

Creel Notes from the



September



P.O. Box 639, Mercer Island, WA 98040

Website: www.wffc.com



MMXXVI No. 9

September, 2026



Summer Fishing

Jim Beck, President,
Washington Fly Fishing Club

President's Riffle

In late June this summer I decided to take a little trip to my favorite local lake, Lake Margaret near Duvall. I checked the WFDW website and saw that it had been recently stocked with rainbows. I'm usually a slow starter in the morning and this morning was no exception. I put the boat on the trailer and set off on the hour-long drive to the lake.



I arrived at the lake around 10:30am. Did I mention that I was a slow starter? I'm also slow getting my boat ready to launch. I got the boat into the water around 11:00am. I started by trolling with a #10 Olive Willie. No success. I switched to a #10 Pumpkinhead and soon felt a strong tug. This was a nice, strong fish, I thought. I got the fish to the net and found that it was only just over 10 inches. A little disappointing size-wise but a good strong fighter. I caught another 14 fish in the next 3-1/2 hours using the same durable little Pumpkinhead fly. None of the fish I caught were big but they put up a good fight. One of them fought so hard that when I got it to the net it was exhausted. I unhooked it and put it back in the water. Instead of swimming away it just laid on the water surface about 4 feet from my boat. I turned my back to the fish for just a moment then heard a swooshing sound in the air behind me. I turned quickly and saw that an opportunistic bald eagle had swooped in and grabbed the fish.

None of the fish I caught that day were what you could call memorable, but I'll never forget the majestic bald eagle I saw that day as it flew away from me with its

prize. It just goes to show that there is more to fishing than just catching fish.

Tight lines.

September Program

Wild Steelhead Coalition

Come join us for an overview of the Wild Steelhead Coalition which is working to restore wild steelhead populations in their native watersheds to levels that provide self-sustaining runs and economic vitality to local communities.



Wild Steelhead Coalition Values

Perseverance: We draw inspiration from the unyielding determination and resilience of wild steelhead and are dedicated to fighting tirelessly to conserve imperiled wild steelhead stocks.

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this Issue

- ✓ Page 1.....September Program
- ✓ Page 2.....In Memoriam
- ✓ Page 3.....Remaining Outings
- ✓ Page 5.....Reeling in the Years
- ✓ Page 8.....Lois Lake Fish Farming
- ✓ Page 10....Loose Ends

(Continued from page 1) -Riffle

Collaboration: We take the coalition component of our name seriously and work to forge powerful coalitions that protect and restore wild steelhead populations.

Science: We are guided by science and committed to developing science-based solutions that ensure a brighter future for wild steelhead.

Pragmatism: We recognize the complex political and cultural realities of steelhead recovery and promote pragmatic and achievable solutions that will benefit wild steelhead.

In Memoriam



David William Ehrich

September 1, 1957—July 10, 2026

WFFC member since 2005

David Ehrich died peacefully in the UW Montlake Hospital Cardio Thoracic ICU on July 10, 2026. As some of you may know, in early 2025 David was diagnosed with Interstitial Lung Disease. He had scar tissue forming in his lungs. He never smoked. This was mostly an autoimmune disease but it was moving fast. In May, two days after he was placed on the Lung Transplant list, they called and said they had lungs for him.

The transplant was very successful and the lungs were beautiful. He was breathing with them after a week. He was recovering slowly in the ICU and doing fairly well with only "normal complications." Sadly, he contracted a virus while there that ended up taking his life. He was in the hospital for 61 days. He died surrounded by his daughters, Faye and

(Continued on page 3)

Meeting Location

This monthly meeting will be held at **Seattle Tennis Club**
922 McGilvra Blvd, Seattle, WA 98112

Wet Fly and fly tying commence at 5:30, dinner 6:15, with a program commencing at 7:00.

Please sign up early on the website.



"Silver flashes, golden moments."
The brief glimpses of fish create lasting memories.

Creel Notes

...is the official publication of the Washington Fly Fishing Club. Subscription is free with membership.

President

Jim Beck

1st Vice President (Membership)

Gary Corra

2nd Vice President (Programs)

Neal Hoffberg

3rd Vice President (Christmas Party)

Jim Goedhart

Treasurer

Dale Lange

Secretary

Coreen Wilson

Ghillie 1

Peter Schuitemaker

Ghillie 2

Travis Sampson

Trustees

Jerry Kindinger,

Tom Neu, Deborah Katz,
Mike Moscynski, Robert Thorpe,
Chuck Ballard, Danferd Henke

Creel Notes Editor

batribble@juno.com

Club Aims and Purposes

The purpose of this club shall be:

1. To improve and increase the sport of Fly Fishing in the State of Washington.
2. To promote and work for the betterment of trout streams and lakes.
3. To encourage and advocate the conservation and increase of trout, steelhead, and salmon in state waters.
4. To promote a campaign of education against pollution in streams, lakes or Sound waters of the State of Washington.
5. To encourage and assist others—particularly young persons of high school age—to become fly fishers and true conservationists.

(Continued from page 2) David Ehrich

Anastasia, his oldest friend from childhood, John Fewell, his first wife, Gale Myles, and his wife Jennifer.

The WFFC played a significant part in shaping David's identity. He valued the camaraderie with so many of you - the High Lakes trips changed his life, and mine! I was able to experience one to the Absaroka Beartooth range! He respected the wisdom he found in this group and modeled himself after some of you.

With respect and thanks to you all for being such a vital community for David

Jennifer Salk



David's

Celebration of Life

Sunday, September 27

3:00PM - 5:00PM PDT

Please RSVP before September 21st, 11:45PM

Mount Baker Community Club

2811 Mt Rainier Dr S, Seattle, WA 98144

2026 Outings

WFFC 2026 Outings

From Mike Nolan, Outings Chair



The 2026 WFFC Outings are winding down for the year with only three left on the calendar. The next Outing will be on September 25-27 at Big Twin Lake. Robert Thorpe is the co-host of the Outing, and he has invited members of the Methow Valley Fly Fishers, MVFF, to attend. Additional information about the Outing can be found on the WFFC website. Sign up on the WFFC website or contact me at outings@wffc.com or call/text to (425) 754-1234.

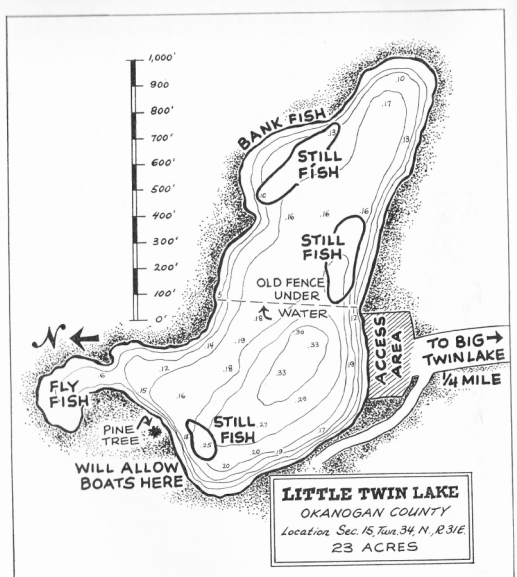
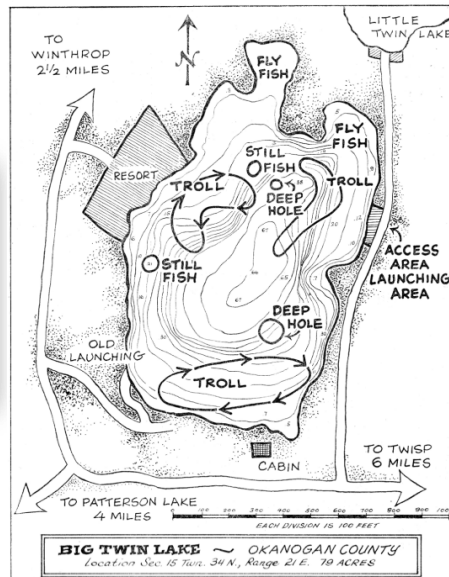
The Yakima River Outing will be on Saturday October 10th. Yakima River guide services are available from Reds Fly Shop and Crow Creek Fly Shop & Guide Service in Roslyn WA. Additional information about the Outing can be found on the WFFC website. Sign up on the WFFC website or contact me at outings@wffc.com or call/text to (425) 754-1234.

- **September 25-27 Big Twin Lake**
- **October 10 Yakima River**
- **October 24 Lake Hannan**



Big and Little Twin Outing

September 25-27 Big Twin Lake



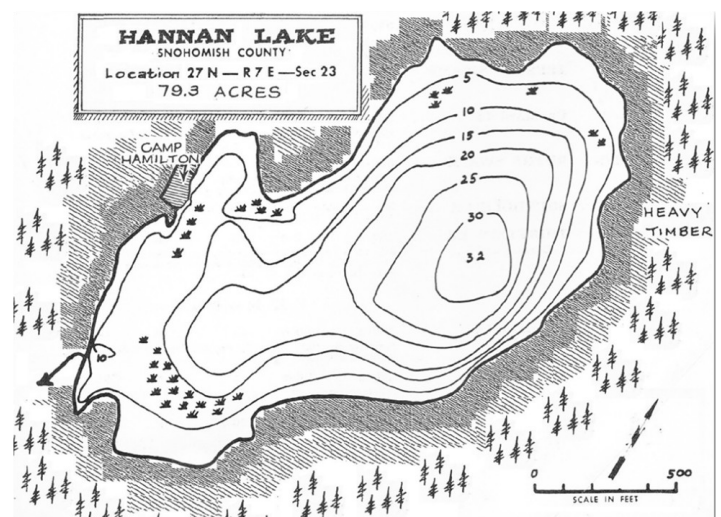
Yakima River Outing

October 10 Yakima River



Hannan Lake Outing

October 24 Lake Hannan





Cooper Lake Outing

July 25, 2026

by Mike Nolan

The Club held its scheduled fishing outing at Cooper Lake, near Salmon la Sac, on July 25, 2026. Four people attended, including Mark Pratt, Shawn Pratt, Ben Chadwick, and me.

Before the outing, I contacted the Cle Elum Ranger Station to ask about possible road closures related to the Three Queens Fire. The ranger said no restrictions were in place, although firefighting aircraft might be drawing water from the lake. On the drive to Cooper Lake, a grouse darted across the road and beneath my truck. When I glanced in the rearview mirror, I saw a plume of feathers behind me. Fortunately, when I reached the lake, there was no smoke and the mountain air was fresh and clear.

I fished small mayfly nymphs—including pheasant tails and soft hackles—on sinking fly lines. The fly selection produced brook trout, rainbow trout and a couple of brown trout all measuring about 10 to 12 inches. Other members of our group also enjoyed good catch rates; Ben Chadwick said he caught more fish than he could count. One distraction was a stand-up paddleboarder playing music through an extremely loudspeaker, which may well have put some fish off the bite.

The weather was pleasant, with sunny, mostly cloudless skies throughout the day. By afternoon, however, the wind had picked up and made casting more challenging.

Later that afternoon, we gathered at the historic Brick Tavern in Roslyn, Washington, for food and beverages. We shared stories about the day's successes and challenges and compared notes on the fish we had caught at Cooper Lake.

Nearly two months have passed since I last fished Cooper Lake, and the area may now look vastly different after the recent Three Queens Fire burned through nearby forests. It is a reminder to value these outings and the time we spend fishing with friends. Circumstances can change without warning, whether because of our health or a devastating wildfire.



Cooper Lake

Reeling in the Years

Reminiscing WFFC History

From 1975 Creel Notes



Summer 1975 High Lake Excursion at the Enchantments

HIGH LAKE BUFFS REPORT AN EXCELLENT TRIP

On Saturday morning, August 23rd WFFC Club members Pete Baird, John Callahan and Don Simonson, plus two guests, Ken Stewart and Doug Thatcher, headed east from Seattle in an attempt to get above and beyond the rain. They arrived at the Colchuck Lake trail head about noon but still had not outrun the rain. After an hour's wait, they decided to brave the elements and up the Colchuck they headed, laden with packs, food, gear. (Yes, John Callahan remembered his fly rod this year). Sunday morning's beautiful sunrise lifted everyone's spirits and after breaking camp at Colchuck Lake, they started up — up being defined as climbing Aasgard Pass which is an increase of 2300 ft. elevation in about 3/4 mile. After five and one-half hours of panting and groaning, the fivesome found themselves on top of 7800 ft. pass marveling at some of the most beautiful scenery anywhere — the upper Enchantments. They stopped by the upper lakes just long enough to fish Freya and Brynhild for Golden Trout. A few rises were observed, but the group registered skunks. From there, they worked their way down to Talisman Lake where they camped for the night. Monday also offered improved weather conditions, which added to the invitation to fish Rune, Talisman, "Fran Woods" Magic meadows, Leprechaun and Vivian lakes. They released many, many cutthroat from 7 to 10 inches. John and Ken decided to climb little Annapurna, at 8500 ft., for a further view of the Enchantments, Mt. Rainier, Mt. Adams, and Mt. St. Helens to the south. Tuesday offered even more sunshine, so camp was moved to Shields, Earle and Mesa lakes, a two hour jog over Prusik Pass. The fishing that took place at these lakes was outstanding and was the best dry fly fishing any of the group had ever had or experienced. Numerous cutthroat from 7 to 12 inches were cruising the shores waiting to engulf a delectable morsel from the surface. Often they were seen swimming in water in less than 8 inches deep. Stomach contents revealed a recent diet of black ants and black beetles along with midges, meaning that most of the food was dropping into the water from the grass shores. The most successful flies included the Adams, Blue Dun Hatch Master and the Tanwax special — all sizes 10 to 16. Pete was having fantastic success with his Tanwax special until a high back cast permanently implanted the fly in a Mountain Larch about 20 feet up. Dry fly fishing was equally spectacular at Mesa and Earle Lakes. On Wednesday morning, camp was broken in a driving rain storm, and about four miles were covered (none of it level) to Heart and Nada Lakes. After setting up a wet camp, they caught a few Brook trout to 11" on a Peacock and/or Black Careys. The group started home on Thursday morning via the Snow Lakes Trail, and as they descended down the trail, their silent thoughts turned to the experiences and fellowship they had experienced in the past four days. Each in his own way was leaving with many permanent memories of one of the most scenic places on earth, the wilderness area of the Cascade Mountains.

Don Simonson

More....Reeling in the Years

Reminiscing WFFC History From 1975 Creel Notes



'Coot Poop' Trick—Labor Day 1975 at Chopaka Lake Dr Richard Thompson...might it work?

THE CHOPAKA LAKE OUTING

Thirteen WFFC members braved the elements and journeyed to Chopaka for the traditional Labor Day weekend outing. The cool weather put a lid on the mayflies doing their numbers, but Aigner's stew and a roaring campfire brought everyone into good spirits. Some interesting fishing was reported, thanks to Thompson's "coot poop" trick, which he explains as follows: cast a sinking line or a sink-tip to a coot after it dives for vegetation. The fish are waiting nearby for nymphs which are being stirred up by the coot. A green dyed seal fur nymph worked very well. The members were spared the loud roar of Aigner's chain saw, as wood had been supplied by the Department of Natural Resources.

White Pass and Beyond from Don Gulliford September 1971

Don Gulliford reporting:

Dog Lake, White Pass, Aug. 5, 3-6 p.m. Took wife up there. Raymond's comments about area essentially true - a gem of a lake, with that great smell of pine trees and lots of good action from what appears to me to be classic examples of small, sexually mature trout grown in a limited season environment. All brookies around 6-8", vividly colored and eagerly smashing a #10 Bucktail Coachman always dry, but one huge strike when I sunk it deep while turning boat into wind and spraying "6-12" over us to stave off waves of mosquitoes. Other comment: I'm one of the older veterans of Dog Lake, and fished it when the old highway went by it (and Leech Lake, too) - early, when the snow was still lying by the lake shore on the "purple rockslide", I caught some monster brooks there in the late 50's.

Yakima River, right below dam at Keechelus, Aug. 4, 8 p.m.- Even more mosquitoes, log trucks, oily dust, blaaaaahh. No good sized rainbows, several little ones. River way high for this time of year, same for Lake. Comment: Hippo Kawahara says that the far shore, when the water recedes to old lake level (look for lack of stumps), is excellent for cutthroat late in the season. Keechelus is known by us oldtimers to have such monsters - I know because my Dad says so.

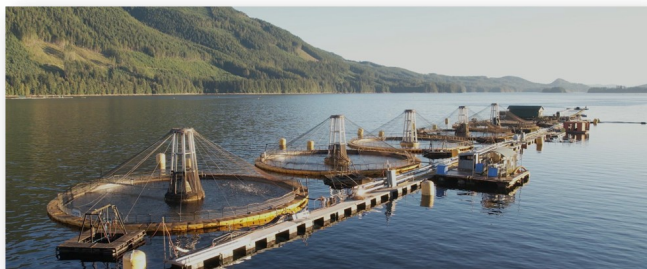
Tieton River, Aug. 5: Forget it, water too high. Fished spot where state record dolly was taken without success.

Addenda: The North River, down in Grays Harbor County, now has some of the finest searun fishing in the state - ate two the other night that were better than salmon and almost as big. Use a Black O'Lindsay on a #8 longshank; huge nightcrawlers and a Jack Lloyd seemed to work well for the locals, in fact, very well.

Lois Lake Saga British Columbia

I received an e-mail from a friend lives in Powell River British Columbia about a number of huge fish being caught in a local lake. This got my curiosity going because the sunshine coast in B.C. is not known for lake producing big trout like the size he was talking about (10 to 20 lbs) on files so I was curious about where, why and who. Well here is the story that I found very unique encompassing man's fooling with nature and a company getting away with it for quite a while.

Below is the story behind all this from Watershed Watch, an environmental group.



B,C, Illegal Fish Farming and It's Native Fish Impact

From



A company that Watershed Watch helped to expose for illegally operating a factory fish farm on Lois Lake, near Powell River, has been fined \$350,000 in a B.C. court.

Back in April 2023, local fishing guide, Pat De-meester, tipped us off to problems at the site, including mass escapes of domestic farm rainbow trout into Lois Lake, the release of large quantities of styrofoam into the surrounding area and equipment strewn along sections of the lakeshore.

According to local fishers, an untold number of rainbow trout escaped the farm into Lois Lake, putting native populations of cutthroat trout at risk. I went to have a look for myself and witnessed an-

glers catch four massive rainbow trout, likely escapes, within a span of 20 minutes.

The company, West Coast Fishculture (Lois Lake) Ltd., a subsidiary of AgriMarine Industries Inc. and ultimately a subsidiary of Toronto-based investment company Dundee Corp. at the time the offences occurred, entered a guilty plea in a Powell River court in March. According to an **Agreed Statement of Facts**, the company was alerted to the violation but continued to operate their site for 483 days without proper tenure. The fine of \$350,000 was much higher than the recommended \$100,000 maximum for such violations but the case was unprecedented.

West Coast Fishculture agreed to have their fish farm out of the lake by the end of August 2025. The company said their site hasn't had fish in the pens since fall of 2023.

We believe this exemplifies an unprecedented level of disregard for the law and wild fish in the lake. The illegal facility was a semi-closed containment farm and clearly had serious problems. An inspection by a federal fishery officer identified many violations including:

- Jump netting was improperly installed or not secured on 5 of 6 pens;
- Only one of the pens had bird netting installed;
- In the one pen with bird netting, a great blue heron had gotten into the pen and died;
- None of the fish in the active pens were adipose (fin) clipped, indicating farm hatchery origin;
- No signage of any kind was observed on the infrastructure, including docking stations or restricted access;
- The "raceway" on the Western end of the floating array had no jump netting installed; and

The onsite manager was unable to provide any records of above-water inspections other than the two previous days (June 1 and 2, 2021)

In addition, the semi-closed containment farm was located 300-500 metres outside the boundaries set out in its original tenure.

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8) -Lois Lake

As we wait for details of the federal ban on open-net pen salmon farms, the Lois Lake semi-closed fish farm is a good reminder that fish farming does not work in the water in any form – open-nets or walled-pens.

This is something we will continue to advocate for as we work towards ridding B.C. of the remaining in-water salmon farms



A Lois Lake Tank!

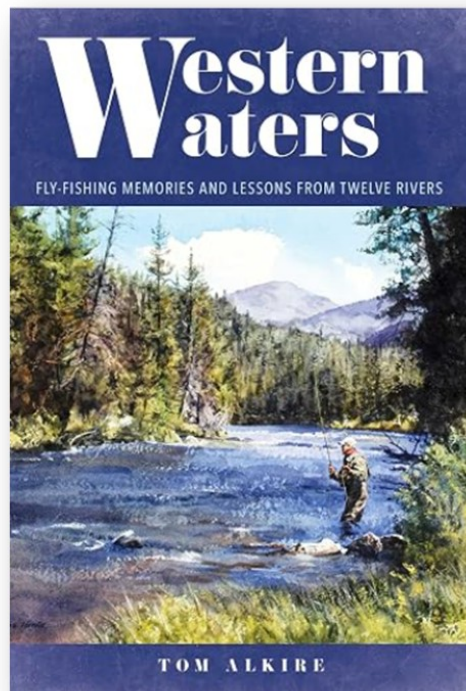


Some of the escaped Lois Lake Steelhead
(caught on a fly too!)

Book of the Month

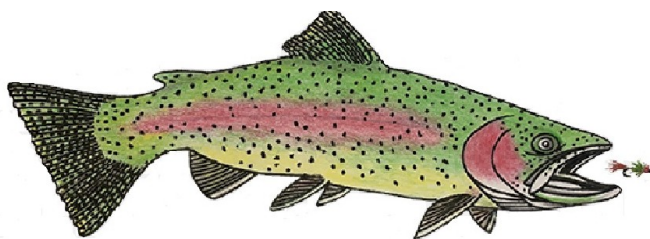
Western Waters: Fly-Fishing Memories and Lessons From Twelve Rivers

By Tom Alkire



In this book about well-known (and some not-so-well-known) Western waters Alkire blends how-to, where-to, and natural history with lyrical prose and a deep insight that comes only with knowing a place well. From rainforest rivers to desert rivers, from tidal rivers to those along the Continental Divide, he has waded and fished those waters over the decades. Along with his fishing adventures, the book also looks at the geography, the early explorers of, and the modern-day impacts on those rivers.

“Dawn patrol, soul control.”
Early mornings on the water center our entire being.



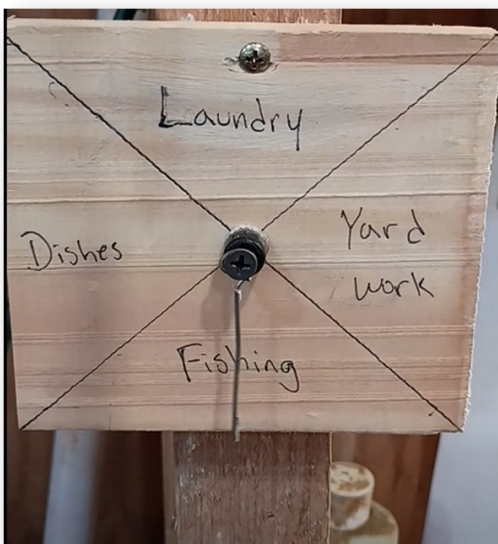


Great Poster for Your Wall #4



Full Size Posters Are Available From
Fly Life Outdoors

Weekend Task Decider Tool



Spin the nail and it will make your selection

Helpful Tip

Threading Leader to Hook

If you have poor eyesight or have lost your glasses or need to thread a hook at night? Use your tongue as a guide.



Place the hook eye sideways on your tongue and hold an inch or so of leader in your fingers and push the leader towards the hook eye. You can easily sense when it is properly positioned.

Water Temperature Counts!

The Importance of Water Temperatures

The metabolism of a fish, and their rate of feeding is largely controlled by the water temperature. An average trout in 45 degree water takes approximately two days to digest and dispose of a small amount of food. Only 5 degrees higher, at 50 degrees, the same fish digest its food every 24 hours. At 55 to 60 degrees the fish can digest it within 12 hours and so within this bracket the fish is at its ravenous best.



Therefore, speaking statistically, a fisherman has four to six times more chance of getting a rainbow to strike where the water temperature is 55 to 60 degrees than it has where the water is a cold 45 degrees.

Species	Peak Fishing Temp.	Active Range
Lake Trout	51 Deg.F	44-53
Coho Salmon	54	44-58
Chinook Salmon	54	44-58
Brook Trout	58	48-64
Brown and Rainbow	60	50-65

Photo of the Month



© Glenn Short 2023

"Evening Hatch, Eastern High Sierra". Fall 2023

Angler: Neal Hoffberg

Photo: Glenn Short

Fly of the Month

Stickleback Minnow

MATERIALS:

- Hook:** Mustad 9672, sizes 10- 12
Thread: Black
Body: Holographic mylar tubing
Rib: Monofilament line
Underwing: White bucktail
Overwing: Barred mallard flank
Hackle/Throat: Red thread or red hackle as gills
Head: Black thread with eyes. Epoxied.



(Continued on page 12)

TYING STEPS:

- Tie in the monofilament rib material at the butt of the hook.
- Slide on the holographic tubing over the shank, being sure to leave a bit loose to for a short tail.
- Wrap the monofilament forward around the tubing to the head.
- Tie off the tubing and monofilament by tying in the red thread. Be sure to wrap the red thread back a little so some will show as gills. If you want to use red hackle then tie those in now and secure the hackle, monofilament and tubing all at once.
- Tie in a somewhat sparse underwing of white bucktail and then an overwing of barred mallard flank.
- Form a black head by wrapping the black thread and then whip finish.
- You can either now epoxy the head and paint on eyes, or you can stick on eyes and then epoxy the entire head, or you can simply leave the head without eyes and cement the head.

Recipe of the Month



Halibut in Creamy Boursin Sauce



To sear halibut perfectly, follow these steps:

- Pat dry the halibut: Remove excess moisture from both sides of the halibut fillets with paper towels. This helps create a better crust.
- Season the halibut: Sprinkle salt and pepper over both sides of the halibut fillets.
- Heat the pan: Use a skillet or cast-iron pan and heat it over medium-high heat. Add a small amount of oil with a high smoke point (e.g., olive or avocado oil).
- Sear the halibut: Place the halibut fillets in the pan, skin side up (if they have skin). If not, place them presentation side down. Cook for 3-4 minutes or until a golden-brown crust forms.
- Flip and cook the other side: Flip the halibut over and cook for another 3-4 minutes or until it reaches your desired level of doneness.
- Check for doneness: Use a thermometer to check the internal temperature (should be at least 145°F/63°C). Alternatively, check for flakiness with a fork

PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz

