



## 2020 April Newsletter

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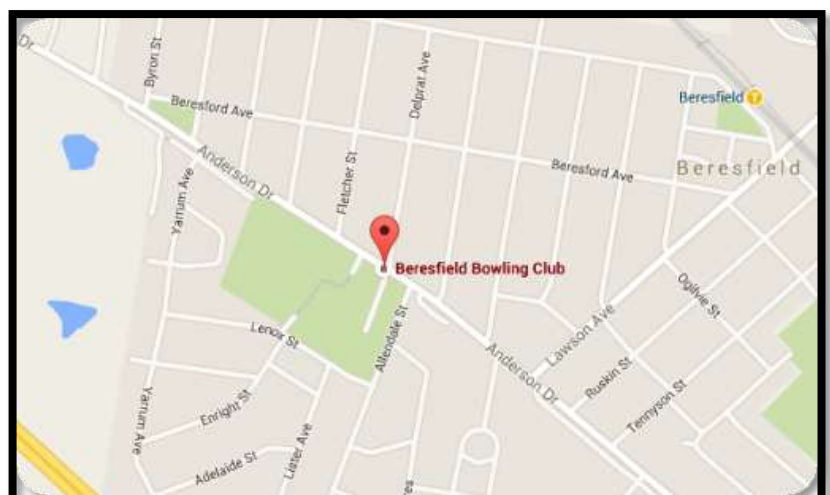
Peter Sewell

Kevin Croft

Robert Probert

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

Beresfield Bowling Club  
Anderson Drive  
Bersefield  
At 7.00 pm



## *Editor's comments*

Jeff Yates



The mullet season is in full swing, and hopefully this year the fish may have a reprieve from the year on year carnage of brood stock, stripped of their roe and sent off to markets in the northern hemisphere. If one good thing comes from the Covid19 it may be a decrease in beach netting and give the fish a year to build up stocks. I remember as a kid, schools of mullet, some up to a kilometer long. These days a patch as big as a school bus is called a good school. Other fish are about at the same time, with bream, flathead, blackfish, whiting, jewfish, tailor and salmon all feeding and breeding along the beaches.

During my home detention, I have been walking (passive exercise) to the local deserted Stockton beach throwing flies to the gutters and have had some good results.

Chris, Darren and Wayne have returned from their Severn River trip, full of praise for the number and quality of cod that they caught. Darren has sent me an excellent article on the trip, looking at flies, environment, company and fishing of course. Great photos and memorable time.

Peter broke away for a solo journey to St Clair to once again do battle with the bass. In the last 12 months, the lake has proved itself to be, arguably, the most prolific quality bass fishery in Australia. This may be a big claim, but having fished a number of dams in NSW and Queensland, St Clair to me is the best. It is one of the few that you don't need a boat to fish, as good water access and close water proximity to the road, gives the shore based angler a good chance of catching fish. Peter has written an entertaining article to read while in lockdown.

Our club does not have a big emphasis on casting skills, and Allan Ekert as an accredited instructor, has generously written another article, aimed at the beginner or someone like me with a self-taught style that could become more efficient and effective. The article concentrates on the basic fly fishing cast. There is more to it than you realise, but when you do it right, it feels good. The PULD cast (pick up lay down cast) has been explained with the aid of photos, in great detail, and should be of particular interest to all of our club members.

Fiona and Ray have just returned from NZ and were in self-isolation for 14 days, biting at the bit to get out for some passive exercise and provisions. After talking to Fiona, they are keen to get down onto the deserted beaches for a fly fish. Fiona has included a trip report to the South Island. How lucky they were to be able to get their trip in and be clear of the dreaded virus after their self-isolation.

## *President's Report*



Welcome to the April 2020 Newsletter.

I hope you, your families and friends are all well as these troubled times continue to push the limits on a daily basis and I hope you are all helping to prevent the virus from spreading by maintaining good personal hygiene and practicing social distancing, and enforcing self-isolation where applicable. If common-sense prevails, hopefully we will start to see a reduction in cases and with time some of the restrictions relaxed or removed all together. I think we are all waiting for the day when we can all return to some sense of normality. Although, we may have a “new norm” to consider when all this is done and dusted.

Whilst we might not be able to get out for a fish as a club, it is good to see Rod Dillon organising another club fly swap. I for one have been looking forward to another swap so thanks Rod for continuing on with what has become a club favourite. And don't forget, if you have a fly pattern or something else fly related and you want to share it with the club, utilise the club's email or the club's Facebook page or send it through to Jeff for inclusion in the newsletter.

Thanks to our resident Rent-a-nerd (aka Grunt) Mark Schmidt for setting up the Zoom thingy for our first electronic club meeting. It was a good trial run for future meetings in these times of maintaining group isolations and will also enable the Sydney members to participate in club meetings when we can resume face-to-face meetings again at the club.

If you're like me and missing out on Brett & Cherie's tying days, get on to Instagram and watch their live feeds of Brett tying popular fly patterns on a Sunday night at 7.30pm or alternatively, search on YouTube for BWC Flies.

Now I know this was in last months newsletter and it may not be for everyone, but you may know of someone that is struggling so please heed the advice below.

During the current situation you may feel overwhelmed by all that is happening. If you are struggling, please, and I really stress please, talk to someone. If you have no one to talk to there are other options:

Life Line Phone: 13 11 14 (24 hours/7 days); Text: 0477 13 11 14 (6pm – midnight AEDT, 7 nights); Chat online: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat> (7pm - midnight, 7 nights)

Or: NSW Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511: Mental health crisis telephone service in NSW.

If you are looking for answers or advice check out: [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au) or [health.gov.au](http://health.gov.au)

Stay safe people and I look forward to talking with you on Zoom or over the phone.

Darren Foster

President, HVFFC 2020

Month	Date	Venue/Event	Trip Master	Contact Number
January	18 <sup>th</sup>	Fly Tying @ Mai Wei with BWC Flies	Darren	0413392774
February	05 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
February	28 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> , 01 <sup>st</sup> M	Lake St Clair — Bass, Yellowbelly	Rod Fox	
March	06 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	0407195508
March	27 <sup>th</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup>	Lithgow — Lake Lyall	Rod Fox	0407195508
April	03 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
April	11 <sup>th</sup> —TBC	Bunyah — Silver Perch	Patrick	0458781675
April				
May	01 <sup>st</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
May				
June	05 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
June	12 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup>	Lake St Clair — Bass, Yellowbelly		
June				
July	03 <sup>rd</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
July	18 <sup>th</sup> —TBC	Xmas in July & Club Awards Night	Cherie	0410555019
July				
August	07 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
August	TBC	RISE Film Festival — Bero Bowlo	Darren	0413392774
August	TBC	Swansea Salmon Classic		
September	04 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
September				
September				
October	2 <sup>nd</sup>	AGM/General Club Meetings at Bero Bowlo	All	
October	16 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup>	Lithgow – Lake Lyall	Rod Fox	0407195508
November	06 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
November				
December	4 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
December				

# Bens Falls Retreat

By Darren Foster

**F**our intrepid travellers headed north looking for all things green and marbled along with the hope and anticipation of an over-sized football shaped yellowbelly. Destination:

The Cod Cottage, located upstream on the property known as Bens Falls Retreat.



After such a dry spell all-round, the trip was not a certainty with the Severn River having not flowed for seven months. However, a nice drop of rain topped up the river by over two metres and got the flow happening. Back in 2018, the river was low, water clear and the cod hiding under any cover, even in very low water. This year's challenge despite the river dropping dramatically, and although still up by nearly half a metre on the 2018 level was a faster flow and water the color of a cup of hot chocolate. At least we didn't have acres of surface weed hindering our every cast. During the trip we had a downpour further upstream which saw the river run slightly faster again and a slightly higher level which only lasted around 24 hours before settling back down to previous conditions.

So, the intrepid four: Chris and his father Robert, Wayne and myself. Once we arrived at the cottage, we wasted no time in claiming bunks and unpacking the bare necessities before concentrating on unpacking the vital necessities: rods, reels, leaders and flies. We quickly set up, agreed upon a game plan and headed off to old but familiar stomping grounds.

Cod on fly was our main objective but if we managed a fish or two on lures as well, then good on us. Or should I say good on Robert whom fished exclusively on lures and managed to out fish us not only by one to three fishermen but around six to one fish (for each of us).

Like all trips you tend to over tie flies and always end up taking more than you actually need but hey, that's the nature of the game. This time I tied a different fly using the JBM Pike Skinz Predator Fibre using the colors Electric Mahi (Electric Eel), Orange Esox (Dirty Rat) and Dark Esox (Little Murray). My first two cod fell to the Electric Eel, with others subsequently falling to the Dirty Rat, Little Murray and the Light Horseman flies in olive and black.



Chris, Wayne and myself headed down to the gorge area below the falls on one of the days and with higher water levels our game plan basically evolved as we went. Finally, after catching our fill for the day we wove our way back through swollen rapids and slippery rocks. Man, talk about slippery rocks. I managed to do the splits over a slippery rock ending up face first in the cool refreshing water only to turn around just in time to see Wayne join me for a refreshing dip. Oh, what fun we had: fish caught; a cool dunking; and a Common Bronze-winged Pigeon to add to my bird list. The next few days saw our game plan change several times to suit the new conditions including stalking a metre-plus fish we spotted in an isolated hole. That fish did haunt us for the remainder of the trip and still does to this day. But we saw it, we really did. Just ask us and we'll tell you.





We managed a day trip in to Emmaville, with a population of around 500 people and an active fishing club that targets Murray cod on lure. We visited the local watering hole: The Tattersall, straight opposite the police station where we had a nice pub lunch and engaged in friendly chit-chat with the publican and his wife. They could not believe we were catching cod on fly!

"Hey, these guys are staying at Bens Falls in the Cod Cabin and are catching cod on fly!" "What? Cod on fly? But fly fishing is only for trout!" Ahh, the joy of education. The local gem museum is worth a visit if you ever get the chance to get there.

Around mid-trip, we did a bit of fly-tying with the Light Horseman on the agenda as well as tying the Little Murray. Chris managed a cod on his green version of the Horseman. Wayne also managed his first Murray Cod on fly. And as well as catching cod on fly I managed to identify 35 different birds with an overall tally of 428 including 12 different groups of Superb Fairy Wrens for the Fairywren Project. So overall, a very satisfying trip all round.



Over the course of the trip we managed between the four of us (on lure and fly) around 70 to 80 cod. Not a bad effort and a wonderful trip with excellent company. Bring on the cod any time. We are well and truly hooked now.











### FLY CASTING SKILLS CHALLENGE PROGRAM Bronze Level 1

Last year I wrote a lot about the Casting Programs that are available for us to become better fly casters and why you should try one. The *Orvis Master Your Casting Program* has been my favourite for a long time and you may have given it a go at some stage just to keep me quiet. It's a good program that will improve your casting skills and take you to a very high level if you follow it through. Now I believe there is a better program and one which I intend completing this year along with anyone I can convince to join me. It's the *Fly Fishers International Fly Casting Skills Challenge Program*. It was the subject of the October 2018 *Casting Around* article so I won't go into all the background and details. What I intend to do is to take you through each level of the program over the coming months and look in detail at what is involved and how I have approached completing the tasks. I know it sounds boring (and it probably is!) but I have a few insights which I hope you might find interesting.

The very first task in the *Fly Fishers International Fly Casting Skills Challenge Program* is to make a pick-up and lay down cast (PULD). The Program states: ***"This cast is fundamental to all fly casting. Starting with the fly at 40 ft., the caster can perform a PULD cast in a near vertical plane with leader straightening to within 2 ft. of the 40 ft. target center. No hauling or false casting allowed."***

I would imagine if you are reading this you probably know how to make a pick up and lay down cast. If you don't or want to make sure you are doing it correctly detailed instructions will follow. In the meantime you may like to look at this video of Paul Arden (from the *SexyLoops Casting Program*) teaching the pickup and lay down cast: <https://vimeo.com/238441496>

As with most things that look simple there is plenty of finer detail to take into account. But before we explore that detail there is an important question that you must consider if you are doing any of the casting programs; or indeed preparing for certification. Unless you ask yourself WHY, you are not going to gain the most from learning the skill. Here are the WHY questions you should ask.

Why is this task in the Program? The PULD is the basic cast in fly fishing. It gets your fly on the water ready to fish. It is used to false cast and for changing direction. **It is the simplest way to learn the proper mechanics of the casting stroke.** It is fundamental to almost everything we do. I say almost as there is an exception – the roll cast (we tackle this task later in the Program). Some would argue that the roll cast should be taught before the PULD. I would agree with that when time is limited and you want to get someone fishing safely in the minimum amount of time. If you are in for the long haul (no pun intended) the PULD is the place to start.

Why start with 40feet? First off you need to get used to Imperial measures as all the casting programs come from non metric countries. That's no problem for people of my age but if you were born in the metric era you will have to use your smart phones to do the conversions. Actually, I think the distance should be 42 because as we know that's the answer to the ultimate question of life, the universe, and everything! And the line length of 40 or 42 feet has been chosen for reasons just as complex. It's based on understanding the AFTMA system for matching grain weights to rod weights (something Douglas Adams would struggle with). It's enough line to load the rod without leading to tailing loops. It's not too much that you need to haul. It's the optimum casting distance for many freshwater fishing situations. If you were doing your casting certificate there are plenty of questions in there for your examiner.

Why does it have to be done in a near vertical plane? If you are a saltwater caster or a protégé of Lefty Kreh you might want to challenge this requirement. There are good reasons you shouldn't. A pickup and lay down cast needs to be done in a near vertical position to get the line off the water quickly and quietly. It is more accurate and is a foundation cast for all the casts that follow in the program. Once you have mastered the PULD in the vertical plane you can work on your saltwater variations as you see fit.

Why does the leader have to straighten? When a beginner makes a "bad" cast I often point to their line and tell them it looks like a bowl of spaghetti. A "good" cast lands with the line and leader straight. This keeps the fly away from the thick fly line and helps deceive the fish. To achieve this you have to learn to load the rod, pause and stop. For the beginner there are many hours of practice to get to this stage. The first level in the Program involves being able to straighten the line and leader and do it accurately. Later levels will require learning to make spaghetti again for those tricky trout!

Why no hauling or false casting? You not are not permitted to haul during the PULD cast to ensure you know how to remove any slack and create enough line speed to load the rod efficiently. Some people use hauling to compensate for poor fundamentals. Casting should be about efficiency and done properly a PULD cast can be performed effortlessly with just one hand. As for false casting it is not needed and defeats the purpose of the quick and quiet delivery of a pickup and lay down cast.

If you understand the WHYs of this cast you are now ready to perfect the HOW. What follows is detailed instructions on performing the pickup and lay down cast by Sekhar Bahadur a Master Certified Casting Instructor with Fly Fishers International. If you follow these steps you should be able to make a PULD cast and pass the first level of the *Fly Casting Skills Challenge Program*.

#### 1. SETUP

Rod pointed along the fly line, tip **just touching** the grass or water.



#### 2. THE LIFT

**Slowly** bend your forearm upwards at your elbow and peel most of the fly line off the grass/water and drag the fly through the grass/water towards you until the rod reaches around the 10:30 position (45° above horizontal). This movement to 10:30 should take around one second (say "one-one-thousand" to yourself and you will be close). Your arm should now be bent around 90° at the elbow. Only the fly, the leader, and perhaps a bit of colored fly line should be left on the grass/water. Because grass provides much less resistance to the line than water does, a caster learning on grass can seemingly get away with a high-speed lift. If you lift fast on water, the cast will not work and will scare fish, so take care to make a slow, steady lift part of your start routine on grass too.



### 3 BACKCAST

**Without stopping**, keeping your arm bent at around the same 90° angle and now moving almost only from the shoulder, smoothly accelerate the rod to the vertical or 12 o'clock position and **stop crisply**. Your elbow should rise when you cast and the line should go **up** and behind you.



### 4. PAUSE

Wait briefly for the line to straighten.



### 5. THE FORWARD CAST

Keeping the bend in your arm and hinging at the shoulder, pull forward and down, smoothly accelerate, and **stop the rod crisply** in the 10:30 position. Your elbow should fall, and you are aiming to cast downwards, roughly opposite your upward backcast, with the leader unrolling just a couple of feet above the water. Remember the backcast was made uphill, against some water tension, and with weak muscles, whereas the forward cast is coming downhill unhindered while propelled by stronger muscles. Very little force is required in the forward cast.



### 6. LOWER

After stopping at around the 10:30 position, slowly lower the rod tip down to the water to follow the falling line at the same pace.



Paul Arden includes the PULD cast in his *Sexyloops Casting Challenge* and adds three variations which I think are worth learning. You don't need to perform these to pass Level One of the *Fly Casting Skills Challenge Program* but if you can I reckon it's worth bonus points and will definitely help your casting in fishing situations. Try landing the fly first with the leader and line landing after the fly has settled. Then try landing the fly and line together at the same time. Finally see if you can have the line and leader land before the fly. And the icing on the cake would be to be able to do this over both shoulders and/or using both hands.

The final word on PULD casts comes from Peter Hayes, a Certified Master Casting Instructor from Tasmania and a member of the Board of Governors of Fly Fishers International. Actually it's not just a word but a whole video that explains just about everything you need to know about this cast. If you are serious about mastering the PULD you must watch this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAB119Zk8o0>

You will find a copy of the Fly Fishers International Fly Casting Skills Challenge here:

<https://coffscoastflyfishing.weebly.com/links.html>

Or on the Fly Fishers International web site:

<https://flyfishersinternational.org/>



## *Not Sexyloops*

Jeff Yates

Having just watched Paul Arden's Sexyloops youtube clips <https://vimeo.com/238441496>, you would think that my first field test of correct casting techniques would mirror his approach, yeah nah!

Us over 70's have been locked down for a few weeks now, and to say I'm stir crazy is an understatement. Now that the National Parks are closed and the beach is locked off, 7kms one way down the beach and 18kms the other way to reach habitation, seems like a good place to get my social isolation. However, I have a kilometer of sand dunes and mosquito ridden bushland to traverse before I get there; but like they say, us elders need to get out at least once a day for passive exercise, as long as we have social distancing, and abide by social gathering rules, whilst this pandemic rages around the world.

Yesterday, I went for a walk down to the beach, there were no pelagics around, but the gutters and flats looked idea for flathead. A check of WillyWeather for the next day forecast winds to 6kph from NNW and a low tide at around 0930; ideal.....

I pulled the 8wt Loomis out, and paired it to an intermediate line on a Litespeed reel and grabbed a collection of flies, armed to do an assault the next morning. I had Surf Candies if the pelagics showed up, otherwise a collection of Bent Backs, Clousers, Deceivers and Shrimps.



Setting out early, I drove a kilometer to the eastern side of the estate, parked up the car and headed for a nearby bush track. This track weaves through Swamp Mahogany, Banksia and Coastal Gum forests, before exiting onto the dunes. A suck on the Ventolin puffer gave me enough lung capacity to get to the top of the first dune where the morning fog was just lifting, leaving a spectacularly clear morning vista, a deserted beach as far as you could see, coal ships sitting off the coast and Newcastle city shining in the distance. This is my style of social distancing!

The gutters were still emptying into sizable rips, but up ahead where the beach changes direction, a fantastic washy area off the point showed prospects for ambushing a flathead. I started with a chartreuse over white Clouser, and with Sexyloops in mind, I stripped out 20m of line, minimised false casts and punched the line above the waves and into wash. Now this is where the fun started: the wash sent the intermediate line in all directions, wrapped around my ankles, swept in with the first wave, tangled and generally was a nuisance to handle.



It took just one enquiry to get me excited and work through the tangles. I found that by standing on one leg, I could minimise the line around the legs by 50%. Likewise, to get greater distance, I found that I could anticipate the wave breaking up on shore and as it retreated, I could chase it down and hurl the line before the next wave swept me back up the beach. All good fun but hardly Sexyloops! I have scored a few war wounds from Clousers bouncing off my head and back, but what the heck, something for a later show and tell!

After 30 minutes without a touch, I changed flies to a #2 white and orange shrimp pattern, thinking of the whiting and bream I caught this time last year on nippers. First throw I connected to a nice flathead of around 400mm. Fantastic, this fly is a winner, but as the old proverb says "*don't count your chickens before they hatch*" was never truer. It took another hour before I got my next fish, another flathead of similar proportions.



Now, the toll this casting into the surf is afflicting onto my aging body was starting to show. Standing on one leg and charging into the surf has waned, and my Sexyloops were more like floppy loops, so I thought I would call it a day.

I skulled a bottle of water to lighten my load and trudged back up the sand dunes, located my thongs that I had hidden on the edge of the forest, and headed back to the car, quite chuffed with the success and fun that I had over a couple of hours in isolation.

However, the second proverb saying "*all good must things come to an end*" I think was written by some narcissist. A local polliwog has posted a message to say that fishing does not fall into the broad category of passive exercise, or essential travel; walking a bloody poodle is ok, riding a surfboard is ok, jogging up and down the pavement is ok, but not recreational fishing. Obviously, the lawmakers were not with me this morning! Stop Press ...The ban on recreational fishing has been overturned! As long as social distancing and public gathering rules are complied with. A win for common sense and a win for my sanity.....





*The only footsteps on the beach for 25kms are mine*



*Another lovely flathead falling to the hybrid shrimp*

Still living off the adrenalin from the flathead trip 2 days previously, and my casting arm starting to recover, irrespective of yesterday's flu jab, I headed back down the beach for my passive exercise. I tossed a white clouser around the gutters and into the wash, and gazing up the beach I saw a flock of birds working close to shore. Now my bionic knees were not made to travel as fast as I run



to try and catch up to the birds. It was like 2 steps forward and one backwards, as they worked their way up the beach.

Finally, I was within casting distance to fish, now chopping into baitfish in a gutter, just off a big washy, green hole being dive bombed by terns, mutton birds and even a lonely sea eagle. The first cast fell short, as I pushed the fly line into and across a slight NW breeze. Stripping the line in as quickly as I could, I run ahead a little further and landed the clouser into the now, highly active gutter and hooked up instantly. The fish headed for the deeper water and me in quick pursuit, trying to keep in touch with what looked like a nice salmon. If you haven't fly fished the beach, then you are missing out on a lot of fun. The line gets swept around by waves, and you are running in and out of the surf, using your motion as a human drag washer.

The salmon put up a terrific fight, had me into the backing and used the waves to its advantage. I was finally able to wash it up on the next big wave and scored my first salmon from the beach this year; but it won't be the last as the school was now a further 400m up the beach. Another hobble to get close enough for shot at them. Looking at some white bait that had been pushed clear of the water and not yet fallen to the marauding seagulls, they were a perfect match for the white clouser I had on, so confidence soaring, I cast into the scrum of birds and fish.

Almost instantly I had a double hookup; a salmon heading south and a mutton bird flapping north. My environmental conscience took a pounding as I released line for the bird to hopefully untangle, but unfortunately the fish used the slack line to run even harder. After what felt like ages, the mutton bird freed itself and flew off, but unfortunately the salmon did likewise!

I had a final cast at the departing fish and got another hookup. The fish performed acrobatically off the back of the waves, which helped tame it a little and after a prolonged fight I was able to land the salmon. The birds by now were well outside the break and my weary legs were refusing to continue the chase; and I still had the long walk back over the sand dunes. What a morning, and with Wollies not delivering meat down here, I intend to be eating fish cakes for the rest of the week!



*Unfortunately, the Salmon Classic might not be on this year, but as long as I'm able, I'll be having my own solo classic on the local beach. What will tomorrow bring?*

## *Corona Cabin Fever Crisis or Crazy St Clair Trip?*

Peter Sewell

Or as the Irish would say - feckin Cabin Fever? Whatever it was, I needed a fix! A fly fishing fix. Now I knew Lake St Clair Recreation area was closed and that was OK because that's not where we generally fish. Now how to justify the trip? It was about an hour and a half drive but there would be no stopping anywhere on the way up or the way back, so that has to be a tick. Alone in the car, another tick for social distancing. Walk in from the car to the lake for 30 minutes (I walk slowly) and then walk out, uphill for 35 minutes coming back. It takes longer cause I'm carrying all those fish (just kidding), it takes longer because I'm old. Anyway, exercise, so another tick. Essential travel? Well it has to be doesn't it, so another tick. Is that four ticks?

With a great feeling of relief and a spring in the step with so many ticks (five ticks with one for mental health), an 8 weight rod and intermediate line and plenty of Craig's Night Time flies, off we go, umm, off I go. Hardly a car on the road on the New England Highway on a Sunday afternoon was a little surreal. What an afternoon warm, sunny, a light wind, enough to create that ripple on the water that just makes the fish more willing and you more confident.



So arriving at the secret spot, just a little south of Twin Soaks at around 5pm all was good. Walked in, noting the trees and some bearing points for the walk out in the dark, without having Jeff as a guiding light it wasn't going to be as easy. There was even an echidna doing its thing with a backdrop of Lake St Clair and blue sky dotted with shiny white clouds in an afternoon sun. LG- Life's Good, and so is nature.



It was rather weird to be there alone and strange to see the tree stumps we used to wade out and cast from, being high and dry, it was even stranger to see so much long green grass, what a landscape.





Even better there were fish taking off the surface in a really regular way. Oh No! I Guess who didn't bring the floating line or the dry flies or even some of Fred's nymphs or Jeff's shrimp patterns and no one to borrow from. There were damsel flies galore and a good smattering of larger dragon flies. Tried, but not a take even using a black muddler which floated for a while before the intermediate line dragged it down. Changed flies a few times but still nothing. These fish were frustrating so I wandered off to hopefully find more fertile ground. Worked along the northern side of what once was an island - caught nothing. Finally, a fish ...at 7.30pm. Well at least I could say I caught one. Reconciling that we all have good days and bad days it was time to start working back, by this time it was 8.30pm.



Someone came wandering along the ridge from the southern side of the island with a really bright headlamp and I hadn't put my light on yet because I'm a bit slow with these things and there was a little moon light. By the time I fumbled to get my torch out to flash back at the stranger he/she had disappeared over the southern side of the ridge. Hmm, Strangers in the Night...Frank Sinatra (that's for you Fred and you probably know the words!)

Anyway back to fishing. It was 8.35pm and another bass, at least 100mm long, then another 150 long then another around 300mm long which I had to drag through the weed. Things were looking up. Then missed one and another and another and another then got one right into the shore and the hook pulled right at my feet, I pulled out my torch and there was the bass at my feet in 150mm of water, nah, 6 inches of water. It would have made a great photo Dillo. Anyway (again), the leader had two wind knots in it so it was opportune to tie on a new one. Then a discovery, now, one should know to check one's fly from time to time but I *didn't do it*. Under the brightness of my nice new rechargeable torch bought from *Wish* for \$12 it was



plain to see the bend in the fly hook had gone from around 180 degrees to around 120 degrees that's either called giving the fish a sporting chance... or Stupid! Hence around six or seven or more missed fish.

From then on, there were still a few missed fish but by walking around 10 meters and stopping for a cast almost every cast was a fish or a hit. Wow, when these bass decide to turn on; they turn on. It became wander and fish and wander and fish finishing the night with twelve bass landed and too many missed.

What a balmy night, fishing in Columbia light weight shirt and pants all night, carrying an unneeded wind jacket and layers. At 11pm after landing fish number 12 it was time to call it a night, it wasn't too hard to find the way back to the car even finding the knarled old log to turn left at to cross the gully and head back to the car arriving in a lather of perspiration, for a hot cuppa and a fruit and biscuit-dinner! (a digestive biscuit or two Lawrence)

It just goes to show that cabin fever can be beaten, exercise is good (and the government call this passive exercise?) social distancing is achievable and fish are still there to be caught. I'm really glad we can now fish with a clear conscience, even enjoy our passive exercise but perhaps it was pushing the boundaries with how far to go before commencing the exercise bit. It'll be good to get back to fishing with a mate.

Maybe Jeff has the right idea, walk from home over the sand hills and get a fix of Salmon on fly from the Beach. Well done Jeff.

Let's hope we can all beat this thing.

We live in interesting times but if we can still fish we can still smile.

### *Craigs-a-plenty*



*Here's the crew waving goodbye to Peter as he exits the free world and enters penitentiary to do time for catching real bass.....*





*Echidna with the best view on the lake, Peter with a late night bass*

## *March NZ 2020*

**Fiona Meredith**

So sitting at home, day 11 of self-isolation.

Looking back at a lovely trip to the south of South Island New Zealand.

Although not many trout were caught, you realise how lucky you are to travel and experience the adventures that come with fly fishing.

The best day was on the Otamita stream, outside the town of Gore.

The fish didn't rise much during the day but about 7.30ish, sun low, the rise would start. Some lovely pools, although the recent heavy rain and flooding has really done some damage.

Ray moved up the long pool, the banks are high, towards a flax plant that gave some cover, fish rising, using a Churchy CDC red tag, obtained in Tassie, he hooked up with a lovely 24 inch brown. Great fight, had to walk the bank with the fish to find somewhere to bring it in.

What a lovely fish.



She took some time to revive, but gradually glided away into deep water.



# *Fishy Pics*



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*A lovely cod in the Severn River at Bens Falls  
Retreat*



# *Scape Pics*



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*A day chasing flathead  
and salmon on Stockton  
Beach*

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL – 2019/2020

Fees due by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club Incorporated (the “**Association**”)  
(incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*)

I, .....  
[insert full name]

of .....  
[insert address]

.....  
[insert email]

.....  
[insert contact number]

☐ Full member (\$40.00 p.a.)      ☐ Junior member (\$20.00 p.a.)      ☐ Family membership\*\* (✓ applicable) (\$50.00 p.a.)

I hereby apply to renew my membership of the Association for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 until 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020  
By renewing my membership, I agree to comply with and be bound by the constitution of the Association for the time being in force.

.....  
Signature of applicant

Date: .....

\*\* Members renewing a Family Membership must complete the information on page 2 below.

**LODGEMENT AND PAYMENT**

Once completed, please sign, scan and email back to [darrenfoster65@bigpond.com](mailto:darrenfoster65@bigpond.com)

Or alternatively mail to:

Darren Foster  
20 O'Donnell Crescent  
Metford NSW 2323

Membership fees can be paid by cheque or via bank transfer.

If paying by bank transfer, please use your name as a reference for payment so your payment can be easily identified.

Bank transfer should be paid to the following account:

Name: Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club  
BSB: 637 000  
Account No: 780 089 059

Please make cheques payable to **Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club**

**Important Note: Your renewal fees must be received by the Association no later than 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to avoid your membership lapsing, after this date your membership will no longer be valid.**

### **Application for Family Membership**

To be eligible for Family Membership, and have the Association's insurance cover extend to include all applicable family members, the following conditions will apply:

- Family Membership is available for a member and their immediate family members only (i.e. wife/husband/partner and children under 18 years of age at the start of the new membership term) and does not include Grandparents or member's siblings or other relations, etc.
- Member's children 18 years or older will be required to join as a full member
- Each family membership is only entitled to 1 vote at club meetings.
- the requested information in the following table must be supplied in respect of all people proposed to be covered by a Family Membership:

<b>Full name</b>	<b>Date of birth</b>	<b>Relationship to member</b>

Office use only:

Date payment received: .....

Membership fee received: \$.....

Payment method: .....



*HVFFC members wish to “thank you”*

### *Arthur's Lake Retreat*

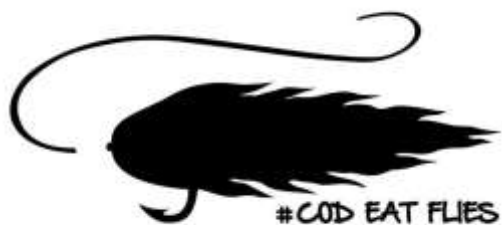


Arthur's Lake Retreat is located in the Central Highlands of Tasmania at Arthur's Lake. The home is located just 3 minutes' walk from the lake, in a private setting. This makes for a perfect weekend getaway. Please contact Rachel on 0428451720 or Michael on 0400721544



<https://bwcflies.com.au/>





**JASON STRATFORD**

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M: 0468 46 54 54

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/logicusimages>

