

DON'T LET RUNOFF "PUT YOU DOWN"

Written by - Tom Caprio

Snowpack is 200% of normal and rivers are getting swollen with runoff. Fly fishermen will pack their rods away until the rivers recede, missing out on some excellent fishing.

When rivers are high, you will find energy efficient trout stacked in the slower water along the banks. Fish still need to eat in the high and murky water which makes the fishing good, especially when the water clarity improves even marginally. This will happen when the weather cools for a couple days thus slowing down snowmelt. Fish can still see your flies in only a foot of visibility.

There will also be daily fluctuations in the flows and you can coincide your fishing with the lowering flows. It's important to understand that it can take several hours for the peak flows to reach a section of river lower in the drainage. Going higher in the drainage can also help get to clearer water since there are less tributaries as you go upstream. Tailwaters (rivers below dams) can also be excellent high water options. The reservoir will settle silt from the incoming runoff and the outgoing water below the dams will have better clarity. Sometimes water will be held back to fill the reservoirs so take advantage of those situations.

One benefit of high flows is bigger food sources are kicked up off the river bottom - stoneflies, crane fly larva, scuds, aquatic worms, earthworms, leeches, and baby fish. It's time to use those big flies! Darker/bigger profile flies will stand out better in off-color water along with pinks and purples.

It's important to fish those flies through the water column in those slower sections of water. Fish will sometimes suspend in slow off-colored water since they don't feel threatened by overhead predators. But, just like normal nymph fishing, keep going deeper if you aren't picking up fish by adding weight and/or lengthening the distance to the indicator. Or, get rid of the indicator and 'tight line' heavier flies.

Be safe when fishing high flowing water. Don't step out into the water if you don't know the depth and consider fishing from the river banks. One trick is to stick your rod tip (gently) into the water to find out how deep it is next to the bank.

June is also the perfect month to fish lakes with multiple hatches happening and excellent water temperatures for feeding fish. These hatches will start on lower elevation

lakes so you can follow them up to middle and higher elevation lakes as the weather warms. Damselflies, dragonflies, calibeatis (lake mayflies), caddis, and midges can all be present, along with leeches, scuds, crayfish and baitfish.

Each of these food sources has a different 'retrieve' so presentation is critical as is finding the depth of the fish. Use the 'count down' method when fishing subsurface on lakes. Fan cast and then let your flies sink - start with counting to 10 by thousands—one thousand, two thousand, etc. Increase your count on the subsequent set of casts until you find the depth of the fish.

Where to fish in a lake can be a challenge but there are spots more 'fishy' than other. Inlets are especially good during runoff since lots of food wash into the lakes. Outlets are also good, along with spots that transition from deeper water to flats or shoals. Look for spots with structure, especially if there are 2 'structures' together (for example a downed tree near a drop off). Just as fish will move into somewhat faster/shallower water to feed in rivers, lake fish will move into shallower water to feed.

Some folks feel that fly fishing lakes can be boring, but when I fish lakes I rarely let the flies sit since most everything in the lakes move - bugs, leeches, baitfish, and trout. By moving your flies, lake fishing becomes more exciting - especially when you feel the fish hit.

Lake fish can get pretty big!



A few of my favorite lake spots to fish this time of year include the 3 inlets to Lake Dillon, inlet to Gross Reservoir (you'll have to hike a mile to get there), inlet to Lake Estes, inlet to Montgomery Reservoir,

and the inlet to Fairplay Beach. Other lakes that fish well include Pine Valley Ranch lake (Jefferson County park near Pine), O'Haver Lake south of Salida (bring your tent or camper), Clinton Reservoir on Fremont Pass, Chrystal Lake near Leadville, Tarryall Reservoir (especially good to belly boat), Jefferson Lake, Spinney Mountain reservoir, and Lily Lake up by Rocky Mountain National Park.

Don't let high water deter your fishing... adjust your tactics on the river or try lake fishing. It can be rewarding and will provide some of the biggest fish of the year. Have fun out there!

JUNE 2016 FLY OF THE MONTH

June Fly



BEADHEAD PEARL CHIRONOMID

Size: 10

Family Matched: Midges & Chironomids

Life Cycle: Pupa / Emerger

Fly Type: Attractor Fly Pattern

Making up to 90% of the trout's diet in many lakes and reservoir across the nation, there are few families of invertebrates or fly patterns so important to the trophy trout hunter as the Beadhead Chironomid Pupa! Tied in a variety of sizes and colors, this fly pattern will produce fish both on the lakes and the streams that feed them when fish head out to spawn. With more than 17,000 midge species inhabiting North America, this fly pattern is an excellent imitation of some of the biggest and fattest on the menu!



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FLY AND THE FAMILY STONE

Written by - Peter Stitcher
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I'm not interested in simply filling your head with scientific bug names and entomology facts. While we took an in-depth look at the characteristics that will enable the fly fisher to identify stonefly nymphs and adults at a glance in last month's article, The Rise of the Stonefly, that information won't do you any good unless you can take it into your fly box, identify your stonefly patterns, and tie on the best imitation while fishing! With 465 species of stonefly inhabiting the waters of North America, fly fishers have tied 100 times that many fly patterns in their attempt to match these trout favorites. Most likely, you probably already have a number of stonefly patterns mixed in among the ranks of flies in your fly box. Our goal now is to help these stonefly patterns stand out from the pack by highlighting profile of both the stonefly nymph fly pattern and the adult stonefly pattern, enabling you to match more species of stonefly with fewer fly patterns with our Deadly Dozen Stoneflies.

The Anatomy of the Stonefly Nymph Fly Pattern

Taking up 99.9% of the life of the stonefly, and lasting between 1 to 4 years, the nymph life cycle of the stonefly is available to feeding trout year round in the waters they inhabit. Among the largest and highest calorie sources of food in the water, the stonefly nymphs are particularly effective during runoff when the naturals are washed from the bottom of the river, and just before they emerge as they migrate across the streambed towards the shore. Below are the common characteristics shared between all stonefly specific nymph patterns that are fished beneath the surface of the water.

- Usually tied to a 2x-3x long hook in sizes 4 – 18
- The distinctive antennae and thick pair of tails of the natural are imitated with goose biots or rubber tubing
- The long, widely-spaced legs are often imitated with goose biots, rubber legs, or a thick, long-fibered section of feather.
- Often tied with a wing pad or pads created from a folded and cut turkey tail feather on the back thorax
- Often tied with 1-2 metal bead heads or a single metal cone head in order to keep the fly on the bottom of the river



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Super Stimulator

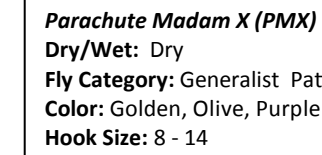
Dry/Wet: Dry
Fly Category: Generalist Pattern
Color: Tan, Peacock
Hook Size: 8 - 16



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Yellow Sally Stimulator

Dry/Wet: Dry
Fly Category: True Fly Pattern
Color: Yellow/Red
Hook Size: 12 - 16



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Parachute Madam X (PMX)

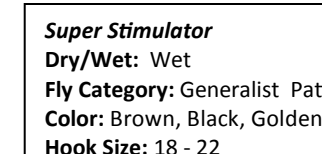
Dry/Wet: Dry
Fly Category: Generalist Pattern
Color: Golden, Olive, Purple
Hook Size: 8 - 14



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Chubby Chernobyl

Dry/Wet: Dry
Fly Category: Generalist Pattern
Color: Black/Purple, Brown/ Bronze, Tan/ Golden
Hook Size: 8 -12



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Super Stimulator

Dry/Wet: Wet
Fly Category: Generalist Pattern
Color: Brown, Black, Golden
Hook Size: 18 - 22



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Adult Stonefly:



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Stimulator

Dry/Wet: Dry
Fly Category: Generalist Pattern
Color: Olive, Yellow, Orange
Hook Size: 6 - 18



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<i>Beadhead Poxback Little Yellow Stone</i>	<i>Beadhead Iron Sally</i>	<i>Double Beadhead Stone</i>	<i>Pat's Rubber Leg</i>	<i>20 Incher</i>
				
Wet Color: Natural, Brown Hook Size: 18 - 22	Wet Color: Tan/Brass Hook Size: 12 - 16	Wet, Color: Golden, Olive, Black, Brown Hook Size: 8 - 10	Wet, Color: Brown, Black, Golden Hook Size: 8 - 12	Wet, Color: Brown, Black, Golden Hook Size: 8-12

<i>Stonefly Nymph</i>

Wet, Color: Brown, Black, Golden Hook Size: 4-18

The Anatomy of the Adult Stonefly Pattern

After crawling from the water and wriggling out from its skin, the adult stonefly emerges large and in charge, dwarfing other families of aquatic invertebrates. While still maintaining many of the characteristics of the nymph (such as two long antennae, two thick tails, and long widely separated legs), the chief trait that the fly fisher seeks to emulate with their dry stonefly patterns is the two pairs of long wings that are held parallel to the back. Characteristics that define our stonefly specific dry flies are:

- The wings of stonefly patterns are most commonly tied with a long tuft of hair that is laid parallel to and close to the back.
- Bodies commonly tied with dubbing and hackle or foam to help them float.
- Some patterns are tied with long rubber legs
- Tied to 2x –3x long hooks in sizes 4-20, with the most common size hooks being between 8-14