



## December 2015 Newsletter

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*December meeting – Tuesday December 1 at 6pm  
BJ's Restaurant – Hamilton*

***“Catch and release fishing is a lot like golf. You don’t  
have to eat the ball to have a good time”***

***Anonymous***

### ***The Program***

The time has come for us to share with our fellow members our deepest secrets, fishing secrets and tips and tricks.

For the December meeting Program Chairman Jay Melzer has asked several “experts” to come forward with something to share with our fellow members.

Several people have agreed to step up;

**Phil Romans** will reveal his killer nymph rig - this slays fish on the Bitterroot. **Bob Prince** will offer up his special streamer patterns - the key to catching larger trout on any water. **Jay Melzer** will show you two knots for attaching flies to leader tippet that are superior to the knots you now use - no more lost fish to badly tied knots.

Please contact [jamelzer@gmail.com](mailto:jamelzer@gmail.com) and let him know what you would like to share - first come first .... Gets a table? How will this work? After the break mid meeting we will push tables around and each of you with something to share will demo their idea as the rest of us gather around in rapt fascination.

**And an added bonus a, SELL YOUR USED STUFF TABLE.**

Bring items you would like to ~~get rid of~~ sell to other club members. We will have space on the raffle table ready to display your treasures to sell or trade.

## ***The Presidents Message***

### **President's Message**

Well, this is my last message as president. It has been my pleasure to serve the club and I would recommend that anyone with any inclination to do so to give it a shot. It was a truly rewarding experience. Among my favorite parts of the job was getting to know more people in and out of the club that have a passion for fishing and our river. I am happy to say that this year we had many members step-up and join the board as well as fill

committee positions. It will be exciting to see what directions their new ideas will take us. I would like to thank all of you that have helped me with my position and contributed to our success. In 2015, The Fly Fishers of the Bitterroot supported Casting for Recovery, a forest service intern, the river cleanup, the May Clinic, the repairs to the boat ramp at the new bridge and many other worthwhile activities. Also the Special Needs Fishing Day was a resounding success. All in all, it was another outstanding year for the club!

Sincerely,  
Chris Andersen

p.s.

Bob Prince is doing the annual slide show again this year and he needs your pictures to get it done. The sooner you can get them to him the better. This is quite an undertaking and he needs time to get it done. Email your pictures to this address:

[robertwaprince@gmail.com](mailto:robertwaprince@gmail.com).

***“Fishing is more than fish; it is the vitalizing lure to outdoor life”***

***Herbert Hoover***

***31<sup>st</sup> President of the United States and avid fisherman***

# FLY OF THE MONTH

## Bob's Fuzzy Stone (Salmonfly Version)

By Bob Prince

### Recipe

Hook: 3x long nymph  
hook,  
size 4  
Thread: Black, 6/0  
Weight: 0.25-0.35' lead wire  
Legs: Medium Black  
Spandex-type legs  
Dubbing: mixture of brown,  
black, and orange  
rub-a-dub dubbings  
plus a little black and  
brown hairs ear  
dubbing.



It's definitely that time of year. Time to "Bobber Up" and dredge the bottoms of your favorite pools in hopes of finding a few good winter fish in between sips of Fireball Whisky and time spent chipping ice out the guides.

If you don't mind a few numb fingers, winter fishing can very rewarding and in some strange draconian way, fun. I do love the stillness of the river in the winter, the solitude, and the view of the Bitterroots cloaked in fresh snow.

Winter nymphing can also be very productive and can give you some real nice trout, the fish are often podded up in obvious holding water (walking speed runs with 3-6 depth), and once you find the fish you can often spend a good half hour or more picking apart a good run, landing enough trout to keep things interesting.

Fly selection in the winter is also a fairly simple game. On our freestone streams often all you ever need is a stonefly nymph, a worm, and a few pheasant tails, prince nymphs, and hare's ears to get you by.

My Fuzzy Stone is my modified (dare I say, improved?) version of the venerable Pat's Rubberlegs, aka The Marvin, aka turd fly, aka the pickle. Whatever you choose to call this fly it's effectiveness is unquestionable. When designing the

fuzzy stone I wanted to create a fly that was equally simple to tie, could be tied in a multitude of colors and sizes to match a variety of stonefly species. I also strived for a fly with more action, a better profile, and more realistic coloration than the Pat's Rubberlegs. The inspiration for this fly came in the form of Doug Swisher's Rub-A-Dub and generation X dubbings. This dubbing has incredible action due to micro rubberlegs imbedded into the blend. Mix the dubbings in a coffee grinder. Pulse the grinder 1-3 times; otherwise you will chop the dubbing up rather than mix it.

## **Tying instructions**

1. Wrap the hook with lead wire.
2. Tie in the rubberlegs just like you would for when tying a Pat's Rubberlegs
3. Create a large dubbing loop and add copious amounts of dubbing. Twist up and wrap.
4. Whip finish
5. Take a dubbing brush or my favorite, a piece of Velcro, and tease out the dubbing. This will free most of the rubber in the dubbing.
6. I trim the top and bottom sides of the fly slightly with scissors to create the flattened profile of a stonefly.
7. That's it, you're done!

This fly works great in Golden Stone, and Skwala versions as well. Simply change the hook size and color to match your desired species. Tie a few up and let me know how they work for you!

***“You must not be too greedy in catching your said game (fish), as in taking too much at one time...That could easily be the occasion of destroying your own sport and other men’s also”***

***Dame Julia Berners***

***“The Treatyse Of Fysshynge With An Angle”***

## Proposed Biennial Closure Rule for Bitterroot River near Supply Ditch Diversion Dam

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is proposing a biennial rule that outlines the circumstances under which FWP could temporarily close a portion of the Bitterroot River surrounding the Supply Ditch Diversion Dam, for public safety and repairs to the structure. This could involve a portion or the entire length of the river between FWP's Woodside Fishing Access Site (FAS) downstream to Tucker Crossing (West) FAS in Ravalli County.

Attached are a news release, the proposed rule, and a copy of the Fish & Wildlife Commission agenda sheet with further information explaining the issue.

This information--along with the opportunity to comment online--may also be found on FWP's website

at: [http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/rules/pn\\_0199.html](http://fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/rules/pn_0199.html)

Comments may also be mailed to Sharon Rose, Region 2 FWP, 3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula 59804; phoned 406-542-5540; or emailed to [shrose@mt.gov](mailto:shrose@mt.gov).

There will be a **public meeting** on **December 1** from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in **Hamilton** at the Bitterroot National Forest Office (1801 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street [along US Hwy 93]).

**Deadline for comments** to be received by FWP is 5 p.m. on **December 18, 2015**.

Sharon Rose  
Comments Coordinator, Region 2  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula, MT 59804  
406-542-5540  
Fax 406-542-5529

## ***FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET***

**Meeting Date:** November 12, 2015

**Agenda Item:** Biennial Rule for Possible Closure near Supply Ditch on the Bitterroot River

**Division:** Fisheries **Action Needed:** Proposed

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 15 Minutes

### **Background**

In 2011, the Bitterroot River shifted flow into a new stream channel and over the Supply Ditch Diversion. The diversion now has a deceptive hydraulic that is dangerous to floaters. After 2011, accidents were reported, and FWP placed signs at access sites and on the river to warn of the danger. Despite educational efforts, several more accidents and one fatality occurred in 2013. Additional notice followed using signs and newspaper articles. There were no more accidents in 2013, but in spring 2014, at least two more accidents occurred and by April, FWP initiated an emergency rule closure for user safety on a five-mile section of the Bitterroot River, from Woodside Crossing FAS downstream to Tucker Crossing (West) FAS. In 2015, FWP asked for the authority to close the river if certain criteria were reached. The river was never closed in 2015 because the West Channel of the Bitterroot was floatable. FWP is taking steps to avoid closure but the potential need remains in 2016 and 2017. If the dam is successfully repaired, the rule would be retracted as soon as it is safe to do so.

### **Public Involvement Process & Results**

Public comment was collected from February 13 to March 9 of 2015. A public hearing was held in Hamilton on March 4<sup>th</sup>. We received a total of 79 total comments with 73 of them being relevant to this issue. Of those 73 comments, 27 percent supported the FWP having the ability to close the river if necessary. These proponents included Bitterroot Trout Unlimited, Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana (FOAM), Ravalli County Search and Rescue, and the Supply Ditch Irrigation Association. The comments supporting this rule included concerns for public safety, rescuer safety (see attached for full analysis). Of the comments we received, 73 percent did not support the rule. The majority of these comments expressed concern about setting a precedent of closing rivers.

### **Alternatives and Analysis**

- Alternative 1: Adopt the rule to allow closure to floating and boating if needed. Closure may be needed if: (1) other channels are not available to get around the dam; (2) high water washes away signs and/or alter conditions at the dam; and (3) repairs can be made to the structure.
- Alternative 2: Adopt an annual rule if the public comment is strongly against a biennial rule.

### **Agency Recommendation & Rationale**

FWP recommends adoption of the rule because FWP can't be certain outreach alone will adequately protect public safety: High flows may change river conditions and destroy signs; posted information may not accurately reflect rapidly changing conditions at the dam. The ability to close all or a portion of the river from Woodside to Tucker FAS would greatly enhance public awareness of this dangerous and potentially rapidly changing hazard. There is also a process moving forward to repair the structure in 2016/2107 and a closure would be necessary to complete that work. Any floating closure would be intended to best meet public safety objectives, while minimizing the length of time and the length of river affected. If the dam is successfully repaired, the rule would be retracted as soon as it is safe to do so.

### **Proposed Motion**

I move that the Commission adopt the biennial rule to allow FWP to close the Bitterroot River to floating and boating for user safety and/or possible repair from Woodside to Tucker FAS. This rule needs to be in effect during spring runoff until flows fall below 4,000 cubic feet per second at the USGS Missoula Gauge, or until July 10, 2015, whichever occurs first. Another reason for closure would be if the dam is actively being modified or repaired and then it would re-open as soon as construction is complete.

## **Cheap Fly Gear!**

Jeff Gray, proprietor of the Freestone Fly Shop in Hamilton has generously extended this special offer to FFB members. The offer is good through Christmas Eve.

**20%** off all Fly Fishing Merchandise (Excludes Guided Trips, Licenses & Gift Certificates) + we will donate **5%** of your purchase back to the club. This would **INCLUDE** special orders, however we would ask the customer to also pay shipping on any special orders.

Why not treat yourself or significant other to some new gear and donate the old stuff to the Bitterroot Buggers!

## **Dues are Due**

Club dues are due and payable each September - \$25 for individuals and \$35 for families (CHEAP). Bring cash or check to the November meeting or send a check to our treasurer, Ken Quinn at 1160 Weeping Willow Way, Corvallis, MT, 59828. Please don't make us send Luigi out to break your kneecaps!

## **Change of Venue – Board of Directors**

The Board Of Directors will meet on December 14 at 7 pm at Fiesta en Jalisco in Hamilton. We are trying this out as an alternative to meeting at private homes, which is unwieldy due to our enlarged size. There is no charge for our use and no minimum purchase amount.



## **Leon Powell still among the living!**

Our long time (now retired) Treasurer, Leon Powell, is recovering nicely from recent heart valve surgery. Leon reports that he is feeling fine but now has a strange urge to root through the backyard flower beds (They used a pig valve to replace his worn out model) He requested that no cards or letters be sent but that cash donations are welcome and can be sent to his home address.

***“A good stretch of river is never the shortest distance between two points. River time is slow and convoluted and when I concentrate and fish deliberately hours disappear into pools, diffuse themselves in riffles, and contract in the eddies where I wait for good trout to show themselves”***

***Christopher Camuto***

***“A Fly Fisherman’s Blue Ridge”***

## **The January Slide Show**

It’s not the Academy awards but it’s a close second. Once again, Director, Writer and Producer Bob Prince will present a pictorial review of club members and families doing what they do best, catching fish and having fun. But alas, there can be no piscatorial extravaganza unless YOU send photos to Bob – yes YOU. Send your best grip n’ grin shots to Bob Prince at [robertwaprince@gmail.com](mailto:robertwaprince@gmail.com) and enjoy fifteen minutes of fame at our January meeting.

*The Editors Drift* – Things I've learned (and ideas I've stolen from my fishing partners)

**Cool Tool!**



I recently discovered a very slick tying tool that combines a dubbing brush/teaser and a comb. For years I've used a piece of Velcro glued to a popsicle stick but when it permanently disappeared into the pile of fur and feathers on my tying desk (I know it's in there somewhere) I found this little gem on the internet <http://store.flyfishfood.com/Stonfo-Comb-Brush-Tool-p/fo645.htm> . At \$8.95 it's a minor investment in increased speed and efficiency and better looking flies. Try it, and you'll never go back to popsicle sticks....

## Articulation

If you haven't tried tying Articulated Streamers because you were unsure about how to engineer the connection here's a short tutorial that demonstrates how quick and easy it can be. Big fish LOVE articulated streamers. If you fish streamers and haven't tried the double jointed version then this winter would be a good time to tie some.

Hooks are a matter of personal preference. I use two different streamer hooks for 95% of my streamer patterns. For the trailer I prefer the Daiichi 2461 in a size 2 – the lead hook is usually a Gamakatsu B10S Stinger hook in size 1. Alternately, the 2461 can be used for both the front and rear hooks.



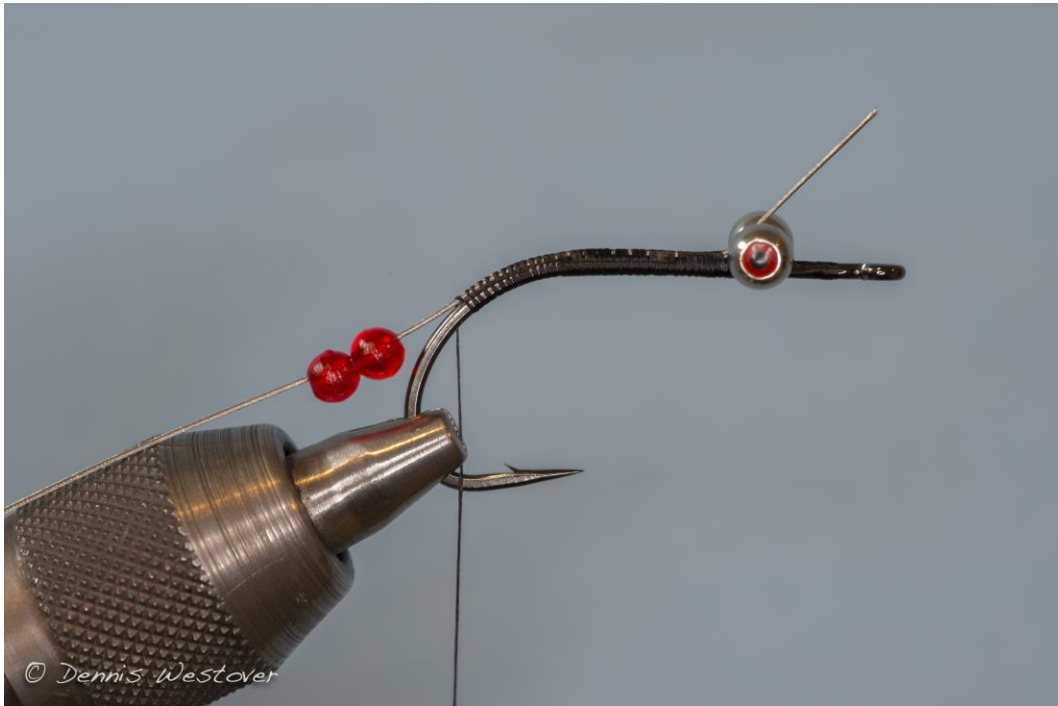


I use UTC 210 denier Ultra Thread in black. Alternately, Ultra GSP 100 denier is strong but harder to work with. Wire is the best material for the connection between the lead fly and the trailer. I use Beadalon .015 in 19 strand coated stainless wire and buy it at Michael's or any craft store.

There are hundreds of articulated fly patterns on YouTube so I won't deal with pattern specifics but concentrate on the mechanics of the connection. Insert the lead hook in the vise and attach eyes and lay down a thread base



Cut a length of Beadalon wire about four inches long and bind it on top of the hook shank so that about one inch extends forward of the eyes.



With Stinger hooks I wrap the wire down the bend of the hook to prevent the trailer fly from wrapping around the Stinger hook. If you are using straight shank hooks place your connection further up the hook bend. Thread two plastic beads (four to six mm- Bob Wards stocks them) on to the wire then thread the trailer fly and make a loop and bind forward to just behind the eyes as shown below. Avoid using glass beads, as they tend to break.





Clip excess wire even with the one inch of wire ahead of the eyes then bend both wires back towards the bend and tie down and super glue. Now complete tying the lead fly and GO FISHING!



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