

# New England Fly Tyers



NEWS LETTER

March 2016

## President's Message



Don't you just have to love March? In like a lion and out like a lamb is great, but even better is that this is the time of season we up our preparation efforts for the fishing season to come. I'm not sure about anyone else, but to me, cleaning lines, oiling reels, tying flies, building or buying new equipment and just tuning up my gear in general is such a great part of my fishing experiences. Each fly box is evaluated for replenishment, the subsequent list of hackles, hooks, dubbing, thread, etc. just helps build the anticipation of that first cast of the season.

And Monday nights at the NEFT club are a reflection of everything I love about this time of year. Open tying has gradually shifted from endless conversations about the weather of the winter, Christmas gifts, experiences anticipated and even a little fly tying to more conservative amounts of conversation and more intense fly tying. Gotta get

those fly boxes filled.



In the rear of the hall, Jim McKenney and Dale Mills hold school and are leading the group taking fly tying lessons so next season they can move into the open tying groups out front. Not a requirement but certainly highly recommended. The new lighting has made a significant improvement to the lesson area and hopefully made it a better learning environment. As an aside, I never get tired of listening to Dean Clark's narrative of each lesson and watching the credits of those who were so important in the development of the class.



And a spin around the hall brings us into the realm of Paul Breau and Danny Helgin and the rod builder's class. Reel seats, cork grips, hook tenders, guides and tip tops are the

focus of attention in this area. There is a wonderful level of satisfaction and achievement when you catch a fish on a fly you tied, but the experience goes over the top when you land a fish tempted by a fly you tied and on a rod you built. Not to mention the money you saved in the process.

And unseen at the Monday night events is the youth outreach program gearing up over at the Leicester Rod and Gun Club on Saturday mornings. Tom Foley and company are hard at work nurturing a whole new generation of fly fishermen and tyers perpetuating our great and historic sport.

And everything seems to come together for our three big spring events; the NEFT Banquet in April, the Trout Brook Outing in May and culminating in the Deerfield River Outing in June. As an organization we have so much to look forward to and also to be proud of.

Finally, I would just like to remind everyone that if you haven't already done so, our **dues are due every February** and the NEFT depends on those funds to sustain all our annual functions.

NEFT  
P.O. BOX 164  
WORCESTER, MA 01613

## NEFT Calendar

### March 7<sup>th</sup>

7:00pm Open Tying  
7:00 pm Rod Building Class  
7:00pm Fly Tying Class

### March 12<sup>th</sup>

Youth Outreach Begins

### March 14<sup>th</sup>

7:00pm Open Tying  
7:00pm Rod Building Class  
7:00pm Fly Tying Class

### March 21<sup>st</sup>

7:00pm Open Tying  
7:00pm Rod Building Class  
7:00pm Fly Tying Class

### March 28<sup>th</sup>

6:30pm NEFT Banquet Meeting  
7:00pm Open Tying  
7:00pm Rod Building Class  
7:00pm Fly Tying Class

## Events to plan for:

### April 22<sup>nd</sup>

Banquet

### May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Board of Director's Meeting

### May 14<sup>th</sup>

Trout Brook Outing

### May 23<sup>rd</sup>

Business Meeting (Last Meeting of the Year)

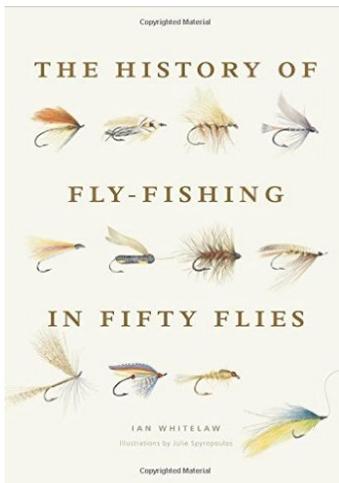
### June 4

Deerfield River Outing

**REMINDER: FEBRUARY WAS DUES MONTH!**

# New England Fly Tyers

## Book Review “The History of Fly Fishing in Fifty Flies” by Ian Whitelaw



For those of us who love to fly fish and tie flies, the history of the sport is fascinating and teaches us why we use the techniques we use, how they developed and who created them. In “The History of Fly Fishing in Fifty Flies”, Ian Whitelaw selected fifty flies, the introduction of which significantly contributed to furthering the art of fly fishing. From Claudius Aelianus to present day tyers, the fifty flies were selected generally based on significant changes in tech-

niques or materials for the times. Its important to note that he defined a fly to be “something that is too light to be cast any distance without a fly line, has no food like scent or taste and is designed to fool a fish into eating it only by its appearance and behavior”. Each fly presented in the book includes it’s originator if known, and what innovation of significance met his criteria that warranted its inclusion, the class of flies it represents and how it improved our fishing.

It is interesting that it is no coincidence that the most rapid changes in development of fly tying occurred as new materials became available to tyers thus allowing creative modifications. When known, the originator of each fly is also thoroughly discussed giving the reader some insight into the motivations behind the innovations. From the Palmer Worm to the Takayama Sakasa Kebari, and all the patterns in between, its recommended reading for both fly fishermen and tyers.

## Favorite Fishing Hole—Wallum Lake

We all probably take for granted our favorite fishing locals and have fished them for years. But consider the person new to fishing trying to locate and fish places you’ve never seen. This series of articles is specifically for those new to the sport looking to find places to fish and perhaps get a few tips on what to use.

To start things off, we’ll first look at the opportunities available at Wallum Lake In Douglas State Forest. Directions are simple, following route 16 toward Douglas from either Route 146 or Webster, once you get close, just follow the signs in and you cant miss it. Wallum Lake is a beautiful, crystal clear body of water and is accessi-

ble by shore or boat. Each spring the pond is stocked with trout by both Massachusetts and Rhode Island and the pond is deep enough to maintain holdovers throughout the year. The pond is open to fishermen with either Massachusetts or Rhode Island licenses.

The Northern, Western and part of the Eastern shore line is owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation and is open to shore fishing with the one exception being the swimming beach. In addition to trout, the pond is also home to largemouth bass and Atlantic Salmon when available. The bass have a relatively slow growth rate, so one should not ex-

pect to see many very large fish.

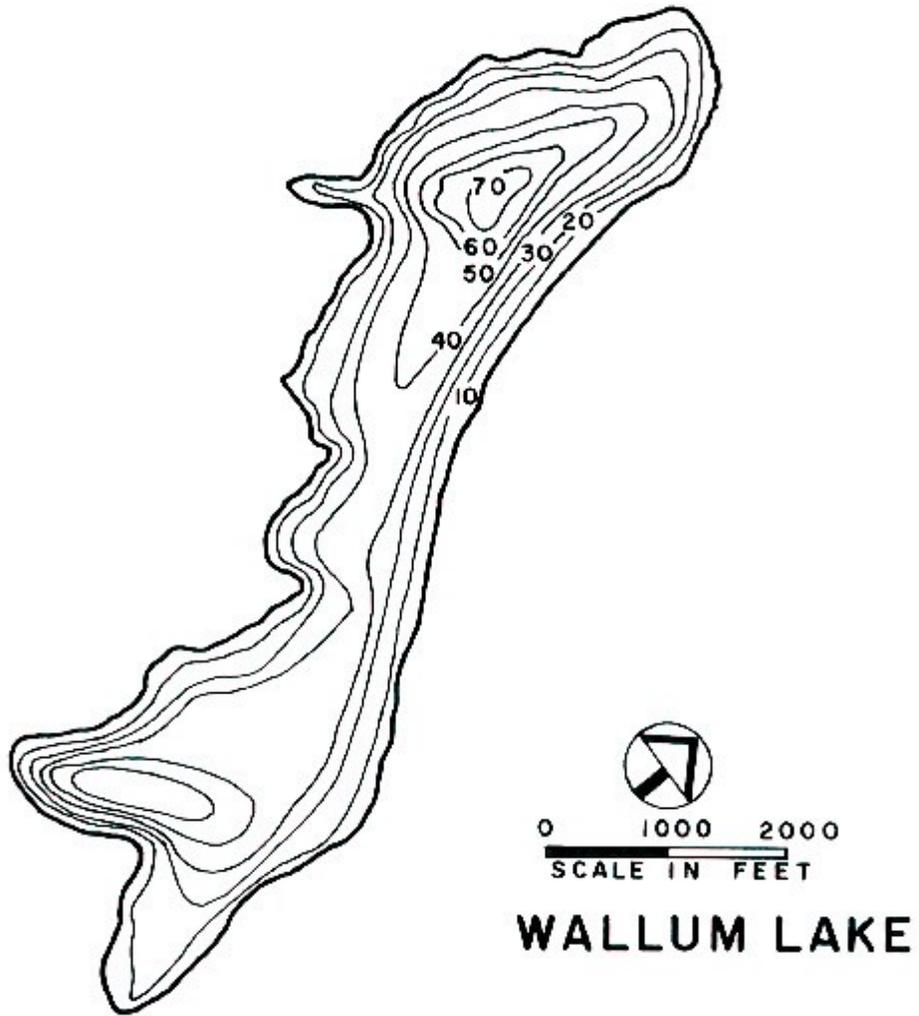
In spring, the usual patterns such as wooly buggers or matukas work fine and if you’re out trolling from a boat, grey ghosts, nine-three’s and supervisors should all produce. With a healthy population of landlocked alewives, any of the popular imitations should work.

Whereas access from the Massachusetts side is primarily through the park, it important to note that when the park is open and operating (usually around Memorial Day) fees apply and its very crowded.



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YES, YOU CAN..... Expanding horizons by eliminating intimidation by Dean Clark

What most often keeps us from experimenting or trying something new is the fear of not succeeding combined with a lack of specific knowledge. I guess it has always been this way: fearing failure and the unknown keeping us from taking the road less travelled which by default forces us to continue repeating the same old, same old. Not that that is bad, just eventually boring.

However, just by realizing this truth we grant ourselves permission to step outside our box of familiarity and become emboldened with a sense of adventure and the excitement of potential new discoveries. Whether it be experimenting with a new material for a fly, or a tying method that is unique or fishing an area that you have yet to explore or seeking out a species that you have, until now, only thought of as an item on your bucket list..... these and more all become possibilities and credible challenges simply by recognizing our self-imposed paralysis.

If you have not yet tried salt water fly fishing I invite you to cast aside your “*not me*” or “*I can’t do that*” attitude and vicariously come with me down to the salt where together we will explore the fascinating and rewarding playground of the striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*). No, you do NOT need new equipment or a unique set of different skills. What you do need is to trust that you will have fun while learning something new about both the fishing and yourself.

First, let’s agree to follow the K.I.S.S. principle at least through this introduction. Massachusetts has over 2,500 miles of salt water shoreline much of which is available to you if you are fishing. There is an old law on the books that states, “Any free man may fish or fowl where the tide doeth ebb and flow.” This allows you to fish below the high tide line most anywhere you wish. There are many “Public Ways to Water” and the MA Division of Marine Fisheries (<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/dmf/>) has an educational web site and free hand-outs that will give you terrific info on both access and the fish that swim in our coastal waters.

You will need a salt water license which can be bought on line also through the Division of Marine Fisheries and the rules and regs are there as well.

Let’s go over equipment. I have a friend that fishes for stripers with a two weight, six foot, fly rod and a sinking shooting head! Some folks insist on nothing less than a nine foot, ten weight outfit. They will all work but if you have a balanced set-up between a six and a ten weight you are good to go. Floating, sinking, intermediate lines, they all work and can be put to obvious and similar use in the salt just as in sweet water. Reels need not be fancy just workable either with a good drag or “palmable”. Unless your equipment is specifically made for the salt - and even if it is - it should be rinsed off in warm soapy water immediately after use.

Leaders need not be tapered but they do have to be strong: 6 pound tippet strength in fluorocarbon is the lowest I would go when fishing skinny clear water and I seldom use less than 12lb. and usually greater under

al other circumstances. The same rules of thumb apply to leader length in the salt as they do in fresh water: the deeper the fly line then the shorter the leader and visa-versa. I will use a 2.5' to 3' leader with a deep sinking line and up to a 12' leader on the flats.

There are no viable hatches on the salt but the fish can be persnickety when it comes to fly selection. Few absolute or exacting fly patterns exist for the salt. Instead there are fly types: surface flies like poppers or Gurglers; critter flies like shrimp, crabs etc.; baitfish representations and the ubiquitous attractors like the fluorescent "Tutti-Frutti or K.O.D (kiss of death). A small sampling of these types will serve you well. I would suggest some olive and white, tan and white and fluorescent green and white flies in three formats: 1) poppers, 2) weighted (Clouser types) and 3) baitfish (Deceivers) and in various sizes of each type. With these in your arsenal of choices you will be well prepared for most all circumstances.

Now let's talk about where and when to go. Moving water will give you better fishing than will slack water as the fish feed more during these times. Low light times –early or late in the day or overcast - will usually fish better than lighter conditions with the exception of sight fishing skinny water when full sun gives you a visual advantage especially over lighter colored or "bright" bottoms fished on both sides of a low tide when the water is shallower.

The "where to go" factor is best determined with a little sleuth work on your own. You might Google up striped bass chat rooms, forums and other internet available information for a start. Also look up fly and bait shops in the part of the state you wish to visit. These can all be good sources of location info as well as the local bite of the moment. Make friends and compliment them by picking their brains. Everyone likes to be thought of as knowing more than the next guy and by asking someone for help you are proving to them that their egocentric feelings are correct! In the spirit of full disclosure this same egotism is both healthy and alive in those that write advice articles (like this) to be shared with others! (I hate looking in mirrors)

If you were expecting me to pin-point exact locations or times or tides or even which fly to use then you will be disappointed by this article. It is however, my intention to stir up some of your curiosity juices and motivate you into exploring a new challenge – outside your familiar fresh water comfort zone: fishing in the salt. If you do your own due diligence the ultimate rewards will be ten-fold more and you will have discovered not just how and where to catch a striper but that you have it in you to seek and succeed at new challenges.



## ***To Promote Fly Fishing and Tying***

Our mailing address is:  
PO Box 164  
Worcester, MA 01613

The NEFT meets every Monday evening at 7 PM from the Monday after Labor Day to the Monday before Memorial day. We meet at the Singletary Rod & Gun , 300 Sutton Ave., Oxford Ma.

*NEFT is a non-profit organization of fly fishers and fly tyers. The purpose of the organization is to foster the art of fly tying, to promote the challenge of fly fishing, to encourage conservation and sportsmanship.*

*NEFT began in Worcester, MA in 1972. Our current membership comes from over 50 cities and towns in Worcester County. We believe that the NEFT is one of the most active clubs of its kind. We meet every Monday night from the Monday after Labor Day to the Monday before Memorial day, a total of 36 meetings in 9 months.*

### **We're on the Web**

**[www.newenglandflytyers.org](http://www.newenglandflytyers.org)**