

The Flydressers Guild Sussex Branch



Newsletter

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FDG Brass Monkeys Competition - Chalk Springs Sat 7th November

I chatted to a few of you on Thursday night about this competition, the full details of which are given below. As we need at least **12 to get sole use of the fishery, I need commitment asap and preferably by October 30th**, so I can confirm things with the venue. I'm aware this is an expensive option but it was voted for at the AGM and with the current issues with several other still waters, it seems the most "fishable" option. For newer members please do not be put off by the word "competition" this is very much a fun event.

For the few who have never fished Chalk Springs before, it is a lovely fishery with 4 crystal-clear, spring fed lakes, where you can see your quarry and that might be a rainbow or brown of over 10lb. It's a stalkers paradise!

Cost £60- includes 3 fish ticket and prizes for first fish, best bag and best fish. Add another £11 if you would like a bacon roll, pastry and coffee on arrival and please make it clear in your email reply to me that you want this.

This is a fun competition with a prize for the first fish caught. Competitors have to fish with any of 4 designated flies (tied by yourself preferably) for the first hour. These will be a small Hothead Blue Flash Damselfly (no bigger than 1 ¼ Inch dressing), a weighted Blob or Egg Fly and a Dry Daddy (well you never know!) Please see attached photo for guidance only. Beads can be of your own choosing & tungsten is allowed. I will have a few spare flies available for the time challenged amongst you.

As it is late in the year, we will meet at 8.00 am when the fishery opens, with a view to start fishing between 8.30 and 9.00 to get the most of the available daylight. We stop fishing at 1.00 pm for lunch and weigh in but you can obviously fish on in the afternoon if you haven't caught your bag.

Please let me know you are coming well in advance, as we need at least 12 to get sole use of the fishery and I need to inform the venue of numbers for catering.

NB. IF YOU DECIDE TO USE ELECTRONIC BANK TRANSFER ,THE NECESSARY DETAILS ARE BELOW BUT PLEASE INFORM THE ORGANISER OF THE EVENT AND ANDY WOOD (TREASURER ON fdgsussexmembership@gmail.com) THAT THE PAYMENT HAS BEEN SENT USING EMAIL & PLEASE MAKE IT CLEAR WHICH EVENT YOU ARE PAYING FOR

PAYING BY BANK TRANSFER:

Account name: Fly Dressers Guild Sussex Branch

Sort Number: 30-99-50

Account number: 84990168

If paying by cheque please make it payable to "FDG Sussex Branch" and send by Oct 24th at the latest to:

Alan Wells

9 Downsview Avenue

Woodingdean

BN26BP

Tel: 07795523608

secretary.sfdg@gmail.com

A Fishy Story

With my oldest friend who is now in the early stages of Alzheimer's we went to Falkenvil .

The water level was low so my long handled net was essential. The fishing was slow but I managed a common carp of about 10- 12lb at noon. But friend Ian blanked until 4pm when he hooked a monster. I netted it for him and as I lifted it vertically up the bank the shaft of my net gave way and off went the fish (still hooked) with my net around its shoulders. Ian managed to bring the carp back to the bank but now without my net and its attachment to the shaft. By lying flat on the bank, I managed to reach it in Ian's shorter net and bring it up.

It was huge, especially in girth. Possibly 20lb. But neither of us had a balance that could cope. Ian went on to catch a large bream and another carp of about 4lb. I did not add to my catch.

John Plowman

Flies for the Chalk Springs event

Hothead Blue Flash Damsel

The **Hothead Blue Flash Damsel** is a popular trout fishing fly and nymph pattern designed to imitate natural damselfly nymphs in stillwaters, lakes, and reservoirs.

Key Characteristics & Design

- **Tail:** Olive marabou tail paired with blue flash strands (such as holographic or UV crystal flash) along each side to create subtle shimmer.
- **Body:** Typically tied with an olive dubbing, seal's fur mix, or fritz that gives a buggy, lifelike silhouette.
- **Hothead:** Features a fluorescent bead (often fluorescent orange or red, around 3.2mm–3.3mm) behind the eye or head, sometimes with painted pupil eyes, acting as an extra strike trigger to pull in trout from a distance.
- **Hackle & Legs:** Often finished with a soft hackle (such as dyed olive partridge or cock hackle) to mimic leg movement.
- **Size:** Commonly tied on size 10 or 12 heavy wet or barbless hooks.
- Fishing Tips
- **Where to use:** Effective for brown and rainbow trout in small stillwaters, larger reservoirs, and lakes

Timing: Works year-round, with peak effectiveness running from late spring through summer (May to August) when natural damsels are active.

- **Retrieval:** Can be fished on floating, intermediate, or sinking lines using a slow figure-of-eight retrieve, steady pulls, or as part of a team of nymphs.

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• Dry Daddy

- The **Dry Daddy** is a classic dry trout fly used in fly fishing to imitate the natural crane fly (commonly known as a "daddy longlegs" in the UK).

• Key Details

- **Target Species:** Brown trout and rainbow trout.
- **Seasonality:** Most effective from late August through October when crane flies are prevalent and frequently blow onto stillwaters or rivers.
- **Design:** Features a buoyant body (often made of foam, peacock herl, or traditional fur/hair) with long, dangling legs that create a struggling, lifelike silhouette on the water's surface.
- **How to Fish It:**
 - Fished statically as a single dry fly or on the top dropper of a wet fly team.
 - Can be twitched, skittered, or pulled with a slow retrieve to trigger explosive strikes from surface-feeding fish.

INTRODUCTION:

THE FLY THAT DIVIDES OPINION AND FILLS NETS

I'll be honest with you. The first time someone suggested I put a blob fly on, I hesitated. It looked less like a fly and more like something that had fallen off a Christmas tree. Bright orange, round, dense with pulsating synthetic fibres—nothing about it whispered 'traditional fly fishing.' Everything about it whispered 'that's going to catch fish.'

They were right.

BLOB FLIES – LOVE THEM OR HATE THEM

Since then, blob flies have become a permanent fixture in my fly box on days out at Ladybower, Rutland and Grafham, and on the smaller stillwaters I fish regularly across Yorkshire. Not as a crutch, not as a last resort, but as one of many tools I reach for when conditions and fish behaviour call for them. Because that's exactly what they are—a tool. A very effective one.

In this guide I want to give you everything you need to understand blob flies properly: what they are, why they work, which colours to use and when, how to fish them effectively, and how to tie them yourself using the materials I've developed and used over years on the bank and boat. Whether you're picking up a blob fly for the first time or looking to sharpen up tactics you've been using for years, there's something here for you.



Biscuit Coloured Blob

THE ORIGINS OF THE BLOB: WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

Blob flies emerged from the competitive stillwater scene in the UK during the 1990s and early 2000s. Competition anglers needed patterns that triggered instant reactions from recently stocked rainbow trout. The blob delivered exactly that.

The irony is that this 'new' controversy is anything but new in fly fishing. The Alexandra fly—sometimes called the Lady of the Lake—faced almost identical criticism when it appeared in the Victorian era.

So Blobs for Yobs, They Should Be Banned..... we have heard it all before in history.

The Alexandra survived. Blob flies will too. Because they work—and in fly fishing, that is the ultimate arbiter.



The Alexandra Fly (Victorian Era)

WHY BLOB FLIES WORK: THE SCIENCE OF THE REACTION STRIKE

- HIGH VISIBILITY** – Bright fluorescent and UV-reactive colours are visible at distances where natural patterns become invisible in coloured or murky water.
- PULSATING MOVEMENT** – Synthetic chenille fibres move independently under water, creating a pulsing, breathing action that mimics struggling prey.
- SILHOUETTE AND SHAPE** – The rounded, dense profile creates a strong silhouette from below, particularly against a bright sky.
- COLOUR CONTRAST** – Two-tone blobs create an internal contrast that mimics the look of a small creature with a dark body and a bright trigger point.

THE BEST MATERIALS FOR TYING BLOB FLIES

I tie most of my own blobs, and my go-to materials are Semperfli UV Competition Chenille and Semperfli EggStatic Blob Chenille—both developed with Semperfli for blob and lure tying.

Less dense than standard fritz:

- Twist two strands for mottled, irregular effect.
- Tie two colours in tandem for a striped, two-tone body impossible with standard fritz.
- UV reactive for extra trigger in low light & coloured water.
- EggStatic forms a slushy, egg-mass look when wet.

For micro blobs: use 8mm chenille. The Fag End (tan) colour is a must-have.

SEE SEMPERFLI COMPETITION CHENILLES HERE



FAQ: BLOB FLIES

- What exactly is a blob fly? A large, highly coloured synthetic attractor pattern. It does not imitate a specific food source but triggers reaction strikes.
- Are blob flies cheating or unsporting? No. They are a legitimate tool, just like the Alexandra was.
- What is the best blob fly colour for beginners? Start with orange – five oranges or oranges & white.
- Where should I put a blob fly on my cast? Middle dropper in a three-fly cast.
- Can blob flies be used on all stillwaters? Check the rules. Some fisheries restrict them.
- What line should I use for blob flies? Intermediate is a safe default. Floating near surface.
- Do blob flies work year-round? Yes. Adjust colours for the season and conditions.
- What hook size is best for blob flies? Size 10 standard. Size 12 for micro blobs.
- Can I tie my own blob flies easily? Absolutely. One of the easiest patterns to tie.
- What is the best material for tying? Semperfli UV Competition Chenille – less dense, twist strands, the two colours, UV reactive.
- What is the best retrieve speed? Figure-of-eight with pauses. Adjust to fish behaviour.
- What is the difference between a blob and a FAB? FAB has foam tail – it hovers. Standard blob sinks.
- How do I fish a blob fly when trout are not moving? Use the washing line rig. Fish it slowly or static.
- TL;DR Blob flies trigger reaction strikes through colour and movement. Fish them on a three-fly cast. Start bright. Adjust until fish respond.

WHAT IS A BLOB FLY?

DEFINITION: A blob fly is a large, highly visible attractor pattern tied on a wide-gape hook using dense synthetic chenille or fritz. It does not imitate a specific insect or food source. Instead, it triggers aggressive reaction strikes through colour, movement, and visual impact.

A standard blob fly consists of:

- ✓ A wide-gape scud or egg hook – most commonly size 10, sometimes size 12
- ✓ A body of synthetic chenille or fritz palmered tightly to create a dense, rounded, mobile mass
- ✓ Fluorescent or UV-reactive colours for maximum visibility
- ✓ Optional: a tungsten or brass bead at the head for added weight and a trigger point

THE FIVE-MINUTE AUDIT

DO THIS BEFORE YOU FISH

- THE SURFACE FILM**
Crouch and look at the surface film. What's drifting? Nymphal shucks? Adults? Struggling flies? One square metre tells you more than 30 minutes of blind casting.
- THE BANKSIDE VEGETATION**
Pick up a stem or reed and look. Freshly hatched chucks cling to nearby vegetation while drying. Colour, size and wing shape = your template.
- THE SPIDER'S WEBS**
Webs show you what hatched last evening. Thick with one species? That species may well hatch again today. Crane fly legs in autumn = daddy-long-legs season.
- THE AIR**
Look up and upstream. Swifts and swallows working low? Insects are hatching. Clouds of spinners flying upstream mean a spinner fall is coming – be ready.
- UNDER THE STONES**
Lift a flat stone. What clings beneath? This is what trout have been eating all morning. Note size, colour and species. Then put the stone back.

30 SECONDS. FIVE STEPS. ENDLESS INFORMATION.

HOW TO FISH BLOB FLIES: ANDY'S STANDARD RIG

THE THREE-FLY LURE CAST



The blob's colour and movement draw fish in from distance. The fish comes for the blob, gets close, and then sees the diawl bach hanging just above it. Whether they hit the blob or the diawl bach, I win either way.

LINE CHOICE

- FLOATING LINE** – fish near the surface, warm evenings, early season
- INTERMEDIATE** – my default for 80% of blob sessions
- D13** – cold conditions, fish deep, Ladybower in winter
- D15** – coldest conditions, deepest water, fast depth penetration from boat

THE WASHING LINE RIG

A buoyant fly on the point holds the team up in the water column. Blob and natural pattern hang horizontally above.

RETRIEVE STYLES

- FIGURE-OF-EIGHT WITH PAUSES** – Default retrieve. Most takes come on these.
- STRIP RETRIEVE** – When fish are active and chasing.
- STATIC** – Cast and do nothing. Particularly effective with FAB blobs on calm days.
- WASHING LINE** – For slow fish. See dedicated section below.

SLOW DAY AT LADYBOWER

FAB Fly Oranges on the point, blob on the dropper, diawl bach on top. Fish it slowly or static. Persistence is the key.

CHECK OUR UK TACKLE STORE

OTHER BLOB POSTS: • BLOB BEST FLY COLOURS FOR UK TROUT • BLOB FLY RIGS & RETRIEVE TACTICS FOR UK STILLWATERS

Andy Kitchener