

*Part II*

# Fly Fishing 101

by Marvin Mitchum

Fly assortment is the most mystifying element in fly fishing. I will try to keep it simple, the more time spent on the water, the less complex it will turn out to be. Most fly fisherman have their dependable patterns to utilize on each river they desire to fish. For instance, when I fish the three lower rivers my selection of fly patterns will be different than the flies I would choose to fish in the Sierra. Belief in your patterns is very critical.

My collection of Dry flies would include a Parachute Adams, Yellow Humpy, Stimulator, Tan Elk Hair Caddis, Royal Wulff, Beetle, Parachute Ant, and Grasshoppers. Nymph patterns and Midges, I would make use of a Hares Ear, Pheasant Tails, Copper Johns, Micro Mayflies, Birds Nest, and a Yellow Jacket. Zebra Midge, Disco Midge, WD 40, Griffith Gnat and a San Juan Worm and an Olive and Burnt Orange Jay Fair Wiggle Tail, and a Hornbergs. These flies are my go to flies, I also carry countless more flies in the identical way that most fly fisherman do.

Leaders seem complicated but ultimately they are used to distance the fly from the fly line, as not to spook the fish. They come in different lengths from 7 ½' to 15'. The leaders also serve to turn the fly over. When using sinking lines we make use of shorter leaders to keep the fly down in the zone. When buying leaders, they are marked on leader package 7 1/2' 6X, which means 7 ½ is the length and 6X is the diameter of the end of the leader, called the tippet. If you divide the size of fly by three, and the fly is a size 18, divided by three = 6 you need a 6X leader. The higher the number of the fly, the smaller the fly will be. On still calm waters you would have to use longer leaders as the trout are leader shy.

Accessories are a vital item when on the river or lake. Most fly fisherman are looking for new gadgets and there are new items that come out yearly. When I would travel to the Fly Fishing Retail show in Denver, I would spend much of my time searching vendor booths for new accessories to purchase. Most anglers are always looking for the



next, hottest, and new-fangled gizmo.

A vest is considered essential and you must have a desired assortment of pockets to hold a lot of accessories needed for lengthy day of fishing. The vest should have a sizeable pocket on the back to hold rain gear and a ring on the back to attach a net.

Polarized glasses are a must to reduce glare when probing the river bottom for trout. Glasses also serve as protection for the eyes. Over the 40 years that I have been fly fishing, I have heard from many fishermen who have known someone who lost an eye from casting a fly without eye protection.

A good razor-sharp pair of nippers is a must and must include an eye cleaner on them to clean any head cement left in the eye of the hook, when the fly was tied.

Forceps are a good item to pinch the bard down and when releasing the trout or bass.

Fly floatant helps to keep your dry flies floating high.

There are many more accessories available, but you discover that the vest will get tremendously heavy, and every year you will find yourself reducing the magnitude of equipment in the vest. If you are on the river long enough, throughout the day, the vest will get heavier as the day goes on.

I anticipate this article will help you comprehend that fly fishing is not a difficult sport to master. There are many guides fly shops, and clubs that are eager to help you learn the basics. If anything it would be a fabulous day on the river.

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