

# Alpine Fly Fishers

*Our Next AFF Gathering  
Will Be Tuesday*

**September 22**

*We will be meeting at the  
Puerto Vallarta  
215 15th St. SE  
Puyallup at 6 PM*



## The Dead Drift - September 2015

### In this issue:

#### Pages 2 & 3

*IFFF Fly Of The Month  
~ Peacock Spider ~  
AFF Meetings 2015*

#### Page 4 & 5

*Back of Beyond  
~ Rivers of the Sound ~  
Save The Dates 2016*

#### Page 6 & 7

*'Presentation' by Neil  
Travis of FAOL  
September Meeting  
A Fly Fishing Quote*

#### Page 8

*Calendar  
Editor Information  
Mailing Address  
Board of Directors*



### **President's Line**

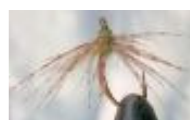
*By Larry Gibbs*

September, the transition of summer into fall. Hot days and muggy nights slide into cooler days and eventually, frosty nights. Hoot Owl restrictions will be lifted as the rivers start to flow with colder water and we hope a fresh influx of rain. The October Caddis starts to show up as do the brown and black Woolly Worms. The flying ants are out in numbers and it is a great time for fishing with a burnt orange colored fly. In mid-August the Clark Fork River was opened up full-time again with water temperatures down in the 60's. Good fishing.

I spent a week down in Bend at the Fly Fishing Fair put on by the IFFF. I had a great time. Jim was there involved in his casting lessons as was Carroll. Sean was there with his steelhead book, by the way, his donated set went for a nice amount in the live auction. Peter was there as well. That makes five of us that I know about. Not a bad percentage. If anyone else was there, sorry I missed you. I managed to win some nice 'stuff' in the Fly Tying Group's BBQ/fund raiser Tuesday afternoon. I also picked up a few items in the regular silent auctions, Thursday thru Saturday. Some of those items will show up on our raffle tables this fall and winter. I had a chance to talk to many people from all over the world. Australia (Tasmania, Victoria & Queensland), Japan, and Iceland to name a few. Plus many people from all over the USA and Canada. I took a tying class on soft hackles put on by Jerry Criss and an advanced casting class put on by our WA ST Council's very own Don Simonson. I was able to sit across from many very good fly tyers and talk with them while they tied. I did volunteer work most days, helping out the IFFF is something I like to do. I was a spotter in the live auction on Friday night. Lots of bidding was going on and people were having fun. Next year the IFFF Fly Fishing Fair will be in Livingston, MT. I suspect you will be hearing about this from time to time, in fact, check out page 5 for the Save The Dates for both the Washington State Council's Fly Fishing Fair and the International Federation of Fly Fishers' Fly Fishing Fair. Don't forget, Peter will be running the auctions and raffles this year over in Ellensburg. Help him out if you can.

We finally have our first meeting of the fall, the fourth Tuesday of September. This is a meeting where we all get to talk about our fishing stories and exploits from over the summer. I will have my laptop there so if you download your photos onto a thumb drive I can copy them for Steve to use at our December meeting.

Good fishing.



Larry

# International Federation of Fly Fishers

## Fly of the Month

### ~ Peacock Spider ~

September 2009

By

John Newbury & Bob Bates



John Newbury tied this great steelhead pattern at the 2009 Federation of Fly Fishers Conclave in Loveland, Colorado. He wrote the following history and tying instructions. John said: “The Peacock Spider was first tied during the winter of 1985 or 1986 after receiving a complete India blue peacock skin. I really liked the blue neck feathers, and when I saw the peacock blue embroidery tinsel in a fabric store, I knew the two were made for each other. My steelhead flies fairly simple, quick, and easy to tie. This is because I am always losing them or giving them away!!! I believe steelhead flies are all about color, size, and sometimes silhouette. The Peacock Spider, Tangerine and Plum Crazy have been my most productive steelhead flies now for several seasons. (Descriptions of the Tangerine and Plum Crazy follow the tying instructions.) In the steelhead rivers of British Columbia, I use a 2/0 hook and in the rivers of Washington, Idaho, Oregon; I use a #2 and sometimes a #4.” John is not alone in praising the Peacock Spider. Fenton Roskelly, outdoor writer, tried the fly and wrote about it for The Spokesman Review, November 8, 2000. His headline was: “Peacock Spider was winning ticket to catch steelhead.” “... The next time I visited the Ronde, the water was low and clear. However, there were few steelhead that day. I fished the Shadow drift, one of the best producers, but didn't touch a fish. Then I fished the first bend. As the Peacock Spider started to straighten out below me, a steelhead took the fly. A few minutes later, after the 6-pound fish had jumped a couple of times, I eased the fly out of its mouth and watched the steelhead vanish into the deeper water. The Clearwater River was clear and low when I arrived at one of my favorite drifts a few days later. I pulled on my chest waders, rigged up my 9 1/2-foot graphite rod and tied on a Peacock Spider. Two men carrying 15- or 16-foot Spey rods were working their way down the drift. They seemed to be experts and I figured they wouldn't miss any steelhead as they worked the water. However, a few minutes after starting down the drift, a steelhead took the Peacock Spider, jumped three or four times, took out all my line and some backing. I was trembling a little as I released the 10-pound fish. The two men walked back upstream about half an hour later. One of them told me they had fished the drift for three hours and hadn't hooked a fish. ...” Most steelheaders use a floating line and a quartering downstream cast. However, some use a sink tip or full sinking line to fish a little deeper.

#### Materials list:

**Hook:** Tiemco TMC 7999 2 & 2/0

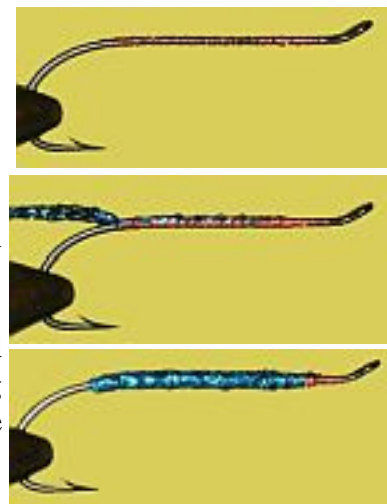
**Thread:** Monocord, red 6/0

**Body:** Embroidery tinsel, Plastic Canvas 10, color PM 62 (peacock blue)

**Hackles:** Peacock breast feathers

#### Tying steps:

1. Put on a thread base on hook and leave thread near front of hook.
2. Attach embroidery tinsel and wrap thread over it to the rear and then forward again to about two eye widths behind the eye.
3. Wrap embroidery tinsel forward, secure and trim. If one likes, some loon hard head product can be applied to the tinsel, and set aside to dry, before attaching hackle. This makes the tinsel indestructible, and also adds weight throughout the shank.



Continued on Page 3 →

4. Tie on peacock feathers. I use 3 large peacock breast feathers on the # 2/0 hooks, and on the #2 and slightly smaller hooks only 2 feathers,. I tie these in by the base, as you only get about two and a half turns out of each feather.



5. Begin winding the feathers. When winding, stroke fibers back, and while winding, slightly twist the stem to keep the fibers perpendicular to the hook shank. It is important to stroke the feather back with each wrap forward and twist the stem as needed. Basically, you are folding the feather as you wind it. Tie off feather, and ends will become part of the collar.



#### **Closing Comments:**

These great steelhead patterns are easy to tie. The bodies of the Peacock Spider and the ones below are all tied using embroidery tinsel or metallic needlepoint yarn or ribbon, available in most yarn shops. However, you might have to look around for the blue peacock feathers. Most fly shops do not stock the blue body feathers.

However, usually you can have the owner to order them for you. Sometimes it will take a little time because most suppliers require a minimum order size, and your fly shop owner might not be ready to reorder. If you have a friend with a peacock or two ask to be permitted to pick up the drops. My daughter sent me a bunch of dropped peacock feathers from birds wandering around her apartment building. Sometime you luck out. (Bob)

#### **TANGERINE**

John commented: "On the Tangerine and Plum Crazy, I am using dyed mallard flank feathers. These feathers take dye easy, and breathe well in the water. I like using two colors that either complement each other or have contrasting hues. These feathers I tie in by the tip, as they're a larger feather, and you can get more wraps. When winding hackle, remember to stroke back and twist stem as you wind forward each time. As you wind you will notice the stem getting larger. At this point, tie off the feather, and snip off excess."

#### **Tangerine Material list:**

**Hook:** Tiemco TMC 7999 size 2 & 2/0

**Thread:** Monocord, Red 6/0

**Body:** Holographic ribbon by Fyre Werks color FH6 (red)

**Hackle:** Dyed mallard flank feathers, claret and orange



#### **PLUM CRAZY Materials list:**

**Hook:** Tiemco TMC 7999 size 2 and 2/0

**Thread:** Monocord, Red 6/0

**Body:** Holographic ribbon by Fyre Werks, color FH7 (plum)

**Hackle:** Dyed mallard flank feathers, purple and cerise

## **Alpine Fly Fishers Meetings in 2015**

**The 4th Tuesday of the other months, except for December**

**September 22** — October 27 — November 24 — December 15

# Back of Beyond

By Stephen Neal

*In Wildness is the Preservation of the World*  
"Henry David Thoreau"

## Rivers of the Sound

I was standing mid calf deep in the Sound's out going minus tide, Jimmy's lyrics whispered through my mind.

*"Mother, Mother Ocean, I have heard you call, Wanted to sail upon your water since I was three feet tall. You've seen it all, you've seen it all." Jimmy Buffet - A pirate looks at forty.*

Beneath my booted feet, bright green and rich reddish brown marine algae (seaweed) anchored to the Sound's floor pulsed with the outgoing tide. Small crabs scuttled from rock to barnacle seeking safety from my clunky passage. Vacant clam shells mingled with rocks, barnacles and starfish. Near the tide line, hidden clams or sea anemone spouted water fountains; it was like watching the water show at the Bellagio in Vegas. The light show was provided by the cloud diffused sunlight reflected off the water waves, created by passing ships. The music was the deep rumble of heavy loaded freight trains and the tremolo of crossing signals, and the slap of the ships waves striking the pebble strewn beach.

The man made world of commerce around me went on in its usual less than graceful pace. I let it go; less than three steps out into the water I found grace stillness in movement, and movement in stillness. I was no longer out of step or out of time. This was a more natural rhythm and how wonderful it felt.

The sky was overcast, the warm air of the past month had given way briefly to a soul nourishing coolness, the water was clear, and sculpin flashed silver as they left the water world for brief air flights. The sun seekers had stayed home and the beach was left to the few today. I did not have to

pay attention to my back-cast with my eyes. I could just let myself feel the rod load and begin my forward cast. The local Bald Eagle settled into the western hemlock over my left shoulder. We had been introduced to each other on my first visit. I would miss him if he ever changed venues. For now he was content to hunt the waters of the narrows for his meals and for me this was a great place to learn the in and outs of Sea-run cutthroat fishing.



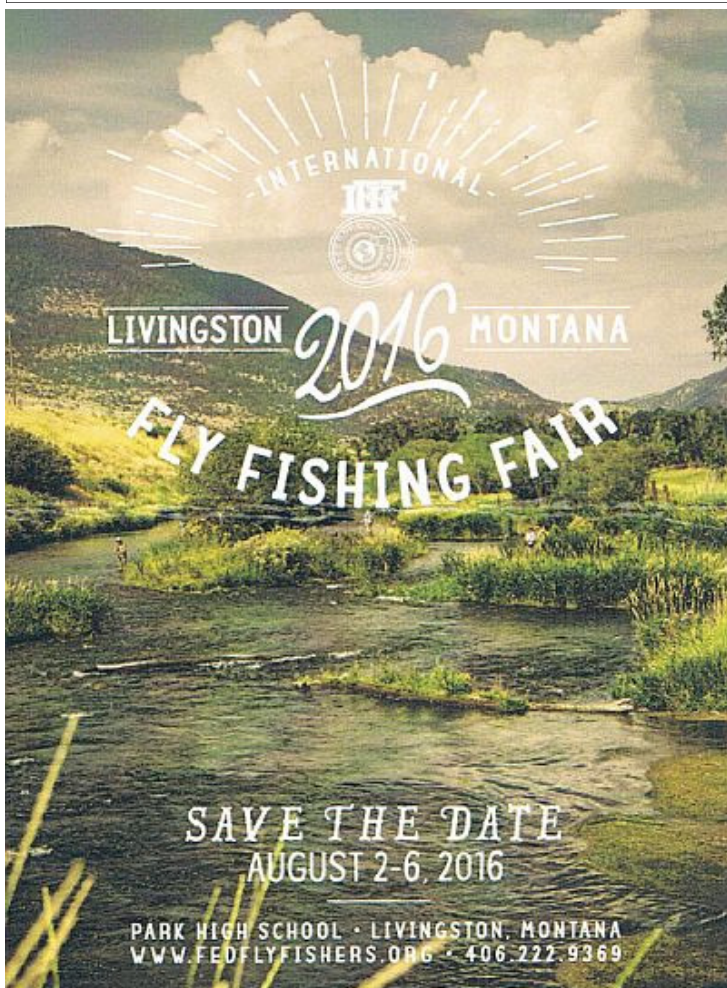
Continued on Page 5

I am getting better; I have improved from hooking to actually landing them. They are beautiful, dark with almost black backs and silver white bellies. They feed in the swift current of the falling or rising tide, where food is concentrated in the waters of the sound. I am still learning. My first tremulous steps in the mighty Pacific were before I can remember, I'm sure it was with my hand held by mom or dad as they introduced me to the ocean.

Since that small beginning, I have boldly stepped into the Pacific from the shores of Mexico, California, Oregon, Washington and Canada; swum with sea turtles in the Hawaiian Islands and walked its shores in the Far East with my toes in the water on Hong Kong Island. In visits to the back waters of San Francisco Bay I have explored the estuaries and sunk into the ooze of salt water saturated flats. I have walked her headland too, been washed by breaking waves under the Golden Gate and suffered hypothermia from the swimming the waters of Morro Bay. Explored Monterey Bay, LA's harbor, San Diego, Santa Cruz and the central coast of California, visited remote coves and hundreds of beaches. I have been knocked down by rouge waves and felt the pull of rip tides with the sand being pulled out beneath my feet. I have swallowed sea water while grasping for a breath after falling off surf boards in southern Cali. I have wet my feet in the Atlantic from Florida to Rhode Island; stood in the Gulf of Mexico in Texas and Florida. I have fished buckets were creeks flow into the ocean. And now I have discovered the rivers of the Sound. They are rich with nutrients, and food. They are fish highways that facilitate migration and life cycles.

I wade in to the current and cast following this river of life and time. "Mother, mother ocean, I have heard you call." Yes I have much to learn and she will teach me if I am willing to spend the time with her. Life is a journey of small everyday miracles, thank you for letting me share them with you.

*“Many go fishing all their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after” Henry David Thoreau*



**Washington State Council  
International Federation Fly Fishers**

[www.wsciff.org](http://www.wsciff.org)

**2016 WA FLY FISHING FAIR**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Ellensburg, WA April 29 & 30**



**SAVE THE DATES**



**2016 WSCIFFF Fly Fishing Fair**

**April 29 & 30**

**2016 IFFF Fly Fishing Fair**

**August 2 - 6**

## PRESENTATION

*Neil Travis - Aug 3, 2015*

### Fly Anglers On Line (FAOL)

www.flyanglersonline.com

Presentation, it's a word that we hear often in the fly fishing world but one that most experienced fly fishers will tell you is the most neglected part of most anglers skill set. Talk to any professional fly fishing guide and they will tell you that most of the anglers that they guide do not truly understand presentation.

What exactly is presentation? Presentation is simply the act of presenting, in this case, an artificial fly in such a manner that the target fish will be take it. This sounds simple and despite comments to the contrary it really is but it's something that only comes with practice.

Several years ago I had the privilege of spending a couple hours on the stream with a world famous fly caster. This individual, whose name I will not reveal, was a truly gracious person and I enjoyed the encounter but I was totally amazed when they started to fish. Their casting was flawless; tight loops on both the back and forward cast, line shooting effortlessly through the guides. Unfortunately each time the line touched down on the water the leader was a straight as a ruler and the fly immediately skated across the surface like a miniature water-skier. Being somewhat in awe of the personage I was accompanying I was at a loss as how to tell them that they needed to put some slack in their leader if they had any hope of hooking any fish. There was an obvious disconnect between fly casting and fly fishing.

Over the 50+ years that I have been actively involved in fly fishing I have noticed an increasing reliance upon equipment rather than skill to produce results. This is a flawed concept and I have beaten this drum many times over the years in this column. It's wonderful to own great equipment; I have a tackle room full of it but without the ability to use it one might as well be fishing with a broom!


To learn to properly present a fly, whether it's a dry fly, nymph, wet fly or streamer, you must be able to control what the fly is doing when it is on or in the water. Your fly is connected to a leader and the leader is attached to the line and all of this is on or in the water. Unless you are fishing completely still water everything starts moving from the moment your line and leader hits the water. Unfortunately not all of the water is moving at the same speed or even in the same direction, and therein is the problem.

Perhaps presentation is such an overlooked subject is the fact that it cannot be taught in a short period of time. Time on the water observing and experimenting is really the only way that a person truly becomes proficient at presentation. Reading the water is an acquired skill and understanding all the aspects of presentation is a life-long endeavor. Regrettably many anglers today do not have the time to devote to becoming truly proficient at reading the water and making the proper presentation. However, there are a few things that any angler can do that will help them make better presentations.

First, take time to observe. Since many anglers only have a few days each year to spend fly fishing they are naturally eager to start fishing as soon as they arrive on the water, but by taking a few minutes to observe before beginning to thrash the water will likely result in more success and less frustration.

Secondly, if there was only one tip I could give that will improve your presentation it would be to shorten up your casts. It is much easier to control your fly and set the hook if you are making a 30 foot cast rather than trying to set the hook on a fish that is 50 feet away. The closer you are to your target the more control you have, you are able to see what is happening, you can observe the fish and, if you are fishing dry flies, you can watch the behavior and drift of the natural insects that the fish are eating. All this will greatly enhance your ability to make a good cast that will result in a proper presentation.

Casting a long line is the curse that has afflicted many fly fishers. When I was giving fly casting clinics everyone wanted to learn to throw a long line. Before they even had gotten the basic motions for making a forward cast they were anxious to learn how to double haul. The crowd at the double haul demonstration is always longer than the line where basic fly casting techniques are being taught. Is there a place for the double haul?

Continued on page 7 

Continued from page 6

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Thirdly, remember that each situation is different. You don't present a streamer the way you present a dry fly! If you want to be successful when fishing terrestrials, especially hoppers and beetles you need to deliver them with a solid splat. I remember fishing on the Au Sable River in Michigan from a canoe. The river is renowned for its cedar trees that grow out over the water. They are called sweepers because they jut out from the bank and rest low over the water; their lower limbs sweeping the surface of the water. Big browns love to live in the shade of these sweepers and the key to getting them is to place your fly as far back under the limbs as possible and deliver it with a solid splat. This type of fishing requires accuracy since your target is often only the size of a wash tub and you will likely only get one shot at putting your fly on target. If you miss you're in the trees. If the fly hits the water with a good solid splat it may just cause that big old brown to stick his head out and see what the commotion is all about. Without that splat he is unlikely to even take notice.

It is likely that the changing dynamics of presentation is what makes it appear to be so difficult. It's not possible or practical to describe every situation that an angler faces when attempting to make a proper presentation. For many anglers the answer to a fish that they cannot move is to change flies or use a finer tippet when the answer might be as simple as taking a few moments to observe, adjust their casting angle by taking a few steps to the right or left and putting their fly where the fish wants it. Try it sometime. What have you got to lose?

FlyAnglers OnLine

The Fly Fishing Enthusiast's Online Magazine

'The Fraternity of Fly Fishers'

There are several of us at AFF who belong to FAOL. It is a great site for fly fishers, lots of helpful information and many fly tying recipes and articles about all aspects of fly fishing and fly fishing gear. Check it out.



Alpine Fly Fishers  
Next Meeting  
September 22, 2015



### A Fly Fishing Quote:

*"October 6, 2006*

*Snake River, Washington*

*The Snake River came calling and I found myself on this great river the week of October 6th.*

*This time of year is great for steelheading but this is the week of my wedding anniversary.*

*I had asked my wife if we could change our anniversary date to some day in May or June or when steelhead were not running. She was not happy. I let it go, if you know what I mean."*

*Will Godfrey — 'Seasons of the Steelhead'*

# September / October 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<u><a href="#">Meeting This Month!!</a></u>		<b>1 September</b>	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	<b>22 Club Meeting</b>	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	"September twenty-second, Sir, the bough cracks with unpicked apples, and at dawn the small-mouth bass breaks water, gorged with spawn." - Robert Lowell ~ 1917 -1977		

"The leaves fall patiently. Nothing remembers or grieves The river takes to the sea the yellow drift of leaves." ~ Sara Teasdale 1884 - 1933 ~				<b>1 October</b>	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	<b>27 Club Meeting</b>	28	29	30	31

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