



NEWSLETTER
AUGUST 2016 Volume XXI: No. 8

www.wacoflyfishingclub.org

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, August 9, 2016

LOCATION:

Lake Waco Wetlands

PROGRAM:

Fly Tying and Tall Tales - About 6:00 p.m.

The History of Fly Fishing by Mike Morpew - About 7:00 p.m.

AUGUST PROGRAM - THE HISTORY OF FLY FISHING BY MIKE MORPHEW

Mike Morpew has been fly fishing for trout, salmon and saltwater fish for over 50 years. He tied his first fly at age 13, caught a trout on it and was "hooked". He has been fascinated with tying "ultra-realistic" insects for 15 years. In 2003 he was asked to create a salmon fly display for Her Royal Highness Princess Anne. All of his flies and realistic imitations are hand tied and mounted for the best presentation. Mike lives in Smithville, Texas and is on the board of the Austin Fly Fishers Club.

Mike is one of the headliners at the Texas Fly Fishing Expo hosted by the Texas Council next month in Grapevine. He will talk to us about the history of fly fishing, something many of us know very little about. We have also asked him to do some demonstration tying for us.

JULY PROGRAM- FLY FISHING THE DURANGO AREA WITH DALE CONNALLY

Obviously the programs presented at our monthly meetings are informative, but they are also inspirational - in a fly fishing sense that is. Not only did Dale Connally detail the fishing opportunities in and around Durango, but inspired us to expand our next San Juan trips to include some fishing in Southwestern Colorado.

Dale's initial planning was aided by the book *Colorado's Best Fishing Waters*, a reference he highly recommends. His group stayed at the Santa Rita Park not far from Durango.

Dale took us to the Gold Medal Waters of the Animas in Durango first. You can fish the Animas right in town. Really, you can park at the Home Depot or a bicycle park and catch many 8-10 inch Trout, a few up to 17 inches with a chance at a twenty incher. This is obviously an urban fishery, but once you are on the water it feels just like a Trout stream. Of course, Durango itself feels more like an old western town than anything urban. Tackle and advice are nearby at the Duranglers Fly Shop. Duranglers also has a helpful website which reports on the current conditions of the waters Dale discussed.

Dale had success drifting a Jimmy Legs above a pheasant tail. Dale noted that he has been looking for Trout that won't take a Jimmy Legs, so far without success. I'm sure his quest will continue. He likes to tie the pattern in brown or olive with a bright orange head. A few years ago Dale demonstrated tying the pattern at one of our meetings, even handing out materials so we could tie up a few.

Dale also described fishing the Delores River both above and below McPhee Reservoir. Dale's group did well on the West Fork above the reservoir using dry/dropper rigs. Below the reservoir they also caught fish, but that tailrace could use more water.

It seemed that the best was saved for the last - the Southern Ute Reservation. The fishing is managed by the tribe, but is user friendly. After checking in and paying a modest access fee you are free to fish the marked public water. Dale choose the Piedra and did really well. He had the pictures to prove it.

As always, Dale's presentation was accompanied with outstanding photography of the waters fished and the fish caught.

OUR CLUB - WE WANT IT TO BE A BIG TENT

The Waco Fly Fishing Club was founded 22 years ago by a group of twenty-one fly fishers to "further the sport of fly fishing, inspire its angling literature, advance its fellowship and broaden the understanding of all anglers in the spirit of true sportsmanship." Our club has a lot to offer and, if you want, we could offer even more.

We currently have thirty-nine paid and life members which isn't too bad considering that social media seems to have taken the place of joining clubs for many younger folks. Also, I don't think the local population has grown by over 50% in the last two decades. Even so, I would like to our club to grow even more. After all, fly fishers are at the top of the list of those who not only enjoy the outdoors, but respect and protect our natural resources. And, there is no more enjoyable way to catch fish than on a fly.

Our monthly meetings give us opportunities to become better informed about our sport as well as the fellowship part. Some of the best fly fishing opportunities I have experienced in recent years derived directly from our club. The Middle Bosque at FM 3047 comes to mind. I consider this stretch of the Middle Bosque to be home water. I probably wouldn't even know about it if Pat Vanek hadn't given me directions years ago at one of our meetings. Thanks to John Maddux we learned a few years later that the right of way at FM 3047 had been closed by TxDOT and we took the steps that lead to it being re-opened to the public.

At another meeting, Lloyd Fason and Jim Cox tipped me off to the Carp and Striper fishing at the Whitney dam. This public access point is basically closed now, but what a year of fishing I had there a few years back. Maybe we can find a way to get it reopened to the public as more than a boat launch.

Dale Connally has tipped me off to some nice holding water on the Guadalupe that put a few very nice Trout in my net. The programs that Dale has presented have always informed and inspired.

There is much more. All of us have similar examples of help given and received.

We have also conducted several introductory fly fishing classes and participated in several outdoor events over the years like the "Get Outdoors" event sponsored by the Corps of Engineers on Lake Waco. You can add assisting with clean-ups like the one sponsored annually by Living Waters Fly Shop on Brushy Creek.

The reason I bring all of this up is because the club officers are starting to plan for 2017. If you can spare a little time, even just a few hours a month, we could use some fresh officers. If you would like to get more involved in one of the events we are already doing we can always use the help. If there is something you would like us to expand into let us know.

One simple opportunity is the angling literature thing. In some ways this newsletter has become my personal fishing journal. For years I have included trip reports to add content. I have tried to point out mistakes made and lessons learned to hopefully help you benefit from my experiences - good and bad. I have to admit that I enjoy writing my trip reports and enjoy going back to read them even more. If you prepare a trip report for publishing even in a friendly forum like our newsletter you put a little more effort into it than just scratching out a few lines in a notebook. Looking back on those reports gives you an opportunity to relive the whole thing.

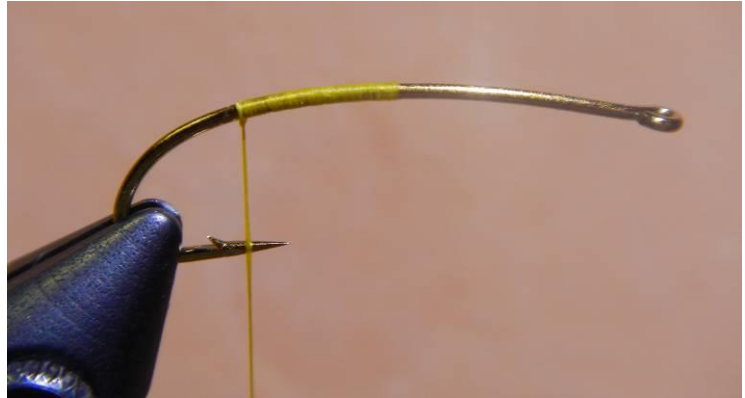
The club officers recently met and discussed a few things we would like to try next year. We would like to hold a White Bass event, maybe at Cabela's. There would be basic fly casting, fly tying and tips on catching White Bass on the fly. If somebody would like to ramrod this event let me know.

If you have an idea that you think would benefit the club bring it to us. Without much effort, hopefully shared effort with fellow club members, we can promote our club, fly fishing in general and provide an opportunity for people that want to give fly fishing a try.

Bob Hanley

SPEAKING OF NEW IDEAS - LET'S TRY FLY TYING NIGHT - THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2016

The club officers have scheduled some fly tying for Thursday night, September 29, 2016 at my office located at 6011 Bosque Blvd (between Extraco Bank and the funeral home). We'll get started about 5:30 pm and tie until about 8:00 pm. Like most everything we do this will be informal so feel free to come late or leave early. The lighting may not be strong enough for some of us, ahem, more experienced tyers, but electricity will be available so you can bring a lamp.



If you don't tie, but would like to get started let me know and we will have equipment and materials available so you can give fly tying a try. WARNING - Fly Tying is Addictive.

We hope this evolves into a monthly event and we are open to ideas to make Fly Tying Night better as time goes on. If there is enough interest, we might move to another location, have featured tyers, etc.

Bob Hanley



**September 8-10, 2016
GRAPEVINE, TEXAS**

The third Texas Fly Fishing Expo is next month, beginning September 8, 2016 and ending September 10, 2016 at the Grapevine Recreation Center. Make a short drive and get into the middle of more fly fishing related stuff than you can imagine. The Texas Council does an outstanding job with its annual Expos.

For more information see- <http://txflyfishexpo.com>.

SOME HAVE "LAID ASIDE BUSINESS AND GONE A'FISHING"

Middle Bosque at the 3047 Crossing

Local fishing has been challenged for much of the year by high lake levels and high flows on area streams. But, by early July, the flow on the Middle Bosque was ideal for taking a stroll

down the streambed with fly rod in hand. The water was not as clear as it gets, but still provided excellent visibility. In fact, the very slight tint to the water probably helped the fishing some.

The best news was the lack of that nasty slick stuff on the bottom. If you have ever waded this stretch of the Middle Bosque you probably know how slick the submerged shelf rock can get. Well the high flows this spring pretty much scoured the rock clean. The only problem was developing a false sense of security. Just when I got the notion that I could jog along on the shelf rock I would hit a slick spot. Always use a wading staff on this part of the Middle Bosque. On this trip I broke in a new wading staff purchased last month at the Los Pinos Fly Shop in Albuquerque. My old staff is noticeably bent into an arch after years of meritorious service.

I went downstream quite a ways catching many Perch. The small to average size Perch were about as colorful as they get. The total numbers still seem down some, but there were plenty enough to catch. I'll need an upstream wade to confirm this, but the downstream Perch still seem smaller than those upstream from the bridge. The only disappointment fishing-wise was the lock-jawed Bass. The only one I hooked went crazy air born throwing the hook almost immediately.



One of the biggest of the morning. The bigger Perch were much less colorful.

The only other disappointment was the littered parking area. The evidence indicates that the general public has been using the area now that the weather is hot and flows manageable. I filled my litter bag and will get the rest when I go back to explore upstream.

Middle Bosque at the 3047 Crossing - the Sequel

On a hot Sunday morning I decided to try upstream from the bridge. I started by picking up a bit of trash. There wasn't that much. In fact, it was better than I left it a few weeks earlier. Somebody else must be policing the area. Thanks to whoever that is.

Flows are down to about 9 CFS and falling, but there is still plenty of fishable water, the water just isn't moving much. If you throw out isolated high flows, 9 CFS is about average for this time of year, maybe a little above.

The water is still not as clear as it can get, but plenty clear enough for fishing. Wading upstream was about as good as it gets at this location. You can stay on gravel about 80% of the time or more. When you do have to traverse shelf rock it is not slick. I don't think I slipped once. I guess high flows earlier this year really scoured the rock and the slime is having trouble getting reestablished. Still, bring your wading staff, it is just a matter of time before things get slippery again.

I decided to target Bass with flies that were too large for the average Perch to take. Of course they still try and occasionally succeed. From what I could see the upstream Perch are a little bigger than those downstream. Also, now that lower flows have concentrated the fish I think numbers are down. The good news is large schools of minnows - the future looks bright.

I fished a variety of flies starting with a floating Grasshopper pattern. I caught a few on that hopper, but the fish didn't seem to be coming up that much so I switched to sinking patterns, catching a little Catfish right after I tied on a woolly bugger. Awhile after that I tied on a salt water fly, Redfish Crack, and pretty much stayed with that fly. I really like the action of that pattern and plan to tie a little smaller version for freshwater. The salt water version is way too big for Perch and I think the Bass will still take a smaller one.



One challenge was getting the fish to actually take a fly. Many, many fish, including some big Bass would do that thing where they followed the fly all the way in, but would not take it. I tried accelerating the fly, stopping it and everything in between with limited success. I still caught plenty of fish, but the followers outnumbered the takers and the bigger Bass were all followers.

Bob Hanley

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