



Kapiti Fly Fishing Club

February 2022 Newsletter



This month's cover photo: A fence in the centre of Raetihi, phot taken by Peter Haakman while on a recent club trip.

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Club activities

Date	Event	Coordinator
Monday 28 February	Club night – Zoom meeting – members activities on the water	Malcolm
Sunday 13 March	McWilliams Shield – Hutt River	Gordon
Monday 28 March	Club Night – CEO Phil Teal Wellington Fish & Game	Malcolm
Monday 25 April	Club Night – Quiz night, who in your team?	Malcolm
Monday 23 May	Club Night – AGM	Malcolm

At this month's club meeting is on Monday 28 February will be a zoom meeting starting at 7:30 pm an invite to attend this meeting has been sent out to all members.

Presidents report

First, I would like to take this opportunity of wishing Michael Murphy a speedy recovery from his present health challenges, Michael had a serious health event last weekend and was admitted to Wellington hospital. At this stage Michael is still in Wellington hospital enjoying being spoilt by a team of nurses and doctors, Michael is waiting to have an operation. I know all of you will join me in passing on our deepest thoughts to Michael and his lovely family, take care my friend.



Last week I received a call from a rather upset Aussie who advised me that someone had graffiti the Memorial seat of Lorna and Austin Fraser that the club organised.

Aussie has contacted the Kapiti Council seeking help in having the graffiti removed, if they are unable to remove the graffiti, we will organise the appropriate chemicals so that we can remove the offending graffiti.

With the present Covid situations the Committee decided to cancel holding a face-to-face Club meeting and replace it with a Zoom meeting to limit the health risk of our members, you should have received an email from me with the link to the meeting. We do not have a 'Guest Speaker' as such, but I would like to encourage members to share any 'fishing experiences' that they have enjoyed participating in, I look forward to hearing of your successes on the water.

At our last Committee meeting we established a plan for the next few club nights, at our April meeting we will hold a Quiz Night where members are encouraged to set up a team to see if they can win the mystery prize. In June we plan on running a Club Auction of 'fishing attire' so if you have any fishing gear that is collecting dust now's the time to dust it off ready for the Auction, more details will be provided closer to the date.

Over the past few months, a number of the club's rods have been issued to members, if you have one of the club's rods can you please arrange to return to me as soon as possible as other members may wish to make use of them.

I would like to remind our members that Sporting Life and the Fly Shop are important sponsors of the Kapiti Fly Fishing Club so please keep this in mind when you are next looking to purchase any fly-fishing materials. When next in Turangi call in and see Andrew and the team at Sporting Life and make yourself known to the team, they are more than happy to provide club members a discount when purchasing their products.



Warm regards Malcolm

Fly Casting Tuition by Gordon Baker

Club member Gordon Baker is available for one-on-one casting tuition. Gordon is a casting instructor with Flyfishers International (USA). He is available to help beginners get off to a good start and to assist more experienced members improve their distance casting skills. Although not yet an approved two-handed casting instructor Gordon is a keen learner willing to share new skills.

Email Gordon kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com or phone 0274946487 to arrange a suitable time for a lesson. There is no charge.

Mid-Week Fishing trips by Hugh

For those members who are lucky enough to be able to fish mid-week during the forthcoming season please confirm your desire to be included in the mid-week fishers email list to:

hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com

The emails are often sent out only giving very short notice to take advantage of the prevailing conditions and members availability, as an example the afternoon of day before the proposed trip.

If you are interested in participating on any mid-week fishing trips, please email Hugh Driver with your contact details and you will be added to the email list.

McWilliams Shield by Gordon Baker

There will be a rerun of the Kapiti Clubs annual competition for the McWilliams Shield. The competition attracted twelve competitors last November. No fish were caught.

We are hoping for better conditions this time around.

Any club member keen to compete or who would like additional information should contact Gordon Baker Kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com by Wednesday March 9th.

Can you please register your interest in participating in the competition by emailing Gordon.

Fly Pattern of the Month – Craig's Night-Time

Craig's Night-Time



This pattern was created by Eric Craig almost one hundred years ago for fishing Taupo River mouths, at night, for large Browns. It is still a very popular pattern for nocturnal anglers. Usually fished deep and slow, often in tandem with a brighter or lighter coloured pattern. Variations with lumo body or rib are also popular and effective.

<i>Hook:</i>	TMC 5262 size 2 to 10
<i>Thread:</i>	Black Danville 3/0
<i>Rib:</i>	Oval Silver tinsel or lumo strip
<i>Tag:</i>	Red wool or yarn
<i>Body:</i>	Black chenille
<i>Wing:</i>	Pukeko or Substitute (Blue dyed mallard feathers)
<i>Hackle:</i>	Black

Please note that if the next fly-tying meeting is held at the Waikanae Boating Club at 7.30pm **Tuesday 8 March you will need to bring your club membership card**. If you haven't received yours yet you may do so at either the club or fly-tying meeting. If we are unable to meet there will probably be another Zoom meeting.

Feather Merchants (NZ) sponsor our fly-tying group. Go to their website www.flyshop.co.nz to see their wide range of top-quality tying materials, tools and flyfishing accessories.



Kapiti Women on The Fly by Leigh Johnson



After a busy time over the summer, including a trip to fish the Tongariro, Tauranga-Taupo and Waitahanui Rivers, activities have slowed due to the changing Covid19 situation.

Meanwhile, Women on The Fly's online community continues to grow, as does our connection with female fly fishers in other clubs.

This includes a serendipitous meeting with Wendy Lu, (a member of the NZ first all-women Fly-Fishing team), who has offered to teach Czech nymphing to Women on The Fly members. We have plans for this and other events to take place later in the year.

Women on The Fly's goal is to build confidence, learn new skills, and create friendships while introducing more women to fly fishing.

Kapiti Women on The Fly is now on www.facebook.com/WomenontheFlyKapiti, www.instagram.com/kapitiwomenonthefly/ and at www.kapitifyfishing.org/kapitiwomenonthefly.

I can be contacted at leigh@leighjohnsonnz.com.

Airflo Nymph Master flyrod for sale

Dan Brizzle has an Airflow Nymph Master 10-foot four-piece 3 weight High Modulus Czech Nymphing flyrod for SALE.

The rod was designed by Manic Tackle Project for New Zealand's conditions, the rod 3 years old and has only been used a four times so is in excellent condition.

The purchase price for this rod was \$300.00, Dan is open to any reasonable offers or swapping for a good conditioned 5 or 6 weight rod.

If you are interested, can you please contact Dan at: dandsbrizzle@slingshot.co.nz.

A Mending Primer by Philip Monahan

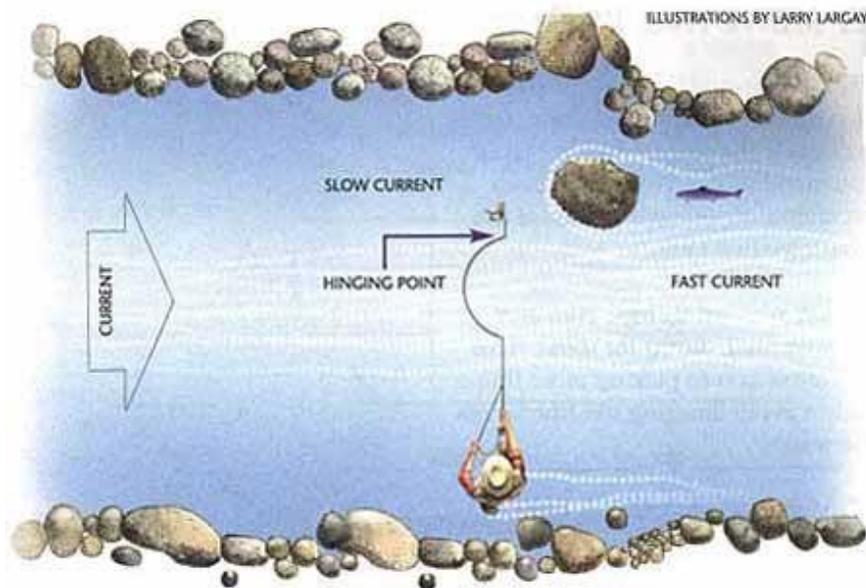


Figure 1: Upstream Mend - The basic upstream mend is used when you must cast across fast water. By throwing the line upstream, the angler delays the moment when the line starts pulling the fly downstream. The key here is to make the line hinge right on the seam between the fast water and slow water.

MOST NOVICE ANGLERS think that the only hard part of fly fishing is learning how to cast: once you've figured out the old "10 and 2," the logic goes, the rest just falls into place. It's a comforting little myth — and it helps some people to justify buying a \$700 fly rod — but things don't really work that easily in the real world.

A good friend of mine, who has been a guide for many years, always draws a distinction between those clients who can cast and those who can actually *fish*. (He maintains that the

former outnumber the latter by a wide margin.) Casting only helps you throw the line through the air. But the fish don't live in the air. They live in the water, and the water is usually moving

To catch fish consistently with a fly rod, you've got to be able to control how your fly and your fly line are affected by a river's various currents. When you're fishing with a dry fly or a nymph, one of the keys to a good presentation is a "dead drift" — when the fly drifts naturally in the current, as if it weren't attached to anything. What makes this difficult is that the fly is, in fact, attached to the fly line, and if the line is drifting faster or slower than the fly, it will drag the fly through the water. This problem is called, aptly enough, "drag".

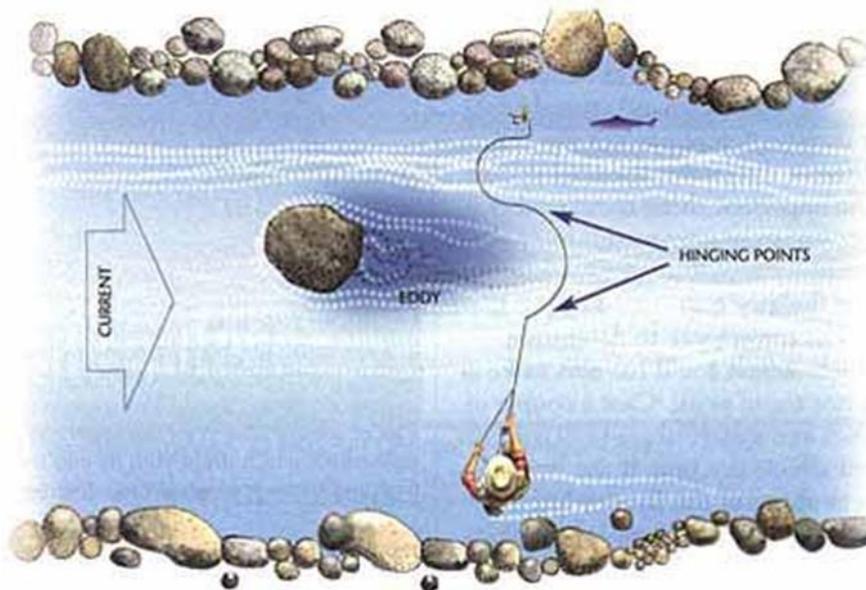


Figure 2: Double Mend - In this situation the angler is casting across an eddy (which will pull his line upstream) and fast water (which will push his line downstream). He will therefore have to make two mends. Always mend from far to near: First make the upstream mend, then the downstream mend. The key here is getting the line to hinge on the seams of the various currents. You can control the hinge point by how high you lift your rod tip and how much line you pick up off the water.

The way to combat drag is by "mending" your line; that is, counteracting the effects of drag-causing currents by moving the line after it's on the water. Mending is one of the least-understood aspects of fly fishing: many anglers are aware that mending is important, but they don't really understand *why*. Mastering the mend requires good technique, as well as an understanding of river hydraulics and how they affect your line.

The next time you look at the surface of a river, notice that the current is not uniform from bank to bank; different parts of the river move faster or slower than others. Problems arise for fly fishermen when they have to cast across currents of different speeds. For instance, the current near the bank is usually slower than that in the middle of the river, so if you want to cast to the opposite bank from where you're standing, your line will lie across the faster current, while your fly sits in the slower current.

Because the fast current will take your fly line downstream ahead of the fly, the line will drag the fly behind it, creating a wake and ruining the dead drift. However, if you can arrange it so the line *starts* upstream of the fly, the fly will float naturally for as long as it takes the fly line to catch up to and then pass the fly. This is where the basic upstream mend comes in handy.

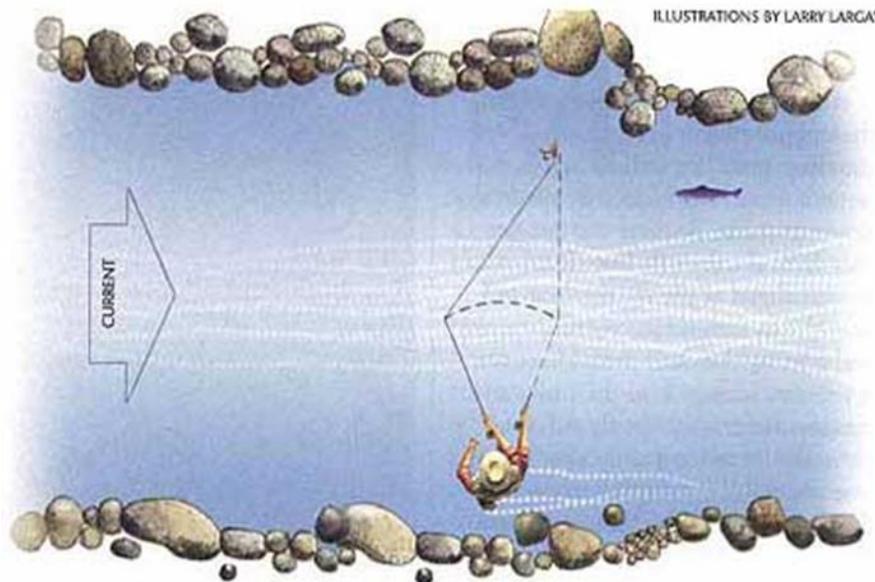


Figure 3: Reach Cast - The reach cast allows you to throw a mend into your line before the fly hits the water. Cast directly across the river, and, just as the line straightens out, extend your arm and the rod tip upstream (or downstream, as the case may be). This will cause the line to fall diagonally across the current, which means that the fly has time to dead-drift before the line catches up. This technique works best in slower water and in deep pools where the differences in current are not very great.

Mending Mechanics

To achieve a good upstream mend, you've got to throw a certain portion of your line upstream of your fly. (See figure 1.) But getting your line to move up and down the river is harder than it sounds; most beginners end up dragging their flies underwater during the mend. To avoid this, you must lift the part of the fly line that you want to mend *off the water*, leaving the un-mended portion of the line on the water. There are five keys to a good mend:

1. *Mend as soon as the fly touches down, before the line has time to bond to the water's surface.* This will help you avoid dragging your fly under.
2. *Begin the mend with your rod tip close to the surface of the water.* If you have a bunch of slack hanging from your rod tip, all you'll end up moving is the slack, not the line on the water. You may have to make a couple of quick strips to pick up this slack before you mend.
3. *The hinging point, where the mended line meets the un-mended line, should occur at the seam between the different speed currents.* If you don't mend enough line, the current will

cause the line to drag the fly; if you mend too much line, you can accidentally pull your fly out of the trout's feeding lane.

4. *Lift your rod tip high, even over your head, during the mend.* This will allow you to pick up more line and to avoid dragging the line across the water.
5. *Mend with authority.* A half-hearted mend rarely moves enough line. You'll probably over-mend the first few times — accidentally throwing your fly upstream with the line — but with some practice, you'll learn just how much power is needed to move the line you want to move without disturbing the fly.

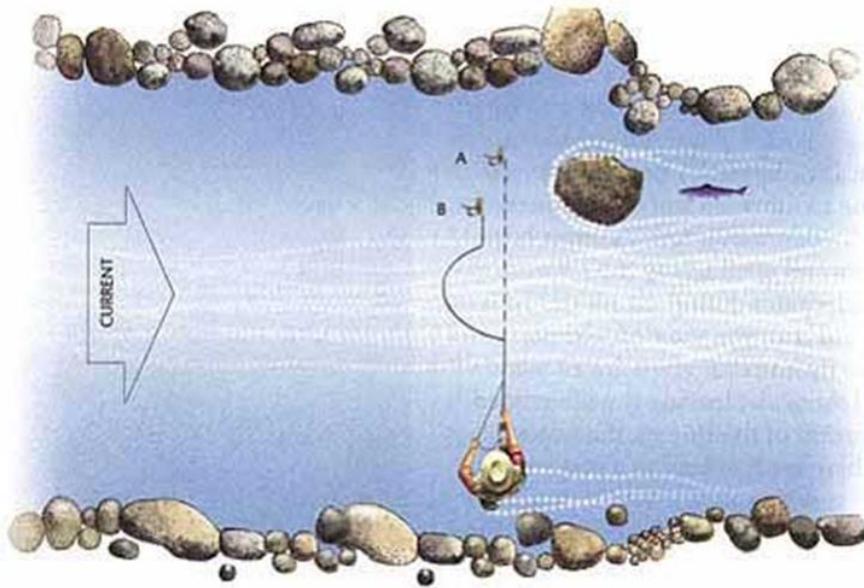


Figure 4: Drag Mend - In some situations, poor mending technique can be an asset. When you're making long casts across a fast current or when the current is really cooking, it's hard to make a big upstream mend without disturbing the fly. The solution is to drag the fly on purpose. First, slather your fly with a lot of floatant. Then cast upstream and beyond where you want the fly to be (A). Make a big, ugly mend, which drags your fly into the lane you want to fish (B). If you really lift your rod high and throw your weight into the mend, the fly should not sink.

Other Situations

Unfortunately, the upstream mend is the only kind of mend that many fly fishermen ever learn, and they apply it to all situations. But different current conditions call for different kinds of mends. For instance, if the fly is moving faster than the line, you must mend *downstream*. In more complex situations, you may have to mend several times or mend different parts of the line in different directions. (See figure 2.) The important thing to remember is that you want your mends to do the *opposite* of what the current does to your fly line.

The easiest way to determine which mend you'll have to make is to not mend at all. Cast a couple of times and watch to see how the current affects the line.

If the line races ahead of the fly, you know that you need to throw an upstream mend. If the line makes an “S” shape.

- with part of the line nearest you racing ahead and the part closer to the fly lagging behind,
- you know that you need to mend first downstream, then mend just half the line upstream.

Once you get used to this idea, you’ll be able to read the water and figure out which mends are necessary before you cast. There are no set rules to how many mends, and in which direction, you can make during a single drift — as long as you don’t drag the fly across the water. An understanding of *why* you need to mend and how mending helps you achieve a dead drift makes the practice of mending a lot easier.

Club trip to fish the Manganui-O-te-Ao river and local rivers by Malcolm Francis

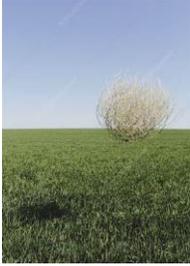
Our home base for this trip was a house in Raetihi that Pete found on the Book a Batch website, a rather up-market residents from the Blue Duck Cottage that we have stayed at in the past, well done Pete.

Pete and I headed up to Raetihi first thing Thursday morning with a plan to spend the afternoon on the Manganui-O-te-Ao river once we dropped our gear off at the house, as we travelled north the weather looked great and we anticipated that we would enjoy a great afternoon on the river.



On arrival at our ‘five star’ accommodation, Pete and I turned on the power and water and selected our beds for the next three nights and made sure there were a few ‘cold ones’ in the frig ready for our return later in the afternoon.

We drove through Raetihi and headed up the beautiful valley towards the Manganui-O-te-Ao river access points where we planed to fish. In my haste to get down to the river I decided to take the short-cut down a steep bank while Pete took the safer route, things were going well until I lost my footing and experienced the life of the ‘tumble weed.’



As I fell luckily, I dropped my rod as I started tumbling head over heels at a great rate of knots down the steep slope only stopping when I landed on a flat part of the paddock some 50 meters from the top minus my sunglasses and hat.

Once getting to my knees the next job was to try and stand up on a pair of very shaky legs and spinning head, it was at this stage that I discovered I had lost one of my rather expensive hearing aids.

Bugger, I cannot go home without them or I will be in even more strife.

Once I began to gain a sense of balance and realised nothing was broken then the 'hunt for the missing 'hearing aid' began lost somewhere in the middle of a paddock of long grass. So, I started looking at the spot where I stopped tumbling and slowly worked my way all the way back to where I lost my sunglasses and hat fingers crossed that I would find a 'needle in the haystack' tinny hearing aid. Today was my lucky day as after forty minutes looking through endless blades of grass and weeds, I spotted my hearing aid hanging off the tip of weed stalk, I sat down with great sense of relief.

Now it time to head to the river and start fishing.

On arriving back at the house, we met up with Steve, Greg and Mark who would be sharing the hose with us and spent the afternoon fishing the stretch of the Manganui-O-te-Ao river by the Domain enjoying a great afternoons fishing.

On Friday Pete and I headed down to the Domain to see if we could fine Leigh and Grant who were parked up in their Camper Van right alongside the river where we also found Stephine and Hugh enjoying the morning by their bus enjoying. After having a having a 'catch-up chat' Leigh, Grant and I headed upstream for a fish while Pete headed downstream to try out 'Czech nymphing' with his new gear.

I have fished this section of the river on previous visits so decided to spend time with Leigh and Grant and provide some support on fishing this section of the river. One of the challenges when fishing the Manganui-O-te-Ao river is spotting trout due to the nature of the river of large boulders where the trout blend into the colour of the boulders, we did spot one trout, but it was very difficult to see.



I was impressed with the way both Leigh and Grant slowly worked their way up through their section of the river, after watching them for some time I decided to move upstream and try my luck.

After a couple cast, I heard this loud shout and turned round to see Leigh hooked into a fish in a fast-flowing section of the river, I left my rod on the bank and headed down with my landing net.

After an excellent fight a beautiful Brown Trout was netted and a very happy Leigh celebrated her success, big smiles all round and well-done Leigh.

After more practice casting a fly line, changing nymphs, and untangling leaders we headed back to the Domain to see how Pete was progressing with his Czech nymphing and discovered that he was enjoying a great days fishing with numerous trout being landed. It was at this stage that the rain started to fall and over a short period of time it gained in momentum, after a brief chat with the team, it was agreed that Leigh and Grant would head out for another fish after a few hours and fish through the same section that Pete had fished.

As you can see from the following photos the weather changed over a matter of a few hours and the heavy rain that was forecast arrived, time to head back to our batch.



Stephine, Hugh and Grant enjoying the day



Hugh and Grant - fly selection

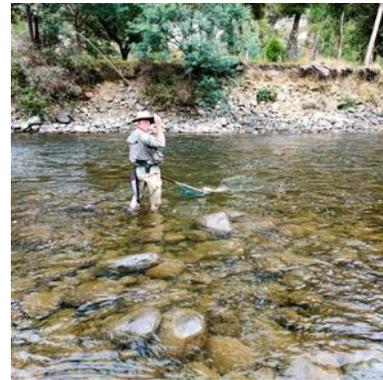
Following is a series of photos taken by Hugh Driver, many thanks.



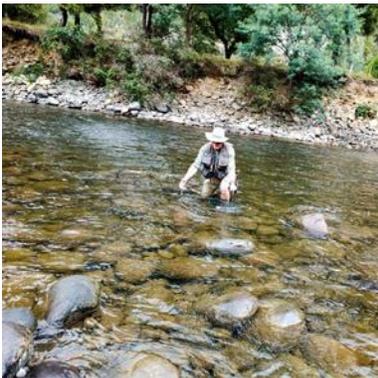
Let's go fishing team!



First on Euro set-up



Brown trout to the net



Released for another day



Bushcraft on display



Team spirit

On waking up on Saturday morning you could hear the heavy rain and it was obvious that most of the local rivers would be unfishable, so after breakfast out come a number of different fly-tying setups and we enjoyed a great morning fly tying. I was impressed with Greg's fly-tying table and the way he had it set with all the tools and materials close at hand. After lunch the rain had eased off so we headed out on an adventure to see if we could find some fishable water, we did find one small stream just outside of Raetihi, so team split into two teams to try our luck. Once again, I enjoyed more 'casting practice' but no fish were tempted by my Intruder fly that I had tied that morning, Steve was the only one to land a nice Brown trout.

After an enjoyable meal, a few stories were shared over a nice drop of Irish whisky, a most enjoyable evening was enjoyed with excellent company. I think one of the great benefits for participating on club trips like this is the knowledge gained when listening to other members life experience, my thanks go to Pete, Mark, Steve, and Greg for your most enjoyable company.

Waking up Sunday morning we were experience rain showers between sunshine, so it was time to pack up our gear tidy up the house and head for home. Pete and I decided to take the scenic route via Whanganui, if you have never driven through this part of New Zealand, I would recommend that you do as the scenery is excellent.



As we headed through the spectacular bush clad hills heavy rain continued to fall, we eventually met the Whanganui River and stopped off to view a well-known waterfall.

As you can see from this photo the river was very high and the rain made for an interesting view from the lookout. Thankfully by the time we passed through Foxton the weather improved and we enjoyed an uneventful return to the Kapiti Coast.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Pete, Leigh, Grant, Mark, Steve, and Greg for the excellent company both on the water and at our 'five-star accommodation' including Stephine and Hugh, a special thanks to Pete who organised the trip.

Designing Trout Flies for Better Fishing by Al Simpson

I must confess that I don't really love to tie bunches of trout flies. I just can't seem to strap myself to the fly-tying bench in wintertime to do so. In fact, I tie most of my flies in proximity to a fishing trip. Other times, it's when I find a new tying material, learn of a new or different technique, or think I may have stumbled upon something new myself. I'm always tying and designing trout flies for better fishing, or at least that's the plan.

Although I have my “own” collection of fly patterns, as discussed in our book [The Ramblings of an Aging Angler](#), it is doubtful that any of us really creates a completely new fly pattern. This is hardly surprising, given the thousands of patterns that already exist, many of which have been created, tied, and fished for centuries. Rather, we make useful modifications to an existing pattern. We may substitute new materials, or add/subtract wings, legs, tails, or shucks. All in an effort to better address the conditions on the streams that we fish most often.

Historical notes

We know from the fly-fishing literature, that fly fishers have been tying flies for at least two millennia. The first pattern was described by a Roman naturalist, Claudius Aelianus, about two hundred A.D. Twelve patterns were next described in “The Treatyse of Fysshynge Wyth an Angle”, thought to be written in 1450 by Dame Juliana Berners. At that time, and for several centuries to follow, it was a necessity to tie one’s own flies.

Fly shops and commercial tiers didn’t exist as they do today. Now of course, we can buy flies easily, and more cheaply, than we can tie them ourselves. Yet many, if not most, fly fishers continue to tie their own, including myself.

I don’t fully understand why I tie flies. However, I suspect that just as we wade into the watery world of the trout to better study and understand it, that tying flies affords the opportunity to better understand why some flies “work” better than others. That is, why a fly catches more trout, the primary goal of this exercise for most of us.

An understanding of the concepts of a “good” fly assists anyone who ties flies. It also helps anyone who ventures into a fly shop, glances at the hundreds of bins overflowing with flies, and tries to select a few for a productive day’s fishing.

The important attributes of a good fly have not changed over time. However, their relative importance has been and continues to be debated. I am not going to enter into a discourse of this centuries old debate. But I am going to exercise a writer’s prerogative at times, and express my own, personal opinion, which will of necessity be at odds with some, or there would be no debate. But from debate comes learning! Perhaps this article will prompt some replies in our forum.

The three basic elements of a fly are of course its size, shape or form, and colour. Another important element when fished is its behaviour, or its ability to look alive. The materials used in making the fly, and how they are arranged or attached, affect the ability of the fly to appear lively. This is especially true when fishing subsurface flies. These four elements then, should be carefully considered in the crafting of every fly.

Dry flies

Let’s first consider the floating or dry fly. I believe that size is of primal importance, especially when fishing quiet waters such as tailwaters, spring creeks and stillwaters. In these types of water, trout have the luxury to closely inspect our imitations, and if they are oversized, they are invariably refused, that is, rejected. Most fly fishers overestimate the size of the natural flies they are trying to imitate. This is perhaps due to the flies’ prominent wings, which are a size and a half larger than the body of the fly. With the exception of drakes and stoneflies, most aquatic insect bodies are size #16 or less.

Within any given hatch, there will be some variation in the size of the hatching flies. Thus, fishing an artificial fly a bit smaller than the largest specimens that we see on the water will not deter the trout from taking it. The opposite is usually the case when fishing an oversized fly.

When fishing freestone streams, especially sections of rougher water, size becomes a bit less important. In such water, trout don't usually have the same luxury of closely inspecting the fly. In addition, the turbulence of the water undoubtedly distorts the image of the fly as well. Thus larger, bushier flies can be used, which helps keep them afloat and makes them more visible to the fly fisher.

Next in importance is the shape or form of the fly. Classic Catskill-style flies will catch trout, but it has been my experience that other styles are far more productive. The Catskill fly nicely imitates a fly about to leave the surface of the water, that is, to fly away. Consequently, a waiting trout has but a second or two to make its move and ingest the fly. A near miss represents a loss of energy, something a trout can ill afford to do with any frequency. Therefore, trout will preferentially feed on more vulnerable flies, such as cripples struggling to escape their nymphal shucks, stillborn' s and spinners. Thus, flush-floating patterns that imitate these flies will be far more productive. Commonly used patterns include comparadun (no hackle dry fly), parachutes, spinners, and cripples.



top: Catskill style flies bottom: comparadun, parachute & spinner flies

Next is colour, which is the most difficult of the three attributes to understand, and probably the least important. Much about the trout's vision can be deduced from the anatomy of its eye. But we will never know with certainty what a trout actually sees, only that it does not see things as we do. It lives in an aqueous environment, where the penetration of light-rays rapidly diminishes as they pass through the water column. If there is turbidity due to silt or algae, light is further reduced. Hence, a trout's ocular system is designed to maximize vision in a dimly lit world.

Their eyes lack both an eyelid and reactive iris, both of which could be used to limit the entrance of light into the eye. This may be part of the reason that trout seek shady and/or deep water during much of the brightest portions of the day. In addition, when a trout rises to the water's surface to capture a bug in bright sunshine, it probably encounters a sunburst effect, such as happens to the human eye. This makes it difficult to see colour at all. In contrast, on an overcast day, colour is likely to be far more perceptible to the trout, and therefore, the fly fisher's colour selection will be of greater consequence.

Another anatomic difference between the trout and human eye, is the ratio of rods (the receptors most sensitive to light) to cones (the receptors most sensitive to colour). Trout have a much greater proportion of rods, enhancing their ability to see in their darker world. But this is at the expense of colour perception. This is not to suggest that colour plays no role, but it's role is more complex than we might assume. Certainly, the fly that we see in our fly box, is not the fly that the trout sees.

I do think it is important to use a fly that is a similar shade or tone as the fly that is hatching, that is, light, dark or medium. But I don't think it must be the same precise colour. How else can one explain the trout's acceptance of a parachute Adams, the grey colour of which matches no native fly, but whose medium tone or shade is similar to many?

If we closely examine a natural fly, it rarely reflects solely one colour. In addition, they have chitin in their exoskeletons, giving them a bright reflectance. Thus, I prefer to use dubbing blends that have a mix of colours and include a bit of sparkle, such as the [Dave Whitlock](#) dubbing blends, one of which is shown below, which incorporate these features.



Dave Whitlock dubbing blend

Subsurface flies

Sunken or wet flies present a different set of challenges. For this discussion I will divide them into two groups, nymphs, and streamers. Size remains important for nymphs. As discussed in my October article, "[Fall Fly Fishing- Strategies for Trout](#)", the size of nymphs changes dramatically over the course of a year, corresponding to the life cycle of aquatic bugs. Most bugs hatch, mate, and egg-lay over the summer. In the fall, the new nymphs are small, size #20 or less. They gradually grow over the year, reaching their maximum size just before emerging the following spring and summer. Therefore, fishing the right sized nymph, especially in the fall, will significantly increase the number of hook-ups.

I think that shape also remains important. Nearly twenty years ago, I observed that nymph patterns, attached to a leader, tumble over and over when in the drift. This is not a natural presentation for a living nymph. Therefore, I tie nearly all my nymphs in the round, using hen hackle for a collar, similar to old fashioned wet flies. Tied in this fashion, my nymphs are always seen to be right side up, never upside down. Also, hen hackle provides a great deal of movement or life to my imitations. Over the past decade, I think that many fly fishers have come to the same conclusion, as these patterns are found with increasing frequency in the fly-bins of commercial fly shops.



nymphs tied "in the round"

Last again is colour. I use muted colours, generally in shades of olive and brown, mottled, with a bit of flash or fluorescence. I study the colour of each stream bottom to guide my selection. Nymphs and larvae live on and within the bottom matter of a streambed and are usually camouflaged so as to blend in and avoid predation.

With streamers, size is again important. While small streamers will be taken by all sizes of trout, large streamers, five or six inches in length, will not be taken by any but the largest trout. Thus, the number and size of your catch will be affected by the size of the streamer you choose to fish.

To give lifelike movement to the fly, it is important to use materials which readily undulate and move in the water. Bunny and marabou are two such materials. I also prefer to use flies with weight in the head. This will impart a dipping motion to the fly when it is brought to a stop, simulating an injured or dying minnow. These are inviting targets for a hungry trout.

The appearance of an artificial fly's colour, as seen by a trout beneath the water's surface, is very difficult to assess. When an artificial fly becomes wet, most of its coloured materials will become darker. As it descends in the water column, there is less light, and longer wavelengths are filtered out.

These factors further change the colour of the fly, which will appear more monochromatic, that is, grey. Regardless of the colour, flies will be seen in varying shades, light, intermediate or dark. I therefore tie various shades of any colour streamer I plan to fish, usually shades of tan or olive. Usually, I add a bit of flashabou for some sparkle. I fish the lighter shades in shallower water, and the darker shades in deeper water.

These are a few of my thoughts regarding the important elements of tying flies. If interested, the following are excellent books to read as well. But always remember, trout are the best fly-tying instructors!

- [Designing Trout Flies](#) by Gary Borger
- [The Dry Fly, New Angles](#) by Gary LaFontaine
- [Trout Flies, The Tier's Reference](#) by Dave Hughes
- [Trout Flies, The Tier's Reference](#) by Dave Martin

3 Tips for dry fly-fishing stealth by George Daniel



Low water and skittish trout are common during the late summer and early autumn trout fishing seasons. While most any fly-fishing tactic will produce results at those times of the year, dry flies are often an excellent option. Although some hatches still occur, reduced activity of aquatic insects both above and below the surface often leaves trout looking up for food, specifically, for terrestrials. But while trout are looking up to feed, they are also on the lookout for predators, thanks to low, clear water, which puts their evolutionary protective alarms on high alert.

Having success with dry flies during these times of the year means being stealthy. Employing a few common-sense tips to help stay out of sight and out of mind of the trout you're chasing can significantly improve your dry fly success during the late season.

Lengthen your leader

Fly lines landing on the water during the cast or presentation is perhaps the most common way to spook trout, especially during times of low and clear conditions. No matter how delicate the angler lays the line on the water, every fly line has mass and—unless you're able to defy gravity—will land on the surface, displacing some amount of water and causing a disturbance. If you find your cast spooking fish, lengthen the leader by adding a heavy butt section to the back end of your leader. The longer your leader, the farther the mass of the fly line will be from the fish you are targeting when it impacts the water, and the less likely you will be to send it fleeing for cover.

Start off with a standard 2.5-meter 5X or 6X leader and add anywhere from 1 to 2.5 meters of 50lb tippet. Lengthening your leader by extending the butt section allows you to minimize the number of leaders you need to carry. If you're new to fly fishing, I would recommend keeping your leader no longer than 3 to 4 meter in length. As you develop better casting, along with better line and leader control skills, you will be able to fish leaders in excess of 4.5 meters.

A quite pickup

A heavy fly line landing on the water will spook fish but so will a partially sunken fly line being pulled out of the water as an angler prepares to backcast. A sunken fly line—or even a submerged

leader—must break the water’s surface tension before it can be lifted off the water, which often causes a loud disturbance. If the line and leader cause too much disturbance during the pickup, fish in the immediate area are likely to spook before you present the fly again, robbing you of that second (or third, or fourth) opportunity.

While there are several casting techniques which help decrease the likelihood of a hard lift-off, the most effective tactic is greasing your fly line and your leader’s butt section with a grease floatant—not a gel. A grease floatant like Mucilin or Loon’s Payette Paste sticks to the line and leader and keeps it floating higher and longer than a gel application, because gel is designed for flies, not fly lines and leaders. A high floating line and leader peels off the water with less disturbance.

Start short

Another common cause of spooking fish is casting over a fish. When dry fly fishing, this is called “lining the fish.” This is a mistake everyone (and I mean everyone!) makes. Sometimes it’s impossible to know where a fish is positioned, and accidentally lining it is just part of the process. But this mistake often occurs due to impatience.

Here’s an example: you enter the water and see a trout rising on the opposite side of the stream. Your instinct is to immediately cast to that fish. In doing so, you end up lining two other fish in the pool. Those two flee and end up spooking the fish you saw rising. That’s game over. Cast short at first, then slowly lengthen each proceeding cast.

There is no way to eliminate spooking fish, but we can reduce how often we do. These three common sense tips will increase your chances for success the next time you find yourself dry fly fishing during late summer, early autumn, or any other time where stealth is crucial.

The Fisherman is Eternally Hopeful by Domenick Swentosky



Rich had cancer, and it was spreading fast. We both knew this was our last trip together and that a dear friendship was coming to a close.

We fished a long morning, and eventually, I worked upstream toward my friend. From thirty yards, I could see the exhaustion in his face. Rich stood where a long riffle dumped into his favourite glassy pool. He breathed a long breath and gazed at the cloudy sky. Reeling in his line and breaking down his rod, he looked at me, and we smiled. We each knew we were at the end of something.

I was fishing a large parachute ant, moving quickly and covering a lot of water, as was my habit on Clover Run in those days. And in the right months it was a tactic that brought at least one chance to catch and release a really good fish. But on that morning, I hadn't caught much of anything, so I threw a couple careless, hopeless casts into the glide ahead of me as I waded the last thirty yards toward my friend.

"Put a few casts to that bank," Rich said, and he gestured toward a shallow piece of side water next to the riffle where he was standing.

With not much cover on the bank for a trout, and with the sun poking through the clouds at midday, *I didn't have any hope*. But I obliged and diverted my course a few feet. I stripped out some fly line and cast to the bank while Rich stood and watched my line draw narrow, artistic loops through the air.

Two casts. That was all. Something with a big mouth swirled and engulfed my fly, and I set the hook hard. Rich howled in approval!

In the shallow water, with no glare against the surface, I could clearly see the long trout before he ran into deeper water — and I knew something was different. The fish fought weakly against the pressure of my rod tip, and I was surprised how easily I brought the trout upstream and into Rich's waiting net.

It was a twenty-two-inch wild brown trout. But it was long and slender, with a head as wide as its body. It looked tired.

Rich and I made eye contact and kept smiling. The symbolism was enough, and words were never spoken. Not only was it a top-tier fish on the last cast — and in the last water that Rich and I would ever fish together — but he'd *shown* me where to find it. Even more startling was the parallel of Rich with the trout itself. The fish was clearly in its last days. It was either sick or dying from old age, and it was weak.

We shook hands, embraced, and kept smiling as we waded to the bank and walked the narrow path back home.

A few months later I found myself in my waders on the same river, but with no fly rod in hand or vest on my back. With Rich's best friend at my side (my father-in-law) in his own waders, we slipped quietly through the clear water to the top of what we now call Rich's Pool. And in the same spot where Rich netted that last fish for me . . . we scattered his ashes in the current.

Rich sent a letter to me before he died. At the end he wrote, "Dom, I'll meet you upstream."

I look forward to that.

***"The fisherman is eternally hopeful."* — Rich Alsippi**

Check, Clean, Dry: preventing didymo and other pest, update from MPI

Freshwater pests can be spread by your activities in and around waterways. If you've been in a lake, river, stream or wetland and plan to move to another within 48 hours, you must clean all your gear that has been wet using the 'Check, Clean, Dry' method. Here's how to do it.

Changes to the cleaning method

In October 2021, we changed our recommendation about how best to clean your gear if you're using dishwashing detergent. Until then, our advice was to use a mix of 5% dishwashing detergent and water, and keep the item wet for at least a minute.

Now it's 10 for 10

Our revised advice is to:

- **use a mix of 10% dishwashing detergent with water,**
- **leave the item wet for 10 minutes.**

This is the first update for many years and the main reasons for it are changes in detergents and the pests that we need to stop. This is based on research by NIWA. We will gradually update our resources with the "10 for 10" messaging.

Clean all gear when moving between waterways

Invasive freshwater pests, including didymo, could squeeze the life out of our country's most precious rivers and lakes. They can be spread by a single drop of water or plant fragment or single fish egg. You can help to protect your favourite waterways if you always check, clean, then dry any equipment that comes into contact with the water, between every waterway, every time.

Legal requirements to clean gear

The South Island is a Controlled Area for the invasive freshwater algae didymo (also known as rock snot), which was first detected there in 2004. This makes it a legal requirement to clean all gear used in the water before going from one South Island waterway to another waterway. So far, no didymo has been found in the North Island.

Under the Biosecurity Act (1993) there is a requirement not to spread invasive freshwater weeds and pests anywhere in New Zealand.

The Check, Clean, Dry method

To prevent the spread of invasive freshwater pests (like didymo), whenever you move between waterways you must check, clean, and dry all your gear that comes into contact with water. If you don't want to treat your gear, make sure you only use it in one waterway.

- **Check** - Remove and plant matter from your gear and leave it at the site (the river or lake bank) or put it in the rubbish. Do not wash any plant material down a drain.
- **Clean** – Use 10% dishwashing detergent mixed with water and leave for 10 minutes.

The rule of thumb for 10% detergent mix is:

- for a 250 ml (small) spray bottle, put in 1 and health tablespoons

- for a 500 ml (large) spray bottle, put in 3 tablespoons
- for a 10-litre bucket put in 1 litre of detergent.

Cleaning options

Option	Amount	Treatment Time
Dishwashing detergent or nappy cleaner	10% mix	Soak or spray all surfaces and leave wet for at least 10 minutes.
Bleach	2% mix (200mls to 10 litres of water)	Soak and spray all surfaces for at least 1 minute.
Hot water	Above 60 degrees Above 45 degrees	Soak for 1 minute Soak for 20 minutes
Freezing		Until solid

- *When using hot water 60 degrees is hotter than most tap water while 45 degrees is uncomfortable to touch.*
- *Allow longer soaking time when cleaning absorbent items.*

Cleaning large volumes of gear

If you have large amounts of gear (for example if you have a fishing or diving business), you can find other suitable options in Appendix 3 of *Check, Clean, Dry: Information for sporting event organisers*.

[Check, Clean, Dry for sporting event organisers](#)

Make sure you:

- follow the manufacturer's safety instructions for any cleaning products
- choose a method that will not damage your gear
- check the cleaning mix has penetrated right through the item before you soak it for the recommended time
- check our cleaning instructions for specific items – some have different cleaning requirements.

Dry

Ensure your gear is completely dry to touch, inside and out, then leave dry for at least another 48 hours before you use it (didymo can survive for months on moist gear).

Treatment by drying

Drying can be used as a stand-alone treatment for non-absorbent items if you take care to:

- make sure the gear is completely dry to touch, both inside and out

- leave to dry for at least another 48 hours (after drying) before entering a different waterway.

Video – How to clean your gear. <https://youtu.be/LJ1UI-iSEdI>

Manganui-O-te-Ao River



Mike Bakker with a Manganui-O-te-Ao Rainbow

Granted a National Water Conservation Order in 1989, the Manganui-O-te-Ao river near Raetihi supports a nationally significant fishery for brown and rainbow trout. These trout average 1.6 kg, though some fish reach 4 kg or more. The river is also notable for its outstanding scenic values and Whio (blue duck) population.

The fishery was adversely affected by a major flood in October 2013 but is now well on the road to recovery. Angling use is low by national standards and there are always easy to access, undisturbed fishing spots to be found. The defined sequence of deep pools, runs and rapids create a diversity of fishing water that caters for all angling methods and levels of skill.

Rainbow trout tend to dominate in the upper river above the Mangamingi Stream confluence, both species occur in similar numbers through the middle section where most angling occurs, and below the Makakahi confluence, brown trout are most common.

The high-water quality sourced from snowmelt and glacial runoff supports rich insect life dominated by caddisflies but also including mayfly and stonefly species, all of which hatch regularly through the warmer months. A feature of the river is the evening rise which occurs on calm, mild evenings throughout spring and summer.

Similarly in late January and February in good cicada years, trout will rise freely during the day to floating terrestrial imitations, particularly along the foam line at the head of the pool and in the shallower and faster 'pocket' water.

All fishing methods work well.

Typically, the pools are productive early in the season while later on the runs and rapids come into their own. Be aware that some of the pools are very deep and if not having success fishing this water, then the answer is usually to add more weight.

When fly fishing the pools during the day an indicator rig fished upstream with a deeply weighted nymph and trailing smaller unweighted or lightly weighted conventional mayfly or caddis imitation nymph is often effective. However, if you are not having success be prepared to add more weight and/ or lengthen the leader.

Similarly, many of these pools lend themselves to being fished from the top of the pool with a wet fly such as a woolly bugger or rabbit swung downstream on a fast-sinking fly line or sinking leader.

A feature of many of these pools is a back eddy at the head of the pool and often trout will lie in this zone facing downstream where they are susceptible to a nymph or fly drifted back upstream along the edge

Similarly, flyfishing this water with a floating fly line and small weighted nymph suspended below a buoyant dry fly such as a royal coachman, or alternatively a high floating cicada imitation on its own, can make for a very productive afternoon.

Often overlooked by many visitors to the Manganui-O-te-Ao is the evening rise.



Ram Paddock pool

Pools that earlier seemed devoid of fish can suddenly have numerous trout rising.

Traditional dry flies like the March Brown, Twilight Beauty and Kakahi Queen are still favoured by many local anglers, or alternatively, a high floating sedge pattern trailing a non-descript emerger nymph or traditional wet fly.

The advantage of this second rig is that the dry can be fished upstream in a conventional manner and then at the end of the drift the nymph is allowed to drag around in the manner of an emerging sedge.

This covers several bases at once without the difficulty of re-rigging in the gathering gloom.

While it is legal, bait fishing is rarely practised on this river though trailing a worm or creeper (dobsonfly larvae) under a bubble float is an effective way to introduce a budding angler to trout fishing.

Access

To access the middle reaches which comprise the great majority of accessible fishing water turn left off SH4 into Ruatiti Road, 4 km north of Raetihi. Follow Ruatiti Road for 12 km to reach the river at the Oruotaha confluence.

The Makakahi and Pukekaha Roads branch off Ruatiti Road to the lower and upper reaches respectively.

All access to the lower reach is across private land and you must obtain permission.

In the middle reaches, river access and a delightful and free camping area are available at Ruatiti Domain, located by continuing downstream along Ruatiti Road. Bridge crossings also provide river access.

A public right of way exists along both banks from approximately 2 km below Ruatiti Domain upstream to the vicinity of SH4. However steep bluffs and anything but low flows often makes access along the river itself difficult.

The landowners through this middle section are very amenable though to providing access across their paddocks (recognising that occasionally farming activities may preclude this in a particular location) – so long as you ask, park away from gates and NO dogs.

Obtaining access opens up many easy to reach fishing locations.

[Click here for a map that shows the various property boundaries along the most easily accessed part of the river and lists a contact phone number for each.](#)

Cell phone coverage is minimal along the river, so it is advised to ring in advance of your visit.

Note that above the Hoihenga Stream confluence the river flows within a steep gorge and local knowledge is necessary to locate the limited and often difficult to negotiate access points.

Orautoha Stream



Orautoha Stream below Papa Stream confluence

When driving towards the Manganui-O-te-Ao river, the Orautoha Stream is the small and attractive stream lying to the right of and flowing parallel to Ruatiti Road.

The Orautoha is a major spawning tributary of the Manganui-O-te-Ao river and can be very productive early in the fishing season before rising temperatures become too warm for trout. There are some excellent pools and riffles sections in the first few kilometres upstream of its confluence with the Manganui-O-te-Ao river which can be easily accessed.

There is a public right of way all the way up the true right bank (on your right when facing downstream) to Papa Road and on the left bank from the confluence with the Manganui-O-te-Ao river up to the second road bridge upstream.

However as for elsewhere asking for permission to cross the paddocks and to access the upper true left bank does make life much easier and is strongly recommended.

While the stream shares the fish population of the Manganui-O-te-Ao river, rainbow trout seem reluctant to hold in the shallow water and most fish taken are brown trout between 1 and 2 kg. Nymph or dry fly fishing on fine gear is recommended and is a small stream anglers should try to maintain a low profile or risk spooking these wary fish.

Upper Mangawhero River



Upper Mangawhero river upstream of Pakahi Road

Flowing through Ohakune, the upper Mangawhero River contains a good population of brown trout averaging 1.5 kg. The headwaters are within Tongariro National Park, however here the river is enveloped in native bush which while scenic makes angling difficult.

The river leaves the National Park to run through Ohakune township and then crosses farmland before entering an inaccessible gorge upstream of SH4. This 10 km stretch between Ohakune, and the gorge is the most popular fishing reach and is characterised by gravelly rocky runs, pools, and more placid willow-lined stretches.

Early in the season cased caddis dominate the trout diet but as the season progresses mayfly nymphs become more important. In December fish often gorge on brown and green beetle and in more recent years in April on wasps under the willow trees. As is common with most rivers in the area there is a good evening rise over spring and summer.

On initial inspection the Mangawhero river may appear to hold few fish. However, the water often has a brownish tinge which makes seeing trout more difficult, and if an area is watched for a period of time fish will often become apparent.

Over summer trout will often lie just under the surface against overhanging or instream cover. These fish are very easy to overlook and equally difficult to cast to though if a small, unweighted nymph or emerger pattern can be cast close to them they will often readily take this.

Otherwise, a weighted nymph under an indicator or dry fly can be used to prospect deeper pools and runs or to target trout seen feeding deeper. Typically, dry fly fishing is confined to the evening rise using the same patterns and techniques as mentioned for the Manganui-O-te-Ao river. However, an exception is when trout are rising to take beetles (or wasps) during the day.

Access is from Ohakune Mountain Road, within Ohakune township and from Mangawhero River, Raetihi- Ohakune and Pakihi roads. While a right of public access extends down the true left bank from the Mangawhero River Road Bridge to just below Pakihi Road Bridge, much of the preferred access is along the opposite bank.

Downstream of Mangawhero River Road on the true right the owner Murray Fredricksen is happy for anglers to access along the river but please no dogs. Similarly, to fish the true right bank upstream of Pakahi Road please ring Bruce Rollinson first on 027 444 6961.

Below the Raetihi-Ohakune Road “golf course” bridge the river is open to angling all year round.

Taonui Stream

This small spring-fed stream joins the Mangawhero at a point halfway between Ohakune and Raetihi. The stream holds fish throughout its length, but it is fished mostly in the 4km below the railway line. The water is generally narrow with a gravel and rock bed, long shallow riffles, and occasional pools.

The same brown trout population is shared with the Mangawhero, but the average weight is greater at 2 kg and the stream has a reputation for producing some very large fish. Access is from SH49 and from Mangawhero River Road near the Mangawhero confluence. There is no public access along the stream and the landowner’s permission must be obtained.

During the day flyfishing with weighted nymphs and a small indicator can be effective though the fish, in the way of brown trout, are often tucked away under the banks and can seem few and far between. However, fishing the evening rise with standard dry fly patterns can be much more rewarding.

Tokiahuru and Waitaiki Streams



Typical view of the Tokiahuru Stream

These streams have their origins in Karioi Forest on Mount Ruapehu's southern slopes. Fishable water extends from the railway line where the forest gives way to farmland down to the confluence with the Whangaehu River, approximately 10 km downstream.

The water of the Whangaehu is naturally acidic from Ruapehu's crater-lake and this effectively isolates the Tokiahuru system. The Waitaiki and Tokiahuru streams come together about 4 km above the Whangaehu confluence, and large trout are most abundant from where they join down to the Whangaehu.

Above their confluence both streams are rather small, the water 'heavy' and large stretches of the Tokiahuru in particular heavily overgrown. The system supports a mixed population of brown and rainbow trout with fish in excess of 2 kg occasionally taken. Available food consists of mayflies and caddis, creeper and also beetles and other terrestrials which fall in off the overhanging grassy banks and trees.

Due to the cold spring water the emergence of aquatic insects is often later than in other near-by waters and dry fly fishing is not usually productive before mid-November, with the best fishing between December and March. Heavily weighted nymphs (hare and copper, halfback, pheasant tail and caddis imitations) or a two-nymph rig are recommended, and often more weight is necessary than you might first expect due to the heavy nature of the water.

However, these are still small clear streams, and it is necessary to be judicious about the size and colour of any indicator used and to take care when stalking and casting to fish so as not to be seen. Alternatively, if the trout are up feeding close to or off the surface then a dry fly or a dry fly and small nymph combination can be used, keeping in mind that all sorts of terrestrials including beetles and grasshoppers may fall from the banks over summer.

Both streams are open all year below the SH49 bridges. Access is from Karioi Station Road, Whangaehu Valley Road and Oruakukuru Road. There are no rights of public access along these streams and anglers should seek permission from the adjacent landowner.

Retaruke River

This Whanganui River tributary rising west of Raurimu contains a mixed population of brown and rainbow trout. At its best the upper reaches are a delightful backcountry fishery, however, in recent years it has been severely impacted by sediment from a major slip in Erua Forest. This slip is now stabilising, and the trout fishery is rebounding well.

In recognition that the fishery is in a rebuilding phase, the river was catch and release only for several seasons, but from the 2021 season, the regulations have reverted to all legal methods and a two trout daily bag limit.

The upper river provides extensive fly-fishing water and is accessible from Oio Road (off SH4 just south of Owango) and Upper Retaruke Road. The remaining 20km of the river down to the Whanganui junction is larger and more tannin-stained, and best suited to spinning. Access to the lower river is via Oio Road down to Whakahoro.

Much of the upper river comprises open shallow gravel and boulder runs and rapids with many trout holding in the pocket water, especially over the height of summer. There are also some

steep-sided gorge sections that create deeper pools, these are often more difficult to fish than they first appear due to swirling currents.

Exploring the pocket water and pools with weighted nymphs under an indicator or buoyant dry fly works well. Alternatively swimming a sunken wet fly down through the deeper pools can overcome some of the difficult currents and swirls that may sometimes handicap using a sunken nymph. On warm summer evenings, there can also be a good evening rise which can be fished to using the same traditional patterns as mentioned elsewhere.

While there is public access along both banks over much of the river, public access spots to reach the river are limited. Also, be aware that illegal hunting is a serious issue in this area and landowners are understandably suspicious of unknown vehicles parked in remote locations. It is therefore recommended to contact the adjacent landowner which in turn may open up many more access points and make for an easier walk back to your vehicle.



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If you have never seen a Kiwi in its natural environment (near natural) then I would recommend the Kiwi Night Encounter at Nga Manu, you will need to book as it is limited to 10 people each night.

Newsletter content with built-in links to other documents by Editor

Readers of our newsletter may not realise that when you see a name or wording underlined in an article, as an example [a Harvey leader](#) this is a link to another article where you can find more information. All you need to do is hold down your CTRL key and click on the words and the link will open.

*Newsletter copy to be received by
Second Monday of each month; your
contribution is welcome just send it to:*

malcolm1@xtra.co.nz

Purpose:

To promote the art and sport of Fly Fishing.

To respect the ownership of land adjoining waterways.

To promote the protection of fish and wildlife habitat.

To promote friendship and goodwill between members.

To promote and encourage the exchange of information between members.

Club meetings

You are invited to attend our club meetings that are held on the **Fourth Monday** of each month.

The venue is the **Turf Pavilion Sport Grounds**, Scaife Street, Paraparaumu,

Our **meetings start at 7:30pm** with fellowship followed by speakers of activities.

Club Committee meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month and the meetings are held at the Waikanae Boating Club and start at 7:30pm.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please remember that the club has two Five Weight 8'6" fly rods that members are welcome to use, just contact Malcolm Francis

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