

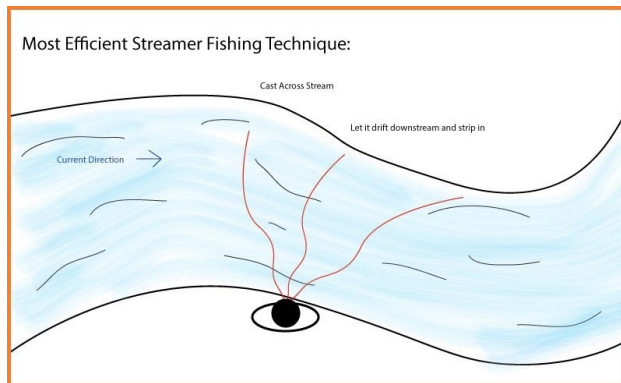
Streamer Bite

Written by - Ethan Wood

As water temperatures warm, fish become more active, and this is the time for streamers. When smaller fish are feeding on insects they are being pursued by larger predators. Thus, fishing a streamer during a prolific hatch can produce some very large trout. When the water is clear use smaller, more natural streamers. Concentrate on the deepest runs and the areas around structure.



When runoff dirties the water use your biggest and brightest streamers. Small trout tossed about by spring currents are hunted by larger trout. In these conditions, these larger trout use their lateral line system to detect prey. This line of pressure sensitive pores provides the information they need when vision is compromised. Also, a downstream presentation is important, as an injured baitfish will not be able to swim against the strong currents, but will be swept downstream.



Streamer fishing is fast-paced, and line management is key. For the streamer to look alive it must be moved on a tight line. The other important key to streamer fishing is to cover water. If your streamer is not taken after a few casts, move and target new water.

It Is Spring

Written by - Ethan Wood

Spring is a season of transition in fly fishing. The weather changes from day to day, even from morning to afternoon. This creates diversity in how we fish, and observing and maintaining an open mind will pay off.

On the warmer days, it can feel a lot like summer; and the rivers come to life with increased insect activity. In April I saw caddis, BWOs, little winter stoneflies, and even grasshoppers accompanying the midge hatches that have been prolific all winter long. On these days, the trout move into the mid-water column where they feed on emerging insects. The Juju Bee Midge is one of my favorite midge emerger patterns. I like to fish it under a small dry Griffith's Gnat, or a little deeper accompanied by a tungsten midge pupa or weighted stonefly nymph. On overcast days, look for BWO hatches; and start by nymphing a Sparkle Wing RS2 as the fish key in on emergers, then switch to a dry if you see significant rising.

Spring is an exciting and even manic time. It is important to stop and observe the fish. Getting a high vantage point from up on a cliff or bluff can help you to see into the water. Try to identify where in the water column the fish are feeding and match that depth. Most patterns will catch some fish if presented well at the correct depth.

Meet our newest FOM contributor...

Ethan Wood

"I am a trained fisheries biologist, and have spent the past few summers working as a drift



boat guide on the upper Green River in central Wyoming. I recently moved to Denver and have had fun learning the local Colorado waters."

April 2016 Fly of the Month

April Fly



Mercury Baetis

Size: 20

Species Matched: Blue Winged Olive Mayfly

Life Cycle: Nymph

The offspring of an RSII and a Jujubaetis, the Mercury Baetis is a born trout slayer! Don't let the slim profile and muted colors of this pattern fool you, as it has been known to clean out every hole on the rivers across the country that are home to the Blue Winged Olive (BWO) Mayfly! The mercury beadhead adds a spark of vital flash that feeding trout just can't resist.

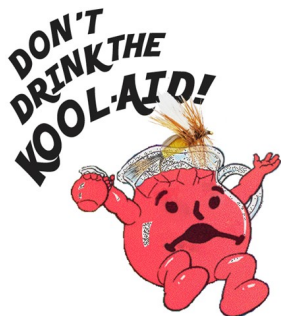


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Don't Drink the Kool-Aid!

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Written By: Peter Stichter



Excuse me! Hold on just a second. I couldn't help but notice you coming out of that fly shop with that plastic dish stuffed with flies, and that nice big glass of Kool-Aid. From the look of the red stains on the front of your Simms shirt and the glassy look in your eyes, it looks like this might not have been your first cup today, but hey, we have all been known to indulge in a little fly shop Kool-Aid on our way to the river. The reason I stopped you was that I noticed there was a fly floating in your Kool-Aid. I'm surprised that you didn't notice it, because from the other side of the parking lot it looked like a Himalayan Condor preparing to take flight! (Awkward pause) Look, the price tag is still on it. (Appreciative whistle) You have got to be careful when listening to the hype around the newest and hottest flies! If you drink the fly shop Kool-Aid, you are bound to get *gouged* and left feeling like a fish!



It's an uncomfortable feeling walking out of a fly shop light in the wallet, a dish full of nameless flies in hand, and with more questions bumping around our heads than when we first entered. We have all been there! Much of the frustration and confusion in fly fishing stems from the overwhelming number of fly patterns and the misconception that one needs to buy the latest and greatest fly pattern to be successful on the water. The result of buying into this mentality and hype is a fly vest stuffed to overflowing with boxes crammed full of anonymous flies and your spouse giving you ultimatums to decide between them or your flies.

Let's all pause for a second and reflect on the words of philosopher and fly fishing pioneer *Confucius* when he said, "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated." This truth should resound with the fly fisher! In spite of the Einstein-like intellect we grant trout to explain why they aren't eating our flies, the truth is, their rejection is more often due to poor presentation than our lack of the hot new fly pattern. Therefore, in our quest to simplify and slim our fly selections back to the basics, I would propose that you equip yourself with a category of flies we will call *Crossover Patterns*.

In the past I've written about *Generalist Patterns*, which are a group of flies that - when fished in several sizes or colors - can be effectively used to match a number of invertebrate species within a certain family. A prime example of this would be the Parachute Adams dry fly: when fished in sizes 12-22, it can be used to effectively match almost every mayfly hatch in Western US. *Crossover Patterns* take this a step further in that they not only can match multiple species within a given family, but also can be used to match additional families of invertebrate (ie. Caddis and Stoneflies, or Mayflies and Midges). Many of your favorite fly patterns, those that have produced fish trip after trip to the river, likely fall under the umbrella of the Crossover Patterns, and are so effective because they in fact match multiple families of bugs on the water. Here are a few of our favorite *Crossover Patterns*.

Small Parachute Patterns



Parachute patterns such as the *Parachute Adams*, *Parachute BWO*, or *Parachute PMD* in sizes 18-24 are equally effective at matching small mayflies as they are at matching midges. Close in size and close in color will usually win the day and catch the fish!

The Mini Hot



With its wing held flat across its back and its brightly colored abdomen, the *Mini Hot* can effectively be used to match a number of stonefly and caddis hatches throughout the spring and summer.

The Pheasant Tail



There are few fly patterns in the angler's arsenal as versatile as the *Pheasant Tail*. When fished in sizes 10-22, the fly fisher can match almost every mayfly and stonefly nymph in our rivers and lakes, as well as a number of beetle, damsel, and dragonfly nymphs to boot!

So the next time you visit the fly shop, prepare to go back to the basics. Leave the Kool-Aid on the counter, and pick up your tried and true *crossover patterns*. I promise you that your wallet will thank you and the trout will rise to greet your flies!