

# The Flypaper

Carson Fly Fishing Club

P.O. Box 3163, Carson City, NV 89702



## Calendar

March 19, General Meeting,  
7:00 pm

April 2, Board Meeting, 6:00  
pm, Pizza Factory

April 11, Tying @ Empire  
Ranch 5:00 pm

April 13, Tie-A-Thon  
Sheriff's Office 10am to 2pm

April 16, General Meeting,  
7:00 pm

May 7, Board Meeting, 6:00  
pm, Pizza Factory

## President's Letter

Hi all:

Happy St Patrick's Day. I hope everyone who celebrated did it safely. Spring is happening as you read our current flypaper. Stan is putting together a fantastic paper with outstanding articles on fly fishing. If you see him or want to send him a thank you, I'm sure he would appreciate it. Good job Stan.

Our next meeting is March 19th 7 PM at the Carson City Sheriff's Office. **Since the speaker is located on the East coast, the presentation is starting at 7 PM.**

**Please be here prior to 7 so we can get started.** This month's speaker is Sasha Clark Danylchuk, her topic is "Keep Fish Wet". It's a zoom presentation on catch and release techniques. We'll conduct Club business after the zoom meeting. We'll have our general raffle and "fly-flye". For those who aren't familiar with it, bring two flies. One for the general raffle and another for a special drawing for those who brought flies.

We had our fly tying night last Thursday March 14th at Empire Ranch GC. Dave Conklin tied a black birds nest. Everyone who attended successfully accomplished tying the fly. Good job Dave. Mark your calendar for our next event on April 11th at Empire Ranch GC. I will be tying a Griffith Gnat. Easy and effective dry fly or may be used as a dropper behind a nymph.

## CFFC Officers & Board

President. Ken Briscoe

Vice President John Walsh

Treasure Dave Conklin

Secretary. Stan Zuber

### Board Members:

Ray Achen. Carol Birchill

Ernie Walsh Jim Elie

Bill Hammons

Has anyone been fishing? The conditions have been rough with all the snow we've had. The water situation is very promising for our lakes and streams this summer.

Please come to our March 19th meeting, John Walsh has put together this presentation. I know it takes time to coordinate these speakers so good job John. We have other speakers lined up for the year. However, there are spots that need to be filled in the fall. Give John some ideas so we can pursue them.

Stan has put together another Tie A Thon April 13th 10 AM-2 PM at the Carson City Sheriff's Office. We'll be tying flies for the High Sierra Fly Caster's charity events.

Come join us it's a fun event. CFFC will provide lunch and a raffle drawing for those in attendance. Last fall's event was well attended by our members, members from High Sierra Fly Casters and some walk-ins who saw the public announcement. Let's do it again.

I hope everyone can come to our next meeting, hope to see you there. Be safe and enjoy the spring weather.

Tight Lines,  
Ken Briscoe

### Fishing Reports:

[www.renoflyshop.com](http://www.renoflyshop.com)

[www.sierrabrightdot.com](http://www.sierrabrightdot.com)

### Nevada Fishing

#### Regulations:

[https://www.eregulations.com/nevada/fishing#google\\_vignette](https://www.eregulations.com/nevada/fishing#google_vignette)

## CFFC Lets Go Fishing

Is a private group on Facebook for Carson Fly Fishing Club members. Members can post to members. Members will receive an invitation to join the group via email.

### FLY TYING AT EMPIRE RANCH GOLF COURSE

On April 11 at 5:00 pm, we will have the monthly, fly tying session at Empire Ranch Golf Course, 1875 Fair Way, Carson City, NV. No experience necessary and materials will be provided. If you want to learn or just come and watch, you're welcome to attend. No equipment! You can use the club's equipment, just let us know so we can have it there.

Empire Ranch Restaurant is staying open for our event. If you would like to join us for dinner arrive at 4:30 pm. Contact Stan Zuber (775) 6712151 if you have any questions or need equipment. See you there.

This month's instructor is Ken Briscoe. The fly he'll be tying is a Griffith's Gnat.



# ATTENTION ALL FLY TIERS

## Tie-A-Thon April 13, 2024

The Carson Fly Fishing Club is holding a Tie-A-Thon on April 13, 2024. The purpose of this event is to tie flies for the High Sierra Fly Casters to use in their programs. All Fly Tiers are Invited. A sandwich lunch and raffle will take place.

**When:** Saturday April 13, 2024 10:00am to 2:00pm

**Where:** Carson City Sheriff's Office, 911 E. Muster St., Carson City, NV

**Flies To Tie:** Woolly Buggers, Sheep Creek Specials, BH Pheasant Tails Nymphs, BH Midges and Hoppers.  
Materials will be on site.

Programs that will use the flies:

Reel Recovery

Reel Vets

Reel Kids





STATE OF NEVADA  
**DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE**  
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ALAN JENNE  
Director  
JORDAN GOSHERT  
Deputy Director  
CALEB MCADOO  
Deputy Director  
MIKE SCOTT  
Deputy Director

February 2, 2024

Carson Fly Fishing Club,  
PO Box 3163  
Carson City, NV 89702

Dear Carson Fly Fishing Club,

On behalf of the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), I'd like to personally thank you for supporting the Nevada Youth License Fund as a donor in 2023.

Thanks to donations from generous organizations like yours NDOW issued **3,712** youth combination (hunting/fishing) licenses to kids ages 12-17, at no cost to them. In other words, every two and a half hours NDOW was able to issue a free youth combination license for the entire year! I'm also pleased to tell you that for most kids (70%) who received a license through this program, it was their first Nevada license!

These numbers help define the success of this program at the statewide level, but nothing helps convey the impact of this program quite like hearing from the grateful parents.

*"My 12-year-old son went fishing for the first-time last summer and fell in love with fishing. We got him the license here in Nevada through the program and went over to a nearby lake all summer long. His grandpa came with us on most mornings because of his love for fishing. We never did catch one fish the whole summer, but our son loved every minute of it. It was awesome for him to be out in nature and connect with his grandpa through fishing. We plan to go again next summer. Thank you for this wonderful program." – Gina*

*"My son received a free youth fishing license this season. He LOVES to fish and cook his catch. Thank you for the free license this year!" – Danielle*

Your support for this program is making a difference and opening the door wider for kids to go fishing and hunting throughout Nevada.

I would like to thank you again for supporting this program and hope you continue to support the Nevada Youth License Fund in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Alan Jenne  
Director

# 3 Tips for Fishing High and Dirty Water for Trout

POSTED ON [JANUARY 26, 2023](#) / BY [KENT KLEWEIN](#)



Trophy brown trout landed during high and dirty water. Photo By: Louis Cahill

**Have you ever pulled up to a stream after a heavy rain, ready to fish, but canceled your fishing plans because the water looked too high and dirty?**

I'll be the first to admit there are times when this is the case, but very often anglers scratch their fishing plans when they should instead, have Fished-ON. The fact is, trout can see a whole lot better than we think, and if you fish the right kinds of fly patterns, and target the right water, in many cases you can do pretty darn good fishing in these water conditions. Even better, your odds at catching a trophy fish are increased, because the dingy water will both mask your approach and keep big educated trout from being able to scrutinize your fly patterns. So go ahead, call those anglers you despise and tell them the waters blown out, and you'll have a good chance of having the water to yourself and wailing on fish all day long.

### **Tip 1. Target the Right Kinds of Water**

So you've decided to take my advice and fish on, good for you. The first thing you need to do when fishing high and dirty water is target high percentage water. I search out the **slower moving seams** close to the banks, long stretches of fast shallow water that are followed by **buckets** or **deep water** where the fish will stack up, and **eddies** behind boulders or lay downs. These are all safe havens that trout search out refuge in during high water. They all allow trout to save energy by staying out of the excessive current, while capitalizing on the large influx of food sources drifting. Increased flows and rising water increases the amount of food available for trout. Many aquatic insects get flushed off the bottom of the stream, while others emerge from the freshly submerged stream banks. Examples of this are big stoneflies that are normally found hiding away in clumps of debris and under rocks, and crane fly larva that get washed in from the high water flowing along the banks.

### **Tip 2. Choose Larger and Brighter Fly Patterns**

The second thing an angler needs to do to increase their success rate while fishing high and dirty water is choose the right kinds of fly patterns to fish. This is the one time when I feel I don't have to carry my entire arsenal of gear. I'll gladly leave my fly boxes with all my tiny fly patterns and light tippet spools at the vehicle. I'll rig up a 9'-12' 3x-4x fluorocarbon leader and carry only my fly boxes with large nymphs, bright attractors (eggs and san juan worms), and streamers. What ever you do, don't be afraid to go big with your fly selection. For instance, larger than average egg patterns work really well in dirty water. The larger profile and bright colors allow the fish to pick them up quickly in the low water clarity. I also like to use big bulky nymph patterns, like Kevin Howells, "Big Nasty". Any rubberleg stonefly patterns in black or brown will work. If you want to try something a little different you can fish streamer patterns dead

drifted under an indicator, like white zonkers, which can be deadly. Most anglers do not realize how well white shows up in dingy water. Your standard Grey woolly bugger work fantastic for imitating crane fly larva, or you can take a more realistic approach using, “Barr’s Crane fly Larva”.

### **Tip 3. Don’t Be Shy with Your Split-Shot, Fish Water Thoroughly, Try Streamers**

One things for sure, make sure you pack plenty of split-shot and don’t be afraid to use it. The higher water is going to call for adding more weight to your nymph rig to get your flies down in the strike zone. Be sure to take more time to fish pieces of water more thoroughly before you move on. Your going to have to get the flies closer to the fish for them to see them, and they usually won’t get spooked from repeated casts. Overall, I find nymphing most productive for me during high water, but you can also catch some really nice fish with streamers as well. Try pounding the banks with streamers patterns that push a lot of water. Rubber legs, some flash here and there, and rattles incorporated into your streamers, can increase their effectiveness. Lastly, your retrieve speed should generally be slower rate than what you would normally retrieve in normal flows and water clarity.

So there you go, that’s my tips for fishing high and dirty water for trout. I hope it persuades the anglers out there to FishON that normally avoid fishing these water conditions.

Keep it Reel,

Kent Klewein

**Gink & Gasoline**

[www.ginkandgasoline.com](http://www.ginkandgasoline.com)

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# Pro Tips: Secrets of a Knot Junkie

Author Phil Monahan Posted on December 12, 2022

Categories Fly Fishing

Written by: [Drew Price](#)



The author has developed his knot skill over the years, enabling him to fight big fish with confidence.

It was on my first saltwater trip to the Everglades that I came to understand the importance of tying good knots. I had made the long trip from northern New York to Flamingo with one of my college professors (and fishing buddies) to chase snook, tarpon, and redfish from a canoe.

We were working Coot Bay, a fairly good-size piece of water, by casting bunny flies to the edges, just like we would for pike back home. Many hours had passed, but we'd seen little more than needlefish, small snappers, and the occasional alligator or crocodile in the mangroves. We got to the far end of the bay, close to Tarpon Creek, when I learned the lesson I had so sorely needed and have never forgotten since.

A huge snook came charging out of the mangroves and smashed the yellow bunny. More than two decades later, I can still see it clearly. I am willing to bet the fish was close to 40 inches, the fish of a lifetime. I set the hook and can still feel the horror as one of my blood knots parted effortlessly. Being a poor college kid, I had tied my own leaders out of heavy mono. I thought I had tied good blood knots . . . but I had not checked them.

In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Gandalf says to Frodo “The burned hand teaches best. After that, advice about fire goes to the heart.” I got burned badly, and the lesson stuck. I worked on my knots and frequently tested them.

A snook from that fateful 1996 trip to the Florida Everglades.

Knots are your connection to the line, the fly, and ultimately the fish. Knowing what knots to tie, how to tie them well, and how to check them will help you land more fish. There is no question that knots can be a challenging part of fly fishing, but there are tricks that will help make a big difference.

The best place to learn a new knot is sitting at home. When I am guiding, I am happy to show a client which knot I am using and how to tie it. After that, I tell them that I will gladly tie that knot for the rest of the day. A new-to-you knot is not likely to have the strength of a practiced knot. Muscle memory is very important, and after you have tied a knot several dozen times, your fingers become used to the movements needed to successfully tie a strong knot. After my snook incident, I started tying knots while sitting at home watching TV or listening to music.

When I am trying to learn a new knot, I do the same thing. Sometimes I still sit down and just tie knots for practice. Get an inexpensive spool of monofilament to practice with, and keep tying the knot over and over again. See how much faster you get between the time you start to practice and when you finish. You will also likely see that the knots get smaller and test stronger.

There is a wealth of information available—books, magazine articles, videos and tutorials online, apps, and fishing buddies—to help you learn fly fishing knots. At times it can be overwhelming to see how much is out there, making you feel like you need to know a hundred knots to be successful. Nothing could be further from the truth. In all the fishing and guiding that I do, I use about a half dozen knots regularly. I know them, trust them, and they have served me well. I have my own preferences, and you will surely develop your own, as well. The key is to find which knots work for you and then to practice tying them efficiently and well.

Wire leaders and bite tippets are important when you're chasing toothy predators.

The number of turns in your knots matters. In *Fly Fisherman Magazine* years ago, the late, great Lefty Kreh wrote that he had developed a knot-testing tool and tested hundreds of knots of different turns in the same tippet material. My biggest takeaway from that is that, for most knots, 6 turns is the magic number, especially with fluorocarbon. More turns was just wasted effort. In my experience, this holds true except when you get into heavier line. Usually, 4 or 5 turns does the trick for mono and fluorocarbon over 20-pound-test, and you might need just 2 or 3 for bite wire.

Another key to knots is *lubrication*. With most knots, the final pull produces a fair amount of friction, which heats up the line and can cause it to lose strength. Wetting the line in your mouth with some spit helps to reduce the friction.

There are a whole lot of knot-helping tools on the market. Some of them work really well, while others not so much. Much like tying the knots themselves, it pays to practice with the tool and know how it works before you get to the water. There are subtleties in using the tools that are much easier to learn at home than while you are watching a feeding trout 30 feet away.

Another trick I have found myself using a fair amount these days is the tippet ring. I don't use them for all types of fishing but they come in really handy in a couple of situations. The first is where I am using a long straight piece of tippet as a means to get and keep my flies deep. A straight piece of 8 or 10 lb fluorocarbon to a tippet ring with the terminal knot of your choice and then tying on the lighter tippet to the ring. This rig helps sink things fast and provides a stopper for any shot you might put on the line.

If you're going to pull hard against a powerful fish, your knots have to be up to the task. The second situation is with wire or heavy mono/fluoro. Most of the time I prefer an Albright knot but there are times this connection just doesn't seem to be working for the materials I am using or I might just want to be able to replace the bite without losing much leader (a must for busy spring pike fishing). It also helps if you have a really light leader to connect to the bite tippet (I have a client that chases line class fish and this method has worked wonders). I tie my leader to the tippet ring with a Trilene knot then tie a clinch with the bite and finish with a non-slip mono loop to the fly.

Testing your knots helps a great deal too. There is no worse feeling than making your first cast and seeing the leader or fly part because of a poorly tied knot, except of course losing a fish to that same connection. After seating the knot properly I like to give a steady pull on the fly and connecting knots. With a heavier fly and tippet for larger fish instead of holding the fly I will put it in a hole in my pliers, hemostats or a carabiner and really reef on it. In those situations, especially if I am using a bite tippet connection I will often give it a really hard sharp tug to simulate a strike. If my connection can't handle that it definitely will not survive a big pike or musky smashing it.

Thinking about knots before you need to use them makes a huge difference. Learn them, practice them and you will start turning the odds in your favor to land more and bigger fish. Hopefully that will help prevent you from seeing the notorious tippet pig tail of shame.

For the record, here are the knots I use:

## Trilene Knot

*Application:* Tippet to fly or tippet ring.

*Number of turns:* 6 turns up to 20-pound test, then 4.

*Number of turns:* 6 turns up to 20-pound test, then 4.

## Non-Slip Mono Loop

*Application:* Tippet to fly; wire or hard mono/fluoro to fly.

*Number of turns:* 5 or 6 turns under 12-pound test, then 4 turns; 2 or 3 turns in wire or very heavy mono.

## Blood Knot

*Application:* tippet to tippet.

*Number of turns:* 6 turns per side in similar-sized tippet, 5 and 7 if big difference in diameter.

*Notes:* 5 turns in the heavier side, 7 in the lighter.

## Perfection Loop

*Application:* Loop-to-loop connection to fly line.

*Notes:* I also tie it as a large loop in my backing to connect to a loop in the back of the fly line.

## Albright Knot

*Application:* Tippet to wire or hard/fluoro bite tippet.

*Number of turns:* 8 to 10.

## Nail Knot

*Application:* Backing to fly line; on-the-water repair for loop in end of fly line.

*Number of turns:* 6 to 10, depending on application.

*Notes:* I use a Nail Knot tool.

## Clinch Knot

*Application:* Wire or heavy mono/fluoro to tippet ring.

*Number of turns:* 2 or 3.

*Notes:* While this is one of the most common knots for tying on a fly, it doesn't have great strength compared to other terminal knots, which is why I reserve it for the specific purpose listed here.

*Drew Price lives in Northern Vermont and is the owner and operator of [Master Class Angling](#). He fishes Lake Champlain and surrounding waters targeting carp, pike, bowfin, gar, bass and other species (even the occasional trout). He's also a [former Trout Bum of the Week](#).*

# Discovering the Benefits of 10-Foot 4-Weight Rods

Author [Evan Jones](#) Posted on April 11, 2023 Categories [Fly Fishing](#)



Sarah Staib fishing a 10-foot 4-weight Recon on the famous South Platte river near Denver.

Photo by Kyle Leard

After moving back home to Colorado a few years ago, I knew my technical trout game would need some improvement, so I bought a couple new fly rods and started practicing. One was a standard 9-foot 5-weight, but for the other, on a whim I chose a Recon 10-foot 4-weight. While 10-foot 3-weights have long been a staple among Euro-nymphers, I figured it would be nice to have a little extra backbone, since I prefer to use heavier indicator rigs. At the time, I didn't realize my purchase was part of a growing national trend, but after using this rod for a couple seasons, I can definitely understand why 10-foot 4-weights appeal to so many anglers.

“What I’m hearing from dealers,” says Doug Bear, Orvis head sales rep for the Northeast, “is that customers have learned to appreciate the value of the longer length, and are now realizing that a 10-foot 4-weight is a more all-around rod when compared to their 905 or 103 models.” My own fishing buddies were a bit skeptical at first, but after watching me easily reach over a few tricky seams and hook trout from areas they couldn’t reach without mending, they eventually came around as well. Now most of us own one.

Sales of 10-foot 4-weight rods have increased significantly over the past year. But the upsides of this rod don’t end at technical nymphing. “I think a 10-foot 4-weight is one of the most versatile rods available for trout fishing,” says Pete Kutzer of the Orvis Fly-Fishing School. “Dry-fly fishing is no problem, since the longer length is better for mending and roll casting; it can handle any style of nymph fishing, from tight-lining to indicators; and you can even fish smaller streamers with it.” Pete attributes this versatility to more than just the extra foot of length or the extra weight, however, noting that, “There was a time when 5- or 6-weights were the most common, but now, with the amount of technology and development these modern rods have, you can get a 4-weight to do just about anything.”

That’s been my experience as well, and I now bring my 10-foot 4-weight with me on pretty much every trout trip I take, so long as there’s enough room to swing it. I really enjoy the extra reach because it allows me to cover more water, but Sarah Staib, manager of the Orvis store in Cherry Creek near Denver, pointed out another benefit that hadn’t occurred to me. “As a vertically-challenged angler, the extra length gives me more line-management ability, helping me to achieve a dead drift from farther away without having to wade so deep.” At this point, I’m no longer surprised to discover even more benefits of 10-foot 4-weights, but I *am* surprised it took me this long to figure out what a great help they can be.

*Evan Jones is the assistant editor of the Orvis Fly Fishing blog. He spent a decade living on the Florida coast and now lives in Colorado.*

# 7 Tips for Rigging Your Nymphs like a Pro

*Rigging nymphs is a highly personal choice and there are countless ways to be successful.*



*Our children will inherit our trout streams and whatever we leave in them. The New Camo Drops from Loon Outdoors are made from non-toxic tin and are available in nine sizes and two different container options. George Daniel photo.*

March 11, 2019

**By George Daniel**

*"This story originally appeared in the 2019 Gear Guide issue of Fly Fisherman with the title "Weighting is the Hardest Part: 7 Tips for rigging your nymphs like a pro".*

“Weighting is the hardest part.” While the phrase is a play on words from the great Tom Petty’s hit song, it couldn’t be truer when it comes to nymphing. By far the most popular question I get on daily basis is “how do you rig your flies for nymphing?” Most of those questions specifically revolve about the weight of the flies, placement of additional weight on the tippet, and about the right amount of weight to get a natural presentation at the right depth. I field all these questions simply because my fellow fly fishers cannot see what is going on below the surface, and people are often most curious about things that are not in plain sight.

The art of dry-fly fishing is just as difficult to learn as nymphing, but the biggest advantage dry-fly fishers have is that they can see exactly what their fly is doing throughout the presentation. They can see a dragging dry fly or notice when a trout refuses a presentation. Having these visual cues gives you motivation to change something in your system. On the flip side, with nymphing all you can do is watch the suspender or sighter (both forms of indicators) and develop a guess as to what the rig is doing.

A common trait of all good nymph fishers is that they have confidence in their systems. We all approach the same problems from different angles, yet come to successful endings if we have confidence in our systems. As Helen Keller once wrote, “Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.”



*All good nymph anglers have confidence in their systems. Confidence and optimism drives you to pay attention to the details in your rigging, and to expect a strike (and set the hook) at every opportunity. (George Daniel photo)*

Before I go into my views on rigging for nymphing, let me make it clear that rigging is a highly personal choice, meaning there are countless ways to be successful. There is no “right” way to do it. For example, two of the top team members for Fly Fishing Team USA differ as to where they prefer to place the heaviest fly on their Euro rigs. They agree to disagree on this anchor fly placement, and they are both successful anglers, so I deduce that their skills and their confidence are big parts of their success.

Still, while everyone does things just a little bit differently, there is much you can learn from examining how these successful fly fishers rig their nymph systems. What follows are seven important strategies I’ve learned over the past few years from some of the world’s best nymph fishermen.

**TIP #1:** Use a hi-vis “tracer pattern” you can see drifting below the surface. In warfare, tracer bullets contain a highly visibly burning powder that acts like a flare, showing gunners exactly where their bullets are traveling. The gunner makes corrections based on this visual information. In some ways, nymphing with a dull Pheasant-tail Nymph is no different than shooting regular bullets during the daylight, you can’t see the pathway the nymph drifts in the water. You can’t see if you’ve hit your target depth. A tracer fly shows the speed, direction, and depth of that nymph and any others that are paired with it on the same nymph rig. A brightly colored Squirmy Wormy, egg pattern, or a bright bead-head nymph are just three examples of tracer nymphs.

I use a tracer nymph anytime I'm unsure of what my rig is doing. I've spent many hours watching tracer flies and how they drift in the water column, and as a result of these observations I've made subtle changes to many of my nymph rigs. As the saying goes, "seeing is believing" and observing these high-vis patterns has changed my perspective on how I rig for nymphing.

**TIP #2:** The length of the drift influences the amount of weight you use. Identify where you want to fish your nymphs and develop two targets: 1) where you suspect there is a feeding fish and 2) the spot where you need to cast to give the flies time to achieve correct depth before they reach that spot.

Normally your casts and your drifts will be shorter in pocketwater and you'll need more weight on your rig to achieve the correct presentation depth. Pocketwater is often turbulent, so your presentation may not be as important as achieving the correct depth. Trout are likely not as concerned with the drift of the nymph in fast water as they are in calm flat water where they can see the nymph drifting toward them.

In calm water, you'll often need to cast farther upstream with less weight to present your flies at the right depth. Using too much weight in this situation may spook trout as they are often are skittish in these conditions and discriminate against unnatural nymph presentations.

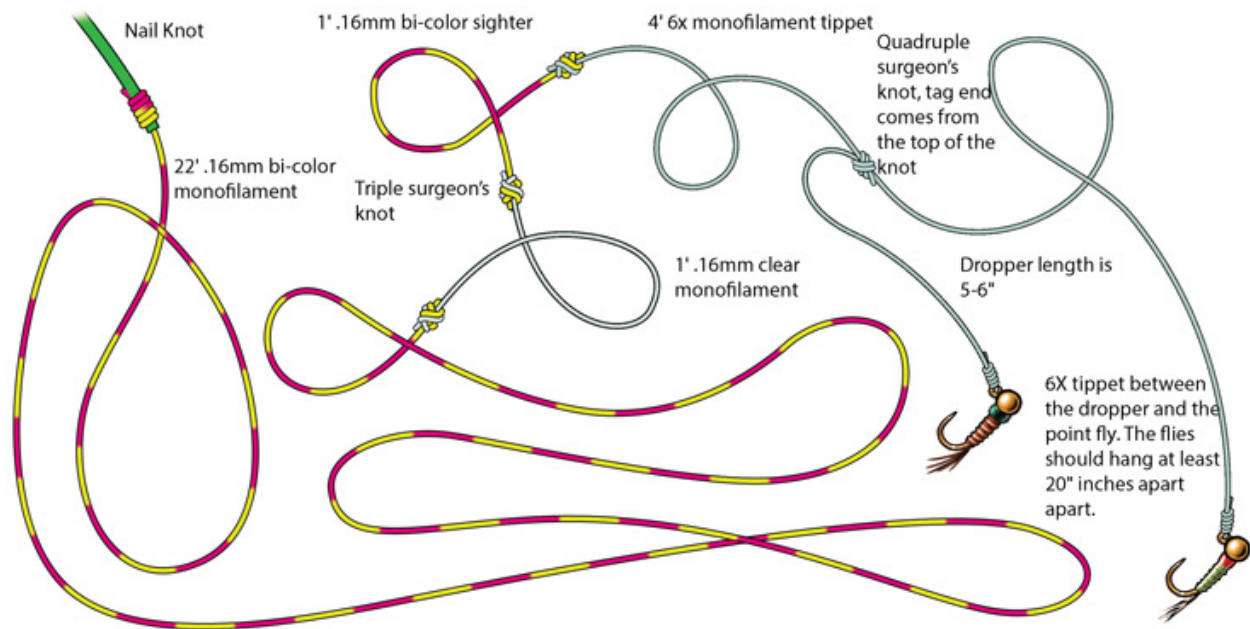
You get a more natural drift when you use weight light enough for the current to move the nymph naturally in the

water. Fine tuning your weight is essential when fishing clear and shallow water types.

TIP #3: Weighted flies are (sometimes) an advantage. When possible, I rely on the weight of the fly to achieve the correct depth. Several advantages of this so-called Euro nymphing system (using only weighted flies instead of split-shot or other weight attached to the leader) include less tangling and more direct contact between the rod tip and the nymph.

Split-shot on the leader between the rod tip and the nymph can create a slight disconnect due to slack line in the system. This disconnect may eliminate or delay your ability to detect a strike. Using weighted flies creates a straighter or tighter line with less slack, and may help you pick up a few more strikes. While these are strong arguments, there still are scenarios that may require the use supplemental weight in the form of split-shot and/or putty.

# Antoine Bissieux's French Leader



*(Peter Chadwell illustration)*

Antoine Bissieux is a master guide from Connecticut who has perfected his approach to French nymphing and has adapted this Euro-style rig to the Farmington River. His attention to detail is impressive. Bissieux uses a light and exceptionally small-diameter leader (see tip #5). His leader "butt section" is 22 feet of level 5X bi-color monofilament. That's before he even attaches his tippet material. He feels it's easier to cast/lob lightweight nymphs with small-diameter line. He also believes that the thin leader doesn't "stick" as much, and therefore doesn't pull the nymphs when he lifts the rod tip for line control. Even a rig made of just 15-pound-test monofilament will sag a bit and lift smaller nymphs back toward the surface when you lift the rod tip.

Antoine boils this entire leader (except for the tippet section) to make the nylon monofilament 25% stretchier. This allows him to fish small-diameter tippets of 6X or 7X with Perdigon-style nymphs to get deep even in fast and turbulent waters. His nymphs are tied with varying sized beads to adjust for the speed and depth of the water. He fishes several different color variations and four different bead sizes. He often places the heaviest fly on the point to keep the entire rig tight, and the two flies are 20" apart to decrease accidental snagging.

I've been using Antoine's leader now for more than a year, and I can say that it's the most sensitive leader for Euro-nymphing small nymphs.

Tip #4: Ditch the lead. Lead split-shot sinks quickly and is cheaper than non-toxic alternatives like tin or tungsten. However, I decided recently to switch to non-toxic weight as I believe using lead products has some negative impacts. It's a toxin after all. We don't want it in the paint on our walls, we don't want it in our drinking water, so why would I introduce it to my favorite trout stream? I know as an individual my contribution of toxic split-shot in our waterways is close to zero, but when you consider the growing numbers of nymph anglers, we could aggregate some level of negative impact on the waters we treasure.

In my previous article "A Propensity for Density" (June-July 2016) I discussed the idea of using a constant piece of tin split-shot that stays on your leader while using tungsten putty to make small weight adjustments. I mold the putty directly to

the tin split-shot because it's difficult to keep putty on the leader without something it can adhere to. The putty stays in position and allows me to make micro adjustments.

If you use only tin shot, you'll need a larger piece to get the same depth and sink rate because tin isn't as dense. But if you add tungsten putty you can balance the size/weight issue because tungsten putty is heavier than lead. And from my eyeball calculations, the diameter of the total weight is close to identical when you compare lead split-shot to a combination of tin split-shot and putty.

In the last few years, I found that this combination of material is so efficient, and so effective at getting me exactly to the right depth, that I have no need to use lead split-shot at all.

I know this isn't a conservation article, but we all need to do our part to protect our waters for future generations. I think about this every time I go fishing with my two children. I also think about their long term health when I see them handling a known toxic metal.

Will my children have the same opportunities to fish clean water as I've had? I hope so, and this is the reason why I have promised to rid myself of all lead in 2019. I'll use what I already own, but I'm no longer going to be a consumer. I'll sleep better knowing at least I'm not contributing to the problem.

**TIP #5** Use a level-diameter tippet between the indicator (sighter or suspender) and your flies: The quickest way

between two points is a straight line. The same is true with detecting a strike. A straight path between indicator and the flies allows you to see and feel the strike faster than with a curved leader with slack. Any type of slack delays strike detection.

If you use a tapered leader, the resistance of water against the large-diameter portions will create a bow in the line. A level tippet sinks at the same rate along its length because it has the same consistent narrow diameter.

The tracer concept I discussed above (Tip #1) isn't just for flies. At times, I've replaced my clear mono or fluorocarbon tippet sections with small-diameter Gold Stren (a highly visible monofilament) just so I could actually see how my leader/tippet sections behave below the surface. After watching different diameters of the hi-vis mono below the surface, it was evident that a narrow, level diameter leader and tippet creates a straighter line. If you're using a tapered leader for your subsurface work, you're missing many more strikes than you think.

**TIP #6: Use droppers.** Is there a correct way to rig multiple nymphs on the leader? After watching so many excellent anglers use both nymphs on droppers and in-line (fly to fly), it's obvious that both ways catch fish. But one of them catches more fish, particularly in tough fishing conditions where fish demand natural drifts.



*Lightly weighted flies tied on a dropper move more freely in the water column than flies that are tied directly to fly. (Cathy & Barry Beck photo)*

There are times in choppy or off-color water when a natural presentation isn't absolutely critical, and at those times I may use multiple flies and rig them with one fly tied directly to the second fly. It's easy, and you get fewer tangles. However, when the fishing and the fish are more challenging, there's no doubt that droppers are a better solution.

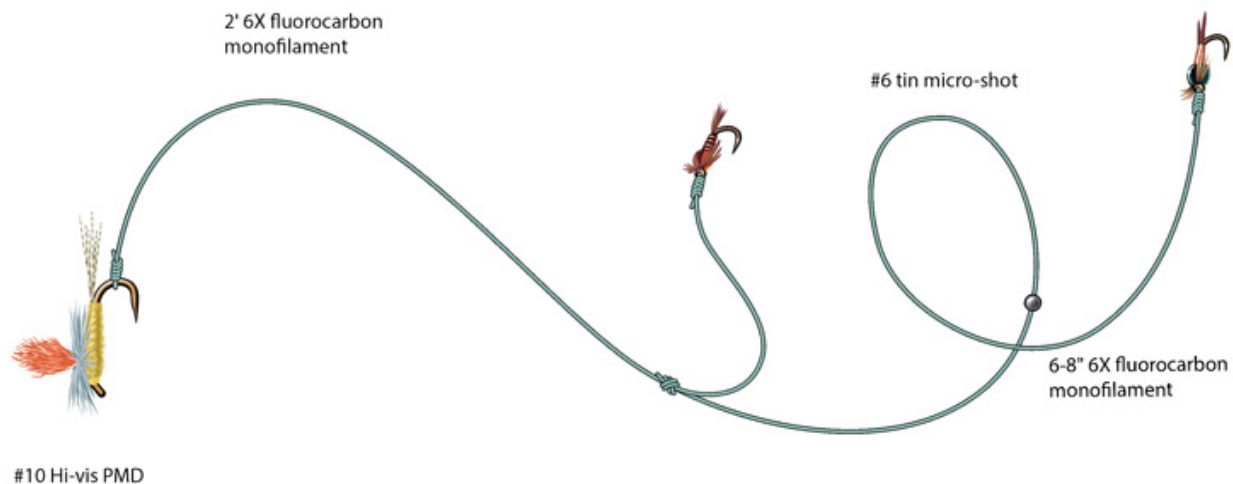
Dropper flies are tied using a long tag end of monofilament left over from joining two pieces of tippet material together. I use the downward tag end of a surgeon's knot. A 4- to 6-inch dropper allows you to make several fly changes and won't tangle as often as longer droppers.

If you've spent time snorkeling in a trout stream, you may notice the insects drifting higher in the water column have more movement. They lift and drop as the dynamic hydraulics

of the stream transports them downstream. A natural drift is not static, these food items actually move up and down quite a bit in this fluid environment.

## Sean Sullivan's Downstream Dropper Rig

Sean Sullivan is a full-time Silver Creek guide. On this challenging fishery, a downstream presentation is the preferred approach. Sullivan's dry/dropper rig is intentionally designed short to maintain control for downstream presentations to suspended fish. A short lift of the rod tip takes slack out of the rig and then he lowers the rod tip downstream toward the fish for a controlled downstream drift. Strike indicators spook fish on these waters so uses a hi-vis dry fly as an indicator with lightly weighted or unweighted nymph patterns and the top fly tied as a dropper (see tip #6).



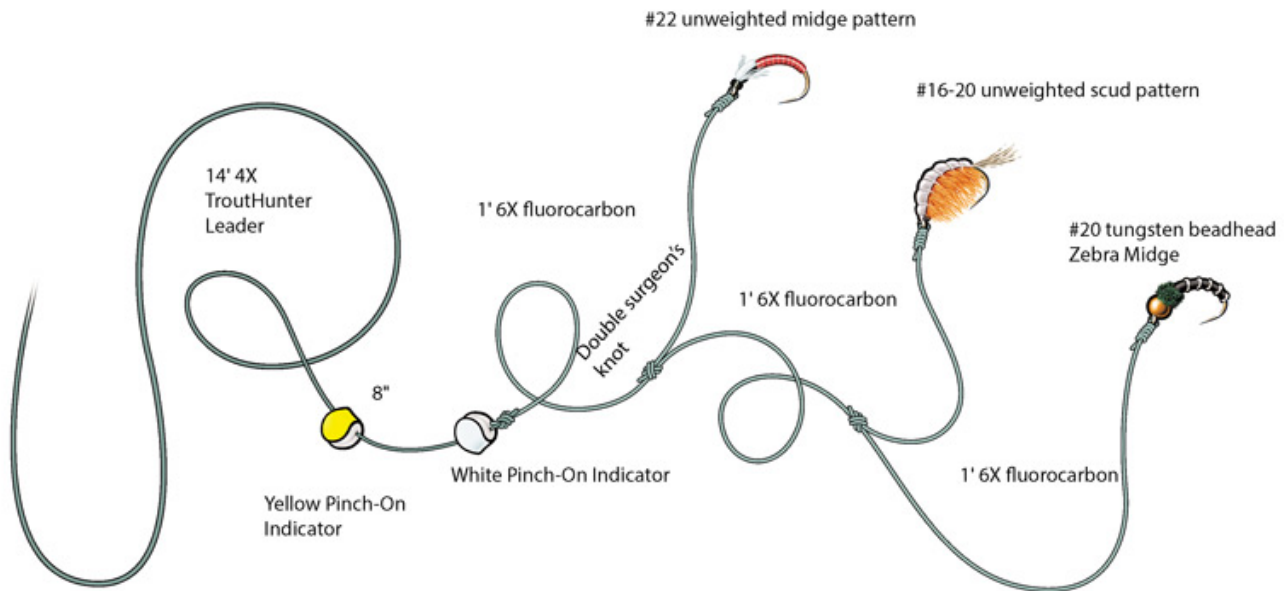
*(Peter Chadwell illustration)*

Insects high in the water column may be emerging, drifting to another location, or a feeble-swimming insect may get knocked off a rock and struggle before finding another in-stream structure to grab hold to. Movement should be part of your presentation as well. A light-weight or unweighted fly attached to a dropper moves freely as the current lifts and drops the pattern naturally. If fish are being picky, it will catch more fish.

**TIP #7** Use chain-style drop-shot rigs. A drop-shot rig is simply a nymph rig where the heaviest weight is at the terminal end of the line instead of above or between your flies. Drop-shot rigs have shown a resurgence over the past few years, maybe in part because of Kelly Galloup's excellent YouTube videos on this subject.

Because the weight is at the bottom of a drop-shot rig, you have better contact with your flies than in some other systems, but the main advantage is that it hangs up on the bottom less frequently. The weight bounces or slides along the bottom, allowing lightly weighted flies to drift naturally. And if the weight itself does become truly snagged, you should lose just the weight and not your flies.

# Patrick Brady's Midge Chain



*(Peter Chadwell illustration)*

This rig was developed by Patrick Brady of Hunter Banks Fly Shop for dealing with fussy Southern tailwater trout. Brady uses long drifts with this lightweight system (see tip #2) to give his flies a natural drift. He feels a single weighted tungsten midge on the point allows the unweighted patterns (attached to droppers) to move freely in the water column. In low, clear water he substitutes 7X in place of 6X fluorocarbon. This setup lets him cover three different depths in a single drift. He uses a level tippet below the pinch-on indicators to create a straight line down to his flies, which eliminates drag and increases strike detection.

I lose far fewer nymphing rigs using the drop-shot approach. My own twist on this style is to use chain-style weights at the terminal end of the tippet instead of a single heavy weight.

Where I fish in the East, there are two kinds of boat anchors. One is a heavy single anchor in the shape of a pyramid, studded barrel, or just a cube. These single weights are designed to grab the bottom and hold your drift boat in one place.

If you just want to slow the boat down, some johnboat and drift boat owners use a heavy chain for an anchor. It drags along the bottom but never seems to stick because the weight is spaced over a longer area. The same is true with the weight in your drop-shot nymph rig. If you use multiple small pieces of tin split-shot or tungsten putty like a chain, you'll find that you hang up even less frequently.

Hopefully these seven pointers will help eliminate some of the mystery of what's going on below the water. The best way to learn is through your own observations, that's why a tracer fly and/or a tracer leader can be a revelation. Once you see how your leader and your flies are drifting below the surface, weighting your system is no longer the hardest part.

*George Daniel is the author of the new book Nymph Fishing: New Angles, Tactics, and Techniques (Stackpole Books, 2018). He owns and operates the company Livin on the Fly and presents schools, seminars, and private lessons across the country.*

## *Ty One On*

# Covering a Hatch Starts with Carrying the Right Flies

[18 COMMENTS](#) / POSTED ON [MARCH 10, 2024](#) / BY [KENT KLEWEIN](#)



Example of me covering a hatch with multiple fly patterns on hand (BWO Hatch). Photo By: Louis Cahill

**HAVE YOU EVER BEEN STANDING IN THE RIVER  
WATCHING A BIG HATCH UNFOLDING WITH**

# **RIISING FISH ALL AROUND YOU, BUT FOR SOME REASON YOU CAN'T GET THE FEEDING FISH TO EAT YOUR FLIES?**

Covering and owning a hatch starts with you first carrying the right fly patterns. When you know you're going to encounter a specific hatch on the water, always carry multiple variations (*colors, sizes*) and stages (*nymph, emerger, dun, spinner*) to make sure you're covered. Trout can get really picky during selective feeding.

This very situation happened to me last year running a guided float trip during an intense sulphur hatch. There was yellow everywhere, and fish were in a feeding frenzy, but the trout wouldn't eat any of my sulphur patterns I tied on for my clients. Even my CDC go-to patterns that always work, were shunned by the feeding trout. I finally found a sulphur pattern after my seventh try that the trout consistently liked, and it saved the day. It ended up being nothing special, just a dun with in a slightly different color shade. The remainder of the float trip all I could think about was how important it was that I had so many different sulphur imitations on hand. It would have been a long quiet drive back if my clients witnessed an epic hatch with perfect conditions, and we ended up striking out on the water.

Your standard parachute style dun with a small nymph dropper off the back will not always work. Below are some examples of other fly pattern options for rounding out your fly box and owning a hatch:

## **Drys**

*Parachute Style (with and without trailing shuck)*

*Traditional Style (palmered hackle)*

*Thorax Style (Palmered Hackle with hackle trimmed off on the bottom so pattern rides low on the water)*

*No Hackle Style (Just like it sounds, no hackle is used in the recipe)*

*CDC Style (CDC is substituted for hackle or feather for tying the wing. There subtle non bulky patterns that do a great job at imitating naturals)*

## Emergers & Nymphs

Carry emergers that incorporate soft-hackle as well as CDC and are intended to float both on the surface film as well as just below the surface. You should also carry a nice variety of nymphs with and without beads as well. Some should incorporate some flashy material while others should be more subtle and natural.

## Rigging & Technique

Always experiment with your rigging and try out different pattern and style combinations. If your parachute isn't working try a different style dry fly. If a nymph dropper off the back of a dry isn't working, change it out with an emerger instead. By changing up your rig you can figure out what the fish are keying in on. In layman terms, what style or type of pattern the fish prefer. Don't overlook adjusting the length of your dropper either. Sometimes a short dropper (10-12") will work great, while other times you'll find the key to getting bites is having a dropper that's 24-30" long. Most of the time a nice drag free dead drift will be the key to success, but there are days where the trick is a nice slow swing at the end of your drift, followed by a couple rod twitches.

*(Carry patterns in different sizes and color shades. Remember the color of your flies can change once they get "wet")*

Keep it Reel,

Kent Klewein

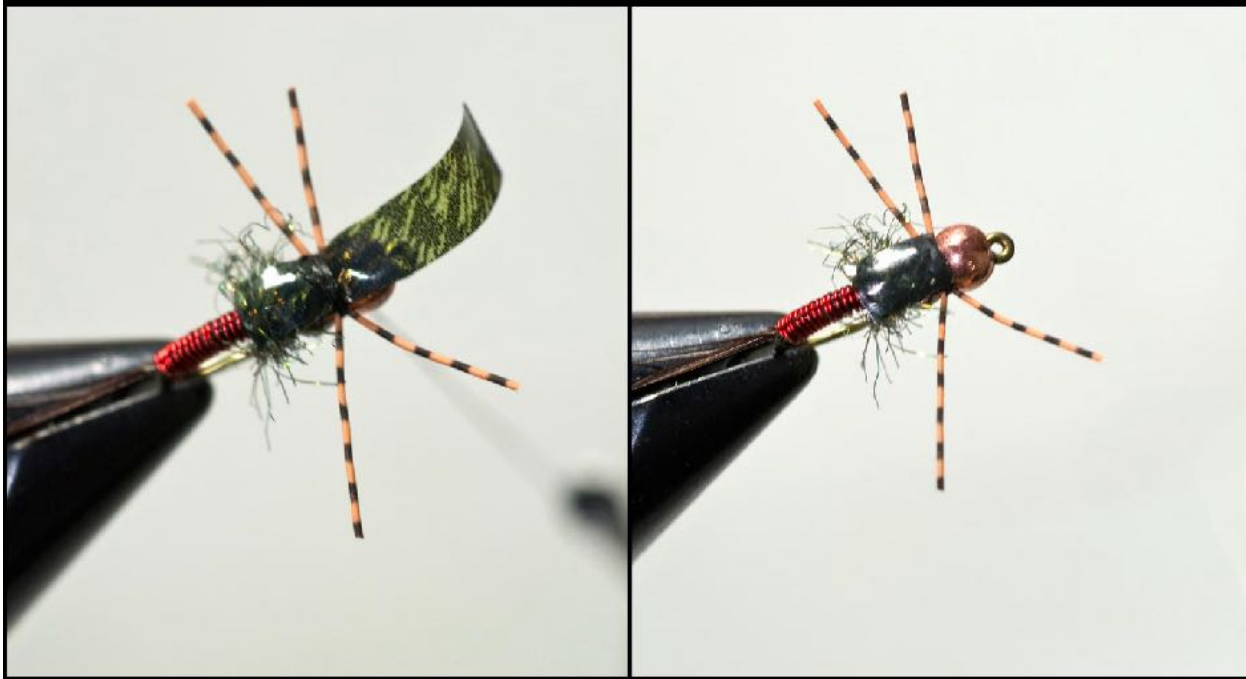
**Gink & Gasoline**

[www.ginkandgasoline.com](http://www.ginkandgasoline.com)

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# Protect the Head of Your Nymphs with Thin Skin

10 COMMENTS / POSTED ON OCTOBER 8, 2023 / BY KENT KLEWEIN



Finish the heads of your nymphs off with Thin Skin to add extra durability. Photo Louis Cahill

**The more durable a fly, the more fish you can catch on it and the longer the life of the fly will be.**

Making a point to tie and purchase your flies with durability in mind will save you time at the tying bench and keep a little extra cash in your wallet. Nymphs in general are the true work horses in our fly boxes. They don't just get beat up by fish, they're also constantly getting beat up from banging against rocks on the stream bed during our drifts. One way I increase the durability of my

nymphs is to finish off the heads of my flies by folding over and super gluing down a piece of thin skin. This tying technique covers the vulnerable thread at the head of the fly and makes a nice looking nymph wing pad. In some cases, like with my rubber-leg copper john version shown above, I also use thin skin to hide the second bead on the fly pattern. I love using thin skin for many of my fly patterns and it comes in a wide range of colors and patterns. Try it out if you aren't familiar with using this fly tying material. It's a must have if you ask me and you can tie a ton of flies with just one package of it. Be prepared to shop around if you're looking for a specific color of thin skin. Retailers tend to carry only certain colors but never shy away from requesting them to order the colors you need.

## **THIN SKIN COLOR OPTIONS**



# THIN SKIN FLY TYING EXAMPLES



*(click on thumbnails for larger viewing)*

Keep it Reel,

Kent Klewein

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# THINGS I DO IN MY SPARE TIME



GO FISHING



BUY FISHING RODS



RESEARCH FISH



TALK ABOUT FISHING