



Sussex Branch Newsletter



MARCH 2020

CONGRATULATIONS!

Hearty congratulations to **Bill Black** and to **Tony Kaatze** who have been awarded their Gold Certificate by the Guild. They join an elite band, and Sussex Branch can be proud of their members who have achieved this milestone.

Promoting Trout Fishing at Arlington Reservoir

The Sussex Flydressers Guild was approached by South East Water, asking for some volunteers from the club to help them promote Trout Fishing at Arlington Reservoir.

The request was for some trout anglers to be filmed, fly casting only. Alan Middleton, Peter Winder and myself volunteered.

The three of us met up at Arlington on the Friday before the official trout fishing opening day, and went to meet the production team that were to film us fly casting.

As originally stated we were to be filmed fly casting only, so we had turned up with various rod and line setups and various flies. The production team then advised us they wanted some fishing action and it was finally agreed with the powers that be that we could catch one fish each - catch and release. Luckily Peter had brought a net with him, no-one else had.

We were located in the Bay, and it was not long before the three of us had caught our fish, while at the same time being filmed and interviewed during this fishing activity. Peter's net came in very handy. After our three fish had all been released the production team wanted to show fish being weighed. As we had all put the fish back, there were no fish available for this part of the film, so - you guessed it - the three of us has to try and catch an extra trout for this process. Alan caught the required fish, which was dispatched and filmed being weighed.

The production team took an estimated 30 plus minutes of filming, which was edited down to 1 minute 35 seconds and can be seen on Facebook, under Sussex Flydressers Guild and also on the South East Water web site Trout Fishing at Arlington Reservoir.

It was an interesting mornings' fishing.

Simon Rickard

SPRING AUCTION

Thursday 19th March 2020 at 7.30 pm sharp
(Viewing from 6.45 pm)

At Patcham Community Centre, Ladies Mile
Road, Brighton, BN1 8TA

About 300 lots of Fishing Tackle (Fly, Sea and
Coarse), Flies, Fly Tying Tools, Materials,
Miscellaneous Items and Books

MARCH SPEAKER Thursday 5th March 2020

We welcome **ANDY LUSH** who will tell us of
his experiences with Barbel fishing in Spain
and Carp fly fishing on local venues.

Everyone is welcome – members or non-
members alike £3 ticket includes entry to
raffle too!

An Angling Life - Chapter 2 by *Phillip Ellis*

So where am I now? Three years ago I joined the Portsmouth Services Fly Fishing Association a club not easy to become a member of and the fees are certainly affordable if you fish weekly compared with day ticket still waters. They have 6 beats on the river Itchen and another six on the River Meon together with two lakes, one in Hampshire and the second in West Sussex.

At the same time, I was offered membership of a syndicate on the Longford estate with mixed fishing, coarse, trout and salmon, just south of Salisbury on the river Avon, Ebble and carriers. After three years I have still not fished all of the river beats; it can easily take 15 minutes to drive to another beat.

The countryside and wildlife there are breathtaking, and never in my whole life have I heard cuckoos all day in the Spring. Fair to say it does involve a lot of travelling; 60 miles to the Itchen and close on 80 miles to Salisbury.

The cost of belonging to these clubs is in my opinion affordable compared with day ticket chalk stream fishing costing say £200 for a day. What you have to do is fish on sufficient occasions to make it worthwhile, if not then

buying a one-off day ticket for say £200 is possibly a better option.

I do not kill any fish, but a brace is permitted with no limit on numbers returned with members catching regularly 20 plus fish. Personally, I stop at 10, as catching huge numbers can impact catches in subsequent days for members. For me seeing a fish taking a dry fly off the surface is a wonderful experience compared with nymphs that I often resort to. The flies I use are varied starting with the Grey Wulff, sedges moving onto smaller dries, daddy long legs and Sawyers PTN. It's fair to say the main action is May and June and more difficult later in season when smaller flies down to size 20 tend to work when you cannot see the naturals being taken off the surface film.

The Mayfly period when the hatch mate and die within 24 hours towards end of May last year on the Avon was something to experience with clouds of them over the meadows and all over my car. Standing in the river one evening you could see Mayflies either landing on the river to lay eggs or just spent with trout sucking them in, and sometimes my fly! I had to stop at one point as the fish went berserk, jumping clean out of the water taking the flies. I did catch one fish of about four pounds that put up a hard fight only to catch it again an hour later, witnessed by a fellow angler.

Another highlight this year was a weekend with the Wild Trout Trust in July, fishing the Haddon estate in Derbyshire including the exclusive river Lathkill, an opportunity that may never arise again.

How fishing has changed since I started. In the coarse world, it's all Carp with reducing interest in river fishing. When I walk into a tackle shop many of the items I do not recognise and who would have thought a small model radio-controlled boat taking your ground bait out to where you have your bait?

Still water trout fishing is seeing more fisheries either close or move over to being coarse or carp fishery. Sadly, cost of buying in fish to stock rises each year when owners have to put up charges. Avian predators such as Cormorants, Goosanders and Herons are a huge problem, taking fish from all types of fisheries, never seen in my early days.

River fly fishing is increasing despite the high costs and one or two are now restricting numbers fishing due to increased angling pressure. Like the Test at Wherwell and Haddon estate on the Derbyshire Wye. Overall, I think angling numbers are reducing and becoming a worry for the sport's sustainability with so many tackle shops closing over the last couple of years. There are not enough young people entering the sport and maybe it will change in time, who knows!

PE



A date for your diary

Orvis are involved with a Saltwater Fly Fishing Festival 3rd - 6th September 2020, the venue being Chichester Harbour. Details are yet to be released. Watch this space.

FLY-TYING COMPETITION

Deadline for entries is 12th March 2020 so get your three identical samples of each fly to **Brian Hendry** or **Alan Middleton** or to Roy Gurney if they are not around.

.A reminder that the patterns for this year are:

Novice **The Red Zebra Devil Nymph**
PATTERN - see Autumn 2018 "Flydresser"
Substitute grub hook #12 and grizzle
For Coq de Leon if you don't have it

Intermediate **The Adams**
PATTERN - see Autumn 2018 "Flydresser"
Substitute hare's ear if you don't
have muskrat

Open **The Rubber-legged Stonefly Nymph**

PATTERN - see "Fly Tying Bible" – p 146-7

Salmon **The Cascade**
PATTERN - see Spring 2014 "Flydresser"

Saltwater/Pike **Grey Mullet**
PATTERN - see Summer 2019 "Flydresser"

Our Rules are:

- Novice** – for those having no more than one year's experience
- Intermediate** – for those having no more than three year's experience
- Open** – for any Branch member
- Salmon** – for any Branch member
- Saltwater/Pike** – for any Branch Member

Members may enter for as many classes as they choose above their lowest qualifying standard

Book Report

By David Constable

Unfortunately, I find I have a lot of time on my hands due to having a heart attack and waiting for surgery. However, it's also a silver lining as I can get on with reading books that I have and recently acquired to be an armchair fisherman.

We must remember we all read differently and so what some take from a book, others will not, also depending on one's level of skill, certain books will have more or less interest. Some are older books like those written by or about G.E.M. Skues, a book from Spain, Switzerland and America, all do refer to European rivers within their text. What is interesting the majority of these books entwine fly-tying with fishing techniques. Another great reason for reading books from around the world is being able to be very open minded and being prepared to experiment with materials and techniques to improve our hobby. Skues was a great believer in experimenting and keeping an open mind as is Daniel below.

Sourcing books is relatively easy as there are specialist suppliers and publishers, as well of course, the internet. Coch Y Bonddu Books, Angle Books will find them on the web, Medlar Press, Quiller Publishing; Angle Books gives rather a good precis of each book and indicates the best edition to purchase.

The Pardon de Meana and The Feather of Gallo de Leon

Author **Luis Meana Baeza**

Published in Spain in 2007

Luis Meana Baeza is a dedicated fly fisher and tier, with years spent on the water including guiding. This book is very much about the feather of the Gallo de Leon and how to use them in tying and how it performs on the water. Included is a history of the very small area of Leon where the cockerels are bred and about the importance of the ground they scavenge on, to enhance the quality of feathers for the fly tier. The feathers come in a small range of colours. Pardon de Meana is a style of fly tying and very much worth the consideration of how we might adapt some patterns for our own use.

Most tiers will already be using the feathers for tails; however, they can also be used for wings but tied as if a hackle to help the fly to float. Regularly he recommends cutting down the hackles closest to the water to let the fly sit more in the water than on, to fool the fish into thinking it is easier to eat the fly.

The beginning of the book includes a number of well-known Spanish fishermen who write about their experiences, followed by a history of fly fishing in Spain and also referring to "*Treatyse of Fisshinge With an Angle*". A chapter is included about the birds, harvesting the feathers types and selection. Two thirds of the book are on a

well-presented step by step tying guide, which includes a menu and a photograph of the tying materials for each fly; naturally it gives you the ability to substitute materials that you already have.

Throughout, the book is full of exceptional photographs and is written very clearly; there is the odd translation error however but commonsense enables you to understand the meaning.

Overall this is a book worth having if you like experimenting with tying with a difference. This one you have to buy direct from Spain in English as it is printed in three languages.

Dynamic Nymphing – Czech, Polish, French, UK, US and more

Author **George Daniel**

Published in the US in 2012

George Daniel was raised by a stream and has fished all his life, for pleasure, guiding and international competitions, including training youth teams. He refers to Skues and Sawyer nymphing as a basis and then takes the subject much further; it is not only about large rivers and at the end of the book are many small river tactics. His writing is extremely in-depth with many photographs in sequential order of many casting techniques; these often need to be read more than once to ensure points are not missed. There are detailed drawings of different rig setups, which are dimensioned, and material and knots are recommended, together with how the rig will perform in the water and how to judge the lengths of the droppers. There are many tips on where and how to fish in a river and what to look for.

Rods are referred to throughout the chapters; however, it is very much suggestions and about you the fisher being comfortable and uncomplicated. For instance, he has cut down from 40 rods to 5 to make his life less complicated. There are a range of fly patterns shown with the menu for tying but not tying instructions, the one downside to the menus is that the size of the beads are not shown; however in the previous chapter he recommends the size weight to use with various hook sizes, so a little detective work is required. Hook sizes range from 4 to 22; however, only two 4's are included one for a streamer (the only one) and another for an indicator fly. A number of the flies are attributed to the originator.

Overall this is a very informative book with many snippets to make a mental note off.

Nymph Fishing - New Angles, Tactics and Techniques

Author **George Daniel**

Published in the US in 2018

This book is smaller than the one above and is taking Daniel's knowledge further and therefore the information, he imparts. Although there are a

couple of casting techniques illustrated and discussed in detail it is much more about fine tuning rigs, fishing and reading the water. In the last five years he has spent more time watching and discussing fishing techniques with other highly skilled fishermen, both at competition level and general river fishing, gaining a more rounded approach which he puts across extremely well.

The last chapter is on his "go to" flies which number 121, with a further four dry fly suspender patterns. The layout is very similar to his earlier book, with the addition this time of specifying the bead diameter, which is a positive. He is also tying a lot more flies using jig hooks and a lot more flies have a wide hook size range. Although I have not particularly counted, I get the general impression overall his flies are getting smaller, bearing in mind G. E. M. Skues regularly tied on size 16s.

Is it worth acquiring if you have his earlier book? I would say definitely "yes" as it reinforces many points.

Petitjean CDC

Author **Marc Petitjean**

Photography **Barry Orde Clarke**

Published in Slovenia in 2017

A substantial hard back book with beautifully executed photographs, but not a coffee table book, one to work with; it starts with the origins of CDC which he considers having been first used by a Swiss, Charles Bickel. Included in this part are several colour plates of his flies for sale which were really inspired by the traditional English flies of the time. It is also interesting to note the majority of the flies were tied on size 16 hooks.

Throughout the book after certain patterns there are short fishing or tying stories, which add to the overall effect. Prior to the chapter on fly tying are a few photographs and discussion about CDC feathers and how to use them, together with thoughts on how to tie colour, body volume, movement on the water etc.

This is followed by a library of flies with those highlighted in blue that are going to be displayed and tied in detail in the forthcoming pages. All is shown - materials and tools required, together with stage by stage photographs with narrative; very usefully there are displayed four images of the tied fly in the vice to enable you to get a sense of proportion.

The next chapter is about his tools and step by step images and narrative on how to use them; if you have his tools it is highly likely you will get more out of them. This is followed by a chapter on fly tying techniques, all the time using CDC, again with full images and narrative. Usefully there is a small chapter on tips to help you understand some of the pitfalls and tricks of the trade. The final chapter is entitled "Modern Flies", again laid out just the same as mentioned

in the chapter above; unfortunately where beads are added the detail is missing.

If you are a CDC fan and would like more information on using CDC for tails, dubbing, bodies and hackles this book is a must.

Fishing and Tying Small Flies

Author **Ed Engle**

2nd Edition

Published in the US in 2019

This is a book of two halves; the first edition was just that, one book of fishing small flies and the second book tying small flies. The second edition, with two books in one, is the one to go for as it keeps them together, but more importantly it is very much brought up to date. Not only are there many good photographs, there are a lot of line drawings to reinforce the written word. Tackle is discussed and suggestion made to enhance your fly-fishing experience and like other books experimenting is highly recommended as it is often what best suits us as individuals. Observation and techniques are discussed in detail, all adding snippets to the wider picture.

The second half of the book is all about tying small flies; this book does not have as many tying steps that others do however, with a very concise menu and the notes following the stages are not difficult. Another most interesting facet of the tying techniques are two or three paragraphs prior to the menu about what you are trying to achieve with your tying of a particular fly; most flies are credited to the inventor in these paragraphs.

How to weight small flies with wire, lead beads and simple tests you can undertake in a casserole dish - how a fly sinks differently with lead wrapped around the body to using beads, the advantages of tungsten against brass, and where to use both to advantage. Hooks are illustrated and discussed in detail, together with some tying tools. Also, there is an in-depth discussion on types of tying threads.

A section of midges on top and in the surface film makes for some interesting tying techniques and materials - different ways and materials for tying wing posts. There are a number of materials mentioned that may not be in your material box but with a little research can usually be found with a wander on the internet and may well introduce to some extra fly material sites you were not aware of. Z-Lon is one of them and can have a number of uses in various colours.

Styles of floating nymphs and how to tie them makes for some interesting reading. However, Ed is often showing hook sizes in the various menus of sizes 16 to 26 and occasionally has discussed sizes down to 32!!! Now there is a challenge!!

A most interesting book which is worthy of a space on the bookshelf.

Naturally there are thousands of books to choose from and you might well ask, why have I only discussed foreign books above. The answer is simple - it might be they would normally get overlooked by us English tiers as being irrelevant, but in the words of G. E. M. Skues: "Always keep an open mind and be prepared to learn". Please remember every day is a school day and however skilled you might be there is something to learn. I have had great fun in reading the above amongst many others and feel that often snippets from all around the world can be added to our arsenal and improve our tying and fishing.

*Happy tying and fishing
David*

Are you prepared for the new season?

By Phillip Ellis

There's nothing worse than making your first trip in the season to find a line in poor condition or you forgot to replace a damaged rod ring or maybe not check what's in your bag since your last trip out.

Rods: check for any damage specially to snake rings for wear. Remember a gold head fly hitting a carbon rod while casting will cause damage that may eventually cause it to break. That new rod or reel you were given at Christmas will need checking over.

Reels: Make sure there is enough backing or indeed remove some if too much. Take reel apart and clean it out using some reel grease on the moving parts. Check that the little handle is secure and tighten up if loose.

Fly lines: check them over for cracks and damage as in time they will show signs of wear. Using one of the line dressings after cleaning in hand soap, e.g. Stergene, and they cast a little better. Have you got the correct line to match your rod, a common fault? Regular application of line dressing will prolong life of line.

Leaders: consider replacing leader and best to connect with a nail knot or use the short-braided connectors. Tying a tippet ring on the end will save having to cut back the leader to prevent it getting shorter. Practice your knot tying at home using one of the many books available.

Tackle bag: Clean it out; mine was full of bits of grass and odd flies. Is it all there? Bass bag, leader dressing, priest, forceps, scissors, towel, spare Leaders and your favourite spooled leader material? Do I need to replace or top up items?

Landing net: Extend it fully and check over net, may have had a mouse in it if stored in garage, Replacement nets can be purchased. Extending nets may need a bit of grease to make sure it extends easily.

Clothing: is it in good order, reproofing, does it still fit? I noticed recently a pair of my wellingtons have a split, so a new pair in order.

Practice your casting: Maybe all you learnt last year is forgotten so go out and practice if you have a large lawn or use a nearby park if not too busy. Overhead cast, roll cast, roll pickup and hauling are the basic casts you need to understand. Try and relax when casting and not use great force, especially on the forward movement. Make sure the rod is loading on the back cast and remember roughly 9 metres of line will load a rod correctly. If the back cast is correct, just tapping rod forward will get the line out. Take the rod back allowing the line to almost straighten before tapping forward. Check leader for wind knots, a casting fault and if all fails, then go and have a lesson.

Phillip Ellis is a qualified level 2 instructor as well as a member of GAIA.

Chairman's Chat



I have found a place for you to have a nice walk with your grandchildren, especially on a windy day!

If an environmentalist has experienced a flooded home, why not give them a beaver, they stop flooding!

When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?

Grumpy as ever!

Tony W

2020 FDG ELINOR BANK COMPETITION

The Guild's Elinor bank competition is being held on **Sunday 26th April 2020.**

Full details from Lee Hooper, Fishing Competitions Manager

fishing@flydressersguild.org

The North Country Method

Ted How has given me the following link which is most fascinating – give it a try!

https://www.54deanstreet.it/en_US/blog/blog-1/post/the-north-country-method-9

Ray's Ramblings

This month I've got a confession to make. I've said in the past that I now only tie flies that take five minutes to make - but now I've found flies that are even quicker to tie and still catch fish. The first of these is just a hook with several small red glass beads superglued to the hook - another is a small red tungsten bead at the head and a body made of the rolled lip of a red balloon and a further one has the same small red tungsten bead at the head and a body made of red plastic covered wire that comes from telephone cables. All three patterns imitate bloodworms.

My friend Martyn has said that I shouldn't mention this in a Guild Newsletter as he's sure that I should be expelled but I'm risking it because it's still fly dressing. I'm only following such luminaries as Frank Sawyer with his Killer Bug made of just Chadwick's wool and copper wire and Oliver Kite whose bare hook nymph was just a hook covered and shaped with copper wire.

Then there's the When All Else Fails that the late Bill Sibbons used to great effect at Damerham and Rockbourne and is just lead wire on a hook coloured black and with a tuft of white deer hair on the back as a sighter, or the hooks covered with lead wire and coloured various shades of olive that Peter Cockwill has publicised.

There's also the Apps Bloodworm made from glass beads and various colours of Flexifloss and also the more recent Blobs made of just Fritz material. These latter flies are without doubt very effective and I remember that on one of the last occasions when I fished Rutland I used a Blob on the point with two nymphs on droppers and all of the eight fish I caught were on the Blob.

None of what I've said though detracts from the great admiration that I have for the instructors teaching fly dressing and for the people who can tie built wing salmon flies or realistic nymph patterns in the manner of Oliver Edwards. In fact many years ago I did a bit of competitive fly tying and gained a Masters badge in the Benson and Hedges competition. It's just that nowadays I'd rather be fishing than fly tying.

One of the most amusing reads I've had for some time is by Martin Donovan. He started his working life as a yacht rigger but his ambition was to be a river keeper. He came into contact with Ron Holloway who was keeper on the Abbots Worthy stretch of the Itchen a few miles upstream of where Skues used to fish and was offered a job as assistant river keeper. He later became keeper of the Nursling Beat on the lower River Test and was there for eleven years until he moved to the Whitchurch Beat on the upper Test, at which time he wrote the book to which I refer - it's titled "Keeper" and describes

many of his experiences whilst at Nursling. It's really worth a read.

Ray Burt



Duncton Mill

Full details are yet to come, but we have been advised that this fishery will now be DAY TICKET only this year as the new owner will be taking over shortly.

Prices will remain unchanged for the time being and our annual match with Salmon & Trout will still go ahead on schedule.

"Fly Fishing & Fly Tying"

Phillip Ellis has a full collection of "Fly Fishing & Fly Tying" in bound binders since its inception in 1990. If anyone is interested in a binder or two let him know. Donations to the branch. He is trying to clear out his loft!

Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers' Guild

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