



[www.flyfishersofthebitterroot.org](http://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."*

## **September 2017 Newsletter**

**Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 6pm**

**BJ's Restaurant- Hamilton- note date change!**

### **President's Message**

As Summer slowly turns to fall, thoughts of cooler weather, cooler water and fall fishing come to mind. I think we will all be glad for a break from fires, floods, smoke and sadness everywhere. It has been a rough summer. I hope all of you have had a chance to get out & have fun, do things with family and friends and maybe some travel too. With September's club meeting (**on the 12<sup>th</sup>**) we are back to our old haunts at BJs. The Board of Directors has been busy this year and we want to hear from you, the members. There are only a few of us, but a lot of you. The Board believes the club had a successful season this year with its agenda of events, culminating with a wonderful BBQ/steak burn on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August at Steve Lilburn's rolling estates. Going forward into 2018 The Board is looking to set dates for our annual events earlier, rather than later. I hope to have a tentative 2018 calendar ready for the next newsletter. If you attended one or more of our events, let us know what you thought, and how to make things better or other ideas for outings, social events, etc. We also need ideas and donations for the raffle too- it is the only source of funds besides dues for the club. How about donating some gift certificates to restaurants or stores? Does one of you have a talent for baking or canned goods?- a raffle item of home preserves/cookies/muffins etc sounds pretty good to me! What about some wine & chocolate? Any budding artists out there? Come on everyone, start brain storming because every little bit helps. Don't want anything that happens to be in the raffle? Then just make a \$5, or \$10, or \$20 donation; it shows support for your club.! Have I soap boxed enough?

You can also support the club by being part of the committees for our events. If you attended one that you feel you would like to be part of the planning shoot me an email; we would love to have you. Board positions maybe opening up- If you are interested in long range planning, have a flair for projects, let me know!

*Tight Lines, Estelle*

## The September 12<sup>th</sup> program



Our Guest Speaker is:

**Jesse Riding the general manager of  
Rainy's Flies**

Title of the presentation:

**"Fly Tying on a global scale: from  
feather to fish."**

Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot is pleased to welcome Jesse Riding the General manager of Rainy's Flies.

Rainy's is one of the largest commercial fly tying operations in the country and operates at a worldwide scale. The company was started by Jesse's mother, Rainy at their kitchen table.

The title of Jess's presentation is "Fly Tying on a global scale: from feather to fish. He will describe what it takes for large companies to mass produce flies and market them all over the world. He will also discuss what to look for in a commercially produced fly, historic trends in flies, and the general business of fly tying.

Also joining Jesse will be Dick Sagara from **Temple Fork Outfitters**. Dick will provide a brief demonstration of some casting techniques. He will also have examples of the rods we are evaluating for the Buggers program for you to try.

### Upcoming programs

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017: Sean Gallagher, author

November 7, 2107: Hilary Hutcheson, fly fishing guide

December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2107: Annual meeting & elections

## **Fly of the Month**

September 2017

### **Easy Baetis Cripple**

**By**

**Dennis Westover**



## Recipe

Hook – 1x long dry fly hook – 18 and 20

Thread – Veevus 16/0 – Olive

Tail (trailing shuck) – Insect brown Zelon

Body – Superfine dubbing – BWO

Wing – McFlyon or Enrico Puglisi EP-Fibers, White, gray or black

Hackle – Medium dun saddle or rooster hackle

Blue Wing Olive (Baetis) season is just around the corner and is regarded by experienced fly fishers as one the most prolific hatches of the year. Baetis hatch twice yearly – spring and fall and both hatches occur virtually every day in some form making them almost continuously available to the fly fisher. I fish the cripple version of the Baetis both early and late in the hatch switching to the Baetis dun at the peak of the hatch. Trout seem to prefer the cripple and apparently know from experience that cripples can't fly away and thus are easy and reliable prey.

I have tied and fished dozens of Baetis patterns but rely on the cripple for 90% of my fall dry fly fishing. This pattern is my own but not unique – this one just happens to be simple and easy to tie. I tie it in three versions. The gray wing version is my preferred color when visibility is good. I switch to the white wing version if I need a version I can see when visibility is poor. The black version is helpful when faced with a flat light situation.

The tying process is straight forward – tie in the shuck, then a tapered body. Tie in the wing two eye lengths behind the eye, finally tie in the hackle with two turns over the wing tie in point and one turn forward of the wing. Trim the hackle even with the bottom of the hook.

Apply floatant **ONLY** to the hackle and wing. Moisten the body and tail with saliva (the fly floats wing up and hook point down)

**Now, go fish!!!!**

**STARTING THE FIRST WEDNESDAY IN NOVEMBER, 2017**  
Wednesday nights: Fly tying at the Bitterroot Brewery 5-8 PM

# Why an Emerger Is Almost Always a Better Bet Than an Adult

by Tom Rosenbauer



*This is the stage of mayfly hatches that trout prefer—when the emerging dun gets stuck trying to escape the nymph shuck. You can also see why dry flies with trailing shucks work so well, and why I tie my shucks in brown instead of the more traditional light tan.*

The secret to successfully fishing an insect hatch often boils down to simply fishing an emerger pattern as opposed to a typical dry-fly imitation of an insect with fully formed wings. You'll often get splashy refusals to your standard dry flies. It may seem like you are not imitating the right insect, but often it's just that you have not chosen the right stage of the insect. It's natural—you see flies in the air and fluttering on the surface and you see trout rising. But by watching carefully you'll see fish rising to seemingly invisible objects, because from 30 feet away it's nearly impossible to see emergers in the surface film.

Why trout prefer the emerger stage is simple when you realize how they select their food. It has to be something familiar, something they recognize as food and have developed a search image for. Studies of trout in controlled laboratory conditions have shown that trout prefer the largest prey they recognize as food. But behavioral studies of trout in laboratories cannot even come close to the number of variables in a real trout stream, and those studies were performed on food dropped into the water, not emerging below the surface. Plus, the studies were performed with only a few food items that could be easily obtained, like mealworms and caterpillars. A trout in a natural trout stream might have a half-dozen possible prey items to choose from.

My theory, one that seems to hold up based on my observation of feeding trout for many decades, is that trout choose their prey based on how easy it is to capture. A common conundrum is when trout ignore large, meaty mayflies like the size 8 Eastern Green Drake and instead concentrate on the much smaller size 16 Sulphur mayflies that hatch at the same time. The common reasoning is that there are more of the smaller mayflies so the trout recognize them easier. But while Green Drakes bolt from the surface quickly, Sulphurs struggle with their shucks for yards on the surface before taking off. The smaller flies are more vulnerable, and trout realize the likelihood of them flying away is not as great.

I saw a graphic example of this one day on the Henry's Fork in Idaho. The weather had been bright and sunny and few fish were rising. Bob Gotshall and I decided to walk the river until we found some rising fish. We started at the Ranch Buildings area and walked up to Stock Bridge without seeing a single rise. We poked around in the big pool above the bridge, but didn't see any fish feeding until a thunderstorm rolled in across the Tetons and the weather suddenly changed from Mozart to Shostakovich. Under the brooding skies, both Green Drake and Brown Drake mayflies suddenly began hatching and soon covered the surface. I watched a half-dozen fish feeding and noticed they crushed the Green Drakes but ignored the Brown Drakes. Both are large mayflies, but the Green Drake is a bit smaller so you would think the fish would have preferred the larger Brown Drakes. Both were on the water in about equal quantities. But when I got my face down to the water and watched a few mayflies emerge, I noticed that the Brown Drakes quickly shed their shucks while



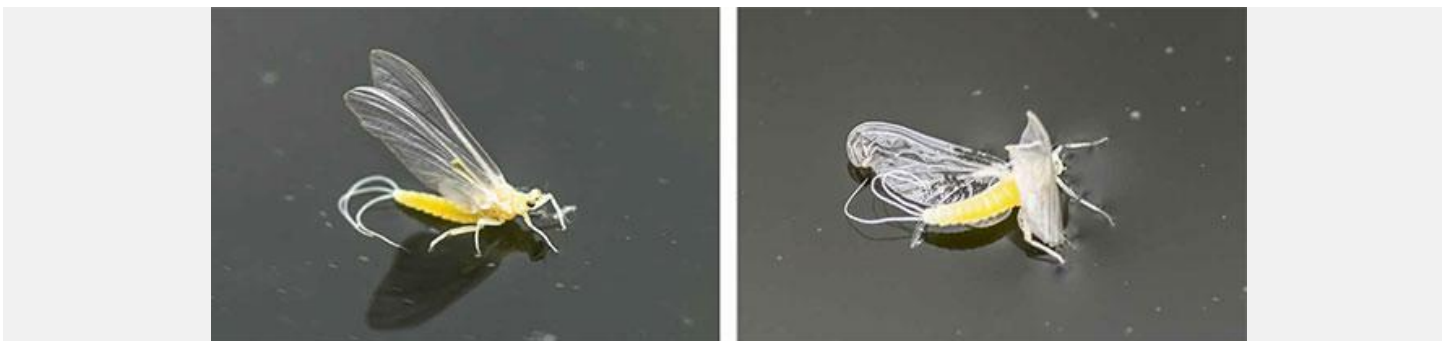
the Green Drakes had a lot harder time shaking loose, and the brown nymph shuck often clung to the emerging flies, preventing them from escaping the water. The trout knew this and were concentrating on the easier prey.

Another reason I suspect emergers are favored by trout is that they can see them from farther away. When a mayfly or caddis fly is fully emerged, it rides lightly on the water on its tiptoes and makes a faint impression in the surface film. But an emerger hanging just below the film is backed up against the mirror that surrounds a trout's window and shows up starkly against that glowing mirror. In fact, I've seen instances where my imitation gets taken more readily than the naturals during a hatch, and I think it's because even our highest-riding dry flies penetrate the surface film more than the real thing and are thus noticed more quickly.

Before you grab your fly box to throw away all of your standard dry flies, rest assured that there are times when you do want an imitation of a fully emerged adult fly. When trout seem to prefer flies that twitch or hop on the water, as they sometimes do with bigger mayflies or caddis flies, traditional winged dry flies work well. Another time is when you fish lower down in a pool where most of the flies emerge further upstream in the riffle. The fish lower in a pool see fewer emergers, thus they may have developed a search image for fully emerged flies riding the water.

Even more convincing is that most of the imitations we use when we think we're imitating a fully emerged insect probably look more like an emerger to trout. Fully hatched flies ride up on their tiptoes. Their bodies hardly touch the water. Yet most of the dry flies we use float lower anyway, bodies and tails hanging in the surface film, because we have a hook attached to the flies and they're just too heavy to float like an emerged insect. For instance, after the small yellow-colored mayfly we call the Pale Evening Dun gets rid of its shuck, it barely touches the surface. Its legs hold it above the film, and its body curls upright and doesn't touch the water. So when we fish an upright-winged fly like a Comparadun, we think we're imitating the adult, but the Comparadun fly suspends its whole body in the surface film and its tails lie flat in the film rather than curving into the sky like the real thing. So we're imitating a different stage of the insect despite our best efforts! But it's the better stage to imitate.

The flies we use also do a great job of imitating another stage of aquatic insects we don't think about as often. We think of hatching bugs as if they were in a binary state—either emerging or fully emerged. But that is not how nature works. When insects hatch, some of them never fully emerge from their shucks and they struggle until they die of exhaustion and sink. Some people call these “cripples” and feel they deserve a separate imitation. But to me, a cripple is just an emerger that stays an emerger and never becomes an adult. I don't think trout make a distinction either. You'll see flies labeled as cripples and many of them are extremely effective patterns. But I don't think they're deadly because they imitate a cripple. The patterns just happen to be great emerger imitations.



*ABOVE, LEFT: This is the way we envision mayfly duns on the water, riding on tiptoes with upright wings. ABOVE, RIGHT: This is how many mayfly duns end up—knocked over and bunged up. Trout still accept them eagerly, which is a reason your imitations don't have to be perfectly balanced.*

One further stage we don't often think about is the "knockdown" stage of an emerging fly. This is a fly that has fully emerged as a winged adult, but got knocked over by the current or wind or a raindrop. Once aquatic insects' wings touch the water, they have great difficulty righting themselves. They float for the rest of their short lives, and then, like cripples, they sink and drown. Many times your fly does not land perfectly upright on the water, and the wings or hackle on some flies create the impression of a knockdown—and this may be a good thing. Both knockdowns and cripples fall into that easy-to-capture category and are probably preferred by trout over an insect about to fly away, with its perfectly upright wings. This is one reason I don't place a lot of emphasis on exactly the right fly pattern. In a hatch, fish may see a combination of fully emerged adults, emergers, cripples, and knockdowns. Those stages include a wide variety of profiles, colors, and attitudes of the flies in relation to the surface film.

*Excerpted with permission from [The Orvis Guide to Hatch Strategies: Successful Fly Fishing for Trout Without Always Matching the Hatch](#) (Rizzoli, May 2017), all rights reserved.*

## Some May Clinic pictures.....





## EVENTS

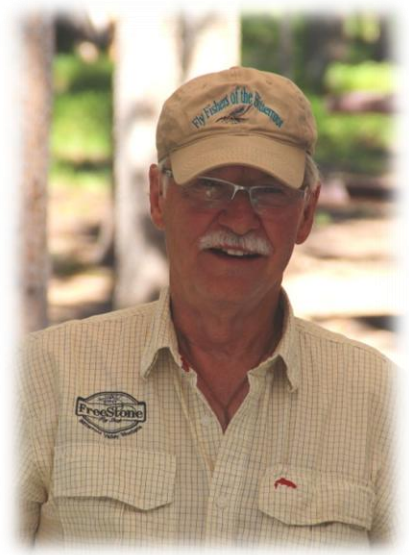
### More of Georgetown .....



**THE CHAIR!**

*A quiet moment*







## ANNUAL STEAK BURN & PICNIC 2017

The FFB celebrated its annual "Steak Burn" along the banks of the Bitterroot on Sunday, August 20th, under sunny skies and warm temperatures. A crowd of 75 members and guests enjoyed great food, camaraderie, and fishing tales of various lengths, with the location courtesy of our host, Steve Lilburn, owner/operator of "Hannon House".

It was a tremendous and delectable turnout of salads, desserts and appetizers, contributed by wonderful members, and a great job of "burning" the steaks done by Albert....a feast fit for at least a Jack...if not a King! Thanks to all that attended, donated, and fibbed through the fishing stories, and now, we're looking forward to the resumption of our regular meetings in September. See you there!!







***Some of our own Riverfest river cleanup crew!  
Steve Holloway, Ken Quinn, Phil Romans & Dick Ellis***

In the past there were efforts to clean up parts of the Bitterroot River. Around 2005, Phil and Dorreen Romans started a river cleanup targeting the entire Bitterroot including the East and West Forks, all the way to Missoula. They were able to gather folks from Missoula to Sula to take on the task of eliminating the debris that had been gathering for years on our river.

In the first cleanup three very large dumpsters were donated by Bitterroot Disposal and placed at the Stevi put in, Angler's Roost, and Blodgett Park. Folks called and were assigned different parts of the river including floats, local parks on the river, river put-ins and take-outs. Even some Scuba divers took part to gather items from the bottom of the river. Private property owners provided their workers to assist in the cleanup. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, schools, churches, small business, and large organizations took part in the event. At the end of the day everyone came together at Angler's Roost to celebrate their efforts. The very large dumpsters were nearly filled in those days.



Since that time, Don McGourty has taken over the event, followed by Heather Barber of Bitterroot Water Forum. Now, we're happy to see that only one dumpster is needed for the Cleanup. The dream would be that some day in the near future, we could use a large plastic bag to gather it all.



**Bitterroot River clean up founders- Phil & Dorreen Romans (left)  
With Don McGourty and Heather Barber**

## **Upcoming Water Forum event**

### **Irrigation & Restoration in the Bitterroot**

On Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, join the Bitter Root Water Forum for an exciting tour of water in the Bitterroot Valley! Through this educational field trip for adults, you will learn how water is managed in the Bitterroot, gain an understanding of modern day irrigation techniques, and view stream bank restoration techniques which help mitigate non-point source pollution. This water-centric tour is open to the public at a cost of \$5/person. The tour is from 1pm-5pm and begins and ends at the Bitterroot Valley Board of Realtors building in Hamilton. Realtor credits are available. Transportation throughout the tour is provided. Space is limited, please purchase tickets in advance .More information and tickets available at: <http://www.brwaterforum.org/irrigation-and-restoration-tour>



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



"Casting for Recovery (CfR) provides free support and education retreats for women in any stage of breast cancer and incorporates fly fishing into the program. CfR is in its 21st year, holding 55 retreats covering 44 states in 2017. This year CfR added additional retreats specifically designed for women with Stage IV metastatic breast cancer, retreats targeted towards minority/low income/uninsured women, and in March, piloted a program with Project Healing Waters for disabled women veterans who are also breast cancer survivors. CfR has two retreats for women in Montana and women from Ravalli County have attended.

CfR's national signature fundraiser, the Cast One for Hope, is in its 5th year, the brainchild of FFB club member Peg Miskin, who has been with CfR for 14 years. 32 anglers from across the country have registered to fish with local guides like club members Phil Romans and Bob Prince, donating their day. The multi day event includes a Kick Off Party at Pineview Lodge, the full day of guided fishing and culminates in a Celebration Dinner with live and silent auction at City Hall. Visit <https://castingforrecovery.org/events/cast-one-for-hope/> for more information or go to this link <https://donate.castingforrecovery.org/COFH> to purchase tickets for the Fri and/or Sat night event. *If you were a river helper at the Glacier retreat this past June, you are able to purchase discounted tickets as a volunteer, as noted on the ticket page. Questions? Contact Peg Miskin at: [castone@castingforrecovery.org](mailto:castone@castingforrecovery.org).*"

*Phil Romans, one of our club's founders, has been guiding in the Cast One since it began. His latest claim to fame is "fish wrangler" along with another Cast One guide, Jim Mitchell, for the upcoming TV series "Yellowstone" starring Kevin Costner. Scenes were being filmed in the Bitterroot recently with the series set to premiere summer of 2018.*



**Phil Romans**



**Bob Prince**

*Club member Bob Prince, one of the long time Cast One guides, is a school music teacher by day, fishing guide by summer and mean sax player year round. The ever popular Bitterroot Jazz Band, of which Bob is a member, will again be jazzing up the cocktail hour at the CfR Celebration Dinner this year.*

## News and Notes

**Subject: Fish and Game closes steelhead harvest to protect small run of fish | Idaho Fish and Game**

<https://idfg.idaho.gov/press/fish-and-game-closes-steelhead-harvest-protect-small-run-fish>

# Catch-And-Release Requires A Few Precautions

By Staff Writer

Monday, August 13, 2001 - 12:00 AM MDT

Most anglers would agree that catch-and-release fishing is an important conservation practice, but returning fish to the water alive is not always as simple as it sounds.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game encourages anglers that they can greatly increase the chances of caught fish remaining healthy and available for catching again by following these simple precautions:

1. If possible, don't play the fish to total exhaustion while attempting to land it.
2. Hold the fish in the water as much as possible when handling it, removing the hook and preparing it for release.
3. When removing the hook, don't squeeze the fish or place your fingers in its gills.
4. If the fish has swallowed the hook, don't pull it out. Instead, cut the line as close to the hook as possible, leaving the hook inside the fish.
5. When releasing the fish in the water, hold it gently until it becomes acclimated. Move it slowly back and forth to help it regain and maintain its equilibrium.

*Press release reprinted from Idaho Fish and Game Department 8.16.2017*

**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!**

## 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.*



## Joke of the Month

### Windows vs. Ford.

For all of us who feel only deepest love and affection for the way computers have enhanced our lives, read on. At a recent computer expo (COMDEX), Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer industry with the auto industry and stated, *"If Ford had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving \$25 cars that got 1,000 miles to the gallon."*

**In response to Bill's comments, Ford issued a press release stating:**

*If Ford had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics (and I just love this part):*

1. For no reason whatsoever, your car would crash.....twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You would have to pull to the side of the road, close all of the windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you could continue. For some reason you would simply accept this.
4. Occasionally, executing a maneuver such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive - but would run on only five percent of the roads.
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single "This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation" warning light.
7. The airbag system would ask, **"Are you sure?"** before deploying.
8. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, your car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.
9. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.
10. You'd have to press the "Start" button to turn the engine off.

PS - I'd like to add that when all else fails, you could call "customer service" in some foreign country and be instructed in some foreign language how to fix your car yourself!

- Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> – **Board meeting**
- **Sept 12<sup>th</sup>** (note date chg— this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month)- **FFB Sept. club meeting**
- Sept 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> “*Cast One for Hope*”
- Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> Club meeting
- Oct 9<sup>th</sup> **Board meeting**
- Oct 13<sup>th</sup>- TU banquet
- Nov 5<sup>th</sup> - Club meeting
- Nov 13<sup>th</sup> **Board meeting**
- **Dec 5<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting & elections**
- Dec 11<sup>th</sup> **Board meeting**

### ○ 2018 schedule

- Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> club meeting
- Jan 8<sup>th</sup> **Board meeting**
- Feb 6<sup>th</sup> club meeting
- Feb 12<sup>th</sup> **Board meeting**
- Mar 6<sup>th</sup> club meeting
- Mar 12<sup>th</sup> **Board meeting**

## 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## FFB MERCHANDISE PROGRAM

FFB graphically labeled merchandise is available at [www.okeefesreef.com](http://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](mailto:hikemastergk@gmail.com)**