



## The Official Newsletter of the Hamilton and Area Fly Fishers and Tyers

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February 2002

### EDITOR'S COMMENTS

This is the month of love. I love fly fishing. I also love my wife. This is the month to enjoy both. Seriously, take part in our couples night this month.

Our *Beginner's Corner* continues as well as Ron Marini is back with a tribute to Maurice How. Stay tuned next month too for his article on where to fish within an hour of this fine city. I'm also pleased to introduce an article by Juni Fisher who also writes for *The Fly Fishing Report* ([flyfishingreport.com](http://flyfishingreport.com))

The big news this month is we officially have a new web site. Check us out at [www.hafft.ca](http://www.hafft.ca).

Just a reminder - memberships are now due. More information is below. And on that money note, for those of you who forgot, your license probably expired at the end of December.

The club survey was sent with the last newsletter. If you did not get a copy, but would like to complete one (and make yourself eligible for a number of prizes), ask at one of the meetings of either myself, or John French. You can even download it from the web on last month's newsletter which is there now.

### PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Just a quick reminder about the Outdoors Show just around the corner. Contact me, John French to consider helping out.

One final comment is please return your surveys. There is a draw for a number of prizes for those who turn it in. If you don't wish to put your name on the survey but still wish to hand it in, please give it to one of the exec's or have a friend hand it to us. We want your feedback, all of it.

John French  
President

### MEMBERSHIP

Just a reminder to those of you who have not yet paid that memberships are now due. Individual memberships are still \$25 and families are \$35; one of the cheapest clubs around. For those of you new to the club or without the experience of other clubs, you may be interested to know our club fees started at \$25 & \$35. Please send your check to the club mailing address

listed below or bring to the next meeting. Make checks payable to Hamilton and Area Fly Fishers and Tyers. Thanks to the members who let me know they'd prefer email delivery. If for any other reason, you get it faster than Canada Post. It also benefits the club, as the mailings are one of our highest costs.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### *10th Annual Ontario Out of Doors Spring Fishing Show*

February 14th - 17th 2002 International Center, Airport Road Toronto. The club is considering a booth. We need volunteers; please contact John French, 905-544-5056 or at a club meeting for more info

#### *The Canadian Fly Fishing Forum*

Apr. 6,7. Following last years smashing success, will, once more, be at the Automotive Building at the C.N.E. The list of speakers is too good to be true including names as **Jack Gartside, Collin McKeown, Dave Schenk, Don Bastian, John Valk, and Bill Spicer. Sheldon Seale, Rick Whorwood, Ken Collins, Gary Dubiel, Mark Madore and Kathryn Maroun** etc.

#### *Mooneye Night*

June 12. Get your dry fly skills honed up for the season. Join fellow club members for our annual mooneye night at Seneca Park in Caledonia.

### **You Just Might Be A Troutbum....**

By: [Juni \(RedHead\) Fisher](#), an admitted and committed troutbum. (12/10/01)

Nobody's gonna make you quit. You're not gonna try to quit on your own. You've got 'way too much time and cash invested to turn back. You're even kinda proud to be called down on it.... You just might be a troutbum.

Oh, yeah, you'll dredge out a popper or a streamer and hit a piece of warm water, and you'll catch a few bass, or bream, or crappie, and you might go off to some exotic place and pretend that you just love to cast an eight or ten weight rod for Bermuda Carp (oh, sorry, they call them bonefish) but after the fun is over, you need a trout fix.

Yep. You're gettin' a little defensive even now, aren't you? You just might be a trout bum.

It's not the worst thing you could have acquired as a habit. There's collecting goofy looking cars, hanging photos of Judy Garland in every room of the house, going to the Rocky Horror Picture Show every Friday at midnight. There's pouring time and money into a boat, into bird dogs, into shotguns, into horses. All time and money consuming things. You could have decided you'd buy a Corvette and find pooh-haired fluffy named Lacey, spelled Layci, to ride around in it with you. If you're a lady, you could have decided the best thing you could do was to keep scheduling cosmetic surgery until you finally acquired that look of perpetual surprise like some of the women in the pages of "In Style". Or you could have taken up tennis, so you could have the tan and the little outfit, and the cute tennis instructor.....But NOOOOO, you chose to be a trout bum.

It's OK, there's no shame involved, and while it's not curable, it's manageable, up to a point.

If the waders fit, wear 'em. Here's a few ways to tell:

If you have at least one fly rod in your car at all times....

If you admit to having one rod in the car, but you actually have three in there, because you never know which one you might need....

If you have two or more fishing magazines in the bathroom....

If you've ever told someone a good spot to go fishing, with out actually divulging YOUR spot....

If you check out every body of water that might possibly hold trout, even if it means holding up traffic on the highway....

If you get the shakes because you haven't fished for six days....

If you've ever been caught in a generation, because you just knew a fish you've named "big Daddy" was ready to strike....

If you've ever set a hook in your sleep, and woke yourself up doing it....

If you've ever combed dubbing off the family dog....

If you've ever combed dubbing off someone else's dog....

If you've ever slowed down to see if there was anything usable on a road kill....

If you get defensive when your non-fishing friends ask how many rods/reels/flyes/vests/etc. you really need....

If you get vague when your significant other asks how long you're planning to fish on any given day....

If you go get your own coffee at the fly shop....

If you have your own chair at the fly shop....

If your vehicle smells like damp waders at any given time....

If you've ever tried to verbally coax a trout to take your fly....

If walking by the trout tank at an aquarium makes you groan audibly....

If you have more than one special fishing shirt....

If you've ever missed a family reunion, wedding, school play, party, or any other function because the fish were rising and you just couldn't leave....

If you've ever been annoyed at a non-trout for taking your fly because it took up extra time to land it and get your fly back....

If you've ever trashed the knees of your waders, crawling up to a pool to get in the one cast you're gonna get there....

If Sage isn't a spice, Winston isn't a cigarette, Orvis isn't a pet shampoo, St Croix isn't a saint, Scott isn't an F. Fitzgerald, Payne doesn't hurt, Wulff doesn't howl, Ross isn't a Betsy, Pate doesn't go on crackers, a two piece isn't a swimsuit, a three piece isn't a business suit, a 4, a 5, a 6, a 7, an 8 or a 9 aren't golf clubs, and Lefty is not a pitcher....

And finally, if you're reading this and saying, "Oh Yeah? What's wrong that? ".....You Just Might Be A Trout Bum"

Juni ReadHead Fisher

Email [Junitunes221@cs.com](mailto:Junitunes221@cs.com)

## STILL TEACHING US TODAY

By Ron Marini

While Hamilton isn't blessed with a fishing destination geography such as British Columbia, Alberta, the Gaspé or Cape Breton Island, it has had and still has its flyfishing notables. Indeed, within our club we have well-recognized members like Harold Becker and Henry Lemieux, if he was still with us today, Maurice How would be a notable member of the Hamilton Area Fly Fishers and Tyers.

Maurice was a master fly tyer and a kind and patient teacher. Indeed, he lived the same principles that caused the establishment of this club. While he was many things to many people, what is familiar to all who knew him, was his selflessness and how generously he gave of his time and his fly fishing creations.

In addition to being a talented fly tier and accomplished fly fisherman, Maurice was a gentleman, kind to all. He was always willing to share, be it knowledge, techniques, materials or one of his famous flies. Whether instructing a neophyte or a seasoned fly fisher, Maurice was unfailingly polite and gentle and never made the student feel intimidated or inadequate. Many who had the pleasure of watching him tie, will always remember sitting at his elbow watching him spin his magic at the vise.

Maurice was a frequent contributor to fly fishing publications, especially "Double Haul", the membership magazine of the Izaak Walton Fly Fisherman's Club and "Trout and Salmon", published in the United Kingdom. He made many submissions in the 1970s and 1980s until his unfortunate passing in 1989. Past editions of the above-noted magazines yield a treasure-trove of instructions from Maurice on tying his famous Hamill's Killers; Baby Dolls; the Dragonfly and Damselfly nymphs; his midœ-nunœ patterns made from the outer covering of a lead

core line that he called his “One-a-minute Buzzers”; his Little Olive Nymph and Wood Duck Nymph; Lister Avenue Special and the Dog Nobbler. And Maurice never used head cement; rather he used white shellac for all his gluing and coating needs.

In his later years, Maurice had to give up his riverine fishing for stillwater fishing. He was a fixture at Rainbow Ranch, casting his 8-weight glass Hardy rod while sitting on a campstool, puffing on his always-present cigarette. Firing out the line, letting the fly sink and retrieving it with a twitch of his wrist unfailingly yielded rewards. This is a mental image of Maurice many of us still retain.

Reflecting on Maurice’s life, Larry Cryderman, the current owner of Rainbow Ranch, said:  
“Brenda and I have now been at Rainbow Ranch since 1979 and during these years, have had the privilege of meeting and experiencing quite a number of exceptional characters. As I think about this, one in particular keeps bouncing to the top of the list—the late Maurice How.”

Larry also reminisced about Maurice’s kindness, generosity and his favourite patterns that were so successful over the years. He shared with us this memory of Maurice fishing at Rainbow Ranch.

“Every time he hooked a trout,” recalled Cryderman, “He’d laugh out loud. His belly would bounce up and down with each chuckle and I thought on more than one occasion that he’d have made a good Santa Claus.”

Cryderman concluded his thoughts about Maurice in this way:  
“Although he’s been gone for a lot of years now, his spirit is still with us and he left behind memories for many that will last forever. Sometimes early in the morning when there’s a heavy mist over Pond 2, I often think I can still see him in the misty swirls doing what he loved doing best.”

Maurice How was a man who gave more than he took in this life. He has left us a legacy of stories and instructions that are relevant today, as they were 15 and 20 years’ ago. Those teachings have been carried forward in the fly boxes and the techniques employed by the many whom had the pleasure of being instructed by Maurice. Even as recently as the past fishing season, Maurice How’s patterns saved the day at Rainbow Ranch, particularly during the dog days of summer. It is a wonderful testament to his life that in spite of being gone for over a decade, his memory and his teachings still touch many of his students and friends today.

## CONSERVATION CORNER

*Brook Spawning Survey - Neil Hunter Property – November 2001*

As part of the conservation program, the club has been busy over the past number of years working to improve brook trout habitat within Flechers Creek. This past fall, members of the club conducted a brook trout spawning to determine if the area of the creek that the club has been working on, is being used by the trout for spawning.

Brook Trout spawn in the fall, beginning mid October until December. Spawning begins when water temperatures drops

below 10°C. Eggs are laid in a shallow saucer shaped pit, and then covered with gravel. The nests that trout make are called redds. Hatching of the eggs occurs in early spring, shortly after ice melt.

In order for brook trout to spawn, a number of habitat requirements must be present. The most important requirement is upwelling groundwater. Brook trout will swim great distances to find upwelling groundwater on which to spawn. Groundwater has a very constant temperature, approximately 8°C. By spawning on top of upwelling groundwater, the brook trout ensure their eggs will over winter in constant water temperature and not freeze. Brook trout will spawn on almost any type of substrate, providing that there is groundwater, but the substrate of preference is pea sized gravel. Brook trout will spawn near over head cover, usually in the slower water, usually the banks.

Members of the Hamilton Area Fly Fishers and Tyers (HAFFT) completed a brook trout spawning survey on Fletchers Creek, north of Regional Road 97, adjacent to Neil Hunter Farm. The stretch of river surveyed has been the subject of a river clean up effort and stewardship program in conjunction with Neil Hunter, the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority and HAFFT. The purpose of the study was to determine brook trout utilization of the reach of creek for spawning.

### *Survey*

The survey was conducted on November 11, 2001. Water temperature was 6°C and air temperature was 15°C. The survey began at the small farm bridge just north of R.R. 97 and finished upstream at the north property limit of the Hunter property. A total of 16 redds were identified and 2 possible attempts. Most redds were found in groups, in areas of small washed gravel and usually close to beds of water cress. Water cress is often found close to groundwater sources, which is also critical for brook trout spawning success.

### *Discussion*

The results of the spawning survey are very favorable and demonstrate that brook trout are using the stretch of Fletchers Creek adjacent to the Hunter property as spawning habitat. Approximately half of the redds observed, were found in the reach of creek that had been subjected to the most recent workday. All redds observed was small in size and likely indicate the relative size of the fish. A number of fish (brook trout) were observed throughout the survey. No fish were observed on any redds, and all fish were small in size, under 15cm.

It is good to see that brook trout are utilizing this stretch of river so early after work has been completed. It is anticipated that as the river “finds” its own course in these recently worked on reaches, the habitat for brook trout spawning will improve. This is promising for the future of the brook trout fishery along the Hunter property.

## BEGINNER’S CORNER

By Bryant J. Cochran, Jr., reprinted with permission of the publisher, Killroys.com.

## READING WATER - PART 2

This is the second installment of the series on reading the stream. As stated in part 1; a river's current (flow) is the trout's conveyor cafeteria line. A trout sits in its chosen feeding station, waiting for his meal to be delivered, just as we sit at a table in a restaurant waiting for our order to be delivered by a waiter or waitress. You can observe this behavior on any stream where you can sneak up on a high bank, using it as an observation post, wearing polarized sunglasses to see below the water's surface film. You will find the trout at their tables, in or close to the current. In front of or behind an obstruction of the current, or in a basin in the stream bed. These locations provide shelter from the current but allow instant access to the food brought by the current. Trout don't want to spend a lot of energy holding their place at the dinner table.

Your observations of trout behavior will reveal some important facts. When a trout spots a piece of food coming it tips its pectoral fins and drifts up to the morsel, then it grabs the tidbit by opening its mouth just wide enough, sucks the food in and closes its mouth. With the food captured the trout shifts its pectoral fins and drifts back to the bottom of the stream. The current will have pushed the trout back from his station but he will not return to the table until he is in the slack current next to the stream bed. The trout is a master of lazy and efficient feeding, there is little or no wasted movement. He has to be this way if he wants to grow big. Trout will not chase down a meal unless they are forced to do so because of a shortage of food supply, or they live in still water like a lake or loch. Occasionally you will see a trout chase food but there will be something special about the morsel that they chase, or it will be a young trout or a freshly released hatchery trout not yet wise in open water feeding. As you observe trout feeding you will notice that their side to side feeding is limited to one foot or less. Even choice morsels are ignored if it will take too much energy to grab it. Of course you will find exceptions, but this will be the normal behavior.

As you begin to learn how to read a stream, pick up on the current flow and find the obstructions and other current breaks. If you are a good student and keep a notebook of your observations and fishing experiences, you will become an above average fisherman. Lefty Kreh has said that ten percent of the fishermen catch ninety percent of the fish and I suspect that this ten percent catch all of the really big trout. So look for the places where a trout could rest without even wiggling a fin and you will find a trout there.

It is important to fully understand that a trout's mind will not allow it to hide in fear and feed at the same time. With a brain 5mm in size, he is simply not capable of doing two unrelated things at once. A frightened trout is totally frightened, he runs to his shelter and hides, aware of every thing around him. He is not thinking of hunger or of eating, he is far too busy being scared and he certainly is not going to expose himself to danger. This is why you sometimes have to "rest" a fish you are trying to catch.

Oxygen, the other essential ingredient, is directly related to water temperature. The O<sub>2</sub> we are interested in is dissolved oxygen, because this is the oxygen the trout breathes through its gills. Dissolved oxygen (dO<sub>2</sub>) is measured in parts per million (ppm). Trout require dO<sub>2</sub> of 3ppm to survive. When water reaches a temperature of 75 degrees Fahrenheit 3ppm is the maximum dO<sub>2</sub> the water can hold without some form of

turbulence to enhance gas exchange (oxygenation). At water temperatures above 75 f with no oxygenation of the water the trout will suffocate. The dO<sub>2</sub> super saturation water temperature is 32 f.

Water temperature also controls the trout's metabolism. While very cold water can hold the maximum of dO<sub>2</sub> it also slows the trout's metabolism to the point of suspended animation (a cryogenic effect). This is the way it works: from 32 f to 44 f the trout is slowed to the point of needing very little food and he has an over abundance of dO<sub>2</sub>, up to 30ppm. At 50 f to 55 f the trout's activity increases and they actively feed for long periods of time and they still have an over abundance of dO<sub>2</sub>. When the water temperature reaches the 55 f to 65 f range you have the ideal fishing conditions. The trout's metabolism is in high gear and they feed constantly, dO<sub>2</sub> is in the 18 to 12ppm range and there is plenty of food. The food; aquatic insects and their larvae, minnows of all types and crustaceans are prolific and abundant. The fisherman only has to give a proper presentation and he will hook a trout. The great decline starts when the water temperature climbs to 68 f. Brown, Brook and Cutthroat trout start to feel what I call the frying pan effect. Unless there is a lot of turbulence to oxygenate the water, the dO<sub>2</sub> falls rapidly to perilously low levels. The trout's metabolism is racing furiously along and he is burning oxygen as fast as he can adsorb it from the water. As the sun heats the water, he uses the dO<sub>2</sub> faster and faster. Without some type of escape valve he will suffocate.

The trout reacts to this danger in several ways. The first reaction is to decrease activity as in "the dog days of summer". Fish sulk on the bottom and feeding seems to be nonexistent. When and if they feed it will be in the wee hours of the morning when the water is at its coolest. Water takes a long time to release heat and pre-dawn is when it will be at its coolest. The trout's second reaction is to move to a place where there is more dO<sub>2</sub> available. This could be as close as the head of his pool where a riffle provides the turbulence necessary for oxygenation of the water or a considerable distance. If there is a spring feeding the stream, you will find trout stacked up down stream of the plume of colder water. Ground water can be 10 to 15 degrees colder than the stream. A high shady bank can attract many trout also.

So, which is most important to a trout, shelter? food? oxygen? As a biologist I have to go with shelter followed by oxygen, water temperature and food. A trout can survive for a few weeks without food if necessary, but with no place to hide from danger he won't be there, even if there is plenty of dO<sub>2</sub>. As a fisherman I am most interested in the food supply, specifically the ease of a trout's obtaining it. Let's face it. If a fish isn't eating you are not going to catch it. If he is too scared or too stressed by lack of dO<sub>2</sub>, he is not going to eat, and if Mr. trout isn't opening his mouth you are just practicing casting.

Does it matter that you have seen a big trout lying on the bottom of a deep pool under a bridge during the days if he doesn't feed there? No it does not! When you see a big trout feeding at the tail of this deep pool in the dusk or dawn hours you have knowledge others would kill for. Now you try to figure out why he feeds there, then you can apply what you have learned to find more big trout. Study the current, see, it is slowest at the tail of the pool where it narrows. Just in front of this trout you spot a wee point jutting into the current. Behind this point is a blown down tree with half the trunk under water. Behind this trout there is a bulge in the water about three inches high. Let's piece together the puzzle. The current slows because of the narrowing

of the pool at the tail, concentrating the food. The wee point pushes the food toward Mr. trout, like a billiards bank shot. The fallen tree gives him a place to hide when we blunder into the water or do some other stupid move. The bulge behind Mr. trout tells of a large stone that breaks the current and pushes some water up-stream making a cushion of calmer water. Just the place Mr. trout can hold his position with little effort, and he won't get pushed backward much when he rises to feed. This is where he is protected from the current. This is his dinner table, complete with conveyor belt service. Now you are reading the stream, now you can go find an other big Mr. trout, all that is left is a great presentation.

The information learned in parts one and two of this series form the knowledge base necessary to fully comprehend what will follow, which is where to look for trout in any stream. How to spot the most likely " best seats in the house". In part three we will serve the "meat and potatoes", now that you have gotten the salad out of the way. Until then, may the good lord watch over you and keep you from stepping in that deep hole in the stream bed.

## BEGINNER'S TYING TABLE

This is some Patterns for the next fly tying session for the (intermediate table)

### *H.L.Caddis*

Hook:dry fly 94831 size 10 to 14

thread: tan 6/0

body:tan beaver fur

Ribbing:small copper wire

Hackle: brown

Wing: partridge hen feather(reinforce with scott tape)

Antenna: peccary

### *L.T. Caddis*

Hook:dry fly # 94831 size 10 to 14

thread; tan 6/0

body: several golden pheasant tail barbs wrapped

Rib: fine gold wire

Wing:very fine dark deer body hair or bucktail

Hackle: grizzly

Head: natural light deer body hair, spun and trimmed to shape

## CLUB MEETING SCHEDULE

Feb 11 2002	Couples Night	Valentines day is just around the corner so please be sure to bring out your wife/husband for a fun social night. Bill and Helen Christmas will speak about their many years together as husband/wife fly fishing enthusiasts. There will be finger food available as well as soft drinks and special raffle prizes for the ladies.
Feb 25 2002	Tying Night – Denny Toffolo	Joe Szymanski at the beginner's table, Henri Lemieux at the intermediate table and Denny Toffolo as the special guest tier. Patterns TBA.
Mar 25 2002	Swap Night	Bring your gear. Unload those things you don't use (or won't use again). Make a little money too (or at least spend some). Retailers will be invited to attend and sell products too. (Note: only one meeting in March due to the school break bookings at the library)
Apr 8 2002	Special guest tier.	Extension from the Forum.
Apr 22 2002	Wayne Martin	Fly fishing the upper Credit and patterns that work (brookies).
May 13 2002	Don Moore	Tying leaders and tippets, strength competition.
May 27 2002	Tying Night - TBA	TBA

## CLUB CONTACTS

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Meeting Place: Sherwood Public Library, 467 Upper Ottawa Street, just north of the Fennel Ave intersection. Downstairs in the A/B Meeting Rm.

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