



Kapiti Fly Fishing Club

September 2023 Newsletter



At this month's meeting on Monday 25 September Matt Kaverman from Fish and Game will be sharing his secrets from this year's Drift Diving results in our local rivers, so if you would like to know where they are hiding you need to be at the Club meeting at 7:30pm

In this month's newsletter: This month's photo is a photo that could have been taken anywhere in New Zealand as the rain continues to fall in many of our favourite rivers, let's hope we see a shift in our weather prior to Opening Day.

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Club activities

Date	Event	Coordinator
Monday 25 September	Club meeting – Guest speaker Matt Kavermann Fish & Game	Graham
Sunday 1 October	Opening Day on Waikanae River	
13 to 15 October	Rangitikei River area	TBC
Monday 23 October	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	
Monday 6 November	Interclub Fly-Tying Competition -host Wellington Club	Gordon
10 to 12 November	Tukituki and Waipawa Rivers	TBC
Monday 27 November	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	



Presidents report

It is amazing how time flies. It seems as if I had only written my last intro to this newsletter and the next one is due. Is that a function of age – I hope not.

The new season is nearly upon us. Have you got your new license?

At our next meeting on Monday, Matt Kaverman of Fish and Game will talk to us about the results of this year's drift diving and hence the prospects for the best places to go once October comes. We will also cover off what you might like to think about in preparing for the new season.

The mid-week group had a trip to the Manawatu a couple of weeks ago. There is a separate report below. Wellington club had a trip to the Manawatu last weekend, and they did a bit better than us, but the river conditions and weather sent them home a bit earlier than they had planned on the Sunday.

NZ Sports Fly Fishing is planning to run a competition on the Manawatu on the weekend of 28/29 October although they may transfer it to the Mangatainoka depending on conditions. I recommend not turning up on either river at that time.

Taupo seems to have still been really firing well and some club members have had great results – which we will get them to tell us about at our next meeting.

There hasn't been much sign of whitebait during the month and the kahawai haven't been tempted by my few attempts on the fly as yet at the Otaki mouth, but maybe later today if the weather holds.

Tight Lines



Fly Casting Tuition by Gordon Baker

Club member Gordon Baker is available for one-on-one casting tuition. Gordon is a casting instructor with Flyfishers International (USA). He is available to help beginners get off to a good start and to assist more experienced members improve their distance casting skills. Although not yet an approved two-handed casting instructor Gordon is a keen learner willing to share new skills.

Email Gordon kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com or phone 0274946487 to arrange a suitable time for a lesson. There is no charge.

Mid-Week Fishing trips by Hugh

For those members who are lucky enough to be able to fish mid-week during the forthcoming season please confirm if you wish to be included in the mid-week fishers email list to:

hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com

The emails are often sent out only giving very short notice to take advantage of the prevailing conditions and members availability, as an example the afternoon of day before the proposed trip.

If you are interested in participating on any mid-week fishing trips, please email Hugh Driver with your contact details and you will be added to the email list.

Mid-week trip to Manawatu by Graham Evans

Again, the usual early pickup and we were away with Hugh, Wayne, Aussie and me and gear filling the car.

Although we could see that the river was definitely at a fishable level, the turbidity at Hopelands Road was worrying us, so on the way up, we finally managed to get hold of Horizons who told us that, yes, they were extracting gravel from Orini, expecting to finish after the day we were going, but it was OK above that point.

So above that point we went. The river had obviously been very high over the winter and the pools were quite changed. Aussie and Wayne headed downstream, and Hugh and I went up. The water looked good and was quite clear, but I only saw 1 fish – well after he had seen me as he was well on his way to the deeper stuff when I saw him. And that was it. The water seemed to be empty.

We then had lunch and decided to go to the Mangatainoka on the way home. I went to the Brewery, saw some rises, and pricked one. The others went to James Rd and again saw rises and Wayne managed a couple of smaller (2lb) rainbows. The river looked really good.

Our assessment is that the Manawatu itself has been hit very hard by the floods starting with the remnants of Gabrielle in January and there are significant sections of the river with very few or no fish. Wellington club fished the Manawatu last weekend and caught a few, but again very patchy. And the Rangitikei is still dirty, we think there are some huge slips in the gorge areas above Taihape that leak more colour into the water on any increased flow.

Kapiti Women on the Fly by Leigh Johnson

August Activities

Kapiti Casting Lessons

Seven ladies from Manawatu to Wellington attended a casting session on Sunday 27th August, under Gordon Baker's guidance. Topics covered included increasing line speed and creating tighter loops using the Double Haul. This was followed by coffee at the River Cottage Cafe.

South Island Connections

I am currently residing in the Hakataramea Valley so was able to attend the Wakatipu Anglers Club first women's forum in Queenstown with one of my neighbours. I got to meet more than twenty ladies. It was a great way to extend the Women on The Fly network now numbering more than 300 followers on Facebook with another 100+ email addresses.

2023 Women on The Fly Workshop - 10/12th November

Following a very successful event last year, this year's workshop will be held at **TALTAC**. The weekend programme will consist of workshops, fishing, and fun.

A steering committee has been formed, consisting of Greg du Bern, Gordon Baker, Leigh Johnson, Rachel McNae (Captain of the Fly Ferns), Marion Hall (TALTAC) and Betty Mani (Wellington Flyfishers Club).

As we are expecting up to 40 participants, we are looking for overflow accommodation.

If you have a house in Turangi we could use over the weekend of 10/12th November, please contact me.

More details on the programme and registration process will be released shortly.

Where to find WoTF?

Please follow our activities on this [Facebook Page](#).

There is also a private [WoTF Facebook group](#) that provides a safe space for women who fly fish, (or would like to fly fish) to share information, arrange fishing activities, and learn from each other about all things fly fishing.

Or contact me directly at leigh@leighjohnsonnz.com or visit www.womenonthefly.nz to register your interest.

Central North Island – Freshwater fishing report by Hunting and Fishing Taupo



The great lake continued to produce good fishing throughout this winter, and activity will start to ramp up even further as we head into spring.

Trolling with ten colours out, and harling with two to three colours in thirty to forty feet seems to be the most productive way of fishing still. Stay on the move, change depths and lures regularly is the key to success this time of the year. Jigging, as always, remains popular but it tends to be harder work at this time of the year. Once again staying on the move and varying depth is key.

As predicted the rains finally came halfway through August and the rivers fired big time.

All of the local rivers responded to the fresh and the fishing was insane for a good two or three days with big numbers of big river bars full of fight providing anglers with amazing sport. The rivers are back to low and clear with the Tongariro running at 24 cumecs as I write this.

We do have a bit of rain on the horizon next week. I'm fairly certain that we still have some major runs still to come through September.

The anglers that have been most successful in these low water conditions are those that have radically adapted their winter approach and done away with the big shuttlecock indicators and gone smaller. Smaller eggs and slushies in the early mornings but once the sun is up and the shadows disappear a complete change of rig is required with lighter and longer leaders, natural caddis, and mayfly nymphs in size #14 and #16.

Even a dry fly dropper in the shallower riffles has been more effective the targeting the big deep pools.

As the days are drawing out now and we get more warmer sunny afternoons, and you can see the birds working the water with small caddis emerging on most rivers with as mattering of mayfly activity. I have seen several fish rising already to mayfly emergers on the Tongariro and Tauranga Taupo rivers. I also witnessed a small hatch of huge colabriscus mayflies hatching and trout making short work of eaten them on the Waitahanui this week on a warm windless afternoon.

The river mouths have been as patchy as ever. You really need to be Johnny on the spot to be consistent on the mouths. The lower lake levels have made most of the river mouths more accessible now. The huge Blue moon this week has pretty much killed any hope of night fishing this week but with that gone in a few days and low pressure and rain coming it could all be on very soon.

The Fish and Game license is now available with a number of new back country rules to try and protect our much-valued high-country rivers from being overfished. Make sure you read these amendments if your favourite river is on the list.

Lake Otamangakau opens today as I write this. Personally, I would have preferred the extra month to have occurred in June rather than September, but time will tell.

Tight lines to all and remember to call into the shop and say hello to Karsten and myself and get the latest up to date oil on the district.

Midweek fishing trip report – August 2023 by Wayne Cameron



Who was it that said: *“T’is better to have fished and caught nothing than to have not fished at all.”*

And so, it proved on our trip to The Manawatu River on the last day of August 2023.

We knew that it was going to be tough, but with optimism in our hearts four of us set out on Friday to test the Manawatu River. After all the recent flooding in the area and a reading of high turbidity we knew it might be a big ask at the outset. But a few phone calls made by Graham to Horizons Regional Council and Fish and Game we found the reason for the high turbidity readings and fished above the river works that was causing it. River level was low (530mm at Hopelands) and the day cloudy with a distant threat of brief showers.

On arrival at the river, it was clear that the river had experienced massive flooding; gravel spread across paddocks and banks well eaten away. Rocks turned over revealed negligible aquatic life beneath. Nevertheless, we geared up, with some opting for nymph and others trying out lures on sinking lines. We agreed to meet back at the car for lunch and a stocktake/reset. By half time, the score was zero all for each of us. A few of us might have experienced a touch but over time and nothing more coming to the fly one starts to doubt if they were in fact touches at all.

Discussion over lunch led to the decision that the possibilities for success might be improved if we try out the Mangatainoka river after lunch. Plan agreed we headed off in the direction of that river for the afternoon. First impressions were positive, river flows at a nice level, swallows flitting about and later in the day there were a few trout nebs seen poking through the surface film. Carefully avoiding the thick scum/growth on the edges of the river we set out to bring some sort

of respectability to the outing. But the results were the same with Wayne being the only one landing a 2 lb rainbow on a size 16 wee wet drifted in the surface film to a feeding fish.

It's always good to get out onto the river so not all was lost, but it may be a while before the Manawatu comes back to the fantastic river it has been in the pre-cyclone past.

How to cast 6 meters – doing it well isn't as easy as you think - by John Juracek



At the most recent Federation of Fly Fishermen conclave held in West Yellowstone, among other activities there was a lot of fly-casting taking place. Never one to ignore such a thing, I took in the proceedings with great interest. The wide variety of casting skills I saw on display reminded me—as always—that one of the most difficult things to do in all of fly fishing is to cast six meters.

Six meters? Am I kidding? No, I'm not. And I'm not being snide, either. I'm simply talking about casting a fly accurately to a target six meters away from where you stand via a tightly driven loop of line and leader.

Try it yourself. If you find that you can cast six meters (this includes your leader) repeatedly, accurately, with a tight loop, in the presence of wind, congratulations. You know a thing or two about fly casting. Indeed, you are casting better than 98% of all anglers.

Why is the short cast so difficult?

There are several reasons, but the primary one is the use of a casting stroke that is too long for the length of line being cast. For maximum efficiency and effectiveness, a given length of line requires a given length casting stroke. When the length of the line changes, so too must the length of the stroke. There is a simple tenet regarding this concept that every angler should know: Shorter line, shorter stroke. Longer line, longer stroke.

Here's how it works: If you find your line and leader turning over in a wide loop and piling up in a heap (when this isn't intentional), your stroke is too long. Shorten it by not taking the rod so far back on your backcast. Shorten your stroke until you find yourself forming nice, tight loops that drive the fly to the target. Conversely, if you find that your line and leader crash onto the water

before they have completely unrolled, lengthen your stroke. Every student I've ever instructed has needed to shorten their stroke to make a six-meter cast; so, look to that first.

The goal here is to find the right stroke length—which will be slightly different for all of us, owing to our physical differences—that delivers the fly to the target with a tight loop, turning over a foot or so above the water. In this way we can achieve great accuracy and render irrelevant most wind.

In really big wind, you may also have to speed up your stroke to straighten your leader and fly. But increasing the speed of your stroke must be done in conjunction with the proper length of stroke. Effort alone will never straighten your leader and fly—your stroke must be the right length first.

Casting six meters (or shorter) should be one of the simplest tasks in fly fishing, but for most anglers it remains one of the most difficult. To make it simple, just remember to employ the right length casting stroke. For most of us, that means shortening our stroke.

- [Fly casting for beginners](#)

Regs impede creation of new wetlands: by Fish and Game



Corina Jordan said there are huge opportunities, particularly on private land, to create, enhance or develop more wetlands.

Current regulations are not working to maintain existing wetland areas and are hindering the creation of new wetlands, Fish & Game New Zealand says. Fish & Game said the current National Environmental Standards for Freshwater regulations (NES-FW) make the enhancement and restoration of wetlands more difficult while failing to protect existing wetlands.

“We have been providing significant free consultancy services to help communities and farmers secure consents; however, many landowners are walking away from projects to create or restore

wetlands on their properties because of the amount of additional red tape and costs the regulations have introduced,” Fish & Game NZ chief executive Corina Jordan said.

“This is an absurd outcome when wetlands not only provide habitat for indigenous and valued introduced species but are also a key tool in farmers’ toolkit to address losses of sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus from the farm, as well as supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation.”

Jordan said one owner with nine wetlands has told Fish & Game about the challenging process required to gain consents to conduct routine maintenance of the canals and more than 125 ponds on their properties.

“Another farmer received a \$25,000 estimate from a regional council for a resource consent and environmental assessment to increase the size of a wetland on their property. That’s simply cost-prohibitive and is inhibiting potential conservation gains on private land.

“We’ve had people say it’s easier to get consent for intensive winter grazing than it is to build a wetland.”

Jordan said the NES-FW wetland requirements are hard for regional councils to implement, in particular those with a strong focus on building, restoring, and enhancing wetlands.

Regional councils are interpreting the NES-FW differently, so while overall there is a move to more consents and red tape, there are wide differences in the conditions being imposed on landowners.

Now, discretionary resource consents are required for wetland creation when previously this was permitted (no consent required). Quarrying activities have gone from often being non-complying to discretionary (less restrictive) in wetlands. Therefore, it has become harder to create wetlands and easier to destroy them.

“We need to introduce Permitted Activity criteria so that regional councils and organisations such as Fish & Game can work with farmers and communities to restore and enhance wetlands and gain funding for projects.

“Signage, boardwalks and small structures such as mai mai under the size of 10 square metres should also be permitted activities.”

Fish & Game, at the forefront of protecting wetlands on both public and private land, including wildlife management reserves for game birds and hunting, has developed educational resources highlighting the importance of saving endangered wetland areas. Most of its work is funded through its sale of fishing and hunting licences.

“There are huge opportunities, particularly on private land, to create, enhance or develop more wetlands,” Jordan said.

“Wetlands are vital in maintaining healthy ecosystems. We need regulation that supports and encourages the creation and maintenance of wetlands and makes it easier to work with farmers and communities to put wetlands back – not confusing regulations and costly barriers.”

The importance of depth by Peter Blaikie



Boulder pool

My only fishing outing this year was a quick overnight midweek trip to Turangi in the middle of September. As most of you know there hasn't been a lot of rain to raise the Tongariro in particular this season with the last big fresh back in June so my timing wasn't too bad as the runs seem to be later this year.

My timing was aided even further by a Westerly weather system that rolled across the North Island two days before my trip. This pushed fresh fish into the Tongariro and so I arrived in time for of those rare moments when the fishing was actually quite good. I'm more used to hearing 'you should've been here yesterday!' so I was pretty excited about the prospects.

I had to stop in for some fishing supplies and yarned with one of the local guides Brian Wilson. He laid down a challenge when he said there's fish right through the river so you should be able to catch one!

Talk about adding some pressure to my fishing!

The equinoctial winds had sprung up following the front and so with strong westerlies Brian recommended trying the Boulder Reach pool. It seemed like everyone had the same idea with 11 rods in the pool. Bugger! I was in a hurry to make the most of the supposedly good fishing, so I headed up to the Boulder pool instead. Only one other car in the car park which was encouraging. The driver of which soon appeared holding a fish, so I quickly put the waders on and headed to the pool.

The wind was blowing upstream making casting tricky but manageable as I worked my way up the pool. A couple of nights prior to the trip I'd re watched some of Alex Waller's Trippin on Trout YouTube channel to reacquaint myself with leader lengths etc. I noticed after a while that my indicator wasn't really bobbing up and down so started experimenting adjusting the length of the leader as well as the weight of the flies. Still no tick, tick, tick on the bottom and with the knowledge of split shot fresh in my mind I decided to 'bite the bullet' and add some shot.

This instantly changed things and the indicator started tick, tick, touching the bottom ticking! Not long after I had my first strike. This one was lost as the hook straightened out as I was trying to land it, but I needn't have worried as within a couple of hours I'd hooked five and landed three. Interestingly my leader length was about 12 foot by this point with the fish sitting right on the edge of the seam.

Having been introduced to Euro nymphing the previous season I was keen to try this out again on the Tauranga Taupo River. 7am the next day and I was the fourth car in the car park along with a gentle breeze. By the time I'd got twenty minutes upriver the Westerly was howling and hence the fishing was hard as the euro gear didn't go well in the wind. I only hooked one for the entire morning.

I saw fellow KFFC members Wayne and Hamish halfway up the TT. They were also having a tricky morning with the wind and a low river. Hamish though had a nice hen on the bank.

On my way home I dropped into the Red Hut bridge and fished the pool a few hundred metres downstream with no success. There were quite a few fish visible off the bridge but with a group of rafters practicing water rescues directly below the bridge it was going to be tricky to fish to them.

I then ended up back in the Boulder pool and had a great couple of hours hooking about 7-8 fish and landing 3 which ended up as a trial for my new Smokai smoker, which by the way worked well!

Fly casting for beginners – 5 things you need to know to improve your casting by Todd Tanner



John Juracek leads the fly-casting instruction for School of Trout students

I watched a fly-fishing film the other day and I was struck less by the size of the trout, and by the gorgeous scenery, and by the anglers — who were young, attractive, and flashing great big toothy smiles — then I saw something that seems to fly under the radar on a pretty regular basis nowadays.

The people in front of the camera were poor casters.

Does that seem weird to you? Because it sure did to me. I honestly don't know why anyone would make a fly-fishing film with anglers who have not yet mastered the most basic element of our sport. It's like shooting a basketball documentary with players who can't dribble, or making a cooking show with a chef who doesn't know how to handle a kitchen knife. Maybe the times have changed, but I just can't imagine an icon like Warren Miller producing a great ski film with skiers who struggle to make decent turns.

Yet there they were ... two folks decked out in the latest gear, and smiling into the camera, and casting like they had absolutely no clue. Watching them flail away made me wonder if the reason we see so little casting in fly fishing films and videos is because the anglers simply aren't up to it. (Watching them also made my shoulder ache.)

Now I wouldn't bring this up if there wasn't a rock-solid correlation between our ability to throw a nice line and our ability to get it done on the water. But we do need to cast well if we want to maximize our angling success. That's just the way it works.

Back when I was guiding on the Henry's Fork and the Madison, I spent a ton of time talking to my clients about casting. Twenty-five years later nothing much has changed. We teach our [School of Trout](#) students great fly-casting form right from the start, and we also teach them how to identify and correct their mistakes. After all, solid casting is the foundation of fly-fishing success.

So, what can you, as a beginning or intermediate angler, take away from this particular story?

1. You should take the time to learn good form. Casting a fly rod isn't quite as difficult as swinging a golf club or hitting a baseball, but it does require that you understand the basic mechanics. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter whether you learned those mechanics from a book, a video, a friend, a guide, or an actual fly-fishing icon like John Juracek or Andy Puyans. You still need to understand how to hold, and move, the rod.

I'm not going to go into all the details of good casting — [you can learn more here](#) — but you should keep in mind that the line tends to follow the rod tip, and that good casts typically start at the shoulder rather than the elbow or the wrist.

2. Remember to focus on your line handling skills. I can't tell you how many people I've seen over the years who don't have a clue how to hold the line, or control the line, or lengthen or shorten the line while they're casting. Good casting requires good line management, and that means your hands have to work together, in concert.

Is that a little like patting your head and rubbing your stomach at the same time? Yes, it is. So, concentrate on perfecting your line handling skills until muscle memory eventually takes over and it all becomes second nature.

3. Fly rods need to bend in order to work correctly. (Don't believe me? Try to cast with a pool cue.) Why is that 'bending' aspect important? Because lots of "experts" will tell you that stiff fly rods are better than not-so-stiff rods ... and that's simply not true.

The more effort you have to put into bending your rod, the more effort you have to put into your casting. And believe it or not, we're trying to make things easier on the water, rather than harder. Long story short, it helps to fish rods that actually flex and bend.

4. Here's a little-known secret. Men tend to be at a serious disadvantage when it comes to casting. So, if you're a man ... well, bummer. You have a built-in handicap. Let's talk about it.

It turns out that most women have a rare and wondrous skill. Somewhere along the line, they learn to listen. And they don't just go through the motions, with the requisite nodding of the head and occasional eye contact, but somehow, and for some strange reason, they actually do hear what other people have to say. I know this will come as a shock to some of you, but it's true, nonetheless.

Men, however, ... nope, we don't listen. Almost never. So, when things go wrong — for example, when our form falls apart — we don't turn to people who know how to cast. Instead, we rely on Manly Rule #6. I'm going to paraphrase here, but the essence of Manly Rule #6 is that when something doesn't work out, we do it harder and faster. That may actually be solid advice when it comes to fighting off cave bears, or when we're breaking big rocks into smaller rocks, but it's not typically good advice for fly casting. So even though a fair number of you will find this tip to be counter-intuitive — and perhaps illegal — if you're a man and you have problems with your casting, do not automatically respond by casting harder and faster. And no, I'm not kidding.

5. Practice your casting. I can't say that enough, but I'll try. Practice. Practice. Practice. Practice. Oh, and practice. But please don't try to practice when you're out fishing. Fishing and practice are two different things, and they both require so much of your attention that you should never, ever try to do them simultaneously.

Some of you may be wondering why you can't skip practice entirely and go straight to fishing. Just off the top of my head, I can tell you that your casting will improve if you practice, and your fishing will also improve, and you'll likely catch more, and bigger, trout. (Or bass, or pike, or steelhead, or salmon, or bonefish, or tarpon, or whatever else it is that you fish for.) And if that's not enough of a reason, just think how disappointed you'd be if you were forced to participate in a fly-fishing movie and all your mistakes were immortalized on YouTube and Vimeo. Don't take that chance. Practice.

I'm going to wrap things up with a simple observation birthed from more than 30 years of fly-fishing experience and thousands of hours on the water. There will always be slow days. That's just the way life works. But good casting is its own reward. In fact, really good fly casting is akin to poetry in motion. It's a treat to watch a great caster like John Juracek, or Pete Kutzer, or Pat McCabe throw those perfect, effortless loops, and there's also a tremendous amount of satisfaction in heading to the river and holding up your end regardless of whether the fish decide to bite.

Please don't try to cut corners. Learn to cast effectively. It takes a little time, and it requires a bit of effort, but it's an investment in your angling that will literally pay dividends for the rest of your life.

One more streamer tip: Sculpins up and fast – do like the sculpins by Chad Shmukler



Chances are, watching guide Santos Madero work a streamer is like nothing you've seen before. Instead of the long casts, big mends and extended swings or retrieves most anglers associate with streamer fishing, Madero works short. Really short; with stout, heavy flies intended to get to the bottom fast and move water. Casts are typically quartered upstream into fast water seams, tight to the trees or banks or other cover and are followed by brief swings—sometimes as little as a second or two—which are punctuated by short, sharp jerks on the line or where the fly is drawn broadside through the target water. And then the whole thing is set in motion again and again, as Madero moves quickly through a run.

Seeing it for the first time, you might be prone, like me, to give a bit of a chuckle. Or glance at your friend beside you with a bewildered look, wondering who could possibly expect such a fevered, almost violent style of fishing to yield any results. Only then the hookups start coming. And coming. Flies that are smacked onto the surface and seem like they've barely been in the water for even a second are snatched away by hungry, waiting trout.

Fish with Madero regularly, and you'll get used to seeing him pull trophy fish from the most unlikely of places using this tactic—places where it's doubtful you'd be able to present a fly using any other method.

What you're watching isn't some form of streamer wizardry, it's Madero fishing a sculpin pattern properly.

Streamers, as most anglers know, are intended to imitate a wide variety of larger, swimming prey—leeches, crayfish, hellgrammites and, most commonly, baitfish. It's to that latter group of swimming prey that sculpins belong. Sculpins, which are found virtually everywhere that trout swim and typically in large numbers, are small baitfish that are an important food source for trout. And while sculpins are typically smaller, they can be as large as 6 or 7 inches long, making them an especially important food source for *large* trout. It's for this reason that so many popular streamer patterns are intended to imitate or work well as imitations of sculpins—think Sex

Dungeon, Drunk and Disorderly, the vast majority of bulky, modern articulated flies and, of course, the classic Muddler Minnow.

Two significant differences between sculpins and other swimming baitfish—minnows, small trout, alewives, and so on—is that sculpins lack an air bladder (which provides fish buoyancy) and are considered relatively poor swimmers. What sculpins do have, however is large, fanlike pectoral fins and a tapered, flattened body shape which allow them to hug the bottom and stay put, even in most rivers' fastest water. Sculpins are ambush predators that don't move much (most sculpin's entire range is less than 150 feet), but when they do, it is most commonly by dislodging themselves from the bottom and drifting briefly before navigating in short, sharp bursts.



NZ Redfin Bully

It is these swimming patterns and behaviours of sculpins that make traditional streamer tactics which feature long and consistent retrieves, extended swings and which cover large distances less productive when fishing sculpin patterns. And it's what makes Madero's method—and others that use short, quartering upstream casts followed by broadside swings or sharp, swift strips—so much more effective.

That's not to say that you *can't* fish a sculpin pattern using more traditional streamer methods. You can, if for no other reason than most sculpin patterns also serve as good imitations of many other baitfish. But fishing sculpin patterns in a way that imitates sculpin behaviour is not only a productive method, but one that often opens up new water for many anglers. It's also a hell of a lot of fun and for that reason alone should be added to your arsenal of streamer tactics.



The Universal Uni-Knot — One Knot to Rule Them All by Domenick Swentosky



Every angler has their favourite knots. But the longer we fish, the more we encounter situations where what we usually do just doesn't work. So, we learn from it. We research and we ask other anglers. And maybe we find a rig, a tactic or a knot that solves the problem.

That's part of what we love about this fly-fishing game. It's a never-ending set of new circumstances and new mysteries with new solutions.

Let's consider the Uni-Knot. Because this one knot can do many different things. It solves problems and opens up opportunities.

In the video below, I show the following uses for the Uni-Knot.

- Tie on a fly (standard or as a loop knot),
- Attach flies as a trailer, and then back them off,
- Create tags for droppers,
- Connect two lines (Double Uni-Knot),
- Attach line to reel spool,
- Attach leader to fly line (through the loop or as a Nail less Nail Knot),
- As a sighter while fishing nymphs or streamers.

Watch the following video, and then scroll below for more details about the many uses for the Uni-Knot.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhDEfZg4trQ>

Why the Uni-Knot?

The Uni-Knot is universal — one knot to rule them all. Because, with just the Uni, you can do everything needed on the water — literally everything. The Uni-Knot does it all. So, if you want to simplify your knot selection, this is your knot.

Incidentally, a few other knots seem to steal from the Uni-Knot and rename it. For example, the Duncan Loop is a Uni-Knot that isn't fully closed. The Grinner Knot is also a Uni-Knot.

Different ways to use the Uni-Knot

Attack a fly

This one is simple . . . with an option. I choose the Uni when the wire diameter of the hook eye is large enough that my favourite Davy Knot might slip. Instead of a Double Davy, I choose the Uni. I rarely use a Clinch anymore, instead choosing the Uni-Knot

What's the option? If you don't tighten the Uni all the way, you create a loop knot. This is a slidable loop knot that usually cinches down while fighting a fish. If the tippet and hook diameter is large enough, you can easily back the knot out again to create the loop after it closes. In truth, I rarely use the loop feature of the Uni and instead choose the Non-Slip Mono Loop.

However, I do like the back-off feature of the Uni-Knot for the following application.



Attach a Trailer

Multi-fly rigs can be created in a host of interesting ways. I usually run tags, but I sometimes choose trailers.

[READ: Troutbitten | Tags and Trailers](#)

Using a Uni-Knot for the trailer allows me to loosen the knot to remove the trailer and the attached tippet. Store that away for later and attach it again when needed.

It's a great feature.

Create a Tag

As mentioned, my favourite way to run a multi-fly rig is with a tag. There are a few ways to create tags as well. Here's a dedicated video on the topic:

[VIDEO: Troutbitten | Three Great Ways to Create Tag Droppers](#)

I use the Uni-Knot for what I call the Add Online method. Tie it around the mainline, snug it up, slide it down to the mainline knot, and tighten it. Done.



Connect Two lines

Splicing two lines together can be tricky. Fly anglers tend to use two standard options: the Double Surgeon's Knot or the Blood Knot. Both are great solutions, with their own drawbacks.

Another option is the Double Uni Knot. It has the slim, clean profile of a blood knot, while it also has the advantage of joining almost any two lines together, regardless of how different the diameters are.

I use the Double Uni-Knot most when joining braided line to nylon or fluoro. But it's a great option anytime two lines must be spliced together.

Line to Spool

If you attach your own backing to the reel (you probably should), you need a solid knot. The Uni-Knot works on any reel, with any type of line, from spinning reels and braided line to fly reels and twenty-pound backing.

Forget the Arbor Knot. The Uni-Knot is stronger and simpler.



Leader to Fly

I change leaders often because I make it easy. It still surprises me how many anglers handicap themselves because they see the fly line to leader junction as almost permanent. Loop to loop connections are a poor choice too. Keep things simple so you can change leaders quickly.

I use the Uni-Knot here in two different ways:

First, attach the leader by tying it to the loop of the fly line — treating it like a hook eye. I usually use a Clinch Knot for this. But if it slips (often when the leader butt diameter is thin) I employ the good old Uni-Knot.

Second, if the fly line does not have a loop, then a Nail Knot or a Needle Nail Knot are my favourite choices — but not on the river. For a down and dirty, quick way to attach the leader to a fly line, I use a simple Uni-Knot.

Backing Barrel Sighter

For many years, I've spread the word about a unique and versatile sighter that attaches anywhere on your leader or tippet. I call it the Backing Barrel, and it is formed with a Uni-Knot and a short length of hi-vis Dacron backing.

[READ: Troutbitten | The Backing Barrel May Be the Best Sighter Ever](#)

Clipped flush and used as a barrel only, or with a one-inch tag dangling, the Backing Barrel Sighter provides an amazing reference for many underwater fishing scenarios (nymphs, streamers, and wet flies).

Often, not Always

The video above shows the standard Uni-Knot in great detail. Remember, all of these uses are just the Uni applied in diverse ways. Learn the basic Uni-Knot. Then adapt it to the situation.

I'm sure there are even more uses for the Uni-Knot. What I've shown here are the ways that I use it every day on the water. If you have another way to use the Uni, please leave it in the comments sections below. That helps everyone.

One final point, here. I don't use the Uni for everything. Because sometimes there are better knots that suit the application. But remember, the Uni Knot is always there, waiting to solve your problems.

Fish hard, friends.

Editor's note: Please be aware that there are a number of [links to videos or additional articles](#) within the content of this article, would recommend that you review them as there is interesting information.

[Uncertain future for fishing and hunting under Labour Party's Wildlife Act Review by Fish and Game](#)

The proposed scrapping and replacement of the Wildlife Act signals an uncertain future for Fish & Game New Zealand and freshwater fishing and game bird hunting.

The Labour Party has announced that if it is re-elected, it will repeal and replace New Zealand's Wildlife Act, which protects native wildlife and recognises valued introduced species such as game birds for hunting.

Along with the Conservation Act, the Wildlife Act is Fish & Game's primary governing statute, setting out the sustainable management of valued introduced species as a food source and their place in New Zealand.

"We are alarmed at what this means for Fish & Game, thousands of anglers and hunters, freshwater species, game birds and their habitats," says Corina Jordan, chief executive of Fish & Game New Zealand. "What is particularly disappointing is we have not been given the opportunity to fully participate in this process to date and the Labour Party has set a very ambitious timeline for what is an incredibly complex piece of legislation. After all, Fish & Game is a statutory

organisation with proven expertise in crafting policy and sustainably managing species and their habitats.

Fish & Game supports the protection of endangered or threatened species and agrees that legislative frameworks need to provide the tools to ensure these species exist now and into the future. Any reform also needs to ensure mana whenua rights and aspirations are recognised and gives full effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

"What we need is workable legislation which protects indigenous species and ensures the sustainable management of valued introduced species for the benefit of all New Zealanders and recognises and empowers people, communities and Fish & Game's conservation efforts.

"Sports fish and game birds have an indispensable place in New Zealand's cultural heritage and ecosystems, existing in tandem with indigenous species. Sports fish and game are also a valued food resource for families and communities across New Zealand."



In crafting a new wildlife framework, it will be important to preserve Fish & Game's statutory mandate, which has been pivotal in managing sports fish and game populations and protecting and enhancing New Zealand's environment, says Jordan

"Fish & Game is New Zealand's leading freshwater champion. Without Fish & Game, this country will lose a key advocate for the health of our rivers and lakes.

Environment Minister David Parker recently applauded the work of Fish & Game following changes to the Natural and Built Environment Bill (NBE).

"Minister Parker told Parliament that New Zealand needs to protect the habitat of trout and salmon and that a lot of the environmental advocacy is done by what he labelled the 'fantastic membership-based organisation Fish & Game'," says Jordan.

"He stated our licence holders are passionately interested in protecting their access to trout and salmon, and they're a force for good.

"Fish & Game urges all political parties to maintain a consistent approach to wildlife management for valued introduced species and ensure the statutory organisations that manage these populations have a seat at the table."

Film: Fly Fishing and Protecting Wild Places

Throughout their lives, Kate Taylor and her husband Justin Crump have prioritized time on the water more than anything else. That connection to the water means they must face the reality that many rivers and wild places now require a fight for their survival."

["The Whitewater: Protecting Wild Places"](#)

The scenery in this short video is stunning and so are the fish that are caught, you will meet two people that are enthusiastic about the rivers they fish, the fish that they have the pleasure of catching and the environment they fish in. Well worth watching, enjoy.

The New Sporting Life Turangi

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If you have never seen a Kiwi in its natural environment (near natural) then I would recommend the Kiwi Night Encounter at Nga Manu, you will need to book as it is limited to 10 people each night.

Newsletter content with built-in links to other documents by Editor

Readers of our newsletter may not realise that when you see a name or wording underlined in an article, as an example [a Harvey leader](#) this is a link to another article where you can find more information. All you need to do is hold down your CTRL key and click on the words and the link will open.

*Newsletter copy to be received by
Second Monday of each month; your
contribution is welcome just send it to:*

malcolm1@xtra.co.nz

Purpose:

To promote the art and sport of Fly Fishing.

To respect the ownership of land adjoining waterways.

To promote the protection of fish and wildlife habitat.

To promote friendship and goodwill between members.

To promote and encourage the exchange of information between members.

Club meetings

You are invited to attend our club meetings that are held on the **Fourth Monday** of each month.

The venue is the **Turf Pavilion Sport Grounds**, Scaife Street, Paraparaumu,

Our **meetings start at 7:30pm** with fellowship followed by speakers of activities.

Club Committee meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month and the meetings are held at the Waikanae Boating Club and start at 7:30pm.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please remember that the club has two Five Weight 8'6" fly rods that members are welcome to use, just contact Malcolm Francis

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