

“Ripples”

The Official publication of the Southland Fly Fishing Club. The club was founded in 1974

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www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz



Southland Fly Fishing Club

President's Report by Dave

The past month has been relatively quiet fishing wise for me, mainly due to what looked like poor weather conditions. With it getting close to the end of the season all of my trips have been to the Mataura in the hope of finding a good rise.

The March midweek trip saw myself and Jim head off to Riversdale looking for rising fish. We did find some and they were rising well. Jim had a couple at the tail of the pool that he fished to from the true right bank while I had some further up the pool that I fished to from the true left. Those I was fishing to were easy to see and were feeding well. For quite a while they would just ignore my fly but finally one rose to it and I was on, but not for long. From then on the others were a bit more co-operative and I landed four nice fish, all on a parachute adams. Meanwhile Jim persevered with those in front of him but they just ignored his flies while continuing to rise to whatever it was they were taking (we couldn't actually see what they were on).

The following day I was away on a two day trip with retired Fish & Game Manager, Maurice Rodway. He had some F&G things he wanted to discuss and decided the best way to talk to me was to take me fishing. Both days we fished the Mataura but didn't find a good rise on either day. We did manage to hook quite a few fish but I dropped more than I landed. All of mine took a small pheasant tail nymph in ripples and I had a lot of fun even if they weren't coming to the net. I was surprised how shallow the water was where I was hooking them on the first day.

I took Murray out to Riversdale the following week and we headed up towards where Jim and I had found the fish rising on the midweek trip. Frustratingly we saw nothing although I hooked and landed a little one in a ripple. When we got to the pool where I had caught fish the previous week we finally spotted the angler that was fishing ahead of us and that explained the lack of fish seen, although he did say he wasn't having much luck either. We went back down and fished down rather than up. There were fish rising but once again I couldn't figure out what to. I did hook some and landed all but the first. It broke me off in branches on the other side of the river. As I often do I was fishing with a dry dropper rig and in spite of the fish rising the only thing I could get them to take was my tiny pheasant tail nymph. One of the fish I landed was rising in the middle of a very wide smooth section of river. Initially I thought it was too far out for me but I made a good cast and even at extreme distance could clearly see the parachute adams drifting down until it disappeared when the fish took the nymph.

The one other trip I made was to the same area but I walked well down the river. When I walk down to fish up I normally don't assemble my rod until I am ready to start fishing back up the river. This was the case this trip and I put my rod on the side of my pack and my net on the other side and set off. Almost immediately I had to cross the river and there on the other side just below me was a fish rising. I thought about setting up but realized there was no way I could cross the river and get below the fish without spooking it so just carried on. When I got to where I normally start fishing, I was surprised how different it was to my previous visits to this area. Almost immediately I spotted fish rising so I put on a new dry I had tied and was into a fish straight away. However, the first one came off but the second came to the net. Unfortunately, these were the only fish I found rising and the weather conditions made spotting extremely difficult and that was my action for the day.

My new dry was inspired by David Murray-Orr. He had mentioned a parachute dry with a pink post and CDC for both the body and hackle in a recent blog. I tried one with an orange post (I didn't have any pink) but didn't like the CDC hackle so I tried a black hackle instead of the CDC and liked what it looked like.

Remember there is a 3-day Lodge trip on April 24th – 26th. If you want to come on this trip, give me a ring on 027 201 6722. I already have a few takers.

Finally, it is with sadness that I report the passing of previous Club Vice President and master Fly Tyer John Day.

Cover Photo

Julie with one of the browns she landed on her trip to Owen River Lodge.

May Competition Fly by Dave

We should have discussed the competition flies for this year at the March meeting but I forgot. This means I had to decide on something myself. I have selected a blue bottle dry fly. I have been having a lot of success with a black blowfly on the Oreti River so will be interested to see how this fly works out. At this stage it is untried.

I have kept it simple and at size 12 it is not too small for anyone trying to tie it.

Materials:

Hook	Black Magic B12
Thread	Black Unithread 6/0
Tail	Moose body hair
Abdomen	Blue metallic string
Wings	White poly yarn
Hackle	Black saddle hackle

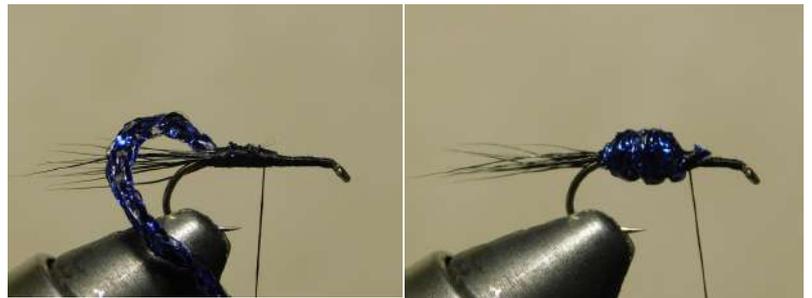


It may actually be worth trying in size 10 as the real blue bottle blowflies are quite big but tie it size 12 for the competition.

I will be demonstrating this fly at the April meeting and have some blue metallic string for anyone that wants to tie this fly. This came from Spotlight a few years ago but they don't seem to have it any more.



Run the thread to the bend of the hook and tie in stacked moose hair. Tail should be about the same length as the straight section of the hook.



Tie in the blue string. Then build up the body a bit with black floss or something similar and wind the blue string forward to form the body. Try and get it a bit neater than this.



Tie the poly yarn on top of the hook and form two wings. Secure with figure 8 binding.



Tie in the hackle. I tie in my hackles out over the eye of the hook like this and run the thread back to the front of the abdomen.



Wind the hackle back to the abdomen, tie off with a few turns and then work the thread back to the eye. Build up a bit of a head and whip finish.

Owen River Lodge Women's Fishing Retreat by Julie

Owen River Lodge is in Murchison, it has an overseas reputation for luxury and excellence. The owners Felix Berenstein and Kylie were offering a special deal on their six-night package for their Women's Annual Retreat due to covid and a downturn in overseas visitors. I could not resist giving myself a very early birthday/Christmas present.

So I booked myself a flight to Chch and on to Nelson where I was collected along with five other women and headed off to Murchison. It was a really lovely piece of our country and I enjoyed every minute of the drive. Fortunately the fog that had delayed my flights had lifted and the weather was clear and the sun was trying to peek through.

On arrival we were shown to our rooms and those that wanted single had them. I was spoilt and was upstairs in the newly refurbished suite. There was a reading room, a bathroom, (with its own bath), a beautifully furnished Queen bedroom with a TV and beautifully arranged flowers in front of it. I might add at no time was the TV turned on. There was a lovely possum throw on the bed, which Kylie told me was Australian possum, not NZ ones. From my room there was a view over the manicured grounds and looking over to the Owen River that was to die for.

On offer were canapés and wine, coffee, tea or drinking chocolate and a short time to relax before being rigged out in the best of Simms gear. The shed Felix has of Simms gear must be just about the largest collection in the world. Fitting was no problem and he had boots up to size 16 men's. I chose hip waders as have always been keen to try them. These were changed for full waders after three days fishing (this is a whole different story). I also chose to try a Sage X, and planned to try a Sage One before the five days fishing was over.

At 4pm, those that wanted to, went for a lesson from Kylie on the casting green. As there were four women that had never held a fly rod before we started at the basics of casting and retrieving, narrowing the V for better casting, following on with roll casting. It was an opportunity for me to work on sharpening my forward stop. Kylie is a great teacher and had excellent methods of relaying the exercises she gave us.

We were all briefed on the next few days. Fishing from 8am-4.30pm, rivers would be dependent on weather. Canapés, wine and afternoon tea on return each day at 4.30, dinner at 7pm, a Jacuzzi for those that wanted, this would be open 24/7 and each of us would be allocated a massage during our stay.

Three of the women had arranged their trip to meet up with girlfriends, so that left Heather and myself to pair up as angling partners. Two were from Auckland, two from Taupo, one from Wellington, and three of us from the South, Blenheim, Geraldine and Invercargill.

The Owen River Lodge has four experienced guides. Heather's and my guide was Adam. We were told sight fishing is the norm, and all catch and release, we would be slowly moving upstream and over and around gravel and boulder edges spotting trout. Any of us that caught double digit sized trout would be added to their wall of fame. Hmm my goal was to catch a trout over five lbs on a fly. I was ready back country license organised.

Fishing - Adam our guide turned out to be an excellent spotter, he kept looking for smudges in the water, (which only he could see). Once spotted Adam would relay the condition of the fish. Was it happy? What was it feeding on? Which side was it feeding from? What is its range? Is there a pattern? Is it stationary or is it wandering all over the place, mainly is it catchable where it is?



Owen River Lodge Women's Fishing Retreat (cont)

Our job was to quietly square ourselves up to it in the best possible place, unseen and unheard and do the required (perfect) cast. Then we were told we would have a chance of successfully catching it. A couple of the bigger ones I didn't get because they took my nymph and didn't move the indicator spitting it out so quickly. Frustrating.

With beautiful fish all lined up the weather turned atrocious and in five minutes were lost as the river coloured and started to flood. On one piece of water the river rose 12 inches in ½ an hour.

On the third day Heather unfortunately tore her knee and could not go fishing for the rest of the trip. So it was Adam and I fishing for the duration. Kylie kindly gave Heather extra casting lessons to make up for being unable to go fishing. This put additional pressure on me to perform under Adam's eagle eye missing no error I might add. He was a typical hunting fishing kiwi bloke that took no prisoners.

Most of my fishing was done throughout rivers in the Matakītaki Valley. We did take a water taxi one day over Lake Rotoiti to fish the rivers up that way. The Tasman/Nelson National Parks are truly beautiful. Some days we saw wild deer, goats and pigs all foraging up on the hills including a totally white pig. Something I had never seen before. The fish I did see were beautiful and quite different colours depending on the water.

One of the newbies caught a fish well over 6½lb on her first day, she was stoked, and another on the last day caught a 12½ lb trout. I have to admit I was really envious? Then I consoled myself with however would I have ever got it landed to the net if I did catch that big a trout.

Ryan and Jo were our chefs and their food was truly delicious. Oh I did love coming home to a beautifully cooked meal after a long day's fishing. One particular meal of a venison backstrap just melted in my mouth. Never had such scrumptious food.

The stories at night from such a lovely bunch of ladies were wonderful to hear and we had a birthday party for one of our group and the birthday cake, chocolate (in the shape of a trout of course) was divine.



Back to fishing, due to the bad weather most fishing was done with a bead head nymph, pheasant tail and a fly they called a woolly worm, this was the go to fly in colouring water. Adam advised that the majority of his fishing is normally done on nymphs. They do not appear to get the hatches we are familiar with in the south.

Adam had a 4 wheel drive and was well used to driving through rivers and over rough paddocks to get to secret fishing spots where he had previously observed beautiful big trout. He knew my level of walking was going to obstruct me getting to some of the headwaters where we needed to get to for the biggest fish so he worked hard to get me as near as possible to the big one. We tended to chase size, and places not frequently fished, rather than places with lots of fish that were frequently fished by anglers.

On the last day he took me to a favourite spot known to have big fish in a tiny narrow stream but we could not spot any of them. I felt sorry for Adam this day as he was chilled to the bone and water running inside his clothes, it was raining so hard and here he was paired with this woman who was as enthusiastic as ever to keep chasing the BIG ONE. I hope he did not end up with pneumonia.

The total count for the 5 days fishing was 38 trout and I caught 18 of them (each with its own story). The fish I caught fish ranged in size from 1½ to just over 5 ¾lbs most were in the 3¾ to 4¾lb range with 3 over the 5lb.

Owen River Lodge Women's Fishing Retreat (cont)



All the 4 to 5¾lbs were double checked with my trusted digital scales as well as the guide's net. I was happy I have cracked my 5lb on a fly rod. Yet, another awesome fishing trip to remember forever.

Thank you to Felix and Kylie for making it possible.

Competitions by Dave

Fish Competition.

April will see the last draw of our Hunting & Fishing fish competition for a \$20 gift voucher. You can put in cards from any month for the draw in April. If you don't get your cards in for the April meeting I will still accept them for the competitions but they will not go in a monthly prize draw.

Fly Tying Competition.

The Fly Tying Competition runs from May until September. The fly for May will be the blue bottle dry fly as shown on page 3 of this Ripples. The June fly will be a Kilwell No. 1 streamer in honour of John Day who passed away recently. This was John's favourite fly when he lived in Rotorua. I will have all the materials required for this fly.

We will sort out the remaining three flies at the April Meeting.

John Day 2nd April 1936 - 31st March 2021 by Chris

John joined the Southland Fly Fishing Club when he moved down from those large rivers and big ponds in the north. He complained about the small sizes flies we used down here.

John was a very supportive club member. He was always available to help at Casting Days, courses and fly tying demo's.

I never fished with John but we tied a hell of a lot of flies together. John was always a gentleman and sometimes the voice of reason.

John was Vice President of the club for a number of years until he retired last year as it was harder to get out at night.

One of John's jobs for the club was to go to Spotlight and collect a number of strange materials and give them to us with a hook and say tie a fly out of that. I never won the Spotlight fly competition but others tied some great concoctions.

I spoke to John's daughter Gillian a while after his wife Monica died and she said the Club was good for John. It got him out and gave him something for him to look forward to.

The Club was good for John and John was good for the Club. The family is missing John now, we at the club have been missing him for a year.

Tight lines John



Coming Events (MM=Monthly Meeting, CM = Committee Meeting)

24/25/26 th April		Lodge Trip (End of Season) contact Dave Harris 027 201 6722
27 th April	MM	
28 th April		Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
4 th May	CM	Fly Tying
9 th May		Club Day Trip, meet at Fish & Game 10am, to the lower Mataura
25 th May	MM	
26 th May		Mid-week Trip – Dave Harris 027 201 6722
29/30 th May		Lodge Trip – End of Season run, close Lodge = contact Dave Harris 027 201 6722
1 st June	CM	Fly Tying
12 th June		Fly Tying for Club members by Club members - Meal at night, (\$5 funny gift)
29 th June	MM	Members Video & Photo night plus photo competition

Club Contacts

- Address **Southland Fly Fishing Club, PO Box 1689, Invercargill, New Zealand**
- Website www.southlandflyfishingclub.org.nz
- President Dave Harris, 30 Baxter Street Invercargill (03 215 6068) dcharris@southnet.co.nz
- Secretary Chris McDonald, 334 Racecourse Road, Invercargill (03 217 3733) mcdonald.ccnd@kinect.co.nz
- Editor Dave Harris dcharris@southnet.co.nz
Items for publication must be submitted to the editor, prior to the 10th of the month
- Librarian Simon Budd
- Lodge Custodian Dave Murphy, 35 Brown Road, Invercargill dmurphy@southnet.co.nz (03 230 4698) or (0276752324)

Club items for sale

Metal Badges \$15 ea.



Cloth Patches \$12 ea.



Club Meetings

The club meets at 7:30pm on the last Tuesday of each month (except December) at the Fish & Game building, 17 Eye St, West Invercargill, Invercargill 9810. [The February meeting is on the river.](#)

Executive Committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month following the general meeting, except for Dec/Jan, includes fly tying, so come along and bring your gear if you want help with a fly—all members welcome.

Club Resources

The club has an extensive library of Books and Videos, contact the Librarian

A blow up Rubber Boat and a set of five Radio's, which can be borrowed by club members, contact Chris McDonald.

Club Sponsors



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