Lancashire Fly Fishing Association

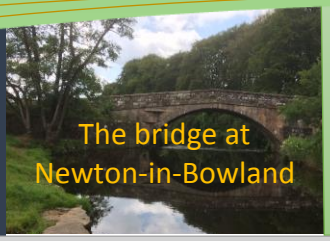
News Letter
Issue 3
Editor Ian H Leaver.

Spring Edition 2022.

Welcome to the third issue of our newsletter.

We are pleased to share this, the third issue, of the L.F.F.A. newsletter. We are delighted to welcome our new members and look forward to meeting you on the river banks and at social gatherings. I would also like to thanks those members who have contributed to this issue. Your input was much appreciated.

The newsletter is not meant solely for airing the views of members of the committee. There is an open invitation for anyone to submit interesting stories ,incidents or anecdotes which I'm sure will provide a welcome inclusive (hands on?) feel to the newsletter.



The bridge at Newton-in-Bowland

This issue

- Chairman's / Secretary Reports Page one.
- Hodder Restoration. Members' retail discounts page two.
- Members' letters and stories Page three.
- A Selection of spider flies Page four.

Chairman's end of year report Highlights.

A full copy of the report can found on the members page of the Website

Dear members,
Welcome to all our new members and hello to you old friends.

This year 2021 has been a testing time with the Covid pandemic and the dry conditions through spring and summer. However the fishing on the Hodder remained reasonable with water levels maintained through the compensation water from Stocks reservoir.

Over the last few years there has been attempts by United Utilities to alter the amount of compensation water and the period when the water bank is released. The compensation water is regulated by an act of parliament and gives reasonable flows to our fishing even during a drought. Last year we calculated the effect on the river level if say the water bank was not released until September. The river Hodder above Dunsop Bridge would have lost 50% of its flow during the summer months which would have been devastating to our fishing. We keep vigilant on this subject.

Gisburn Parking.
We are hopeful of having some permanent parking facility at Gisburn next year

HARP.
Our interests have been registered with United Utilities and they are giving due consideration as to how this may affect us.
Gravel reinstatement
We have attended several meetings with the Hodder stakeholders, EA and UU and submitted a gravel plan to reintroduce gravel back into the river Hodder.
Stocks Reservoir Fishing
Prince Albert have obtained the fishing at Stocks and all reports suggest that their last season was not a great success considering the residual amount and the limited stocking of fish that they did.
Ranunculus.
There have been encouraging signs that the planting of 2020 has been successful and we have repeated the project in a different area on our Hodder fishing this year. Our intention is to scale up next year with a propagation area on a small watercourse so that we can use it as a plant nursery.
Mossthwaite conservation project.
In 2018 we gave financial support and volunteered to assist with planting trees to help Ribble Rivers Trust (RRT) with their conservation project below Knowlmere.
The winter floods of February 2020 damaged some of the planting but this has now been reinstated. This will be a beneficial project for our fishing in creating good shade and insect habitat for the future.

In 2021 we have had a good intake of new members, however the trend remains the same that there is little interest from the younger generation. If anyone has any ideas as to how we may encourage them then please contact me and if there is sufficient interest then LFFA will sponsor the activity. It may take the form of a summer fishing workshop at still water where there is a good chance for them to catch a fish.
Some of you may wish to table questions and requests for discussion at the next AGM meeting .If this is the case then call me anytime on my landline, mobile or email.
Please remember to pay your subscriptions, which will be notified to you after the AGM meeting on the 7th December, by the 31st December 2021.
All the best for the New Year and tight lines To you all.

Vince Edmondson.

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Secretary's end of year Highlights.

The migratory fishing this year has been one to forget. In England and Scotland with very few exceptions rod catches have been below the 5 year average. While the very dry summer will account for most of the shortfall,with fewer rods out as rivers showed their bones. It is not the only reason spate rivers have suffered inordinately but even the mighty Tweed is down 25% on its 5 year average. Maritime issues are definitely having a major impact on stocks. Most noticeable has been that once the rains arrived the traditional Autumn runs have been virtually non-existent. It certainly appears that migratory fish are running earlier albeit at a reduced level. Fortunately the trout and grayling fishing on LFFA waters continues to do quite well,undoubtedly helped by limited judicious stocking of triploid trout,something which LFFA is one of the very few Associations to carry out.It is a huge pity that all the Hodder clubs could not get together and agree with the E.A a management plan to rear diploid stock fish from indigenous parents, if only for mitigation purposes.With ever increasing water problems-and HARP on the way-we are at risk of losing all our truly wild trout.

John Shorrock

P.S. Below is a Christmas message and donation from our President W.F.Williams.



Waterhen Bloa-What else
(Roger Beecham)

At the start of the season (mid March to late April) I have frequently seen Anglers searching through over populated fly boxes and wondering which fly to use.
The answer is simple, only one fly of consequence will hatch consistently at this time of the year and that is the "large dark olive" bless his little cotton socks.

The undisputed imitation of the "water hen bloa" size 14 the best place for this is on the point of your cast with possibly a spring black size 14 on the one dropper.

The reason is that frequently at this time of year small gnats appear usually black not in the abundance of large black olives, but sufficient to warrant inclusion in the cast.

However for the first 5 or 6 weeks of the season I could quite happily and productively fish with the waterhen bloa possibly or even two.The point that I am making is simple. Why make things difficult when they are not. Remember it is the one and only time of the season when you don't have selective decisions. Come mid Sumer when the air is full of what appears to be countless thousands of varieties of fly,selections is another matter, and you may care to think back to those first few days of the season when your only choice should have been the waterhen bloa

Special points to remember
1. Always dress this pattern lightly.
2. Use size 14 unless the water is coloured then a size 12 is useful.
3. The time of the hatch during the last few weeks is usually between 12am and 4 pm and it may last two hours or only 20 minutes.
4. When the hatch is over fish will frequently feed in sheltered back eddies gently sipping spent or water logged flies and a dry fly can produce success even as early in the season as this. a hackied gold ribbed hares ear size 13 is as good a dry imitation of the large wing olive as any.

Ian Beecham

ROB – Reverse Olive Blue.

I was first introduced to fly fishing by my father, on the Hodder at Newton. Both he and my uncle were members of Lancashire Fly for a number of years. On that first day the fly my father tied on for me was a ROB. A Reverse Olive Blue. (I didn't catch anything that day, but have done over the years.)
Both he and my uncle used this fly to good effect for both Trout and Grayling. As far as I know, this particular fly, was one of my uncle's creations. I have only ever seen one article about a very similar pattern, written by Roger Smith, not that long ago, in Fly Fishing & Fly Tying magazine.
This fly was tied with a Blue Dun hackle, and a Mole fur body. Heron herl was also used.
The choice of hackle is yours as I think this fly is a template for many patterns. Grizzle, red game, Badger, even white, can all be used. The amount of turns used to create the fly can be varied, more turns if you want to show a bushier fly. The fly was always tied sparse. It is not a killer pattern but it takes fish.

I was always told to squash the fly between finger and thumb, as it was best fished flat to represent a crippled insect.

Materials.

Hook size 16 – 20.
Thread – Yellow.
Body – Mole, Heron herl dyed olive.
Hackle – Blue Dun or Grizzle.

Tying Method.

Start your thread towards to bend of the hook. Depending on the hook you use about level with the point. You might need to start further back with barbless hooks as some points are quite long.
Tie in the hackle at this point, as many turns as you require. Take the thread down to the eye, dub on mole fur, again sparse and wind back to the hackle. Tie off at this point.
If you use Heron herl tie it in as per the dubbing, take the thread back to the hackle, wind the herl and tie in at the hackle. Whip finish.
You can, if you wish, take the thread back to the eye in open turns to secure the herl. The herl on the fly will soon get chewed with the teeth from your catch but this is a quick and easy fly to tie.

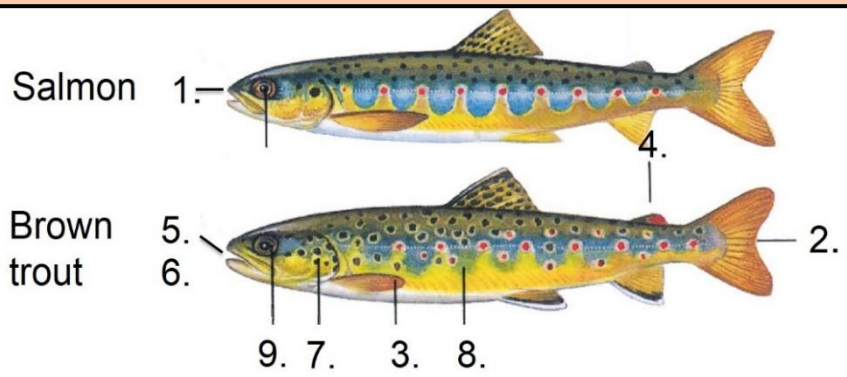


Ian Beecham

Salmon parr, smolt and small brown Trout Recognition

Catch a small game fish and unsure what it is?

During the season I'm sure, that like me, you catch your fair share of "tiddlers", which to the untrained eye all look identical. Is it a salmon parr or a fingerling brown trout? Whilst working for the Rivers Trust I made it my business to find out the differences and thought these may be of interest to fellow anglers.
My quick assessment is to look at the shape of the tail and/or the spots on the gill covers. I'm sure that you'll have your own ways. You never know, once you can differentiate between the two it may add a little extra to your fishing pleasure!



Salmon Parr can normally be distinguished from young Brown Trout by:

1. The more streamlined shape,
2. Deeply forked tail,
3. Longer pectoral fin,
4. Lack of orange on the adipose fin
5. Smaller mouth,
6. Sharper snout,
7. 1-4 spots on gill cover (often one large spot)
8. Well defined parr marks.
9. Shorter maxilla (Does not extend beyond the eye)

Royal Lancashire Show

LFFA will be attending the Royal Lancashire show next year and will hopefully be joined with "Guide instructors" who will once again be providing casting tuition and practise.

Future Issues

We hope that you've enjoyed this issue of the club's magazine and found the articles useful, informative and enjoyable.

For future editions we would be more than pleased to receive contributions from any member. If you have any stories-serious or amusing - advice, anecdotes, or simply would like answers to any fishing related queries you might have, then we would love to hear from you.

Working Parties:
Due to Covid 19 restrictions no working party dates have been set for 2022.

GO outdoor offers a 10% a discount on all none sale items for LFFA members.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT, PERHAPS?

…some fun with the chub…

By Ian Dandy

Most 'old-school' river trout and salmon fly fishermen I come across have a mixture of attitudes towards the chub, ranging from most commonly 'Downright pest, kill loads of salmon and trout parr, ought to be exterminated', next comes 'Bit of a nuisance really', or 'Didn't know there were any in our beat', right through to occasionally, 'I like them, and often have a go for them!'

As far as the first response goes, well, they are a voracious predator, and no doubt take their toll of many smaller fish. However, the chub has been in the river as long, if not longer than most other species, and for most of the time they all got along fine. Whatever is causing the demise of the Atlantic salmon or our native sea trout, it certainly isn't the chub.

The second response, 'well, they can be a bit of a nuisance sometimes', it's true, on two occasions I have hooked them whilst fishing for salmon. You get the pull, then realise it's no salmon on the end. But, on the bright side, it does give you about 5 seconds of excitement, on what would otherwise been another boring blank day, and at least you can legitimately say you caught something!

The third response – well, they are probably the most elusive fish in the river, and many anglers would never realise they are there. They seem to appear at certain times and seem to have a knack of being able to disappear again almost at will. For such a large, bulky fish, they are masters of concealment.
As regards the last response, well to me they have a lot going for them. Firstly, like the grayling, they are a truly 'wild' fish. How many times have we had a good day amongst the trout and told ourselves what a skilful angler we are – only later does the guilty realisation dawn that we have probably caught about a dozen naïve stockies!
Catching chub on the dry fly will certainly test an angler's stalking skills, their powers of concealment and stealthy wading to the limit. One false move or splashy step and they rapidly perform their disappearing act. Also, unlike fishing for salmon, which is often undertaken in cold, harsh conditions, we can usually expect to encounter the chub on those hot, still summer days when little else is moving, but it is a pleasure to be on the river, if only to get a good suntan.
My favourite spot for them is just downstream of the water treatment plant at Gisburn. On a hot summer morning, I will often seek them out on the far bank, basking in the clear water under the shade of the trees. You walk slowly along the path through the wood, with your eyes fixed on the far bank. If you're in luck, you will see them, about 4 or 5 big fat chub lying there motionless. You stop dead in your tracks and watch. Occasionally one of them moves slightly sideways and upwards, and just dimples the surface ever so slightly, as they sip up another morsel. Every so often, they decide to go for a swim, and do a slow leisurely lap of the pool, before returning to their same positions to repeat the process.
Now is the time to slide on your backside slowly and carefully down the bank, and, ever so carefully, creep across the gravel and enter the river. You stop and have a look – hopefully, they are still there – Good! Then, slowly, you wade into the pool to reduce the casting distance and get away from the trees and vegetation behind you to snag your back cast. All the time you keep your eyes fixed on the chub. One slow step at the time, lifting your feet slowly out of the water, just like a heron does. Keep pausing, no rush, you have all day! No splash, bow-wave, quick movement or disturbance, otherwise, the chub will be off!
Finally, you're in position, just about directly across or preferably slightly downstream of the most upstream fish, about 10 yards away, or even closer if you dare risk another step!

What fly to use? Doesn't matter, really, so long as it floats well, so give it a bit more floatant and have a breather. You don't want a lot of false or repeated casting; the first cast needs to count. So, a good ploy is to let some line slowly off the reel and let the current extend it slowly along your own bank until you judge you have the right length. Then, carefully, flick it into a forward cast, aim to put your fly just nicely upstream, and slightly to your side of the upstream fish. Now is the time to brace yourself, concentrate and get ready, and make sure you are prepared for what happens next. Nine times out of ten, the fish will wait until the fly comes just about level with his head, and just starts to drag slightly. Then, hopefully, ever so slowly, he will move and delicately suck it in with hardly a ripple.
You wait a second or so and slowly lift into him. Suddenly, all hell breaks loose, and the pool erupts, as his mates 'leg it', and the hooked fish makes a sudden headlong dive. That's when he will snap you, unless you are ready for him. If you can absorb that first headlong lunge, and give him a bit of line, the rest of the 'fight' is easy. He just lolls slowly around the pool, as though you have hooked a black bin liner. If everything goes right, and your net's big enough, you will be rewarded with probably the biggest fish you're ever likely to catch in the river on dry fly, 4 or 5lbs or more of big fat brassy chub, be careful he doesn't break your rod!



Look at the belly on him!
About 5lbs I would guess. Taken on dry fly, certainly put a bend in the old cane rod!

Spider flies set ups

While most anglers will pick dry flies with the greatest attention to detail. When it comes to wet flies, or "spiders" it appears that whatever is hatching, a random selection of two or three appears on the leader.
At worst without knowing anything about entomology, match the size and colour of your wets to the naturals hatching or falling into the river.
As a starting point a small selection of the following flies would cover a lot of the hatches. Is shown below.

Pattern	Size	Hatch
Water hen Bloa Greenwell Spider Hare Lug & Plover	12 - 16 14 - 16 12 - 18	Large Dark Olives Olive Upright Blue Winged Olives
Partridge & Orange	14 - 16	Stoneflies, Sunk spinners.
Snipe & Purple	16 - 18	Iron Blue Duns Midges
Black Spider / Black Pennell	14 - 16	Midges Hawthorns Black Beetles
Partridge & yellow	14 - 16	Pale Watery Yellow May
March Brown Spider	12 - 14	March Browns Brook Duns
Invicta	10 - 12	Hatching Sedges

Localised hatches such as Grannom will add to your box. But with these flies and a few size 14 Hares Ear and Pheasant Tail nymphs (either beaded or not) on the tail of the leader for searching patterns will equip you well.
At worst, with nothing rising, my go to searching leader would be;

Size 14 GRHE Beaded or not
Size 14 Partridge & Orange
Size 14 Waterhen Bloa

Tying patterns for some of the above flies are shown on page four.

A typical set up would be

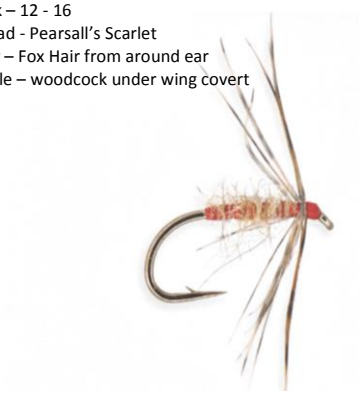
Gold head GRHE	Point	Large Brook nymph
Greenwell glory	Mid	Large olive
Montana nymph	Top dropper	

Discount's for Members

John Norris of Penrith offers a 15% a discount on all none sale items for LFFA members

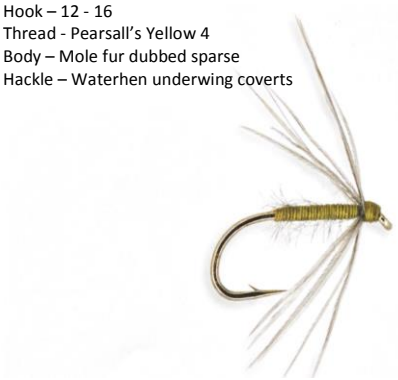
Spider Patterns

Hook – 12 - 16
Thread - Pearsall's Scarlet
Body – Fox Hair from around ear
Hackle – woodcock under wing covert



March Brown

Hook – 12 - 16
Thread - Pearsall's Yellow 4
Body – Mole fur dubbed sparse
Hackle – Waterhen underwing coverts



Waterhen Bloa

Hook – 12 - 18
Thread - Pearsall's Purple 8
Body – Tying silk
Hackle – Snipe



Snipe and Purple

Hook – 12 - 16
Thread - Pearsall's gold 6B
Body – Hares ear dyed rusty Orange
Hackle – Golden Plover
Rib – Oval tinsel gold



Hare's Lug and Plover

Hook – 12 - 18
Thread - Pearsall's yellow 4
Body – Tying thread
Hackle – Greenwell Hen Hackle
Rib – Gold wire
Tail – Hackle Fibres



Greenwell's glory

Hook – 14 - 18
Thread - Pearsall's Scarlet 11A
Body – Awesome possum grey
Hackle – Blue dun hen
Tail – badger hair



Iron Blue Spider

Hook – 12 - 16
Thread - Pearsall's Brown 17 or Cardinal 12
Body – tying thread
Hackle – starling



Black Spider

Hook – 14 - 18
Thread - Pearsall's Gold 6A
Body – Tying thread
Hackle – Grey Partridge



Partridge & Orange

