



Rip Rap

November Meeting.....

When: Wednesday, Nov. 6
 Where: JR Ranch, Hudson
 Dinner: 6:30 pm
 Program: 8:00 pm

"Jim Humphrey's Top Twenty Flies"

President's Lines: A new Dam Committee was established by the Wisconsin State Council at their September 7th meeting in Stevens Point. This committee will look at issues surrounding dams on coldwater trout streams. Wisconsin has a large number of aging small dams that are vulnerable to removal efforts. Removal of dams has been proven to increase trout habitat and restore water quality to our coldwater streams in Wisconsin. The goal of the committee will be the restoration and improvement of trout streams through dam removal.

Plans currently include:

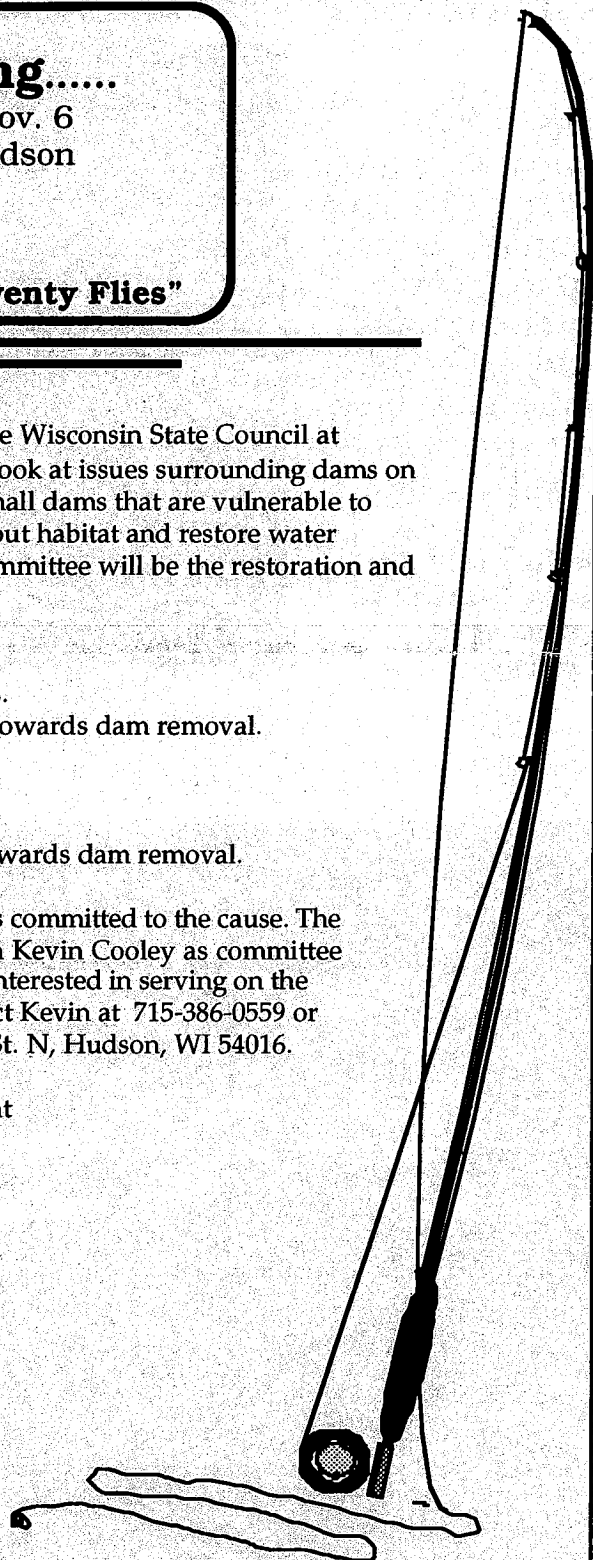
- an audit of the state for small dams on coldwater streams.
- identify other organizations or partners willing to work towards dam removal.
- prioritize potential targets for removal efforts.
- identify teams to lead efforts for individual removals.
- formulate effective strategies for dam removal.
- act as a resource for individuals and chapters working towards dam removal.

The success of this committee depends on having enough volunteers committed to the cause. The executive committee of the council appointed Kiap-TU-Wish's own Kevin Cooley as committee chairman. Any person interested in serving on the committee should contact Kevin at 715-386-0559 or write to him at 653 8th St. N, Hudson, WI 54016.

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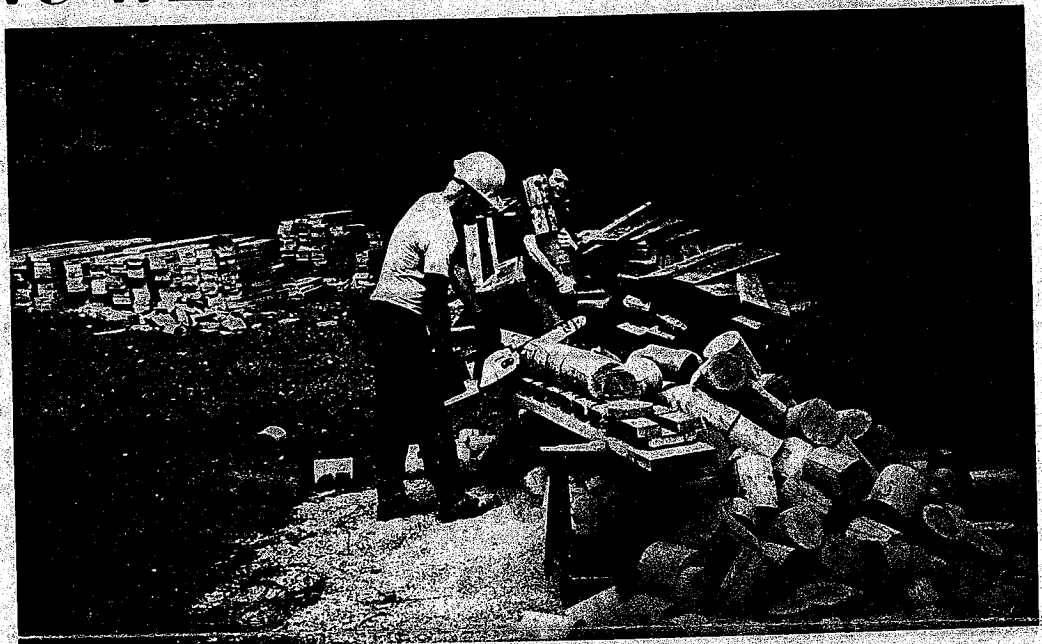
Gary Horvath, President



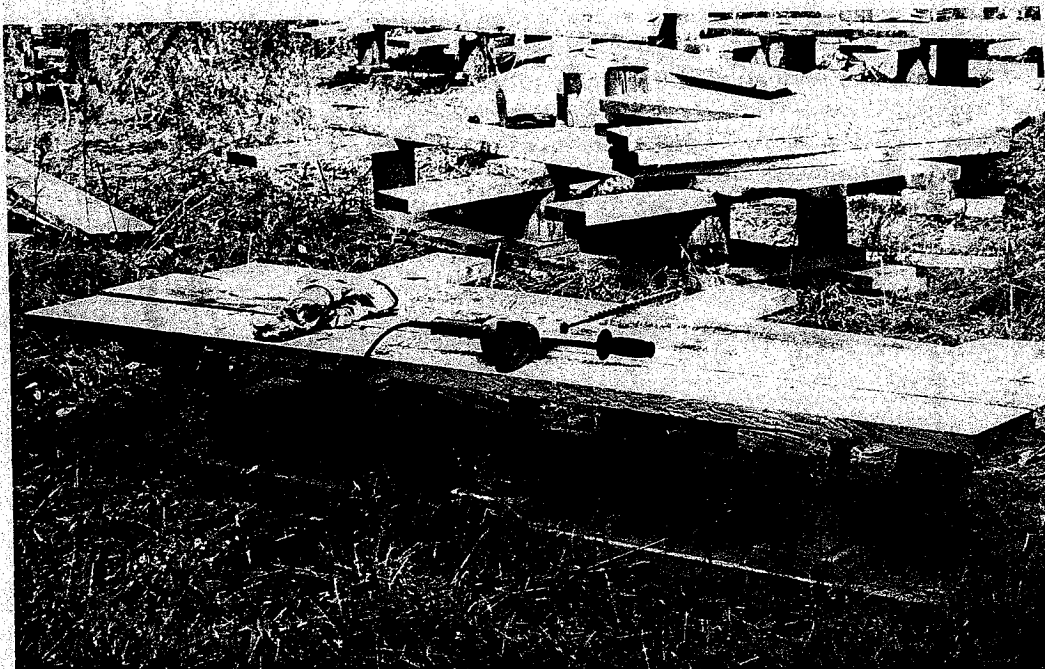
Members Donate Time, Labor, and Love to Improve Willow River Trout Habitat

Lots of raw material: green oak boards and rounds, rock for rip rap, heavy equipment for installation of finished lunger structures in the stream bank.

Stifter and dog bring lumber to Goossen for cutting.



So that's what they look like..a really low, Japanese style picnic table.



Brian Spangler of the DNR designed this project, to install forty-four of the structures in 1815 feet of stream bank. In addition to Stifter and Goossen already mentioned above, Vern Alberts and Bill Hinton were on hand, plus DNR Fish Manager Marty Engel and a young man from the U of M named Paul that the DNR guys described as "hired muscle."



Goossen and Hinton rap while using the air hammer.

“Is this number 28 or 29?” “When I get to be your age, Chuck, I hope I’m in as good shape as you are.” “Do you suppose I’ll ever catch a big brown from under this thing?” Funding for the project came from the estate of Ivan Schloff.

Miller time... And a job well done. Or, at least, well started.....

The crew wonders how many trout have already taken up residence, there’s still some trout season left after all. “I can’t wait to see what mother Nature does to this ugly rock and dirt next summer. Forty-four lunker structures, 150 boulder retards, 20 tree/log covers, current deflectors and rip rap. Enough work for a couple of years!



Rif Raf

by Jon Jacobs

Confession, it is said, is good for the soul. Thus, here is mine... I am an unrepentant, unreconstructed angling book junkie!

In all the books I've seen in the past year or so, I have been struck by the truly remarkable intelligence of the authors. While I struggle to assemble a single sentence with fair to middling grammatical accuracy and something akin to a point, people like Thomas McGuane are reeling off hundreds of pages of cogent, descriptive, moving, funny and vivid prose in books like his *Live Water* from Meadow Run Press. My womenfolk indulged my habit with a slip cased and autographed copy that goes for \$50. That's a substantial amount, but the book is worth every penny of their money. McGuane goes steelheading on British Columbia's Dean, sea trout fishing in Argentina, Atlantic salmon fishing on Canada's Grand Cascapedia and Russia's Ponoï and bonefish angling in the Caribbean. Along the way we get wonderful travel writing and a pervasive sense of good humor (how about an angling werewolf or fishing with a headstrong son?) There's a thoughtful essay on tackle called "Foundationless Opinions" that's bound to entertain, too.

After too long a wait, there is a new paperback edition of Harry Middleton's *The Earth is Enough* available for \$18. The hardbound edition went out of print several years ago and it's difficult to understand why. This book ranks second only to Norman Maclean's seminal work *A River Runs Through It* in taking real life experiences and blending them into fiction that explains families, our frayed connection to the natural world and fly fishing and how they intertwine. Middleton was an army brat whose hard bitten soldier-father saw his son's luck running out in the aftermath of a tragedy involving Middleton and his boyhood friends in Okinawa. The elder Middleton sent his young son to the Arkansas hills to live with the boy's maternal grandfather and grand uncle, two absolutely remarkable characters who by example teach the younger Middleton that, indeed, the earth is enough. Russell Chatham, who is no slouch with a pen himself, writes in the new edition's introduction that this book moved him to give up trout fishing. He says, in summary, that the book made him realize that the king salmon was his fish and that he lacked the essential passion for trout fishing that people like Harry Middleton have, and that without that, he was defaming the sport by participating in it. Now that's moving writing!

College student James Prosek has produced a beautiful piece of work with the publication of his *Trout: An Illustrated History*, available from Alfred A. Knopf in hardbound for \$27.50. Young James is a very talented painter and, apparently, a compulsive angler. He's fished over much of the continent for nearly every species and subspecies of trout, char and salmon imaginable. His paintings of the fish he's captured are simply gorgeous. The accompanying text is informative and usually interesting, even though it's occasionally a tad insipid. Then again, when I was his age I had difficulty printing my name in block letters, so perhaps I ought not complain.

True Love And The Woolly Bugger (Greycliff, \$24.95) is a first effort from Montanan Dave Ames. I bought it on the strength of its title. It's billed by its publisher as a rollicking novel about a guide who began guiding in those wild and woolly sixties. I don't know. Ames can certainly turn a phrase and the book is entertaining, but it does not follow the usual novel format. The chapters are really stand alone stories with little or no obvious connection to material preceding or following.

I can't quite make up my mind about Dave Hughes' *Big Indian Creek, October 23-29, 1994* (Stackpole, \$19.95, hardbound). Hughes has always stuck me as a very thoughtful, decent and modest gentleman. Those qualities come through in this little book, a diary of a trip that the author made to Oregon's southeastern desert mountains, an interesting area about which I am woefully ignorant. Hughes reflects on his place in the universe, offers practical trip planning and camping tips and tells us about the fishing. I'm left wondering if the book is a verbatim transcript of the diary. If it is, it ought to have been edited. If it's not, it ought to have been considerably better edited.

John Gierach's *Another Lousy Day In Paradise* is the latest offering from the Trout Bum. It's nothing more than what we've come to expect from his books. That's not a complaint. No one does a better job of getting at the sense of a fishing trip or why we fish than Gierach. Over the years, he's become both funnier and more philosophical. He has a clear idea of his time and place in life and he writes eloquently about both. Sample chapter titles: "Fly Fishing Elbow," "Carp," "Desperation Creek" and "What Else Is There?" If you've read his other books, you'll most definitely want to read this one. If you haven't pick up a copy of his foundation work, *Trout Bum*, instead.

Dream Fish and Road Trips (\$22.95, hardbound, Lyons & Burford) is a very solid effort by physician-polymath E. Donnell Thomas, Jr. Thomas blends solid, informational text with humor and a striking sense of awe of the natural world in work that takes us, as the subtitle says, from Alaska to Montana and beyond. "Beyond" is saltwater fishing, a segment of our sport about which I am ambivalent. I know that I would be an interloper, a trespass-

(continued on next page)

ser on the flats, but Thomas' writing helps me understand the almost mystical attraction that some anglers have for that ecosystem. I'm more at home with "Huck Finn Lives", a story of a multiple family camping trip on the Missouri River in its warm water stretches, where Thomas and his friends find walleyes and a Lewis and Clark campsite. This is a fine follow up to Thomas' earlier work, the whimsically titled *Whitefish Can't Jump*.

Here's an opportunity to feel good twice: Buy and read *The Gift of Trout* (Lyons & Burford, hardbound, \$25.00), edited by Ted Leeson. An anthology featuring the works of several fine writers, including David Quammen, John Gierach, Datus Proper, Harry Middleton, Thomas McGuane, Nick Lyons, Robert Berls and others, it's a Trout Unlimited Book. Thus, you get a sampling of many authors' first class work and you get to feel good about putting some money in the Trout Unlimited treasury. Berls has two keen and insightful essays, both on angling literature, that will serve you well in your search for further reading material.

O can't maintain any pretext of objectivity in a review of Jim Humphrey's and Bill Shogren's dandy Wisconsin & Minnesota Trout Streams (Backcountry Publications, paper back, \$17.00). I'm proud to say that Jim is a friend of mine and that while I'm only acquainted with Bill Shogren from his work with Twin Cities TU, he's proven himself to be a good guy, too. Nonetheless, this is a great book about our back yard. It's meticulously researched, well organized in terms of content and graphics and written in a lively and compact style. Lest you fret that the authors have ratted out your favorite honey hole, let me assure you that they have done a fine job of giving us general background on some places to fish without telling us that the big one lives under that alder over there. Besides, the book's conservation message is so strong and so clearly stated that anyone you find astream because of this book ought to be a companionable brother or sister of the angle. The book is much more than a 'where to, how to' anyway: I challenge you to read the account of a hippopotamus running amok in the Mekan River without laughing or Jim's touching tribute to Dick Frantes without becoming melancholy.

Lastly, speaking of Dry Fly Dick, I now own, I smugly state, his copy of John McDonald's long out of print *Quill Gordon*, a scholarly, yet highly readable collection of Mr. McDonald's essays. I'm smug because I found this book among some other nice books and some absolutely hideous dross in a used book emporium in an out of the way little town. You too can be smug. These stores can be found all over and they frequently hold gems such as McDonald's book. The people that own such places are almost always genial folk and exploring their bookshelves can be a delightful way to spend a winter Saturday. Give it a try this winter and the season of our discontent will pass more quickly.

River Falls Clinic a Success

The Education Committee has two stated goals: to educate the community and involve the membership. Thus, they hosted the second annual Fly Fishing Clinic in River Falls on June 1st. Participants were treated to a full day of fly fishing lore, casting instruction, entomology, knot tying, fly selection, and tackle rigging. A picnic supper was followed by guided fishing on the lower Kinni. Everyone had a great time, and the students received a healthy dose of ecology awareness and stewardship. Thirteen chapter members acted as teachers, guides and mentors. These generous people gave up an entire day of their lives to help others discover the joy of trout fishing: Dan Bruski, Jon Jacobs, Tony Stifter, Al Kiecker, Matt Nelson, Jay Johnson, Ross Nelson, John Stiney, Bill Hinton, Bob Bradham, Gary Horvath and Mike Stanton.

In addition, the Committee delivered part of the program at Outdoor Activities Day in Willow River State Park on August 24th. Ellen Clark headed a group of Kiap-TU-Wish volunteers who endured the hot sun for a day while introducing visitors to fly fishing and fly tying. In addition to Ellen, volunteers included Mike Stanton, Jim Caspers, Bill Lovegren, Kevin Cooley, Ross Nelson and Tony Stifter.

Save Wednesday, December 4, for Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Feast

The annual Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Banquet will be held Wednesday, December 4th at the JR Ranch. Mark the date on your calendar and then start looking around for items to donate to the silent auction. This is our only fund raiser for the year and your generosity is critical to our success. There are two things you can do that will help us. First, please remember that the items you donate don't have to pertain to fishing. You can donate a ride in your boat, or a day at Valley Fair, or a dinner for two at a local restaurant, or a golf lesson. In the past, we've received scrumptious desserts, homemade maple syrup and a couple of computers in addition to an array of fly rods and tackle. You can deduct the value of your donation from your income tax as a charitable gift. Second, the earlier you get the swag to us the better job we can do in promoting it. If you bring your donations to Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop or Jon Jacob's house in Hudson before Dec. 4th, we'll have enough time to properly catalog and display it. Jon Jacob's address is 703 Summer Street, Hudson.

Skip's Loose Threads

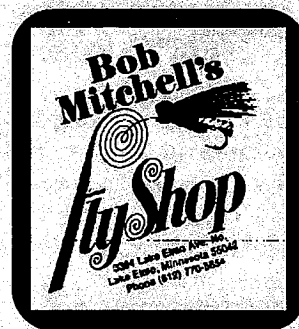
As far as I'm concerned, the jury is still out on the use of Freebie Heads. You've never heard of Freebie Heads? I suppose the term is a corruption of Free Bead Heads. A couple of years ago, several fly fishers got the idea that instead of adding beads to all their favorite nymph patterns, they could simply slip a bead on the leader tippet in front of the fly. In fishing, the bead would settle at the eye of the hook, providing weight and flash as needed. It's certainly convenient, and it fits right in with my ideas of tying nymphs without weight, (see *Skip's Loose Threads* for April, 1995).

I've tested the technique off and on over the past season, but I've never had as good success with the Freebie Head as I have with the attached Bead Head. Now, that could be because my favorite bead head pattern is a Caddis pupa that I don't tie any other way. Perhaps to be fair I should have tied up a few beadless pupae, and simply added the bead to the leader. I have had good results with adding the bead in front of a Pheasant Tail, Zug Bug or Hares Ear.

Do your beads get tarnished? I use a lot of copper beads, and after fishing them for a month or two, they are not exactly bright and shiny...kind of a dull reddish brown. If you add the bead to your tippet, of course, it's always brand new, and it really shines. Can a bead be too shiny? Gary LaFontaine thinks that flash is a 'trigger' for the trout. It signifies something good to eat. I remember something in an old fishing book about 'spoons,' and how you could restore the shine to a dull spoon by polishing it with emery paper, then rouge, and then coat the whole thing with fingernail polish to lock in the shine. I'm sure that 3M has probably invented something that would accomplish the same thing in one step. It would probably dissolve the leader and the fly as well. All kidding aside, I'm not convinced that the bead has to be shiny. Has anyone tried black metallic beads? Do they work as well as brass or copper. Has anyone out there caught a fish on a silver bead head fly?

I still haven't heard or read anything very positive about the use of non-metallic beads, either incorporated in the fly pattern, or hanging on the leader. Every trolling rig ever made for generations has at least two or three fluorescent red beads on it, and the perennially successful Mepps spinner has beads of various colors, but tying glass or plastic beads into trout flies seems never to have caught on.

Maybe we should carry on an experiment. Tie a dozen of your favorite bead head nymph pattern, six with the bead, and six without. Carry a little pack of the same size and color bead in your vest, and when your bead head fly is doing well, try putting a bead on your leader in front of the beadless version. Let me know if it works!



What's New at the Flyshop

Bob Henley, of Sacramento, California, is marketing a product called Tie-A-Fly. Stacked plastic bags in a simple, fold over package contain all the ingredients to tie a dozen of one fly pattern. Hooks, usually in two sizes, hackle for tailing or winding, dubbing, ribbing, wing material, thread, even a model to imitate are included. The patterns include the most common trout flies: Elk Hair Caddis, Royal Wulff, G.R. Hare's Ear, Humpy, P.T., Woolly Bugger, Black Winged Ant, Adams, Parachute Adams, Light Cahill, and A.P. Nymph. There are instructions, although the author presumes the tier is familiar with basic operations. For instance, the reader is asked to "X-wrap" a feather wing, "tie in" the tail of the fly, "place dubbing on thread," and "whip finish the head." The drawings accompanying the directions don't show proportions correctly, and I found the amount of winging material barely adequate to tie a dozen flies. If you make any mistakes, you won't get twelve flies from the kit. The quality of the materials appears to be average, although the written history of the fly pattern is woefully wanting. "The Light Cahill: One of fly fishing's most historical patterns, the Light Cahill began catching fish before the turn of the 20th century. Resting on the water, it represents many light colored adult mayflies." The completed fly to be used as a model is well tied. At \$12.95 for each Tie-A-Fly kit, it will give the beginner who has tools and a wise useful practice.

November Events at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop (10:30am)

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Sat. Nov. 2 | Perry Palin, fly tier |
| Sat. Nov. 9 | Scott Nordby's realistic flies |
| Sat. Nov. 16 | Drift Boats with Bill Hinton |
| Sat. Nov. 23 | Jim Kojis, fly tier |
| Sat. Nov. 30 | Mark Larson, fly tier |

Is it really important to know the Latin name of an insect you've met on a stream? Well, yes, if you want to discuss it intelligently with someone else who isn't standing right at your elbow at the moment of capture.....

The trout certainly don't care, and knowledge of the insect's genus may be only peripherally important while fishing. Knowing that might help you remember information you've read about hatching procedures, or habitat, or when to expect a spinner fall.

But one man's Blue Quill is someone else's Mahogany Dun, or Parachute Paralep, or Dun Variant, so the fly pattern name is about as useless in describing a living insect as it would be to characterize Marilyn Monroe as a 5'4" blonde! Fly shops sell the most sought after color of hackle for dry flies, dun, in so many shades that they cover the spectrum from dark chocolate to grayish cream, and commercial suppliers of flies usually farm the tying out to villages in Indonesia, China, Malaysia, or Mexico with only a benchmark pattern to guide the workers, and a supply of materials. It's a little easier getting the colors right with nymphs: it's pretty difficult to make a Black Woolly Bugger look like anything else, as long as you use the proper materials. But what about dubbing? Your hare's ear may not look much like mine. I add clear Antron, fox squirrel, a bit of both red and olive dyed rabbit to the mix. Every year the color is subtly different.

If fly pattern names can't be used reliably to discuss insect hatches, and the same insect might be a different size and color on a neighboring stream, why bother with trying to identify them at all? Fly fishing is a repetitive sport. The flowers bloom, the birds come and go, the earth turns and seasons change. Natural events happen within this orderly progression, always at the same time. Not human time, mind you, marked by days, hours, and minutes, but by Nature's time schedule, ruled by heat and light. Do you remember a toy called a Slinky? Really, just a large spring, the rings can be compressed tightly together, held apart at various points over it's length, making an uneven, ever changing pattern of tight and loose links, but no single link of the Slinky will ever change its place. That's how hatches work. Some years a given insect will appear for only a day or two, often totally overlooked by both fish and fishermen. Other years, the hatch of the same insect may last for weeks, if conditions are favorable. But the really important lesson to be learned from the progression of stream activity is that you can study it, remember it, learn from it, and apply the lessons in future seasons. No insect that you encounter is appearing for the first time. They all have been evolving for millions of years, and what you

learn about an insect this year will be invaluable to you the next.

Back to Latin for a moment. There are anglers who have kept a stream log for many years, anglers who look for and anticipate the appearance of insects. If you are to be one of them, and learn more and more each season, isn't it better to learn the correct name of the insect, so that you can share your discoveries and experiments with others? If you want to learn the names, you need a taxonomic key.

Taxonomy is the science of naming animals and plants. Like a huge tree with many branches, flora and fauna are grouped together by common features, from the most general to the most specific. (It's no accident that specific and 'species' have the same root). Through Phylum, Class, Order, Genus, and Species, each individual can be seen as a member of a group. The common Blue Wing Olive is in the Phylum Arthropoda (many legs), in the Class Insecta (insects), of the Order Ephemeroptera (Mayflies), the Genus Baetis (two tailed), and the species Atratus. So the insect that many of us call a B.W.O is properly known as Baetis atratus, but there are many other insects that anglers in different parts of the world call Blue Wing Olives, and you really can't discuss the particular bug on your water without the correct name.

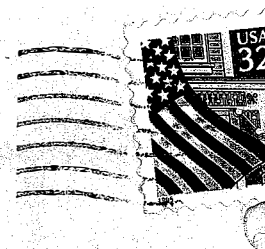
There are a number of books on the market designed for fly fishers, which will help you identify the insects you meet on the stream. Some are extremely scientific, with lots of unfamiliar words, technical descriptions of the sexual organs of male spinners and the venation of wings. Most of the scientific ones have little or no reference to size or color, two of the most variable features of an insect. Others contain color photos of insects, with suggestions for imitations and vague references to where the insects fit in the taxonomic groups. Somewhere in the middle of this spectrum is the right book for you, with enough science for identification, with a minimum of jargon, and descriptions of the habits and habitats of the various families that will help you understand their life cycles.

Finally, there are a few tools you'll need for insect collecting. A tropical fish net with very fine mesh is a lot handier than your hat for catching duns in the air, or spinners in the film. You will need a couple of clear vials to keep your specimens in, and perhaps a small magnifier to help your vision. The most important tool is a notebook, in which you record the conditions under which you captured your specimen. You'll refer to the notebook every year, and every year it will get bigger and bigger, as your knowledge of insects becomes more refined. You'll catch more trout, too!

(Reviews of books which provide taxonomic data for aquatic trout foods will be featured in the December issue of RipRap)



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DEADLINES

DEC 11/15
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Now on the Internet at:

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Don't Forget to Make your Reservation for the Holiday Banquet on December 4th!

6:30 Social Hour

7:30 Dinner

**A groaning board buffet of turkey, ham, salads, potatoes
and gravy, rolls and butter complete with beverage all for
the unbelievable price of \$20.00 per person!**

**November 21st is the deadline for reservations, so don't be late....
Call Now...**

Mike Alwin at Bob Mitchells Fly Shop 612-770-5854

OR

Jon Jacobs w. 612-930-8245 h. 715-386-7822