

Part I

Fly Fishing 101

by Marvin Mitchum

Most fly fisherman focus on rainbow trout, but many will pursue panfish, bass, stripers, bonefish, marlin, and tarpon. The average fisherman fishes five times a year starting in June and generally put their rods away for the year in September. Others, me included, consider themselves passionate, committed, trout bums. Most people have a hard time relating to our passion. Jack Dennis, a well known fly fisherman, lecturer, and fly shop owner, once said, "I love to fish for trout because you don't find trout in Los Angeles".

When entering into the sport of fly fishing, most anglers are taken aback by the amount of tackle available on the market. It can be complex, but remember at this stage, keep it simple.

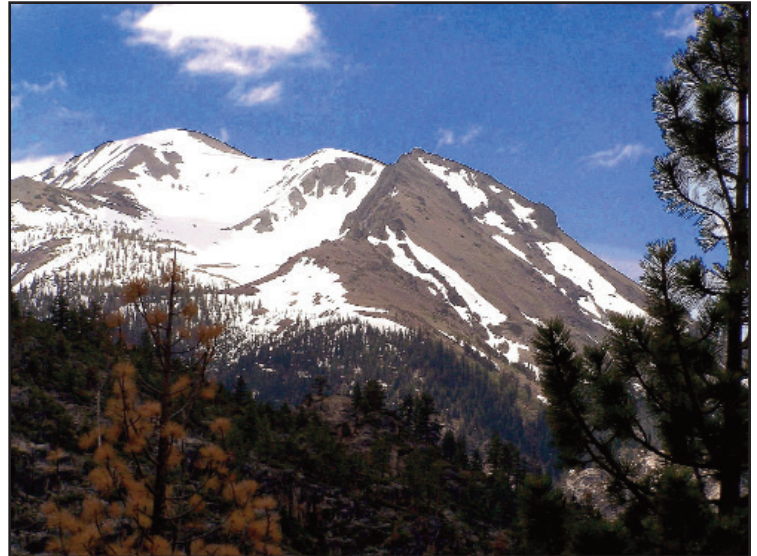
After guiding, owning a fly shop, and teaching fly fishing schools, I often had many questions asked about equipment, flies, lines, leaders, and casting. So I will try to simplify the questions that have been asked.

Most anglers are reluctant to try fly fishing because casting seems difficult, fly selection confusing, rods, reels, leaders, make for a difficult learning curve.

Generally, the first question asked is, "Why do we fish flies?" Fly fishing is the art of trying to emulate aquatic insects that live in the rivers and lakes with flies tied with fur and feathers. Mayflies, Caddis flies, Stoneflies, and Terrestrials make up the diet of trout in streams. All streams and lakes have a good population of baitfish and generally a good pattern will imitate this baitfish. As a rule, the key to imitating these insects and baitfish is size, shape and color. Again, keep it simple.

After a couple lessons and some time on the water, you will be able to start enjoying the art of fly fishing.

Rods, reels, and lines are the first pieces of equipment to purchase. A 9' 5 wt graphite, moderate action rod is a good all around trout rod. The line weight is printed on the rod down by the reel seat. Choose graphite when looking for a rod as they are more powerful and when casting, you will get more distance with less effort. If you feel like you are working too hard, slow down. You will be surprised how much better you will cast. Most anglers work too hard



when learning to cast.

When choosing a fly reel, anglers are often under the impression that the reel serves only to store the line. That is true if you are only going to fish for small trout that won't take long runs after being caught. If you are going to chase large trophy trout that have a lot of strength and power and are able to make long runs after being caught, you must look for a good reel with an excellent smooth disc drag system - one that is light-weight, made from barstock aluminum and has a capacity of at least 100 yards of backing plus the length of the fly line.

Match the fly line to the rod weight. The code on a box for a 5 wt floating line would read 'WF-5-F'. Most dry fly lines are light in color. Sinking lines are dark in color- code 'WF-5-S'. Clean your lines with mild soap and water and dress them with line cleaner. This will enable the line to shoot easier through the guides.

Next month we will talk about leaders, flies and accessories.

VA, Oakland A's welcome home vets on July 24

The San Jose Mercury News notes that Major League Baseball's Oakland A's are teaming with the VA to host a "Welcome Home Event" for local veterans returning from in Iraq and Afghanistan. The event which is scheduled for Saturday, July 24 in Oakland two hours before the game An Iraq veteran who lost both legs will throw out the first pitch.

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