattern for Clarence Town)
Gartside Gurgler
Grabham Gurgler





Book Review

By Jeff Yates



A book of memories, mates and places, 85 years young, Les has produced book number 5.

Regular grabs from famous authors help emphasis a point or add wisdom to a story.

A life member of Greenwell's Fly Fishing Club, Les has over 50 years fly fishing experience and as he reminisces about events, techniques or places we can see our own encounters being reflected in his stories.

Les hails from the Albury area and has a superb knowledge of trout and more importantly, how to catch them.

One chapter of the book discusses the hazards of flyfishing, from dropping down wombat holes, dodging snakes and being used as a pin cushion for wayward flies.

This is neither a technical book nor novel, but a grab of memories from an enthusiast, not unlike most members of our club. He reminisces about fishing trips in the Snowy Mountains, Tasmania and New Zealand.

It is refreshing to see a continuation of books being written and printed in Australia by accomplished and experienced authors. Les is passionate about his fly fishing.

The book is available from lhawkins29@bigpond.com for \$29.95





Proposed SFFC name change

Much discussion occurred during the February monthly meeting about the idea of a name change for our club to truly reflect the location of the majority of current members. The meeting attended by nearly half the membership unanimously agreed that the change should happen, but in the true democratic traditions of our club, it will go to the members for discussion. Justin volunteered to take it to the members and gauge feedback. He sent out the following email:-

Dear members,

Last night at the first meeting for our club for 2016, the motion was raised and carried unanimously, to communicate with all members as to their preferences and comments concerning changing the name of our club in the future.

Background

As you may know, the club was founded in 1999, in Singleton by a mostly novice group of aspiring fly fishing enthusiasts. In the beginning the club was more a loose association, operating we thought, under the umbrella of the Singleton Returned Servicemen's Club. At that time, we called ourselves the ***Singleton RSC Fly-fishing Club***. (I still have a patch somewhere?)

As the club became more organised, the members realised the need to incorporate and formalise the club according to 'Fair Trading' standards, including the provision of a trading name, insurance and a formal constitution. We changed the original name by removing the reference to the ***RSC***, and

settled on the name Singleton Fly Fishing Club.

At the time, as in the beginning, the overwhelming number of members were located in or around Singleton, but in time the membership demographics changed, until when a majority of members were Newcastle based, we moved to a more central location 3 years ago to better serve the majority of members.

The reason I raised the motion to change the club name, is I see the current name not reflecting who we are, where we are, or the area we represent. It seems logical to incorporate a strong brand name like ***Hunter Valley*** into our new name, and focus the expansion of our membership into this larger location and identity. We can assure members, we will maintain ownership of the current name, for as long as seems appropriate and we have explored other legal and technical issues involved with a club name change, and none seem too difficult to manage.

The names I am putting forward for comment, as discussed at last night's meeting are:

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club
Hunter Valley Fly Rodders

It is the intention of the committee, to compile the feedback from this motion, and if consensus is positive, to move a motion to change the name to the most popular members choice.

Please direct your preference or comments to me so we may assess and report back to



the membership prior to the next club meeting.

Regards

Justin
Club Treasurer

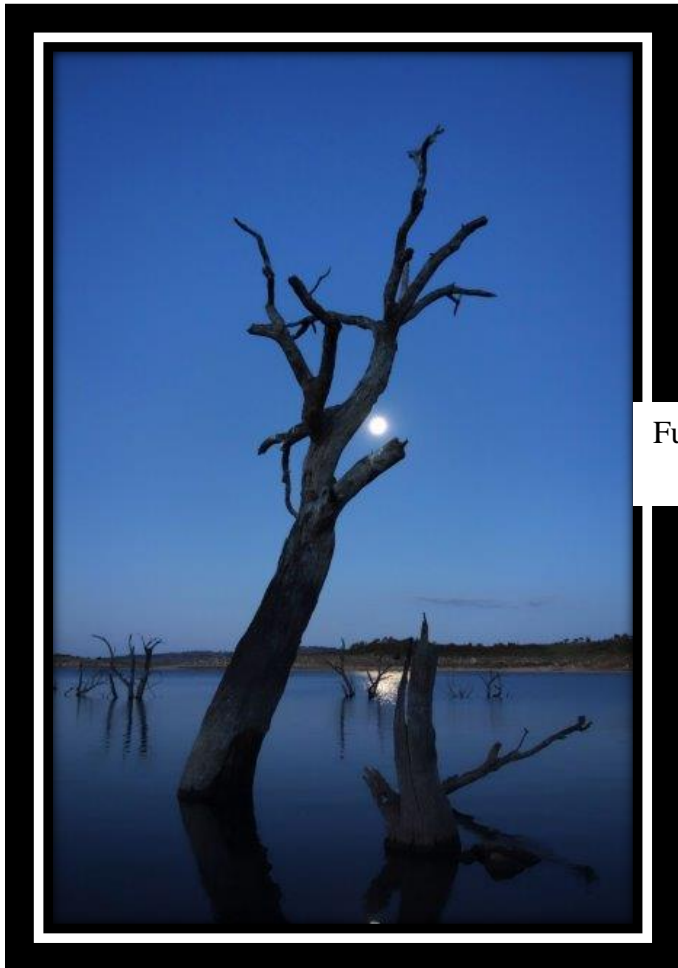
following domain names have been registered for two years.

Hunintervalleyflyfishingclub.com.au and
Hunintervalleyflyfishers.com.au

The members will decide the final name.

Not long after the email was sent, a flurry of activity began on our email account. At this stage there is very positive feedback. The

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Full moon over Eucumbene



Southern Adventures

By Chris Moloney

My family and I headed back to Victoria to see family and friends over the Christmas break. While there wasn't much time for fishing, I managed to get a few varied sessions in.



Our first stop was Shepparton, where I was able to catch up with a friend and pursue some Murray Cod. When I was living down there the river we fished was severely affected by the droughts most of the time, so much so, that at one point it completely stopped flowing. A few years before we left it had managed to get back

to its usual flows. As a result the local CMA and

Fisheries departments put a great deal of effort into restoring the Cod population, which they have successfully done. This also timed in well with Cod becoming a target for fly anglers (this was the point I moved away without ever getting to see the potential of this river) as a result I only ever managed three sessions before leaving. This is a sore point for me and I am always looking for an excuse to get there, despite never having caught a fish there. Unfortunately this trip proved no different. While we heard Cod splashing up and down the river, including in the middle of a large snag we were fishing. Despite the broken pride and a scorecard of Cod 5 and Chris 0, I still can't wait to get another chance at this river.

The second part of our trip took us down to Central Victoria, a trout lakes area. Despite the drought conditions that saw the local lakes holding between 20-60% water, there was good fishing to found in one of the smaller lakes.





Bullarto Reservoir was the healthiest looking water and during my two sessions there, it put on a great show. Don't get me wrong, the trout were not easy or large, but the challenge they give anglers makes up for the smaller size. Stocked with both Brown and Rainbows plus some natural recruitment the dams generally fish the best or at least the most reliably during the evening before dark, but for my first session I could only get a couple of hours in the middle of the afternoon. I set out with a midge pattern and started working the weed beds, after a while I realised they were not interested in my midge. I started to notice a pattern with the wind, when

it dropped the trout would become active then disappear then it picked up again. It was then I noticed the spinner fall. When the wind stopped the spinners were coming out and laying eggs, not in huge numbers but apparently enough to grab the attention of local trout. With this new revelation I changed flies to a spinner pattern (see Bob Wyatts Flies that Catch fish for tying instructions) and waited. And waited. It seemed to take forever for the wind to drop again but when it did the trout came out again. Once I worked out the feeding pattern of the larger fish I cast my fly, waited then strike. Like I said, not big fish but worth the effort, see pic below.



The next session was later in the evening, and the trout were giving nothing away. So I worked the weed beds and was on... to a tiny Red Fin, then again to another Red Fin. I lost count on the number in the end but I did manage one nice brown trout before the night set in.

The joy for me in these lakes is the challenging nature of the trout and the fact you almost always have the lake to yourself. A crowded night may see one or two other fisher people. On my last night there was no less than 15 people fishing. Bait, lure and fly were all

represented and covering every corner. Far too many for my liking, so I jumped back in the car and shot across to the Wombat Dam. This one is generally more popular but with access blocked on the eastern banks you can generally get plenty of room to move. This night was no exception with 5 anglers across the wall and no one on the eastern side. Unfortunately the drought has affected this dam and as a result this generally reliable dam yielded not even a rise. I did manage to capture a rather large Red Fin from this dam, just not the end I was hoping for on this trip, but a good trip nonetheless.





Eucumbene Feb 2016

By Jeff Yates

A trip to the snowy mountains in summer is always beautiful. The snowgums, with their flash of red or contrasting green on a brilliant white trunk dominate the landscape. Wild flowers give a tapestry of colour to the river flats. Wallabies, wombats and dingoes are part of scene, along with the myriad of birds, snakes and lizards. What a setting for our favourite sport, fly fishing.

However, fly fishing on the lakes is a fickle business, and is subject to the vagrancies of the weather. With a month of high temperatures over January and February, the water temperature was hovering around 21.5°C, and because of the warm nights, stayed substantially constant. Trout growth rate is optimum at 15°C, but as the water temperature rises so the oxygen level decreases. From about 19°C the fish experience some level of stress. During a mud-eye hatch the fish will dart from the deeper cold water into the shallows to feed.

Great in theory, but Eucumbene this year has rapidly decreasing water levels, caused by evaporation, discharges and hydro generation. This rapid drop in levels does not allow the riparian vegetation to take hold on the banks, creating habitat for insects, and the dam has quickly become more like a cattle dam, featureless and muddy. Foxes roam the banks at night digging up crays left stranded in the mud after the water recedes. If a mud-eye hatch occurs there is no cover for them, and they are quickly gobbled up at dawn by seagulls and crows which patrol the shores.

So the challenge was out, what do we do? Jindabyne was slow, but the water temperature was a lot cooler and on one visit I was able to land 4 rainbows and dropped a few more.

What about the rivers? Foxy, Fred and Darren were keen to visit a little gem tucked away in the mountains between Eucumbene and Jindabyne, just inside Kosciuszko National Park, on the other side of the range from Guthega. This remote fishing/camping spot on the Gungarlin has the luxury of drop toilets, picnic tables, fire rings and shade. Nestled in a heath and tussock grass valley, it winds down from an altitude of 1660m to 1050m where a weir diverts water to Island Bend Reservoir. It's a fly fisherman's dream, just ask Fred, who landed 20 fish on his second visit on his handcrafted Irish wet flies on a 6m leader. Snakes and wombat holes are hazards to be avoided during the tramp along the heavy undergrowth.





The Thredbo River always has a good run of cool water and was our second choice of river stops. Arriving at the Diggings, we were unprepared for number of campers, along with a full class of private school boys on a country excursion. Immediately under the camping grounds, large pools with rising fish soon distract our attention.

Like kids in a lollypop shop, we disappeared up and down stream, after an agreed time of return. Fred used his wets, I dredged nymphs deep through the black pools, and Peter, Darren and Foxy used a combination of hoppers and Geehi beetles to tempt the fish. Everyone soon learnt that these fish are survivors, and can spot nylon line the thickness of hair from 20 paces. Difficult to catch, but with Mount Kosciuszko as a back drop, the beautiful mountains hid any

dissatisfaction that we may have been suffering through lack of fish.

That night we wet our whistles in Horizons Jinderbyne, and dined on steaks and rabbit feed before fishing Hayshed bay. This private property is one of my picks for consistency, but permission must be sought before entry.





The week finished quickly, but not before we raided a roadside apple tree and cooked up a treat with fresh custard back at camp. Foxy's Hilux springs sagged another 50mm under the load of apples transported back to Sydney.

Highlights were many, as any baggage gets left behind on these trips. The camaraderie, humour and stories made it all worthwhile as we bid farewell to another pilgrimage to God's country in the Snowy mountains.



2 good fish from early in the week



Josie's cabins at Eucumbene under a fog covered Mt Cobrabald





\$4k Bass Release for 2015/16

By Dazza

I met with Glen Searle at the St Clair boat ramp and after a brief chat and wait to see if anyone else was turning up, we headed down along the shoreline just to the left of the boat ramp. There we released ten thousand fingerlings from the bank.



On the day, I spoke to Glenn regarding lead time for release from the time of clearance from Fisheries; there is basically a two week time frame to stock the fingerlings after the clearance from fisheries. Extending to three weeks is pushing the limit as keeping up with the food source for the little fish is exhausting. And to push out to the full two weeks would have meant a mid-week release to which a few members expressed their unavailability to such an event held mid-week.

Once Glen positioned his Ute near the water we soon had a captive audience with a bucket brigade quickly formed leading from the back of the Ute down to the water. A couple of families from the Central Coast

(whom are into fly fishing as well) gave us a much appreciated hand.



The young children had a ball releasing the little fingerlings. Glen gave them a running commentary on the complete process from the initial breeding of the food source for the baby bass through to breeding the bass, feeding them up, and disease checks from the fisheries to finally releasing the fingerlings into the dam.



The families were very much appreciative of the information provided by Glen as they had no idea where the bass came from that they (and so many others) enjoy catching on and around the waters of Lake St Clair.



Tasmanian Fishing Trip December 2009

By Justin Smith



How to plan a trip to Tassie

A couple of years ago, 6 members from SFFC did a trip to the South Island of New Zealand. On the whole, that trip was reasonably successful, and in follow on, 4 members from our club took themselves off to Tasmania for a week's fishing in the central highlands of Tasmania.

From the start, this was not a 'club trip', just 4 fishing mates who decided that a week's fishing in Tasmania was possible, and from there, we planned.

The aim of this first report is to present a how to and a bit of a road map for other members who may want to follow in our foot prints so to speak, and plan their own trip to Tasmania.

To be clear from the start, I am not presenting this as some kind of expert, or guide. But, having just 'done' the Tasi fishing thing, it makes sense to me that if I can do it, just about anyone could.

As I said, our group consisted of four. This seemed to be an ideal number for this kind of trip, so if planning to do the same, base your planning on 4 being the maximum size of the group.

Our group planned this together, each contributing to the overall outcome. However, if what you want is to just pay your money, turn up and go fishing, then you want to book yourself on a guided fishing trip holiday. Proangler do some great trips like that, and for about 2-3K, they will guarantee a fully guided and catered for fishing trip which you will enjoy.

For the record, a guided trip like the ones Proangler do will all but guarantee you catch fish, they will short cut the learning curve and take a lot of the hard work out of the planning. And that's what you pay for.

On the other hand for those willing to have a go, you can do something similar for a lot less money, and in our case, as much fun as any guided trip; having said that, there was over 60 years of combined fishing experience in our particular group, so there was always a chance we would hook up eventually. We also researched extensively prior to arrival and this held us in good stead for the fishing before us.



If no one in your particular group has any kind of clue what to do, or doesn't like reading or researching, take plenty of good wine or scotch and enjoy the ambience of the lodge because you will be wasting your time on the water unguided.

The key for any group is 5 main but simple things;

- **Agree on the members who will constitute your group, no more than 4.**
- **Agree on the date for your trip, and duration.**
- **Book your accommodation**
- **Book your flights**
- **Book your hire cars 1 per pair.**

As a suggestion for forming a group, first of all, try 'pairing up', use the contacts list for our club to express your interest. Find a fishing buddy and make this the first step. Two pairs who agree on a date make a group.

The date range you choose will determine the kind of fishing you will experience, the weather and the cost. If you can plan your trip outside of school holidays between November and April, that's a good start.

Now, if your group has an agreed date, its time to pre book your accommodation.

Our group stayed at the Shannon Rise Lodge in Miena. This is a fully equipped cottage, linen supplied, great location and very comfortable.

So if you want to stay in a cottage, prepare your own meals and share some of the domestics, go for a lodge like this, or better still, this one. Some of our club members prefer to stay at the Great Lake Hotel in

Miena. For those who don't mind paying extra, and want the convenience of pub meals, this is a nice option, but this will mean your accommodation and food costs will more than double.



Figure 1 Our Lodge 'The Shannon Rise'

www.shannonriselodge.com.au

Shane owns/ manages this lodge and a phone call or email will start you off. Check and confirm availability for your planned date. For our group, a single call confirmed and held our place at this lodge. For Shannon Rise Lodge, we paid about \$30 each a night, and this was for an off peak period over 8 nights.

The next steps follow a course. They assume that the group will agree on stuff, that they will meet together, pool some skills, share some time in the planning. If the group doesn't want to do this they should probably not spend a week in the same house together, you know what I'm saying.

Now, get on the internet and book some flights.

We flew from Sydney to Hobart. It's a direct flight, and there are several each day. Pick



one that suits. At this stage, let's assume from the group of 4 that has assembled, that one of you has a computer and knows how to google...if not....?

Now the cheap flights come from either Jetstar or Virgin. Plug in the dates, check the costs and availability? Don't book it yet. But flights there and back should be less than \$300 out of peak.

At this stage, I should mention that for those who have time to spare, and don't mind spending that time on the road, there is the opportunity to drive down to Melbourne and take your car over on the Ferry. Off season, this is very reasonable. A car costs about \$160 return off peak and a passenger about the same. In my opinion though, unless you are planning an extended stay, even this option is not cost or time effective. Given that getting to Melbourne will take 12 ½ hours non stop, which practically means accommodation en route and petrol money (~\$250), the ferry journey is overnight or all day, I would wonder, if you really pushed it, whether you would have any energy left for fishing once you arrived.

However, for an extended stay, it would be a brilliant and cost effective way get there and tour.

But generally, for the independent short term traveler, you are going to need a car, one between 2 worked for us, and the X-trail from Budget was perfect. It will cost you about \$700 between 2, about \$350 each for the week, not including special insurance. As for the car type, you will need an SUV at least, as the designated roads can be quite rough.

We used Budget, but there are lots of others, have a look.

Don't forget to bring your own GPS, you will find it very useful.

At Hobart Airport, the hire car pick up is 30m from the door of the airport, so once you arrive, cross the road and get your car. Easy! Don't forget the extra insurance. I recommend it. It will cost you \$12.50 extra a day each. Our group were divided in opinion as to whether you pay an extra \$12.50 a day each to insure the car. But consider this. If you hit a Kangaroo, it will cost you \$3000. For me it's a no brainer.



Figure 2 Our Choice of Car, the X-Trail SUV

In context, hitting animals on the road, especially early mornings and evenings is a real risk. In one stretch of road between Miena and Bronte we were encountering animals on the road every few hundred meters. Every day presented new numbers of fresh road kill (fly tying material) Very sad in so many ways, but a fact of our trip. After leaving the airport you will need to shop.

Time for some retail therapy; head to Eastland's Shopping Centre. This is a typical well equipped mall, which will be able to provide a one stop shop for all your



supplies. At just 12 minutes from the Airport and basically en route, it will do the trick.

www.eastlandssshopping.com.au/centreinfo

Time to stock up on all those things you said you'd get at one of those planning get togethers you had prior to getting here. Agree on a shopping list, put a kitty together and away you go.

I recommend you get everything you think you will need, especially your favourite special treat thingies, because once you get to Miena, your choices are limited. You can also get your fishing licence; the well appointed tackle shop there will sell you one and 30 something dollars will get you weeks worth.

If you run out of food, don't worry, Great Lake Hotel at Miena serves a great meal and the beer is cold.

In less than 2 hours, a scenic drive will bring you to your fishing lodge for the next week or so.

So now you've arrived at your lodge after picking up your keys at the Miena general store, assuming you've worked out where you are sleeping, it's going to be time to tackle tinker and go fishing.

For us this is when the challenge really started. But experience and research enabled us to be effectively fishing in about a day or so.

For research, consider the following;

Tasmanian Trout Waters by Greg French, consider the information regarding Pine Tier Lagoon, Bronte Lagoon, Woodward's Broadwater, Little Pine or Cowpaddock Bay at Arthurs Lake. And check out the Canal

outlet at Liawenee and have a go at some of the lakes and tarns at 19 lagoons. Penstock is worth a look too.

Numerous fly life references, too many to mention, but they all count.

The web site below has maps and links and lots of fishing tips.

www.ifs.tas.gov.au/ifs

Even so, catching trout in Tasmania can be tough. There are a thousand lakes and they all fish differently, not just to each other, but the same lake will require different methods depending on the time of day, not just the time of year! Throw into the equation the chaotic weather and you will have a conundrum to fill a life time of fly fishing challenges.

So be prepared to invest some time in just getting the feel of the place.

As for gear, we all found out that Tasmania is a destination, where variable conditions really mean that your gear must be up to scratch. So consider the following.

If your jacket isn't breatherable and water proof don't take it.

Tasmanian conditions will accentuate any failings in you equipment so be forewarned. For once consider using the best you can afford, it will pay you back.

The following should do the trick.

5-6 wt rod, generally for lake fishing, longer is better.

Floating line, best you can get.

Breathable good quality waders; I wear Stalker Guide Skins waders and they are great.



Breathable wading water proof coat/jacket; again three of us wore the Stalker Wading Jackets and Jeff a UK designed Gortex jacket and this kind of design enabled us to fish in all weathers comfortably. Our Stalker Jacket has lots of pockets, wrist seals and gismos; it's just a great fishing tool. Good quality wading boots are an asset, make sure they are comfortable and have good overall grip and make sure you use gators or gravel guards.

As far as accessories go, I took so much stuff, but here is a list of what I actually used;

- Good quality tippet, 4lb, 6lb and 8 lb Mono and Fluro.
- Clippers with hook eye needle
- Floatant
- Leatherman
- Net
- Forceps
- Indicators
- Lead Putty
- Glass cleaners
- Line cleaner
- Line straightener
- A selection of flies, but less then you think (see web site for tips)

As I mentioned, three of us sported The Stalker wading jacket, but the other key to fishing comfortably is layers. Although it was summer, our average day time temperature was less than 9 degrees, and night times plummeted to 0 more than once.

We had snow in summer. It was windy, it rained, the sun burned, the water was cold, the nights were freezing and that was just Tuesday!

So when dressing you will need layers, and you will need to add and subtract as required. Take thermals top and bottom,

take a fleecy, take a good hat, one for cold, one for sun or both at the same time.

Add to this a significant chill factor. If you use sub-standard gear it will leave you cold.

Neoprene fingerless gloves will be handy too.



Figure 3- 6 degrees rugged up and waiting for the hatch

If you forget anything, the general Store at Bronte Park will probably have it, talk to Shane. The prices are surprisingly reasonable; spend some money there, even if it's to buy a coffee.

So how much will it cost? More than you plan for but less than you think.

\$250 for flights

\$400 car hire (Xtrail)

\$35 Licence

\$\$\$ For food depends what you want, maybe \$200?

\$\$\$ For wine beer or what ever, skies the limit, up to you.

\$\$\$ Petrol, Tasmania is small, but \$100 should cover it and some.



The good thing is you mostly pay as you plan, and that means by the time you go, most of the pain is over, and so you just have fun and fish. How good is that?

We will see about a how to fish it when you get there article, depending on feedback, and again anything we put together has no guarantees, and compared with the amount of information that's out there already, it would be debatable as to whether what we did is or would be better than other methods already tried and proven.

On a final note, we all had an enjoyable and memorable fishing trip. Not because we caught big numbers of fish, although we did OK, but it stood out for lots of other magical reasons;

For me, special memories include the following;

Having a good mate take time out from his own fishing so he could polaroid the perfect fish and then offer it to me.

Night fishing on Pine Tier listening to the gloop-gloop of gulping surface feeders and the subtle swish of near silent lines.

Sitting around the fly tying bench all together in our lodge, watching Jeff's (road) killer fly come to life.

Seeing persistence pay off for Greg as he plucked the two feistiest rainbows from the one run on one of the most attractive fast flowing streams any of us have ever fished.

Or sitting down to fresh smoked trout for brunch served with a perfectly chilled Tasmanian Sauvignon Blanc.

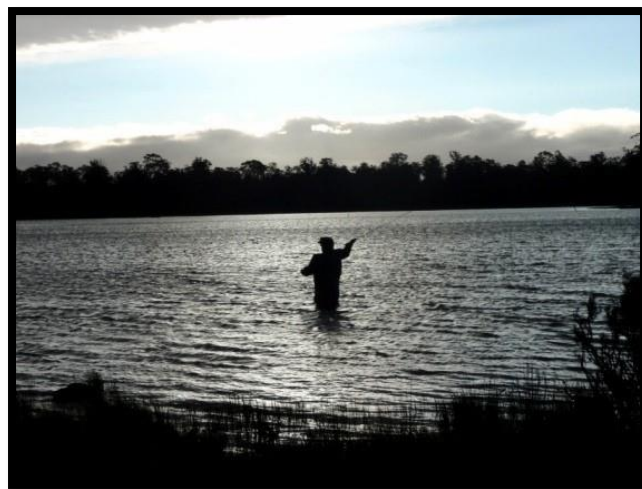


Figure 4 Lawrence casting on Penstock

In conclusion, as I recount the many successful aspects of this trip, more often than not I am prompted to think of what I could have done better. There was a back water inflow at Pine Tier that I so want to fish again, but this time approaching it with the stealth that was warranted and a well presented dry fly to match.

And I am sure, that Little Pine would give up a monster brown to the evening session that we never did.

Cowpaddock Bay at Arthurs just needed that special windless sunny day to turn on a Polarising adventure to remember.

So I think with this in mind, Tasmania is on the cards again for the not too distant future.

If you want a challenge, and a trip to remember, I will see you too in Tasmania.

I hope so.





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