

volume seventeen

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LYNES & LEADERS

Newsletter of the Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association

March Meeting

Subject: TRICKS TO TAKE TROUT
by CFFA MEMBERS

Place: VETERAN'S MEMORIAL HALL, SUNSET RIDGE
EAST HARTFORD

Date: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 1990

Time: FLY TYING 7 PM
PROGRAM 7:30 PM

FROM THE VEST OF THE PRESIDENT

Our 20th Annual Banquet was very successful and even more innovative than was intended. In addition to the planned fly raffle and silent auction we also had a banquet with no speaker. Due to problems with the weather Paul Kukonen was unable to make it down from Worcester. In spite of this unexpected development, quite a few people said that they had a good time and appreciated the earlier than usual ending of the evening. If you weren't there, bad weather was expected around midnight.

There were no complications with the awards. The Scarlet Ibis Award, a graphite rod made by CFFA member Ed Roberts, went to board member Ed Fidrych. The Ted Barbieri Award, an engraved Wheatley fly box given to a non-board member, went to Dale Matthews. Congratulations to both of you, the awards were well deserved!

Out-going President Gary Bogli received a very handsome shadow box of flies tied or donated by CFFA members and also took temporary possession of the plaque listing past presidents of CFFA (with his own name now included) that was donated to the club by out-going President Elmer Latham. A special award of a shadow box of flies tied or donated by present and past board of directors members was given to Jim May, who left the Board after 23 years of service to CFFA. Finally, a lot of members and guests (some of them quite excited about it) won prizes from the fly raffle, silent auction, and conservation drawing.

A lot of unseen work goes into a successful banquet, and we are already beginning to plan for next year's event. We would like to have your opinions about what to include (not having a speaker seemed to work this year) and we would also like to have your participation. The Annual Banquet really should have the attention of a Banquet Committee and a Banquet Chairman. The position of Banquet Chairman is available, and there should be no problem with finding members to help out. Any volunteers?

Pleasant Days Astream,

Gary J. Kukonen

THAT MAGNIFICENT GRAY GHOST

The first Gray Ghost I ever saw was not tied by Carrie Stevens. As a matter of fact, the first of most flies I ever saw was not tied by its originator. In most cases, this particular deprivation is not of particular importance, but in the case of the Gray Ghost, it was. Perhaps a bit of historical background is in order at this point.

Carrie Stevens had retired from her career as a milliner and was living in the Rangely Lake area with her husband who was a fishing guide. In response to her musings that she was bored, a fellow from Connecticut gave her what amounted to a fly tying kit without vice. On July 1, 1924 she tied what would become the Gray Ghost, and promptly caught a 6 pound, 13 ounce brook trout with it. I have had the good fortune to have examined many Gray Ghosts tied by Carrie Stevens and feel that the classic pattern description alone is not enough to guide guide the tyer. Nonetheless, here it is:

Head:	Black, with red band
Tag:	Narrow silver tinsel
Body:	Orange silk, dressed thin
Ribbing:	Narrow silver tinsel
Throat:	Four or five strands of peacock beneath which is tied a small bunch of white bucktail, beneath which is tied one golden pheasant crest about one-third the length of the throat
Wing:	Crest curving down as long as the throat, two pairs of olive gray dun hackles, same length as the throat
Shoulder:	Ripon silver pheasant body feather, long and wide
Cheeks:	Jungle cock nail

While the Gray Ghost can be described in the conventional fashion, its correct method of construction requires some elaboration. Chuck up a long streamer hook in your vice and wrap the entire length (to the bend) with white thread. The silver tag should be about four or five widths of tinsel. Tie in the tinsel and wind the thread forward to the point where the tag will end. Tie in the orange-yellow floss. I emphasize orange-yellow because Carrie complained that imitations of her streamer were much too orange. Now wind the white thread forward, covering four-fifths of the shank. Wind the silk over the white thread and secure. Form the tag and rib the floss to the same point. Secure.

Select four or five strands of good green peacock herl and stack evenly. Tie in at the bottom of the hook where the floss and ribbing end. The herl should extend a bit beyond the hook. Tie in a small bunch of white bucktail at the same point, extending the same length. Finally, tie in the crest at the bottom, half the length of the rest of the throat.

Select a long golden pheasant crest, long enough to extend the same length as the throat when tied in. Now, go fire-up the tea kettle and clip the long crest in your hackle pliers. When the kettle begins to spout, wave the crest in the steam for 30 seconds or so, restoring the feather to its natural grace. If it grew crooked on the bird, there's no hope. If it's a good one, shake off the water and let dry. Then, tie in on the top of the shank where the throat materials were bound. Whip finish and snip the white thread. Cement.

Up to this point, the tie has been pretty conventional. Routine streamer construction, albeit with a rather long throat. And at this point one would expect to be binding various wing and cheek materials to the hook, but you can't because there isn't any thread to tie with. This is the crux of all Stevens ties. She constructed all her wings in a separate operation, in fact, would build a dozen bodies and then a dozen wing sets and then attach the wings to the body in a final operation.

So, for the time being, forget the vice. Select four identical olive gray dun hackles that, when stripped of webby root fibers, will be as long as the throat materials. Pair up two of the hackles and glue the stems together. I use cyanoacrylate based cement (Krazy Glue) at great peril to my person. It works, but be careful. Glue the second set together and set aside to dry. I generally apply the glue to the stems while they hang over the edge of a table and leave them there until they dry.

While the dun hackles are drying, strip the webby fiber from a Ripon silver pheasant body feather and clip off all but the thinnest of the feather's quill. Align this feather with the dun hackles and glue the stem to the dun hackle stems. If the bend of your feather makes it reluctant to cooperate with this operation, you can rest a hackle plier or pair of scissors on the feathers to keep them aligned.



A word about Ripon silver pheasant. Choose

a finely barred feather. Carrie Stevens was quite vocal on this point, and all of the Gray Ghosts that I have seen tied by her had shoulders with pencil thin barring. (See previous page.)

Jungle cock nails are hard to come by. The proscription of importation puzzles me. They're eaten in India like chickens in the U.S. South Africa is over-run by them. Great Britain and the United States prohibit its importation. Thus, there has developed a domestic effort to raise these birds here, and the feathers are once again available to those who get the right catalogs. Select one that, when stripped of unnecessary fiber, will cover two-thirds of the length of the silver pheasant shoulder. Glue its stem to the other wing stems that you've assembled.

When this assemblage of feathers, a pair of two olive gray dun hackles, a silver pheasant feather, and a jungle cock nail, is dry, tie them in as wings with black thread. Carrie Stevens "signed" her flies with a band of red thread in the head. There is some debate about the propriety of using this signature in copies. I use it. Whether or not you do is a matter of personal preference. Fly fishing is fun, and fun should not be taken too seriously.

Wally  Murray

WE HAVE A NEW ADDRESS!

CFFA, Inc.
P.O. BOX 380268
Silver Lane
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THANKS!

First, thanks to all the people who made my three years as president of CFFA so enjoyable.

Second, thanks to those members who actively participated in the fly raffle. I apologize again for not getting all the names of you who donated the seventy-five dozen flies. I do have to single out Charles Tice for his extraordinary effort, twenty dozen flies and a hand made wooden box which went in the silent auction. Just over half the membership purchased or sold tickets for a total of \$1,130. A truly great effort which will just about pay the club insurance.

Third, thanks to you who donated flies for the presidential display box. I have placed it on my desk and get great pleasure gazing at it again and again. Special thanks to Doc Ringrose for putting it all together for me.

Happy Hatches,

Larry

WE HAVE OPEN BOARD POSITIONS

THEY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

RECORDING SECRETARY: This individual records and keeps the minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors.

LEGAL SECRETARY: An attorney who can sit on the Board of Directors and council the Board on legal matters.

BANQUET CHAIRMAN: This individual organizes and coordinates our Annual Banquet, the Banquet is our most important fund raiser of the year!

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CFFA FLY FISHING SCHOOL

MARCH 2, 1990
MARCH 9, 1990
MARCH 16, 1990
APRIL 7, 1990
MAY 1990 (TBA)

The Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association, Inc. is organized to "Preserve and Promote the Pleasures and Tradition of Fly Fishing and to Conserve Gamefish Waters". CFFA membership meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May. Meetings are held at The Veteran's Memorial Clubhouse, Sunset Ridge Dr. East Hartford, CT. "Lines & Leaders" is the official publication of the Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association, Inc. and is distributed to its membership and allies of conservation. Business card ads may be placed at the cost of \$5 per ad or \$40 for 9 months. CFFA member may place for-sale or want ads of a noncommercial nature without charge. Newsletter correspondence should be sent to: Pam Murray, 34 Northwoods Lane, Middletown, CT 06457. Change of address notices and other correspondence should be sent to CFFA, P.O. Box 18268, Silver Lane, East Hartford, CT 06118.