



www.flyfishersofthebitterroot.org

"Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot is a nonprofit club dedicated to sharing our passion for fly fishing by promoting fellowship, education and stewardship of our fishing resources."

October 2017 Newsletter

Tuesday, October 3rd at 6pm BJ's Restaurant- Hamilton

President's Message

Happy Fall everyone. I know it seemed like a long journey getting here, but clear skies are here at last, along with cool nights & the colors of autumn appearing everywhere. Snow levels half way down the mountains remind us that Fall can be fleeting around here so get out and enjoy it. I know I will- I am out of my sling and have been ok'd to start a little fishing—part of my rehab.....it makes me a happy camper! This month's speaker is Sean Gallagher, author of "Wild Steelhead, the Lure and Lore of a Pacific Northwest Icon." At the last club meeting, Phil Romans started a board raffle for his signed books. It is already half full and we plan to draw the winner as soon as the board is full. Sean will add a little note to the winner of these classic books.

Most of my fishing past has been on the Pacific Northwest Rivers he talks about. As a neophyte fly fisher handling the heavier gear and frigidly cold waters in late fall and winter where honestly not my favorite type of fishing. But I remember my first Steelhead- on the Skykomish River in Washington state in late fall in the cold rain. I had never caught anything over 12 inches, let alone 10 pounds! As I slowly worked my way back towards shore I was frantically calling to my friend on the shore to get the camera. He, unfortunately, had decided to take a nap and was unaware of my heroic efforts to land my first steelhead. Needless to say, there is no picture except the one in my memories. As I released the fish & I watched it shoot back in to the cold waters, I was thankful for this opportunity to experience why these fish mean so much to people. As the pressures of civilization in the Pacific Northwest intensified & invaded the waters of the Steelhead, they became known as "the mystical steelhead": seldom seen and rarely brought to hand. They will always be the Icon of the Northwest- there is nothing like them. I didn't fish much for them in the next years as the runs had been decimated & fishing was closed on all the rivers we fished, even the mighty Skagit River. I do have one picture that is dear to me- of Jim with a Steelhead on the Skagit River, not long before it was closed to fishing. He was with his friend John Farrar, another guide. Another cold, rainy day on "The River", 2 friends..... *Tight lines..... Estelle*



The October 3rd, 2017 Program



Our Guest Speaker is:

Sean Gallagher, renowned author

Title of the presentation:

**“Wild Steelhead, the Lure and Lore
of a Pacific Northwest Icon”**



Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot is pleased to host Sean Gallagher as our speaker for October 3, 2017 at 7 PM at BJ's Restaurant in Hamilton, MT.

Sean's digital slide show includes a number of never published photos mixed with images from WILD STEELHEAD and steelhead country. All of them have a story. “This is a book of experiences. It is about the lure, the lore, the tradition, the culture that has evolved around—and most of all the characters I have met while pursuing steelhead throughout the last 50 years.” Join us and take a look behind the scenes at the making of the largest (two volume) steelhead book ever published.

Sean has a memorable connection to Montana besides special friendships. His grandfather, an avid trout fisherman, was born and raised in Montana. During the early 1960s he tutored Sean in all things trout, including the art of fly casting.

WILD STEELHEAD review quotes:

“Once in a while a book comes along that so resonates as to change the way you view things. Wild Steelhead is such a book. It makes me remember why I became a steelheader, and reconnects me with all those things that are elemental to my steelheading experience. I have not had an angling book get under my skin in this way since Trey Combs’s Steelhead Fly Fishing. It really is that good...”

Some books really don’t require much patience—the good stuff will jump right out at you because there isn’t much of it. Wild Steelhead isn’t like that. It is a book to cover slowly, with patience and care, preferably accompanied by good single malt...

*“If Wild Steelhead is the final work to come out of the greatest era of the literature of steelhead fly fishing that began with Trey Combs's Steelhead Fly Fishing, Combs's and Gallagher's works are the bookends...”
Is it worth 150 bucks? Every penny.”*

Dana Sturn, Spey Pages

“It is not much of an exaggeration, if any, to state that these two volumes represent the greatest collection of steelhead photographs, techniques and lore ever compiled in one place...”

Western Washington University (Special Collections Library)

Recap of September meeting



Many thanks to Jess Riding from Rainy's Flies for an interesting and informative trip through the business of commercial fly tying. We all enjoyed the slide show and came away much more knowledgeable on how the complex process of tying flies on a large scale happens. He donated flies to our raffle and they were a hit alongside a plate of fresh strawberries hand dipped in chocolate!... *It seems the strawberries never made it out of the restaurant.....*

Upcoming programs

November 7, 2107: Hilary Hutcheson, fly fishing guide

December 5th, 2107: Annual meeting & elections

Club dues run January 1- December 31st.

You can pay at the meetings, or via our website or mail a check in. We will be updating information this year on everyone, so please keep an 👁 open for a form coming to you likely by December.

Thanks for those of you who are paying early- it will be for 2018

Fly of the Month

October 2017

By

Dennis Westover



OCTOBER CADDIS

Materials

Hook – TMC 5263, 3XL, 2XHVY, #10

Thread – UTC Ultra, 70 denier, Orange

Body – Senyo's Fusion Dub, Flame

Underwing - Orange calf tail (Alternate underwing – Root Beer Crystal Flash or UV Pearl Crystal Flash)

Foam Wing and Head – 2mm Fly Foam, Tan. Use River Road Chernobyl (tapered) foam body cutter, small 10-12

Wing – MFC Widows Web, Beige

Legs – MFC Centipede Legs, Speckled Orange, Medium

There is no shortage of October Caddis patterns – so why another you ask? Because I can see this pattern! The beige wing makes following the fly easier for older, tired eyes and the beige color seem to differentiate the fly from the inevitable white foam patches floating all around it.

In the interest of full disclosure, I have plagiarized this pattern from fellow club member, Jay Melzer. I've made a few changes to his original tie but I doubt that my modifications make my tie any more effective than his original. I was introduced to Jay's pattern last September on the Elk River in B.C. I rowed one afternoon and watched as Jay boated and impressive number of cutthroat using his October Caddis pattern.

Tying this fly is straight forward – start by covering the hook shank with thread and then dub a tapered body to about two eye lengths behind the hook shank. Tie in a clump of stacked calf tail and then the foam Chernobyl body so that the tail of the body is just slightly past the bend of the hook. Tie in the Widows Web wing and trim even with the end of the foam body. Tie down the foam that's forward of the wing tightly up to the eye of the hook and dub that area with Fusion Dub. Bring your thread back to the wing tie in point – fold the foam back and tie in tightly. Dub a very SMALL amount of Fusion Dub on your thread and tie in and trim the rubber legs.

I have been meaning to tie a version with orange or brown hackle palmered over the body but have yet to get around to it – if you tie that version let me know how it worked for you.....

STARTING THE FIRST WEDNESDAY IN NOVEMBER, 2017

Wednesday nights: Fly tying at the Bitterroot Brewery 5-8 PM

The new lanyards have arrived! These are shorter- 30" instead of 36". If you wish to switch out your longer one, bring it in for a trade. Remember, first lanyard is on the club, replacements are \$2.50 each!

QUOTABLE QUOTES

Reuben Cross dedicated his book, Fur, feathers and Steel "to those anglers who never become so engrossed in their art of casting and catching trout that they cannot pause to listen to the song of a warbler or admire the beauty off a delicate wild flower..."

"Ours is the grandest sport. It is an intriguing battle of wits between the angler and the trout; and in addition to appreciating the tradition and grace of the game, we play it in the magnificent out-of-doors."

Ernest G. Schwiebert, Jr, Matching the Hatch

The difference between a fairy tale and a fish story is a fairy tale begins "Once upon a time," and fish story begins "I'm not shitting you...."

NEWS AND NOTES & UPCOMING EVENTS

September 29-30, 2017



Casting for Recovery presents the 5th Annual
Cast One for Hope
An exclusive single-fly event
to benefit women
with breast cancer



October 13, 2017



Coming in June 2018



A Skip Morris workshop- Location- Bitterroot River Inn

AM program is Lake Fishing (2-3 hours. Cost- about \$35.00/person)

PM program is tying flies for lake fishing (3-4 hours. Cost- about \$35.00/person)

You can sign up for one or both sessions

Stay tuned for more information!

2017-2018 Bitterroot chapter of TU schedule

- October 19, 2017 - Gavin Ricklefs, Executive Director, Bitter Root Land Trust, Hamilton, MT, "Private land conservation: how it works and what it means."
- November 16, 2017 - Tony Tomsu, River Road Creations, Stevensville, MT., "Modern trends in flytying tools, materials and methods."
- January 18, 2018- Chris Clancy, MFWP, Hamilton, MT, "The Bitterroot River: what now and what next?"

The public is welcome to attend all Bitterroot TU meetings. All meetings are the third Thursday evening of the month, at 7:00 PM at the Hamilton Elks Club, located at 203 State St. in Hamilton.

ACRONYMS

FFB	Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot
BRTU	Bitterroot chapter of Trout Unlimited
BRWF	Bitterroot Water Forum
TU	Trout Unlimited
BCD	Bitterroot Conservation District
MWF	Montana Wildlife Federation
FFI	Fly Fishers International

[Got more? Send them my way--- je@shuttleworthje.com]

PICNIC PICS- thanks to Gary Brothers





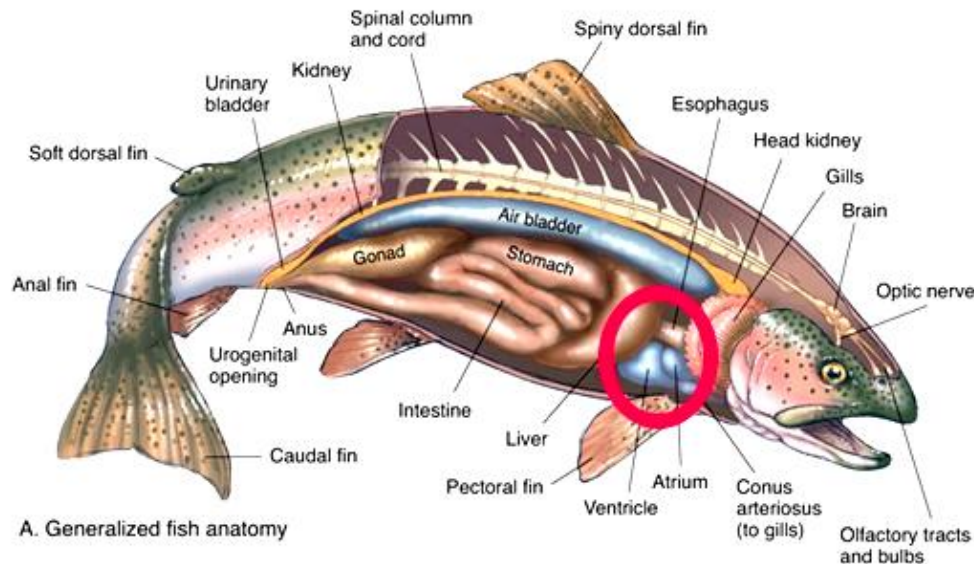
A fun event for all!

Trout Dying To Get a Good Photo? *Reprinted with permission from Tony Bishop*

We all should know the rules for releasing a trout with the best chance of survival, but there is one rule that is almost never included in articles about a successful release.

So, you have landed the fish as quickly as possible to limit capture stress and you are about to pick up the fish and get a few 'grip and grin' shots before release.

But, grip and grin, can all too often turn into **grip and kill**, and it can depend on where and how you grip the trout that can determine its chances of survival.



Have look at the anatomical drawing above showing the main internal structure and components of a trout. Take particular notice where the heart is (red outline) - between and under the gills and liver, just above the Pectoral fins. These three organs, heart, gills and liver are very susceptible to damage, although not always immediately obvious, unless the damage is very severe leading to immediate death.

A fish subjected to external pressure to the heart and other organs may swim away on release, but many die soon after.

Gripping a fish in the pectoral area using inward force and squeezing pressure will compress the heart and maybe the liver and gills. The outcome for the fish is not going to be good, even if it does manage to swim away on release. So we should have a look at a gallery of grip and kill photos copied from the web and magazines - any ID of the person holding the fish has been removed. I should also note that none, some or even all of these fish were not released - I could not tell.



This grip while probably not lethal will still stress the heart. Any squeezing here must be avoided. We need to try and avoid adding any more stress than landing the fish has already incurred.

Placing stress on the heart and other organs will exponentially increase the chances of the fish dying.



A bad grip and tight squeeze, very likely to damage the fish's heart and reduce survival chances substantially.



The worst example of 'grip and kill' in these shots. Almost certain lethal damage to heart, liver and gills.

Those who follow UK trout fishing magazines and websites may have noticed the prevalence of photos with the trout being held as seen in the photos. I did a quick flick through a pile of recent top selling UK magazines and websites and as rough estimate well over 70% of fish are held by what I call the 'UK grip'. I believe trout are held this way to show off the fact that the fish is a 'full-finned' or a wild fish, not a stocked fish.

Most fly-fishing in the UK is done in stocked still-waters. Many (most?) stocked fish have their tails and fins damaged by other fish and the concrete walls of the stock pens. So to show off the fact the fish is 'full-finned and tailed' you need a grip that does just that.



The 'UK Grip' - A Killer Too!

That grip, above, which I have called the 'UK grip', is great for showing un-damaged fins and tails, but is it good for the trout? No!

The UK grip means that the tail of the fish is not firmly held, so the holder must squeeze the fish in the heart area as shown above. If the fish thrashes about, the grip around the heart area has to increase because the grip ahead of the tail is very weak. All bad news for the heart and other organs.

But this bad grip is certainly not confined to the UK, you see grip and kill photos from around the world on the net, but it seems to be a more common practice in the UK.

This practice needs to stop. Magazines and websites need to stop showing photographs of fish held in this damaging way.

The way it should be...



The right way to hold a fish near the head. The trout is 'cradled' with the **fingers parallel** to the side of the fish, not clawing in like talons, or squeezing this vulnerable area. One finger is ahead of the pectoral fin.

Note that the angler is squatting down in the water so the trout is near the water, and can be easily dipped in the water, between shots - although the best possible practice is to limit shots to as close to one as possible.

The key to being able to get a good non-squeeze grip on the pectoral area is a good grip on the tail.

One of New Zealand's best known guides, Tony Entwistle, writing in the New Zealand Fish & Game Magazine, (published here by permission) has one of the best descriptions I have read on the proper handling of a trout.

"Securely handling trout without causing stress or damage"

Securely handling trout without causing stress or damage is a matter of a gentle touch, not a tight grip.

To pacify a landed trout, simply place a hand vertically in front of its nose to prevent it from swimming forward and fold the palm to cover both eyes. This acts as a mask and immediately calms it down. Trout relax quickly when their eyes are covered.

Next grasp the fish's tail with the other hand, without excessive force.

Some anglers use a piece of stocking for grip, but with good technique this isn't necessary. Securing a trout needs only gentle pressure between the thumb and forefinger, applied directly over the base of the tail, applied where it joins the body (hypural joint).

Apply pressure top and bottom through the first joints of the forefinger and thumb, rather than along the sides

The mistake is grasping the tail too far forward and using too much hand in doing so. Squeezing hard does not help as the fish slips more easily.

Now test the grip by lifting the fish slightly by the tail, keeping the other hand over the eyes for the moment. If the grip is secure the trout will not slip, but if it does resist grabbing at it with both hands. By quickly slipping a hand in front of the nose, and covering the eyes again, a lot more fish will be saved from premature release.

With a positive grip on the tail it is now possible to begin lifting the trout safely for a photograph or release.

Avoid squeezing the fish around the soft belly area behind the pectoral fins because this causes discomfort and can potentially cause serious damage to internal organs.

Instead slide the free hand under the pectoral fins, orientating the hand so that the trout's head rests along the index finger, with the pectoral fins spread out between thumb and little finger.

The trout will be nicely balanced and the soft tissue in the belly area will not be supporting any weight. Lifting the trout this way, and returning it to the water between photographs minimizes any distress which could reignite its struggles. Turn the fish belly up when removing the hook.

Handle trout gently and with respect and they won't panic or stress, ensuring their revival for release without damage and a minimum of fuss."

Securely handling trout without causing stress or damage first published in New Zealand Fish & Game Magazine is Copyright and published here by permission.

The Harsh Fact About Holding a Trout Out of The Water

There is no getting around it, lifting a trout out of the water to take a photo is almost certainly going to dramatically increase the stress and physical damage already done while landing the fish.

This is true, even when the fish is handled very carefully and all the "rules" about releasing are followed to the letter.

If you are really concerned about releasing a trout with the maximum chances of survival never lift it clear of the water.

(Recent research (report to follow) suggests after playing and landing, holding a fish out of water after landing it, for 30 seconds reduces the chance of survival by 30%, and 60 seconds out of the water reduces survival by 70%.)

To get the full picture on releasing trout, and other fish, fresh and salt water with the highest chances of healthy survival [see this](#), it spawned the grip and kill article above.

Doubters Strike Back at Grip and Kill

The Grip and Kill (GAK) article received a huge amount of support from the fishing community. Links to the article reached many hundreds and is still growing. Many out-takes from the article were, and are still, being published by a large number of sites, big and small. The article has been published, (by permission), in a great many fishing club newsletters, etc.

The GAK page blew my site bandwidth cap out the window, and if it was not for a friend in the business mirroring the page, I would have had to shut the site down for a while. Even today, the page receives over 200 - 250 unique visits, every day.

But of course, being on the Internet, GAK attracted a significant group of nay-sayers and doubters.

There were two main points of dissention

- My article quoted no scientific evidence to back it up.
- Fish regularly swim freely away when released, even after squeezing.

1. The reason I did not quote scientific evidence, was simple - I could not, and cannot, find any.

My article is based on 50 years fishing observation, experience and conversations with a good many very experienced and well-known guides.

All of us have observed dead trout lying in the shallows of a river or lake with no outwardly visible signs of wound or damage. All of us have watched as ourselves, clients, fishing mates, and other anglers released a fish which swam away apparently un-injured, only to turn over on its side and sink to the bottom minutes later.

But this is just 'anecdotal evidence' as the boffins would say, and promptly ignore it.

So I devised an 'experiment' you can try yourself that only takes a few seconds. It can immediately reveal just how damaging squeezing a trout with fingers bent, near the pectoral area, can be.



The correct grip to avoid 'grip and kill' - fingers straight up the side of the fish.



The wrong way to hold a fish - note the fingers 'clawed in' cutting distance between thumb and fingers by about half. not good.

One time when the 'claw grip' is most damaging, is when the fish squirms and bucks, and the angler squeezes down hard to maintain a grip. A bad outcome is likely.

2. Just because a trout swims away freely on release does not mean all is well.

All of us who have, or still, hunt know that a wounded animal can flee from where it was shot, but still die hours, sometimes many hours, later.

Those of us who have played a contact sport, (mine was Rugby in the front-row) will know that many injuries are not readily apparent in the 'heat of battle', but very apparent the next day.

Trouble is, unless the damage to a trout is obvious, such as bleeding from the gills, knowing whether the fish is 'wounded or not is difficult.

Sometimes it is fairly obvious that the trout is in trouble. Fish that take several minutes to 'revive' and finally swim away may well be unlikely to survive.

(Recent research (report to follow) suggests after playing and landing, holding a fish out of water after landing it, for 30 seconds reduces the chance of survival by 30%, and 60 seconds out of the water reduces survival by 70%.)

So we are left with the fact that one important way to help ensure a successful catch and release, is to avoid squeezing a trout, especially around the pectoral fin area. Indeed, in my opinion squeezing a trout anywhere is not going to be good for it. Article written by Tony Bishop



Website: <http://www.bishfish.co.nz>
Blog: <http://www.bishfish.co.nz/bishonfish>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bishfish1>

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Old Adult truths:

1. Sometimes I'll look down at my watch 3 consecutive times and still not know what time it is.
2. Nothing sucks more than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.
3. I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.
4. There is great need for a sarcasm font.
5. How the hell are you supposed to fold a fitted sheet?
6. Was learning cursive really necessary?
7. Map Quest or Google Maps really need to start their directions on # 5. I'm pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood.
8. Obituaries would be a lot more interesting if they told you how the person died.
9. I can't remember the last time I wasn't at least kind of tired.
10. Bad decisions make good stories.
11. You never know when it will strike, but there comes a moment when you know that you just aren't going to do anything productive for the rest of the day.
12. Can we all just agree to ignore whatever comes after Blu-Ray? I don't want to have to restart my collection... again.
13. I'm always slightly terrified when I exit out of Word and it asks me if I want to save any changes to my ten-page technical report that I swear I did not make any changes to.
14. I keep some people's phone numbers in my phone just so I know not to answer when they call.
15. I think the freezer deserves a light as well.
16. I disagree with Kay Jewelers. I would bet on any given Friday or Saturday night more kisses begin with Miller Light than Kay.
17. I wish Google Maps had an "Avoid Ghetto" routing option.
18. I have a hard time deciphering the fine line between boredom and hunger.
19. How many times is it appropriate to say "What?" before you just nod and smile because you still didn't hear or understand a word they said?
20. I love the sense of camaraderie when an entire line of cars team up to prevent a jerk from cutting in at the front. Stay strong, brothers and sisters!
21. Shirts get dirty. Underwear gets dirty. Pants? Pants never get dirty, and you can wear them forever.
22. Even under ideal conditions people have trouble locating their car keys in a pocket, finding their cell phone, and Pinning the Tail on the Donkey - but I'd bet everyone can find and push the snooze button from 3 feet away, in about 1.7 seconds, eyes closed, first time, every time.
23. The first testicular guard, the "Cup," was used in Hockey in 1874 and the first helmet was used in 1974. That means it only took 100 years for men to realize that their brain is also important.

(Ladies .. Quit Laughing!)

It just gets better as you get older, doesn't it?

I was in a Starbucks Coffee recently when my stomach started rumbling and I realized that I desperately needed to fart. The place was packed, but the music was really loud so to get relief and reduce embarrassment I timed my farts to the beat of the music. After a couple of songs I started to feel much better. I finished my coffee and noticed that everyone was staring at me. I suddenly remembered that I was listening to my IPOD (with ear piece) - **and how was your day?**

(This is what happens when old people start using technology!)

- Sept 29th-30th **"Cast One for Hope"**
- Oct 3rd Club meeting
- Oct 9th **Board meeting**
- Oct 13th - **TU banquet**
- Nov 5th - Club meeting
- Nov 13th **Board meeting**
- **Dec 5th Annual meeting & elections**
- Dec 11th **Board meeting**

○ 2018 schedule

- Jan 2nd club meeting
- Jan 8th **Board meeting**
- Feb 6th club meeting
- Feb 12th **Board meeting**
- Mar 6th club meeting
- Mar 12th **Board meeting**

2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FFB MERCHANDISE PROGRAM

FFB graphically labeled merchandise is available at www.okeefesreef.com Sample merchandise can be seen at <http://www.flyfishersofthebitterroot.org/> page

FFB members can order from the website and have merchandise delivered to their home.

We have negotiated a **10% discount** with the vendor on all orders from Club members. Items for ladies also!

CLASSIFIEDS

The Board of Directors set a policy concerning classified ads in our newsletter. We want to facilitate our members selling unwanted, unneeded gear. The following rules apply: (1) the seller must be a Club member; (2) the seller must be noncommercial; (3) this editor has full right to edit submitted materials; they should be "Tweet" size (4) the ads will run a maximum of two times and then be retired; (5) the thing or things to be sold must be related to fly fishing; and (6) we not will charge for the ad placement and take no responsibility for its accuracy

OTHER

Name tags and lanyards are ready and are at the check in table. If you need a name tag please contact Gary Kosaka at hikemastergk@gmail.com