



Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club.com.au

2017 July Newsletter

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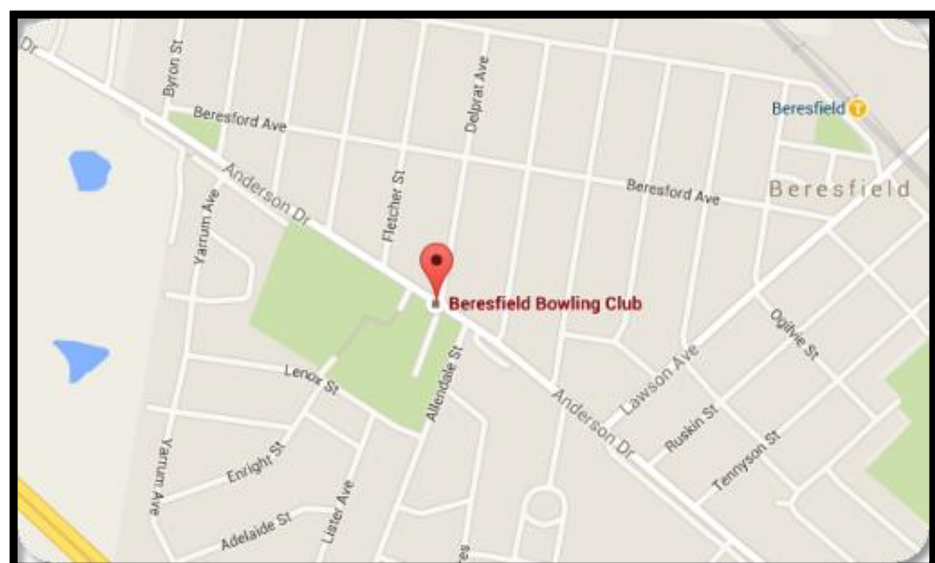
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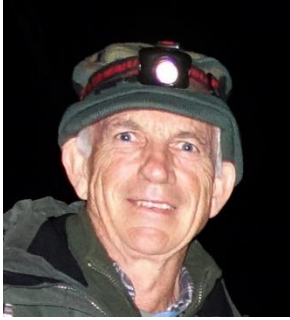
Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club meets on
the first Wednesday of each month at:-

Beresfield Bowling Club
Anderson Drive
Bersefield
At 6.30pm



Editor's comments

Jeff Yates



I would like to send a big cheerio and get well wishes to John from Sydney Fly Outfitters and Guiding. John, our number 1 sponsor, has been unwell of late, so hope you come good soon mate and join us on the water. Our Sydney club members Rod, Rod, Alex and Glenn have been keeping things moving in the shop.

Darren, generous with his time and skills, has tutored Patrick in the art of fly tying, now Tallis, not to be left out, has also commenced tying flies. Both lads have joined Rod's fly swap to further enhance their tying skills.

Recent bass outings have been a boom for our new club members, with Fiona, Ray, Shane and Kevin all consistently catching bass. Well done, and hope to see you doing battle with the salmon at our Swansea outing in 2 weeks.

Get out and practice on the salmon, they are in abundance at the moment.

I hope you enjoyed the pppx of Lake St Clair that I sent out recently. Look out for the St Clair report in the next edition.

President's Report



Welcome all to the July issue of the Hunter Valley Fishing Club's Newsletter. It is good to see members turning up in large numbers to club outings as was evident at the recent St Clair outing run by Cherie and Lawrence and the previous St Clair outing run by Pete. The social atmosphere at these outings is what makes this club so attractive to be a member. Well done to all the members.

The Swansea outing is coming up upon us fast so hopefully the Salmon will be playing a bit friendlier than what they have been lately. Remember if they are a bit shy, go to a fly with less flash or no flash at all and go to a longer, lighter leader.

The next step in our \$4\$ Bass Stocking is almost under way. I will be sending through the Fish Stocking Order Form to Fisheries. The release date is yet to be decided upon and I will be talking to Glen from Aqua Searle soon. The RISE Film Festival will be at the club on the 24th August in the Rainbow Room. There will be more info put out very soon.

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.

Cheers
Darren Foster
President 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
March	01 st	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
March	10 th — 12 th	Lithgow	Rod Esdaile	0418667949
April	31 st M — 2 nd A	Swansea	Darren	0413392774
April	05 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
May	03 rd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
May	Sat 20 th	Morpeth Day Trip	Darren	0413392774
June	07 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
June	16 th — 18 th	Lake St Clair - Bass	Peter Sewell	0428685101
July	05 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
July	28 th — 30 th	Lake St Clair - Bass	Cherie	0410555019
August	02 nd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
August	11-13 th	Swansea – Saltwater - Salmon	Darren	0413392774
August	24 th	RISE Film festival – Bero Bowlo	Darren	0413392774
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				
November	10 th – 12 th	Windamere	Chris Moloney	0422144382
November	18 TH	Club AGM Meeting @ 5.00pm	All	
November	18 th	Dinner/Awards @ 6.30pm	Cherie	0410555019
December	6 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
December				
December				



Salmon a-plenty

Jeff Yates

They have taken their time this year to start playing ball, but they are now in abundance. An email from Rod Fox saying that the Sydney connection of the two Rods and Alex would be heading up to Swansea for the weekend was enough for Peter and myself to test the waters again for the fly fisherman's dream, Australian Salmon.

We hit the water at 5.45am on a freezing windy morning with white caps riding high on the top of the tide. It looked abysmal, with the forecast offering only a glimmer of hope later in the day, but like hardy fools, off we sped from the Blacksmith's ramp to check out the various holding spots. The bridge had showings on the sounder, but the fast water flow, funneling through the orifice under the bridge, prevented a presentation to midwater fish.

Down past Blackned's Bay we got the first glimpse of Salmon, with nervous water contrasting the otherwise rough, windswept features of the now outgoing tide. During past trips we worked hard with small flies and light, long leaders, but not today. This weather calls for a robust approach; 20lb fluorocarbon leader with a #2 Surfandy on the clear intermediate 8wt line.

The fish school was nice and tight, and a few shots over the back of protruding dorsal fins soon got a response, but not the one we expected. A pair of 3m Bronze Whalers, showed an interest in our Topender, before they got back to their business of feeding on Salmon. This beautiful sight was magic considering what was an otherwise uninspiring morning.



Undaunted, we chased the school for a couple of fish, then left the sharks to their meal. A fish further down the channel, ended a cold, windy session, and the call of a hot cuppa became too strong to resist, so off to the ramp in the comfort of its small harbour for a welcome hot tea. There we met up with fellow fly fishers from the Illawarra club, just arriving for a club event.

After recharging our batteries, we headed out again. Meanwhile, the Sydney connection, along with Tony and Rod Dillon had arrived and soon we were all onto fish. The Salmon were attacking schools of anchovies, on and just below the channel dropover on the outgoing tide. We found that by using the spotlock on the electric, and orientating ourselves adjacent to a weedbed, gave us the best chance for a hookup.

The fish were soon compliant, with a number of fly fishermen in the armada attached to Salmon. There were several schools working all over the channel, and the tell tale explosive splashes, fleeing bait fish and accompanying birds gave away their positions.



Yes, doubles were also possible, as Peter holds aloft two 3kg fish before releasing them. A glimpse across at the Sydney connections and Tony was showing his skills on an outward bound fish with Swansea heads as a backdrop. To say that Salmon are a great sporting fish is no exaggeration, once hooked with a firm strip strike, you are in for at least a 10min fight, and more on the lumpier ones. We are so lucky to have them on our doorstep.



After a great day on the water, it was time for us to depart. A few fish kept for our favourite fish cake recipes and the ever alert pelican eyeing off our catch.

As a postscript to the story, as I was feeding pelicans with the fish frames, one decided to beat the others to the meal, and made an aggressive grab, and managed to also grab the knife handle I was holding and slashed a fair gash in my thumb. Good one, now I'll have to wait a week or two before I can start chasing Australian Salmon again. With our club outing to Swansea now on the 2nd weekend in August, I can't wait, or maybe not.....



Going Native

by Rod Dillon

Opening the small gate and leading my Kayak through, the sound we all dread was heard.....PING. All of a sudden my beloved Sage Smallmouth 4 piece was a 5 piece, and unfishable.

On my return home I contacted The Flyfisher in Melbourne and was informed that yes I could get a new tip but at a price. Steeling myself for the worst I was relieved to hear that Sage rods are guaranteed for the lifetime of the original purchaser and a tip would cost \$120. The downside to this was that I had to send the rod to them and they would forward to the US. Turnaround time was about 7 to 8 weeks which meant that if I was to pursue my quest for natives I would need a replacement.

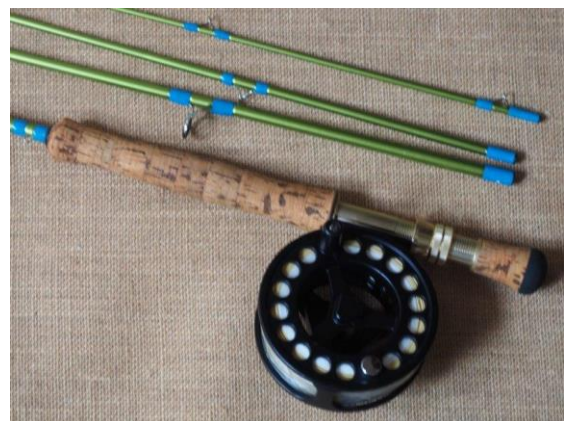
A search of the net showed a Sage Smallmouth replacement would cost \$850 approximately and there was no way I was going to spend that sort of money on a backup rod. I was a bit dejected by all this and then I recalled John Marshall telling me he had a rod made to his specifications for fish such as cod and other natives and the price was reasonable.

A phone call to John satisfied me that the rod could handle lines from 8wt through to 10wt and I arranged for the purchase and shipment of one. It is branded Drift Native Bass. As I already had the line John sells with the rod it brought the price down.

On receipt I proceeded to give the cork handle 4 coats of Tung Oil with a light sanding with 0000 stainless steel wool

in between coats. The rod came up a dream but my photo does not do it justice. A few casting sessions on the front lawn with the intermediate shooting head (and the Rio Bass floating line) convinced me that my money appeared well spent. Of course the real test would be on the water with a difficult fish, be it bass, cod, carp or yella.

On its return I tried both rods on the front lawn with both lines. The Sage feels a little sturdier than the Native, with a little bit more power through the butt but that is to be expected bearing in mind the significant price difference. The Native will certainly get more use than the Sage in the next few months to give it a fair workout. It is a delight to cast on the lawn however it needs loading up on a decent native (excuse the pun). The rod is rated 235gms against the Smallmouths 295gms so that accounts for the feeling of more power in the Sage. The Sage Bluegill is rated 230gms so I guess John was aiming the Native at this rod.



Since writing the above, the rod had its first test at St Clair on a couple of resident Bass, handling both fish with ease. As you are aware Bass are great fighters that never give in. The rod felt good with the fish on and with good power in the butt, the Bass were played and landed with ease. But I felt that this rod was more than the eye could see and had some hidden strengths that needed to be brought to the fore before I would declare it a go to rod.

The opportunity arose last Friday when I ventured to Swansea for a crack at the Salmon with two other Rods and an honorary Rod. Confusing? Not really, Foxy, Rod E and Alex who unfortunately was unlucky enough to be christened Alex not Rod. Oh well it happens. From hereon he is referred to as HonAr to fit in with ArDee, ArEee and ArFef.

Anyway, HonAr hooked the first salmon and had it under control when it decided it was going under the boat. Unfortunately for HonAr it disconnected and kept going. Disappointments expressed by us both

A short time later I hooked up and was led a merry dance for some 10 to 15 (more 15 than 10) minutes until the salmon was in the boat. It measured 66 cm and weighed 8 lbs. A second was later caught and is pictured below. It was 64 cm and 6 lbs

How did the Native perform? There is no comparison between the fight in a salmon and that of a bass with even a small salmon winning hands down. The 2 salmon I caught put up memorable fights with my knuckles hit by the reel handle on numerous occasions, so I think that the rod had a fair test. I found that the initial salmon strike and run was easily handled by the rod. When it got down to playing

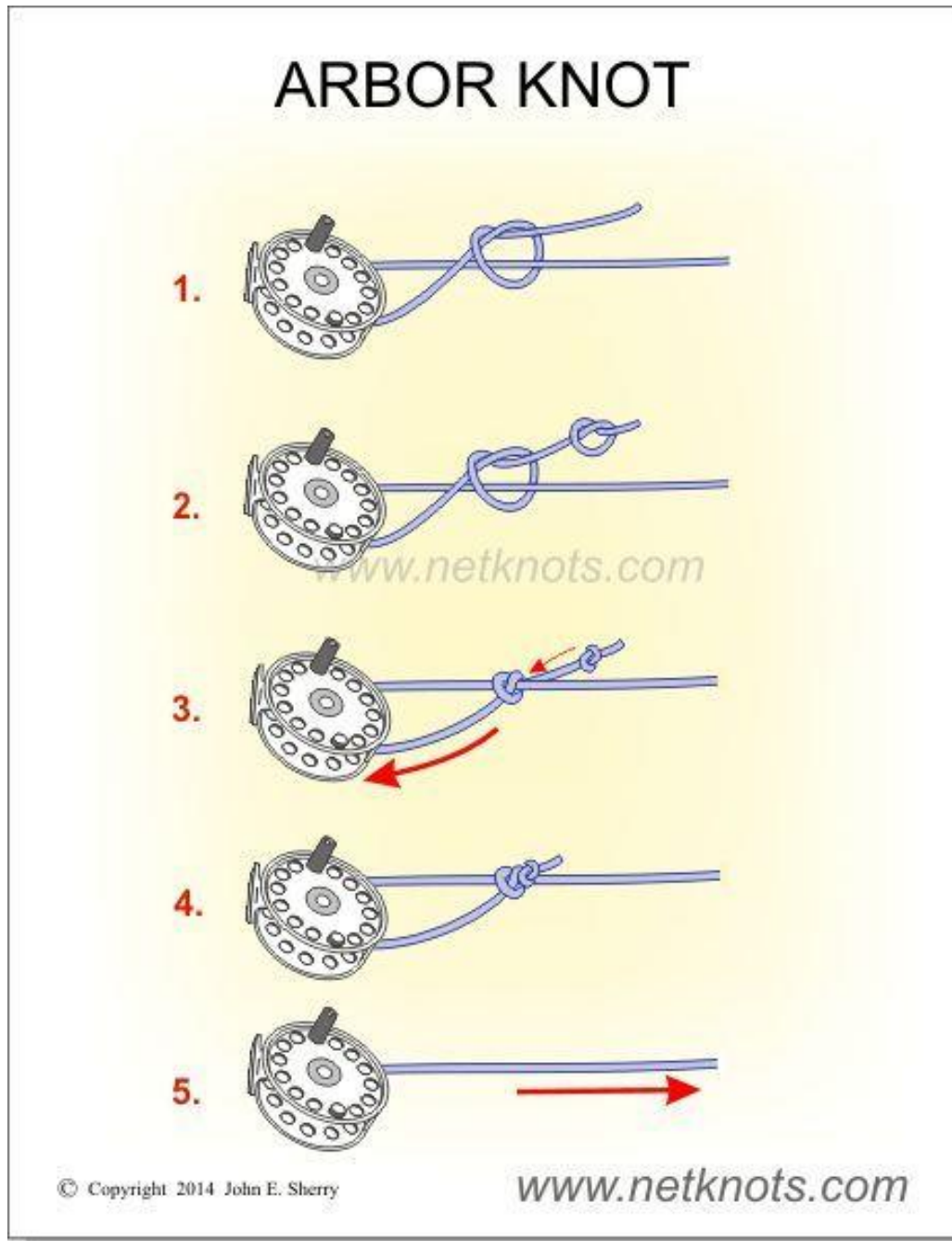
the salmon, the Native had good power in the lower section, with the tip allowing contra direction movement easily as the fish constantly changed direction. A lot of the time the rod held the fish with no line going on or off in an effort to tire it. Sudden runs were handled effectively by the rod and at no time did I feel that the rod was inadequate for the job. Incidentally it handled magnificently a third hookup which was savage and hard for a few seconds. My flyline didn't survive however, as boat props are unforgiving!

I am confident in saying that the Native is an excellent rod which fights above its weight and will be my go to rod for the big natives I am hoping to encounter in the future. John Marshall has done an excellent job in designing this rod. I understand there are only a couple left in the shop so if you are interested in a quality rod at half the price of the big name rods be quick.



The Arbor Knot

This is the goto knot for terminating your line on the reel. It is simple and slip snugly on the arbor of the reel. For added strength try looping the line twice around the arbor before tying the knots.



Darren, Tallis and Patrick tying Clousers for Fly Swap

I think there was more joking around and laughs than tying flies otherwise we probably would have had about twenty flies each tied. Somewhere along the line Flash Gordon's theme anthem came into play a fair bit. Actually every time the word flash was mentioned. Lol.



The Woolly Bugger

By Darren Foster



The Woolly Bugger. This would have to be one of the very first flies that anyone would ever learn to tie. It certainly was the case with myself, tying the roughest, woolliest looking bugger of a fly, brown in color, which was instrumental in catching my first Australian Bass on fly in the Williams River at Clarence Town in 2006. My second species to fall to a Woolly Bugger was Rainbow Trout at Lochlorian Trout Farm, this time on a red and black model.

The Woolly Bugger was accredited to one Russell Blessing from Pennsylvania as far back as 1967. When you delve a little into the history of the Woolly Bugger, a little-known fact is, the fly was named by his seven-year-old daughter, Julie. Others say the Woolly Bugger was derived from the Woolly Worm, which was derived from the British palmer fly of which goes back to times of Isaack Walton and older. Another theory put forward by Jack Dennis is that the bugger is a variation of the pattern, Black Martinez and others again argue it was originally tied for Bass in the 1800's.

The Woolly Bugger is usually called a streamer or wet fly and is generally fished

sub-surface, although there are several variations where the fly has been adapted for surface use as well. The fly can be tied with a bead head, cone head, or with bead chain eyes or even just lead wire wrapped around the shank before tying the fly and is suitable for both fresh and saltwater use. The fly is generally tied on size 6 to 4 straight shank hooks but can be tied on hooks as small as size 12.

Depending on how much weight you add to the fly depends on how deep you wish to fish the fly. Obviously, the heavier the fly, the deeper it will sit in the water column or you may need the heavier fly to reach the bottom when fishing fast water. Where you position the weight (if using lead wire) will depend on how the fly will swim. Weight added to the centre of the shank will get the fly down on the bottom; add the weight to the front of the shank and the fly will dive head first also giving the fly a jerky motion; move the weight to the rear of the shank and the fly will sink back tail first. If no weight is added at all, the fly tends to achieve a more slinky and seductive movement.

Colors or color combinations are varied and depend on what you wish to mimic or even if you are using the Woolly Bugger as an attractor fly. Even consider straight black with a bit of flash for fishing at night. What is the Woolly Bugger meant to imitate? What do the fish see? The original claim is a hellgrammite or dobsonfly nymph. It could also be taken for a damselfly or dragonfly nymph; grubs, worms or a leech maybe or tadpoles? What about a yabby?

If your tying buggers for saltwater, think bright colors. Maybe the fish take them for squid or maybe small tropical reef fish? They may even be tied to resemble Gar or

Needlefish or Sand Eels. Bright colors also work for sea-run trout

There is no right way to fish a Woolly Bugger and certainly no wrong way either. Whether you fish it at a dead drift, short jerky strips, fast strips or long slow draws, you will soon work out what works best at the time.



Variations of the Woolly Bugger

Top to bottom:

Bottom Bouncer Woolly Bugger
Articulated Woolly Bugger
R C Bugger
Bead Bugger
Winged Bugger
Bow River Bugger (or Muddler Bugger)

Undeniably though, despite all the unusual ways it is spelt (or miss-spelt), or the many variations of the pattern there are, or who can claim the fly as their own original pattern, you would have to agree that the Woolly Bugger can catch fish.

I have caught Bass, Trout and Carp on buggers.

What have you caught on a bugger?



PETER WITH A FURRY FRIEND

Fly Cabinet Raffle

Cherie says ... we are running a special raffle of a beautiful fly tying cabinet for the club. We will be drawing the raffle at the AGM in Nov this year. Tickets are \$5.00 each. If you are interested just advise me of how many tickets you would like and deposit funds into the club account. I will then email you back with your ticket numbers. As we do not have the Bass Classic this year, this is a great opportunity for the club to raise some revenue, so get behind this initiative, and score yourself a bargain. Tickets will also be available at the monthly meetings until it is drawn.

This pine fly tying cabinet is hand engraved and crafted by a former (now deceased) Lithgow fly fishing identity, Dan Engel. It is mounted on castors and has storage for materials as well as a fold down work top. It has been beautifully restored by Darren, Tallis and Patrick, also donating tool and material holders. I'm not sure what it is worth, but I do know there is many months of hand engraving on the cabinet.

Bank Acct details:

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club

BSB: 637 000

Acct: 780 089 059





Fishy Pics



Kevin with a nice Yella and silhouetted fighting a bass on dark



Scape Pics



Peter fishing between his favourite trees at Lake St Clair
By Rod Dillon

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Tie flyer extraordinaire, check out Paul's website for your favourite fly