

FREE RESOURCE

20 FLY FISHING MISTAKES

AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Making fly fishing more
fulfilling and fun!



Hagen's



Fishing Buddy Seiner

Hagen's and Larva Lace are proud supporters of fly fishing organizations and education initiatives. This book was created for the betterment of the fly fishing industry and all who get an opportunity to enjoy it. It is meant to act as a guide for anyone who may have questions or hesitations about this wonderful hobby or industry. In no way is this an exhaustive list, nor are the rankings in any particular order of importance. Challenges and opportunities are unique to each angler, and should be considered on an individual level. Consult the assistance of a local guide or fly fishing instructor for additional tutelage or advancement. Search your area for fly fishing membership/club meeting opportunities, and enjoy the growing community and all who enjoy it. Thank you for your interest in Larva Lace! Tight lines and well tied flies.

About the Author

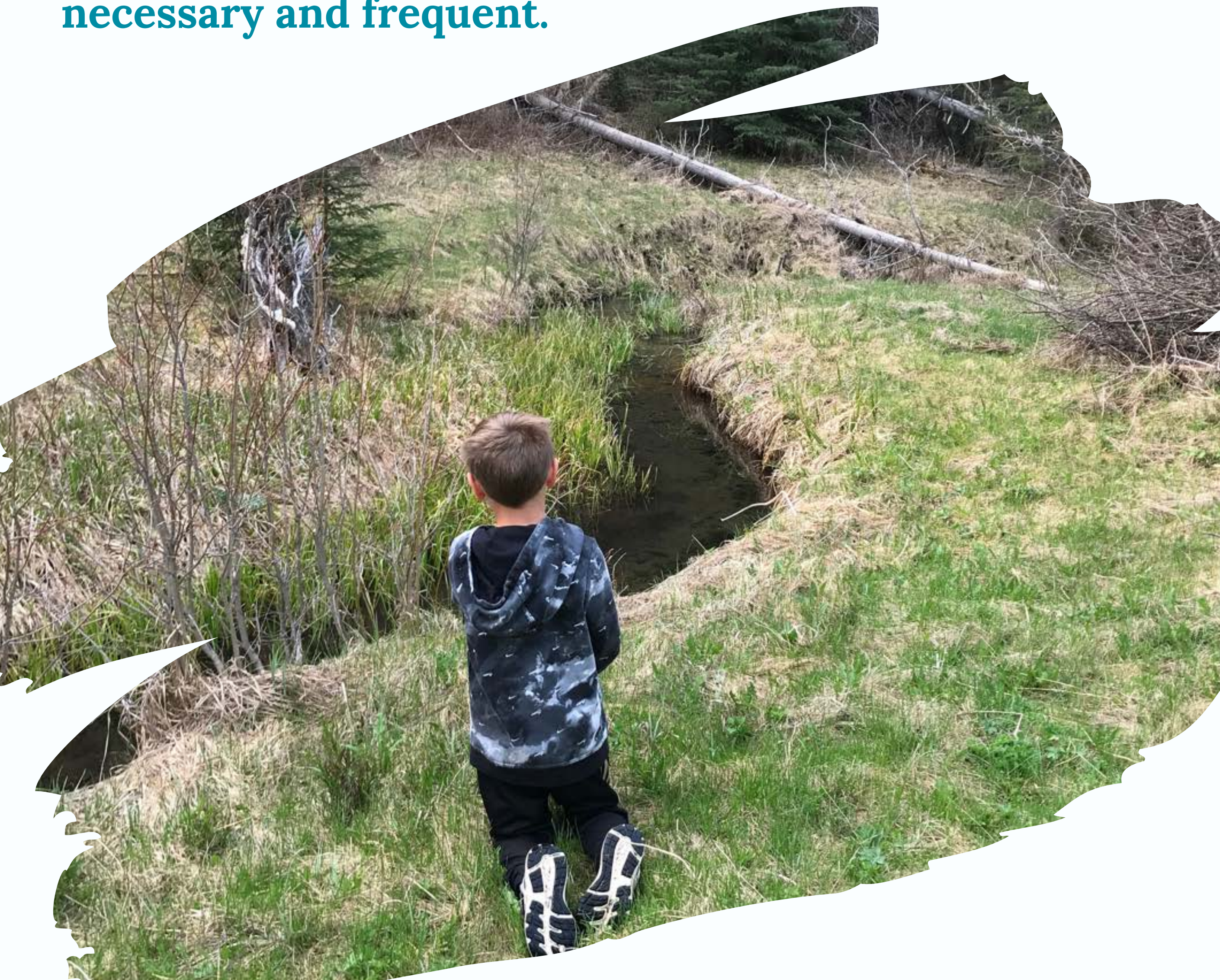


"Fishing" Buddy Seiner is a communications consultant and fly fishing instructor from Pierre, S.D. He began his fly fishing journey on the banks of Bear Butte creek chasing small brown trout while seeking constant improvement through individual practice, research, and a bit of fishing time. He is the President and founder of the Fish Stories Archive at Fishstories.org, board president of the Black Hills Flyfishers, and active member of the Tuesday Tyers fly tying club. He lives in a house down by the Missouri River with his wonderful family.

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NOT PRACTICING WHEN YOU CAN

All of my fly fishing students begin their journey with a piece of yarn or foam ear plug tied to a 9 ft leader in a wide open space. I do this for the same reason I don't hand new basketball players a ball and ask them to start chucking three pointers. The foundation of great fly fishing skill and understanding begins with the fundamentals. You don't need fancy gear, the perfect setup, or even water to accomplish much of this task. Practice will walk you steps closer to accomplishing goals, but is only fruitful to those who accept it as necessary and frequent.



TOO BIG TOO EARLY



Great ambitions can severely hinder progression of a fly fishing enthusiast. When I first started, I wanted to copy those who knew better by casting greater distances, utilizing multiple fly setups, and chasing fish in very technical locations and situations. To a progressing angler, these are important steps toward advancement, but to a novice it is a recipe for frustration and demotivation. Every tangle, hooked limb, and spooked fish further opens a fissure for negativity and doubt to creep into the back of your mind. Before too long, it begins to make its way front and center of your thought process, crushing any hopes and dreams of perpetuating into this wonderful adventure. Understand the need to walk well before you can run, and take baby steps towards growing as a fly angler to help ensure longevity in the sport.

FISHING BEYOND THE FISH

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The allure of a long cast has long been perpetuated through media exposure and hype videos. The dream of throwing a perfect loop 70 feet to a tailing redfish, rolling tarpon, or steadily feeding trout sparks delusions of grandeur in the minds of the uninitiated. In the Black Hills of South Dakota, where I began my fly fishing journey, the average cast is about 17 ft (weather and stream conditions depending). You will begin to find yourself in situations where spey casts and double hauls will be required to launch your fly into oblivion, but the early years should be filled with as many roll casts, reach casts, and short-line high sticking situations as possible. Of course, some of us live in amazing places where big casts are a regular necessity, but it's important to build up to that. In golf, it's important to understand the mechanics of hitting irons and wedges before going to the driver. Begin by mastering your short fly fishing game before you let the big dog eat.



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LOOKING THE PART

When I was growing up, I admired fly fishing enthusiasts. Not only because it seemed like they had it all figured out, but because they looked the part. From an outsider's perspective, they were the epitome of what a fisherman should be. I thought that in order to be a fly fisherman, I had to look like a fly fisherman. This thought consumed me for some time. I concerned myself with having the proper gear so at least I looked like I belonged, because I certainly didn't feel like I belonged early on. This recently came to my mind when my buddy and I were standing near my truck after catching some spring carp. We looked the part. Waders, packs, nice gear, etc. A car pulled up and asked if we were catching anything. My friend and I, fully aware that they were not referring to carp, chuckled as we responded. "A few," we said. "Well, you sure look like professional fishermen," he replied as he put the vehicle into gear.

Did the gentleman leave that day thinking we were professional fishermen? Was he sold on our accomplishments and prowess as anglers simply because of how we were dressed? While those questions might seem silly, consider it for a moment. Who is going to be the most influential person in the meeting? The one with the armani suit, or the person in business casual? At first glance, are you going to ask for help on a construction project from an individual with a nice tool belt around their waist, or a guy/gal wearing an orange vest? Perception is everything in this world. People are prone to jumping to conclusions before all (or any) additional evidence can be gathered.

While this phenomenon may be good for the business world, it is NOT good for fly fishing. I stopped caring about my appearance long ago. As long as someone is finding their own success, what does it matter if they look a bit different doing it? The fact of the matter is that I only need a fly rod and a box of flies to be successful on the water. Everything else is an unnecessary luxury or optional convenience created by an industry working hard to sell you more stuff. Whether you are just getting into the sport, or are a veteran of the game, trust your instincts and not what some poster boy for the sport tells you to use. Dress comfortably (for your style and your wallet) without feeling the need to "fit in". Like the saying goes, "fish like nobody's watching". You'll have more fun and you'll catch more fish. Stay positive and don't worry about what others think of you.



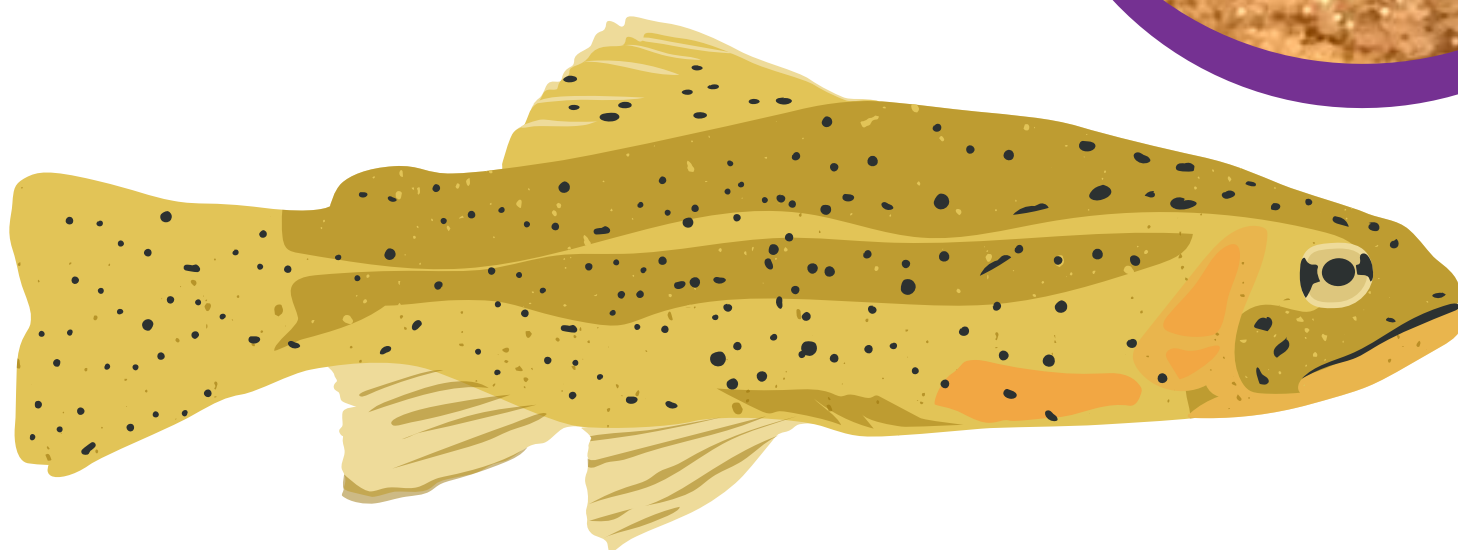
CHANGING FLIES TOO OFTEN

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Beginning fly anglers always assume they have the wrong fly if they are not catching fish after a few casts. I remember feeling this way while searching through the hundreds of store bought flies that didn't bring me any sense of comfort or excitement. Trepidation and anxiety was all I felt when fish were actively feeding and my only idea was to keep trying new flies until I found the right one. What I wish I knew early on was that there are so many things you should change before you alter your fly (unless you've obviously got it completely wrong and can identify that in an objective manner). Weight, leader length, fly depth, tippet size, presentation/drift, and location are all controllable alterations that can significantly increase hookups and ultimate angling success. Also, seining the water, or picking up a few rocks and sticks will give you a better understanding about the critters living subsurface. When you do decide to make a change, make sure you consider the other controllable factors prior to tying on a different bug.



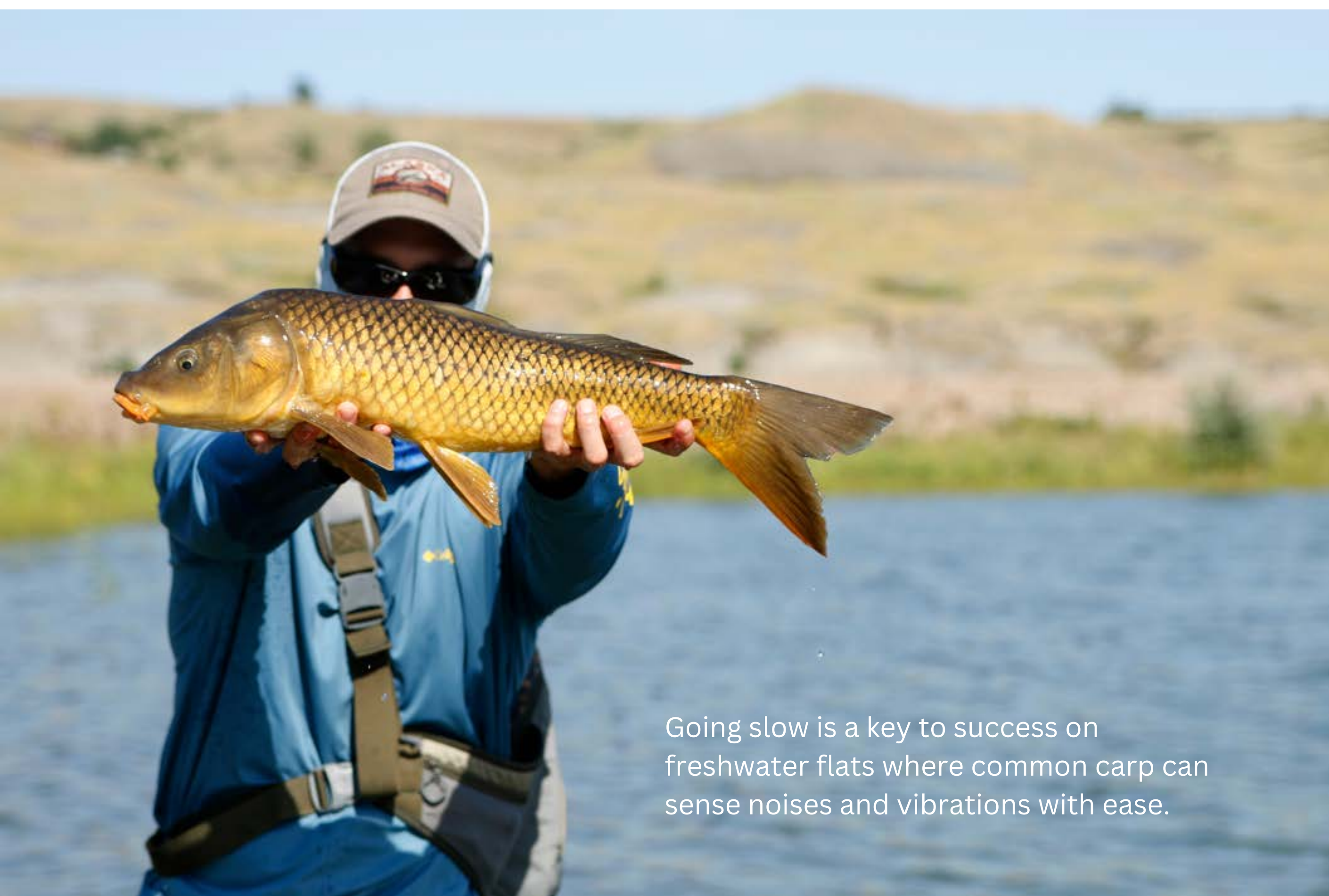
NOT LOOKING AT THE MENU



Early in my fly fishing career, my brother and I were patrolling the banks of Spearfish Creek in search of trout one February morning. Giant snowflakes were gliding towards the water as if held up by tiny parachutes. As new angles, our guess at a generic nymph rig was not getting the job done. It wasn't until I finally picked up a stone at the tail end of a seam, that the lightbulb turned on over my head. Clinging to the bottom of that rock were three massive golden stonefly nymphs. I tied on a size 12 golden stone and immediately hooked into a 17 inch brown trout. It's difficult to understand why anyone would try to guess what fish are targeting when there is a menu of fish food readily available for observation. There are certain times during the year when confidence flies are tied on without consideration of hatches and food availability. These are flies that have created success in similar situations, and are worth a shot when getting started at a location. But for those times when a starting point is unknown, it will pay dividends to explore the creatures in the area prior to tying stuff on. Begin by picking up stones and sticks from accessible locations. Follow up by covering your landing net with a five gallon paint filter and holding it in the moving water for a minute or two. Terrestrial observation is key, too, especially when protein packed critters are crawling about. There's plenty out there for fish to eat. Take a look at the menu before serving up your main course.

FLASH, FLASH...100 YARD DASH

Slow and steady wins the race. There are times when fishing fast can be a benefit to anglers, but for the novice, a slow approach to everything you do will serve you better in the long run. The excitement of a fishing adventure can be hard to manage. As much as one might love the adrenaline rush that comes with the prospects of a juicy piece of fishable water, the urge to jump right in and start fishing must be temporarily shoved aside if one is to find consistent success. It begins with a waterside routine. Analyzing the overall conditions of weather and water, identifying potential prey species and fly options, ensuring gear is properly rigged and undamaged, speaking with local anglers about fishing advice and HOW to fish, and sitting still for a bit to take it all in can help make your day on the water more successful.



Going slow is a key to success on freshwater flats where common carp can sense noises and vibrations with ease.

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NEGLECTING THE KNOTS



I've seen great anglers lose big fish because they hastily tied a fly on their line. Tie the fly on correctly and check it twice. If your knot doesn't feel right when you seat it, cut it off and tie it again. Taking it one step further, always cut the fly off and re-tie if abrasions/nicks/cuts exist in your tippet after catching a fish (check it with decent tension after each fish caught). Fish teeth, sticks, rocks, and other rough natural objects weaken leader material, tippet, and knots. Check them early and often so that you do not regret losing a great fly that was catching fish for you...or worse yet, a big fish. It happens all the time!

Not only do you need to make sure you tie good knots, but you need to know your knots and when to use them. Here is a short list of knots that will serve you well for many years of fly fishing: Nail knot, blood knot, improved clinch, figure 8 loop knot, palomar. If an angler only knew these knots and could efficiently tie them out on the water, they would have all they need to be very accomplished for many years. Of course, there are many more knots to know, and opinions all over the board regarding which are best. Get to know your knots well. Sit down with some monofilament line and a few hooks and practice tying them all until you are proficient. Tie your own leaders and test them on your local fish species. Knot knowledge brings confidence. Confidence helps you catch more fish.

THE POWER OF EGO AND ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTION

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We've all been there (at least I hope I'm not the only one): We've been thrashing away at the water for hours trying to get the fish feeding in front of us to take, and the guy/girl upstream is catching them like they're using powerbait! You begin to walk up-stream to have a nice conversation with a fellow flyfisher when...your "fishing pride" takes over. Fishing pride (FP) is like the cartoon devil conscience on your shoulder.

[Struggling fly fisherman accepts defeat and begins the walk of shame upstream to the next angler]:

FP: Hey, you!

You: Who, me?

FP: Yeah, dummy. You're getting outsmarted by a couple of fish!

You: Well, I'm about to go ask this nice fly flinger for help. They are crushing fish!

FP: NOOOO! You'll be the laughing stock of the fly shop. They're going to head back and tell all their buddies about how this NOVICE came up begging for advice. When you walk your pathetic keister into that fly shop later tonight, they'll laugh you out of town! You'll never be able to fish this stretch of water again!

You: You're right. I can't ask them for help. I'll look stupid. I can figure it out myself.

FP: Try a few more flies in your box, you'll figure it out big guy.

My inaugural trip to the Bighorn River in eastern Montana was the first, and last time, my fishing pride got the best of me. There I was, fresh into my fly-fishing career on an amazing river with nearly 10,000 fish per mile...NOT CATCHING A THING. The angler in the hole upstream was catching fish on every other cast. I'm not sure that day's dialog between me and my fishing pride was similar to the one above, but it was enough to prevent me from visiting with that angler and limited me to 4 or 5 fish to hand the entire trip. Next time you are having trouble on the water, novice or not, take a chance and ask a fellow angler. There are plenty of fish to go around, and there is always someone who knows more.

Being a novice fly angler is a scary concept! The intimidation intensifies alongside considerations of fishing situations, locations, trophy species targeted, etc. You will find yourself in a situation where nothing is going right while others can do nothing wrong. Some anglers choose to scoff at their counterparts seeking assistance like they've never been in a fishing situation without the knowledge or skill to catch fish. We've all been there at one point in our career. I'm an advocate for seeking help, especially when on unfamiliar water or in difficult conditions. While asking "what" is a great way to find out what bugs an angler is imitating, it will only get you part of the way towards catching fish.



Much like a computer, our brains have evolved to become lean, mean, problem solving machines. Their processing power is only limited by the confines of the questions that are posed to it. “Can I afford this new fly rod?” is either a yes or no answer. But asking “how can I afford this new fly rod,” will put your brain into action concocting the most perfect plan for ultimately obtaining the desired gear. Asking another angler what fly they are using to catch fish is like asking yourself if you can afford to purchase something or not. The question, “what fly are you using” only tells us part of this angler’s story. It’s leaving out rigging, depth, color, size, presentation, and many other considerations that a simple fly name will not answer. Most of fishing is presentation. Your presentation will vary based upon time of year, species being pursued, water conditions, and angler abilities. Asking “what,” will only get you one piece of that puzzle. If you want to become a better angler, you need to be comfortable asking “how” on the river. “How are you rigged?” “How are you presenting your flies to the fish?” These questions will not only shock the angler to which you are posing them (don’t be offended if they brush you off or give you a smart ass response because some people are like that), but they will initiate a dialog about how to be a better angler in that moment. Offer a question with intention, and benefit from the answer that is provided.



SMART FISH...CHALLENGING WATER

Fish are not very smart, but they have evolved to be pretty damn good at staying alive. Avoiding predators is what they do every day, and each location offers a unique list of challenges and circumstances that impacts our approach to fishing. Finding small successes is an integral part to an angler's journey. While fighting through adversity and learning through difficult fishing situations is a valuable part of an angler's growth, catching fish early on is essential. This means choosing locations where the fish give you a fighting chance. Florida Keys fly fishing guide, brand ambassador, and all around good dude, Bruce Chard, has built a significant name in the fly fishing industry for his genuine approach to fishing and exceptional skill developed over years of fishing/guiding situations. Bruce likens fishing saltwater to playing professional sports. People don't realize how fast and challenging it is until they experience it in person. The jump from, say, high school (trout stream), or college (carp stalking), to the pros (salt) is ridiculously large. An angler can have decades of freshwater fishing under their belt and feel like a lost novice out on the salty seas. Of course, there are a few freshwater situations that could be considered professional level as well, and taking care not to use these as a foundation for experience and education will help to dilute any frustration and sadness that may be a part of your early angling journey. To begin, stick to fishing situations that will give you the highest probability of success. This includes stillwater locations, slower moving stretches of creeks and rivers with nice deep holding areas (fewer spooky fish), abundantly active feeding times, and experiences that allow the angler to visualize the fishing experience. Then, keep your expectations in check when attempting higher level fishing opportunities. Enjoy the experience, and do not get too mad at yourself WHEN you make a mistake. It will happen. Establish a foundation through success and failure first before venturing up to the pro level situations.



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"WEIGHTING" FOR THE FISH TO BITE

If you are one for percentages, you probably know that most are made up. But one that gets thrown around the fly fishing world quite often is that at least 90% of a fish's feeding takes place subsurface. That means the traditional, sometimes nostalgic, understanding of fly fishing as an art of casting a dry fly across a creek is not a consistent occurrence. In order for a fly angler to experience catching success when adult bugs and other terrestrial prey are not on the menu, they must get down to the fish. The only way to do that is by adding weight. One of the most common mistakes a fly angler can make is not considering the weight of your rig at each fishing location. As mundane and frustrating as altering a setup can be, it is absolutely essential when fishing subsurface. Every hole may have different current flow, depth, bug activity, fish location, and water clarity. Each factor plays a part in determining how much weight to use and how it should be placed on your rig. Better understanding of the how and why will come with on-the-water education and tutelage from those who already know. Don't neglect the weight and you'll catch more fish.

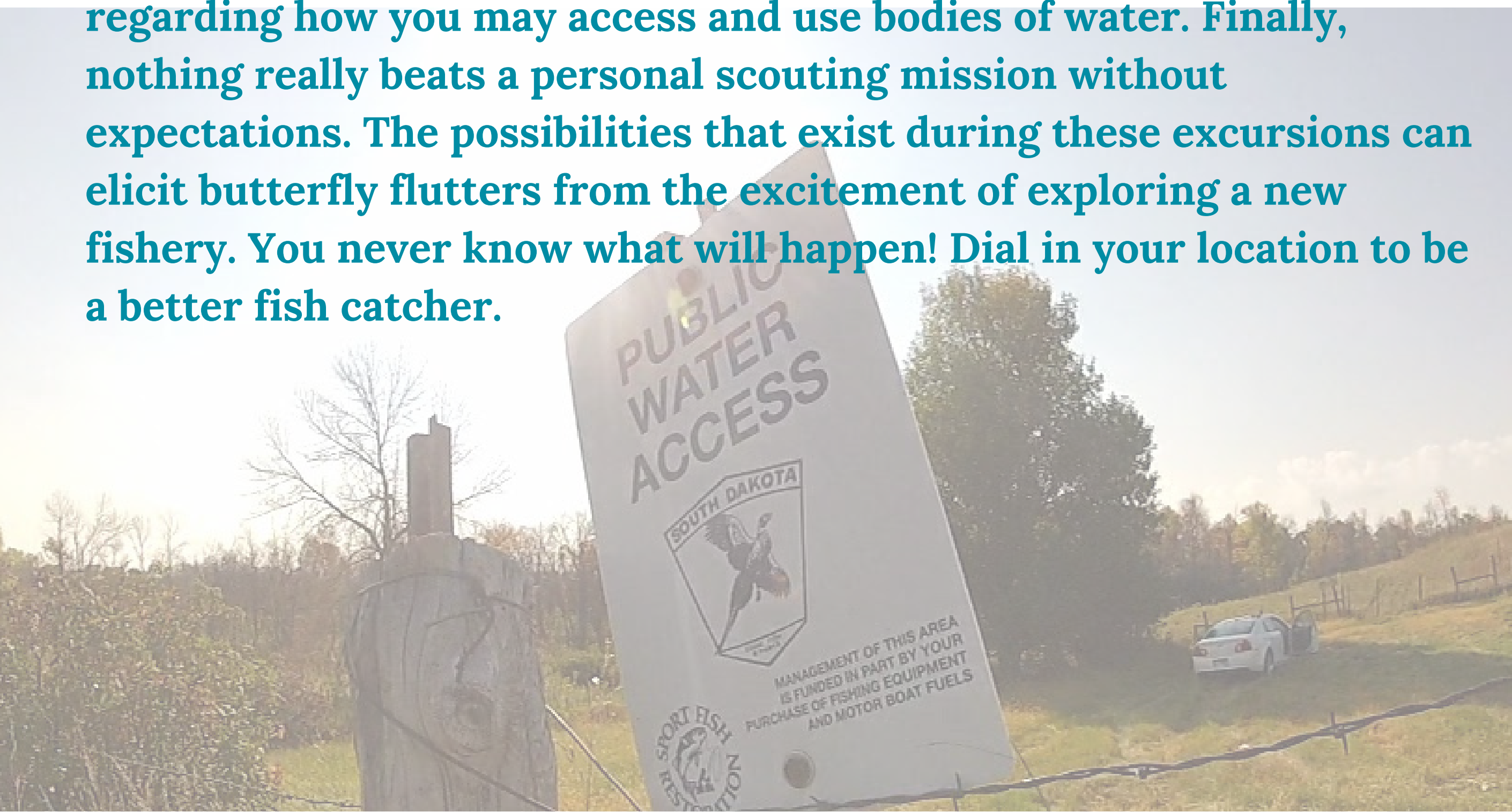
FISHING BBB'S...BIG, BUGGY, BUGS

I always teach in my kids clinics that there are flies that catch fish and flies that catch anglers. In order for us to best dial in the catching part of our fishing game, we must begin to think like a fish when choosing bugs to present. All too often, anglers choose fly patterns for their buggy appearance and strive to create those buggy patterns that they feel will look good to a fish. Unfortunately for most situations, a more streamlined and sparse presentation will offer a better likelihood of success. There are definitely situations in which buggy flies serve a very valuable purpose (turbid water, specific prey available, desired fish species preference). But for most fishing situations, an angler should consider the KISS method for crafting or purchasing flies. Keep It Simple and Sparse. All materials on a fly should serve a specific purpose and used with little excess. Compare and contrast fly patterns to the natural prey available in order to dial in your sparse presentations and always try to lean to the “less buggy” side of flies for best results.



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Fly fishing can be difficult. An angler is attempting to trick a wild animal into eating a hand-crafted concoction of fur and feathers that should resemble natural prey. Before any of that sequence of events can be put into motion, a location must be determined and fish must be found. Not doing your homework and fishing blind can be a recipe for a skunk sandwich. This can be a daunting task for a new angler, especially when fishing an unknown body of water. There are a few tried and true methods that work well for building confidence in a fishing location and helping an angler narrow down a starting point with opportunities for success. The first should always be real people. Find a local fly shop, bait shop, department of natural resources contact, or online fishing forum to ask about a particular area or region. Don't get your feathers ruffled if people are not kind to your inquiries. There are all sorts of people out there. Next, check your online map applications (navionics, On X, and google satellite images) to identify key features for the species you are focused on. Water color, underwater structure, topography, surrounding habitat, and waterway configuration can all offer clues as to where those fish might be hiding. Access is another consideration when doing research, keeping in mind that all states have different laws regarding how you may access and use bodies of water. Finally, nothing really beats a personal scouting mission without expectations. The possibilities that exist during these excursions can elicit butterfly flutters from the excitement of exploring a new fishery. You never know what will happen! Dial in your location to be a better fish catcher.



KEEPING YOUR FLY IN THE AIR

One simple fact pertaining to any fishing style or presentation is that you will only catch fish if your hook is in/on the water. For some reason, false casting has a firm grip on many novice and experienced anglers alike. Much pertaining to the beautiful eccentricities that casting brings to the minds of uninitiated fly anglers dreaming of what it must be like to perform that elegant dance. This is a perpetuating perception that a fly cast is a beautiful piece of art. A perfectly choreographed dance between an angler and their favorite partner. There are circumstances that justify this elicit artform, but it must be known that the longer your fly is in the air, the less time you will have actually catching fish. It must also be known that the longer your fly is in the air, the more time there is for something to go wrong with the cast (which often does to beginning anglers). My intentions are not to discourage you from mastering your favorite dance moves (casting strokes) in hopes of perfecting them in a fishing scenario, but instead to warn you that you are likely false casting more than you need to, and that's not making you a better angler. The goal for any fly flinger should be to present your pattern to the fish with as few casting strokes as possible. Very often, no false casts are required. Instead, simply just picking the fly up and setting it down again is all that it takes. Water haul's, roll casts, spey casts, and other methods are also preferred for their fast and efficient means of presenting a fly. False casting can be fun, and a necessary tool at times, but limiting your false casts will make you a better fly angler and help you catch more fish. The same is said for finishing a drift or moving locations. Many anglers will be quick to pick up their fly and present it in a new location, not fully understanding that the action imparted upon a fly as it begins to swing at the end of a drift can elicit a strike from predatory fish. Very often, just holding a fly pattern at the end of a drift can make for exciting takes when fish might not take otherwise. When moving locations, toss out your rig and drag it alongside or behind as you move. I've lost track of the number of fish, some very large, that have come by this obscene fly fishing technique. It may seem beneath us as fly anglers to stoop to such strategies during the hunt, but pride has never suffered from a caught fish. Keep your fly in the water to catch more fish!

DWELLING ON THE PAST



**You will make
mistakes**



**High aspirations...
low expectations**



Have Fun!!

The greatest athletes and high performance players in any industry all share common traits that would serve fly anglers well to consider for themselves. They all have a short-term memory when it comes to mistakes. And the mentality of these high performing players in a competitive situation is one of excitement rather than nerves or fear. Fly fishing, like so many other performance sports, is as much a mental game as it is a physical one. This is not often talked about in fly fishing circles and not given proper consideration each and every time we step into a fishing situation. Our mindset dictates much of our fishing rhythm, presentation, casting, and timing. Standing on the bow of a flats boat thinking, “don’t blow this cast! Don’t blow this cast!” will only lead to you likely blowing the cast, spooking the fish, and reliving the moment in your head for the rest of the day. Setting mental expectations for ourselves (having fun, trying to catch some fish, understanding that fish will be missed and lost throughout the day) will exponentially make us more mature anglers and enhance our fly fishing adventure. Our mental state, and ever present expectations of ourselves as anglers should be checked regularly to ensure our day on the water is well spent and meaningful. Nothing worse than dwelling in a dark place mentally when surrounded by beauty and opportunity. Don’t let it happen!

NOT FINDING A MENTOR

Much of what is poetically written about the sport of fly fishing often involves solitude and serenity. An independent adventure in pristine settings is sometimes the ultimate goal of anglers. This does not always bode well for the novice fly fisher in need of advice, examples, and constructive feedback. Finding a mentor, while not necessary, will exponentially expedite a beginning angler's progression, and remove much of the mistakes and frustration that can result from trial and error experiences. I was one of those solitary learners, but would have loved to have a mentor to help guide me through the process. My fly fishing family members peppered me with stories, advice, and bits of gear to help keep me motivated. I never did have someone to accompany me on the water. I remember all of the times when frustration poured in like water into leaky waders. The desire to break a fly rod over my knee crept into the back of my mind more times than I care to admit. My trial and error was way more error than trial. Over 25 years later, I'm proud to have mentored many into the sport of fly fishing. I've witnessed exponential progression firsthand as I've taught proper casting technique and accompanied anglers on the water. When you are with someone who can tell you exactly what you need to hear in order to improve, frustration will be infrequent and short-lived. Finding a mentor might take guts, more than anything. You first must be willing to show some vulnerability in admitting you are not great at something. I had a difficult time with that when I first started fly fishing because I so desperately wanted to be a valued part of that community. Next, you must seek out opportunities for mentorship and meeting possible mentors. Local fly fishing clubs, outdoor agencies, or state run programs are all good places to start. Getting involved is the first step. The rest will fall into place when you find the right person to help you along your journey.

THINKING LIKE A PERSON... NOT LIKE A FISH

The fishing industry has been built around tricking anglers to purchase “innovative” and flashy new items the industry claims will make them better anglers. Unfortunately, it’s sales numbers that are the end goal and not an angler's advancement. This is the long way around to gently reminding fly anglers that there are things that catch fish and things that catch anglers. More often than not, the latter is what captivates our mind and can be detrimental to our fishing success. What may seem right to you, or a hunch you might have can definitely produce results, but it will only be luck. Fishing left to luck will only leave you either lucky or unlucky. Might as well increase the odds in your favor by thinking like a fish. What are the current conditions, where would I be holding if I was a fish? What would I be eating? What prey species are available in this section of creek? What were the fish eating last time we were in this location? Fish have tiny brains and are not very smart. They have evolved as a species for millions of years, and use their survival skills to hunt and avoid predators. Take advantage of their instincts and nature's clues to bring more fish to hand on many more occasions.



YOU HAVE TO BE THERE

Captain Lance Valentine, a Michigan walleye guide and founder of the Teachin' Fishin' online education library, is known for saying, "You have to be there." To Lance, who works in the fishing industry and sells fishing products, this means you must be fully present and immersed in all things you are passionate about. Being "there" means something different to everyone and that is up to them to figure out.

For us as fly anglers, being there means many things. Being at events, conferences, group gatherings, fly tying nights...the list goes on. Above all, though, anglers aspiring to increase their skills and proficiency on the water must be present **ON THE WATER!** One of the biggest mistakes made by growing fly anglers is that **THEY DO NOT FISH.** They dream about fishing opportunities, study situations, cast in the backyard, and watch videos all day long...but their skills are rarely tested in real time situations. While knowledge is certainly powerful in the world of fly fishing, it is only useful to anglers when applied in fishing situations. As you progress along your fly fishing journey, make sure you are "there" as often as you can...hopefully with a fly rod in hand.



EXPEDIENT OVER MEANINGFUL

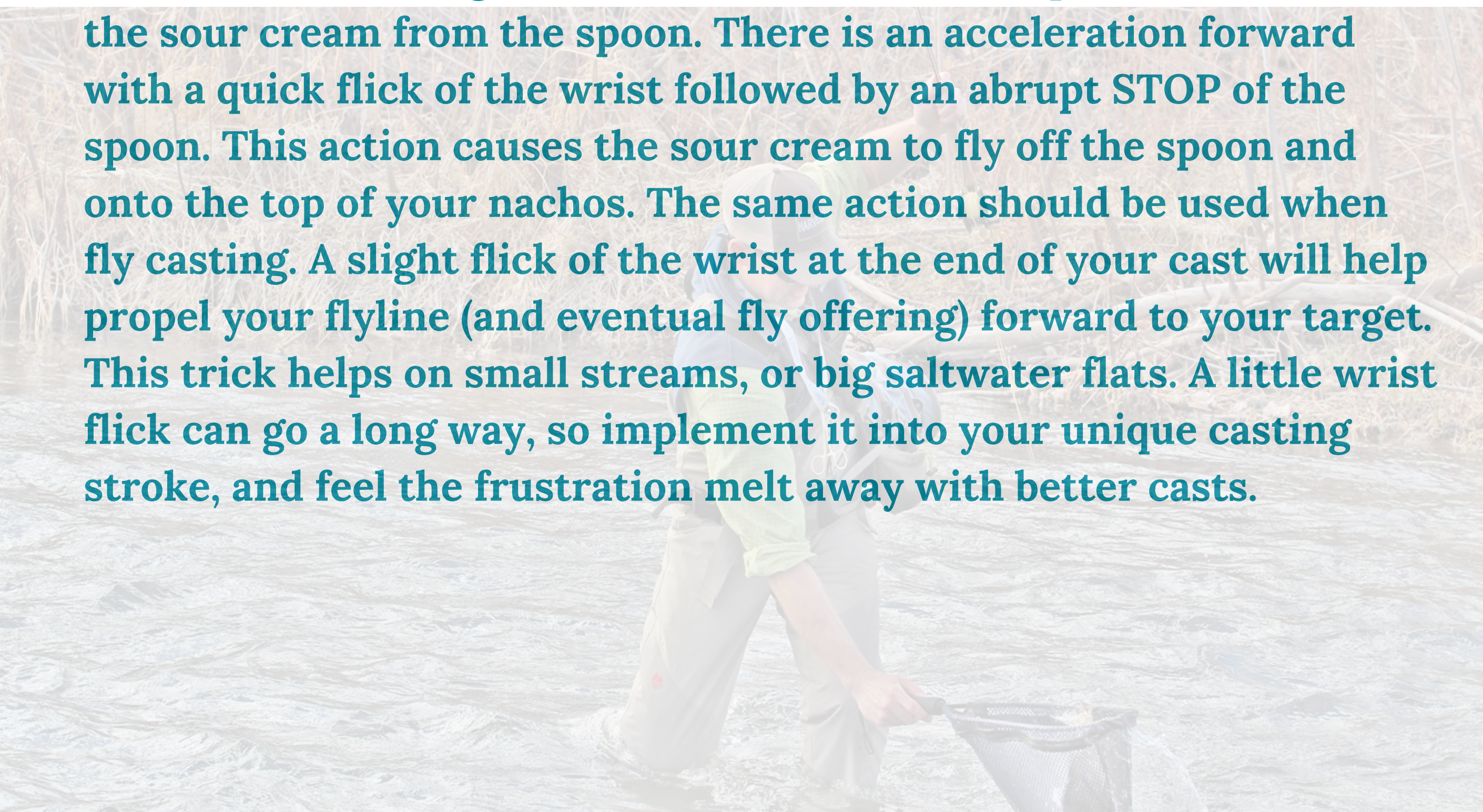
There is so much fear that exists for fly anglers when it comes to trying new things. I've been there many times. Especially as a new, aspiring fly fisher. The fear of rejection, ostracism, bullying, and failure is a massive obstruction to growth and exploration. Many will pursue what is expedient (what is easily and quickly attained or achieved) in order to remain comfortable in their own skin rather than pursuing something meaningful that may be a bit more difficult or foreign to them. This mentality will prevent fly fishers from pursuing new species, fishing new bodies of water, meeting new people, and having unique fly fishing experiences that will bring great value to your life. What is the point of being in this industry if not for growing as an individual, catching fish, and experiencing as many of the places in which fish live as possible?



One mistake that fly anglers make is going back to the same honey hole each and every time rather than picking out a new blue line on a map and making the trip over regardless of what the outcome might be. How meaningful can a catch really be if it has been done many times before? How fulfilling is this endeavor if the task never changes and scenery stays the same? To experience greater success and fulfillment in fly fishing (or work, love, and life, etc), take risks, pursue those things that are meaningful to you, and never look back to what is expedient.

NOT USING THE WRIST

Fly casting is HARD! It takes time, patience, practice, and A LOT of failure. I'm afraid that your interpretation of that might be to think that you will mess up on occasion. No. When I write "A LOT of failure", I mean you are going to suck at casting a fly rod. Suck to the point of wanting to break that nice fly rod over your left knee. I've been fly fishing for 25+ years. Do you think I still make mistakes when casting? Heck yes, I do! There is one thing, though, that fly casters can do right now that will make them better and reduce the number of mistakes they make when casting. This one trick is practiced by some of the most successful anglers in the industry and it is something that is not usually taught to beginners...The wrist flick. Using wrist action during the fly cast can be difficult for beginners to understand and adopt. Generally, we want to limit wrist action on the backcast to ensure a strong load of the rod throughout. The forward cast, however, is where the wrist can really make a big difference for presenting a fly. Imagine you are having a big plate of nachos with all the fixings. You put taco meat, cheese, olives, salsa, and of course...sour cream. You take a big spoonful of sour cream and move toward placing the dollop upon the top of the nacho mountain. Now imagine the movement that is required to remove the sour cream from the spoon. There is an acceleration forward with a quick flick of the wrist followed by an abrupt STOP of the spoon. This action causes the sour cream to fly off the spoon and onto the top of your nachos. The same action should be used when fly casting. A slight flick of the wrist at the end of your cast will help propel your flyline (and eventual fly offering) forward to your target. This trick helps on small streams, or big saltwater flats. A little wrist flick can go a long way, so implement it into your unique casting stroke, and feel the frustration melt away with better casts.





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