

Flatland Fly Fishers



Wichita, Kansas

www.flatlandflyfishers.org

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Name this fly at the
April Meeting

Anyone who would like to share
pictures or articles for the
Newsletter should contact the
editors at:
07editor@flatlandflyfishers.org

Spring is almost here and the fishing has been great for most all of March, I have well over 100 trout this past month. Where you ask, right here in river city. SCP has had good bite all month. I have had a lot fish on every thing from buggers to dries.

Also made my first trip to Tanney Co Mo during spring break week and did OK. It was tough for me, but after some work I got into the fish. They had not run water for two or three days, water was low and clear and even the guides were not getting as many fish in the net. On my last day I got a guide from Angler and Archers for a two hour trip in the late afternoon and got over 30 fish, one 20" fish and five or six in the 15" to 18" range.

On my last day of vacation Neal Hall and I went out to Pratt for about three hours and caught about 30 fish each, and missed more fish than I like to talk about. Here again we caught fish on all kinds of flies, and Neal caught some on a dry fly.

Now that the weather is getting hot, now is the time to start taking trout. Get out there and fish, fish, fish. Go after work or go before work, just get out there and have some fun, the fishing is great this time of the year.

Now is also the time of year to start tying bass and bluegill flies. April is maybe one of the top months for big bass.

If you are just getting started fly fishing the more you fish the better you will become at casting, remember to keep the line in control and you will do well.

The Club has set dates for a Tying class and a Casting class. Also look for more information on this years Bluegill fest coming up some time in May.

Hope to see you on the water. Or even better at the next club meeting!



Rick with a small rainbow
at Tanney Co Mo

Get your Newsletter in Color

<http://www.flatlandflyfishers.org/>

Next Meeting April 2, 7:00 P.M.



Madness in March

Years of rumors, failed attempts, and dedication have led to this. The idea of hooking into one of the bad boys of Kingman County has taunted me for at least three years now. Every spring and fall for the past few years, I have put forth the effort and come up empty... every time. Almost enough to discourage the soul... To consider giving up is not an option. Sooner or later, we were bound to collide. The time came sooner than later.

One week in early March, the emails were flying around as we tried to come up with a plan for the weekend. The objective was finally set to pursue the ever elusive



Esox Lucious in Kingman State Fishing Lake. Our plan however, was full of holes, due to conflicting schedules. I had a birthday party to attend, but one of the guys stayed the course. I received a phone call, too late to make the trek to Kingman, that the birthday party had been cancelled, so I headed over to Sedgwick County Park to try and salvage what was left of the day.

An hour or so into casting into 20mph headwinds, I received another phone call. It was Gary, who surprisingly, against all odds, had launched his pontoon at Kingman a couple of hours earlier. He asked what I was up to and I told him I was trying to catch some trout in Vic's Lake. I returned the inquiry and he responded, "I'm puttin' the hurt on the Pike!" I couldn't believe my ears. The usual Monday morning emails to confirm the weekend's catch went around, and before my eyes, on the screen in front of me, was a mug shot of one of Kingman County's local thugs. There was little to no decision making as to what we were doing next weekend: We already knew.

The following Saturday was as gorgeous a day as any in Kansas. You couldn't ask for anything more. Steve Webb, Gary Tatro and I got launched on the lake around noon or so. There were a few long hours of casting, without more than a half hearted bite I got on a Buck Tail Agitator, before we got any real action. I was kicking around on a shallow flat, making blind casts, when out of the corner of my eye, I noticed a large white spot moving in the water about ten feet to the left of my pontoon. The white spot turned out to be a scar on the jaw of the first Northern Pike I had ever seen in the wild! The fish was cruising slowly parallel to the direction I was fishing. I quickly stripped in the grey, pink and white agitator and made a short curve cast in the fish's path to try to lead it. The Buck Tail Agitator sinks at a slow rate of speed, so most times I can retrieve it slowly and keep on an eye on it in relatively clear water.



Madness in March

The bright pink flank on the particular fly I was using stood out like a light bulb. Never actually seeing the fish take the fly on this cast, it was more like lights out as the fly simply disappeared. I pulled the line tight with my line hand and felt the fish there, moving away from me, so I gave it all I had! The fish immediately rolled on the surface in a boil the size of a small bath tub and my fly came loose. The words that exited my mouth at that moment were heard up to quite some distance away. Not that I use that vocabulary in that context on a



regular basis, but that had been my first Northern Pike hooked up and I was sure it would be the last. After years of searching for them with zero results, one does not go into a day of fishing for Pike with the thought or confidence of getting very many realistic shots at them.

The fact that I saw this fish before I cast to it got me thinking about how to get a little more elevation in my pontoon. I needed to see what I was casting to and what was going on around my fly. I remembered seeing a show on TV starring a couple of lady fly fishers, one of whom was fishing out of an Outcast Fish Cat Cougar, just like mine. They were in British Columbia, fishing with Fisheries Biologist and still-water trout fishing expert Brian Chan. They were on a very calm lake with no wind, similar to where I was, and they were able to anchor down and stand in the seats of their pontoons. That in mind, I

decided it was time to find out what I was made of and give it a shot. It wasn't long before it dawned on me that they were not wearing kick fins, and I was, which indeed made this feat as close to completely impossible as standing on my head in the pontoon. I did find however, that I could turn around backwards and rest on my knees.

Now, a bit higher above the water, I could see much deeper into it and was able to make out the break-lines of the flat where the deeper water started. I started making casts toward the submerged tree trunks and grass beds. A few casts later, during a quick stripping retrieve, I saw a wake pop up behind my fly, that followed for about two or three feet before the water blew up and I was tight to my second fish. I whistled to Gary and Steve, who were fishing 100 yards or so down the bank, so they would know I had found some active fish. After a short yet powerful battle, I spun around, plopped into my seat, and landed my first Northern Pike. I took a few pictures of the beast and successfully released it. Though not a huge fish like the Pike I'd seen people catch on TV in northern lakes, it *was* a pike, and I *was* in Kansas. Gathering my thoughts and trying to settle my mind and emotions took a few minutes, after which I got back up on my knees and continued fishing.



Madness in March

It wasn't very long before another wake emerged behind my fly and the water erupted again, and I was bringing another pike to the boat. This was getting to be ridiculous! The attitude and predatory nature of this species was materializing before my eyes. I'd read about them, watched people catch them on TV, and heard stories from people who have caught Pike in the north, but until now, I hadn't realized how mean they really are. I've never fished for anything like them. If Trout fishing is like wine and cheese and Bass fishing is like a beer and a football game, fly fishing for Northern Pike has got to fall somewhere between a demolition derby and a pro bull riding competition.



I found that angering these fish was the best way to get a bite that day. The Buck Tail Agitator is a seven to eight inch fly, with a wiggling articulated tail and a rattle built in. I tie them with and without a wire weed guard. I have found that if using one with a weed guard, when I get a bite, it helps to allow the fish a few seconds to turn and start swimming away before setting the hook. Built in every way possible for speed, it didn't seem that I could strip the fly too fast for the fish to catch and attack it. Every now and then a pike would follow the fly all the way to my boat, and when I'd lift the fly out of the water for another cast, a huge boil would tell me the fish had been there. If I got follows, but no takes, I would change colors of the same fly pattern and

typically end up getting a fish on.

By the end of day one, there had been a total of ten fish hooked and five of them landed. We concluded that the fish were likely in the shallows to spawn and that a big, aggressively fished fly posed a possible threat to the Pike's territory. The local biologist and Game Warden for the area showed up as we finished loading up to head home. He told us that the Northerns had not been stocked in this lake since 1995, and that it was likely that any fish that measured thirty inches or shorter was a naturally reproduced fish, born in the lake. We didn't catch any over thirty inches but we saw one that was definitely longer.

Monday morning was full of plenty of psycho babble about what we had encountered that weekend. It got to be too much for me to handle. I scheduled to take Tuesday afternoon off work to go back out to the lake, fearing that the window for this season's pike fishing would soon come to a close. Gary decided he wanted more too, so Tuesday afternoon, we headed back out. Although the fishing wasn't quite as hot as the last time, Gary was able to land several fish on some Double Bunnies, one of which was second to the biggest any of us had hooked. The biggest either of us had hooked also belonged to Gary, but after a surprisingly long battle, the



Madness in March

fish won the fight and the fly came loose from its jaw. The second to biggest that he did land also happened to be the meanest we'd encountered, adding to my list of 'first time I've ever seen that' items, by literally head butting Gary in the side of the head during a photo op!! Should have been shooting multi-frame pictures for that one!



Though I was glad we had some action on day two, I must admit that I was a little bummed out about not hooking up. After all, on day one, it seemed I had the answer. I guess it's just like any other type of fishing: Just when you think you've got it all figured out, the fish change the game plan. The following Saturday, or day three, would prove this all too well.

We arrived at the lake around noon and were back in the groove shortly. This time, the fishing started out even tougher than Tuesday and sent us digging through fly boxes to try to figure out what the fish would take. Kind of mind boggling at first, but when the action

finally picked up, there weren't many flies that the fish wouldn't show at least a little interest in. I took my first fish of the day on a yellow Barry Reynolds style pike fly with a chartreuse head fished rather slowly and was forced to change flies shortly thereafter, since it seemed only one fish was interested in that one. It went on that way for a couple of hours: Switching flies and taking an occasional fish here and there. Not much consistency.

There was another guy in an aluminum boat who I had met on the lake last fall. He doesn't know it, but he inspired me to try to come up with a huge fly after watching him land a thirty incher that day in the fall on a foot long plug, hence The Buck Tail Agitator. We watched him catching Pike pretty consistently on a chartreuse spinner-bait and on some type of baitfish he had dropped next to the boat. He wasn't concentrating on the shallows like we were; rather he was anchored down in open water.

Gary started making casts out into open water and soon had a fish on. Shortly after, he had another fish on and finally I asked what he was fishing. He said it was a size 2 Clouser Minnow!!?? Size 2?! That's small compared to what we had been catching them on. I went into my box, found a Clouser, and tied it on. I paddled out to an area where I wouldn't be over the water he was fishing or in his way and anchored down. Soon we were hooking fish after fish: All Pike.



Madness in March

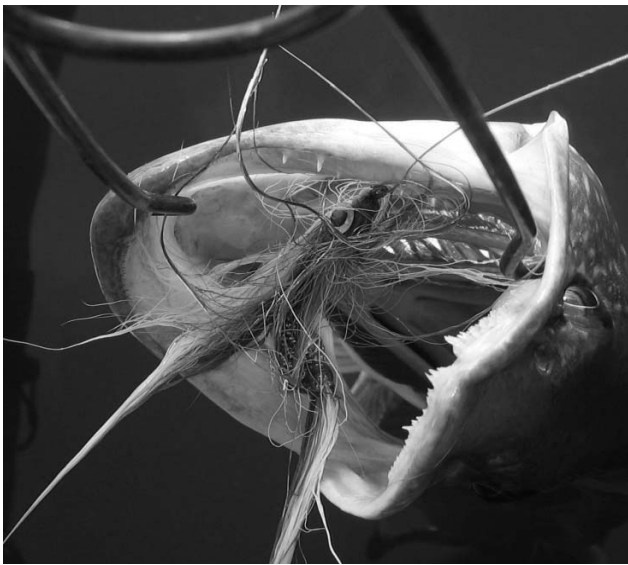


It turned out to be the greatest day of fishing for them yet. I think we ended the day with around twenty fish landed, half as many missed bites, and several fish fought and lost. We figure most of the fish are finished spawning and have transitioned to a feeding stage since they were keying on the smaller flies, which could possibly suggest a shad or other small baitfish. It was a perfect day of fly fishing for Northern Pike. All in all, this three or four year search has come to be one of the greatest experiences for me.

Rory Wiske

Suggested Gear for Pike Fishing at Kingman State Fishing Lake

Rods should be in the 7 to 9 weight range. Not so much for the size of the fish, (although the Department of Wildlife and Parks shocked a lot of bigger fish up to forty-seven inches during fall sampling), but more for keeping the fish out of the weeds and throwing bigger flies, when necessary. Reels should match the choice of rod. Rumor has it that you may not need a reel with a good drag, but we have had several fish pull some line off the reel: A reel with a smooth drag is necessary, as these fish are lightning fast when they run in their short bursts. Floating lines are going to have it covered, but try to select a line that casts well in the wind. Also, try



to select a line that is manageable in cold water that will not tangle and knot up so bad. Leaders should measure standard between seven and nine feet in length. I found that throwing a level mono leader of thirty pound test works well with casting the big flies I was using. We all started out using some sort of nylon coated steel wire, which worked well. Later on, Gary wondered if some of the fish that were following flies back to the boat, but not eating them, might have been a little tippet shy, so he decided to try some hard mono as bite tippet and did well with it. Long forceps can be very advantageous and you should always have a jaw spreader handy: If you get your hand caught in one of these guys' mouths, your fishing day is over. Some type of watercraft is also very highly recommended, whether it's a boat, float tube, pontoon or

kayak. Shore fishing limits an angler to the opportunities within casting range only. If you're gutsy enough to wade, it can probably be done to some extent, but I would not recommend it. There are a lot of pot holes in the bottom and also a lot of dead vegetation that could entangle your feet.

I hope you get a chance to get out and enjoy what these fish have to offer, if not this spring, maybe next year. The only problem we could find with starting the warm season off with Pike is that for the rest of the season, we will be wishing we were out Pike fishing.

Tight lines 'til we meet again! Rory



Roaring River trip May 9

Education

Neal Hall

I am told that this is a good weekend . Just after spring break and there should not be a large crowd.

Cost : MO. Fishing license is required cost is \$7.00 a day or an annual out of state license at \$30.00, an additional cost fishing trout permit \$3.00 a day.

Lodging: The Roaring River Resort has rooms at \$52.00 and Kitchenettes at \$61.00.

At the park there is Park Cliff Cabins at \$125 a night (2) night minimum.

Camping Fees Tents \$12.00 and \$20.00 for RV with Electric and Water.

Cassville: Hotels, most chains such as Days Inn Budget and Super 8.

Most motels and Roaring River Resort will give discounts up to 10% if we reserve 5 rooms or more.

Contact : Jerry Donnelly

Phone 316 942-0634

Cell 316 213 6665

Conservation:

Neal Hall

I have seen a lot of trash at the Slough Creek recently. Please make an effort to pick up and carry out a small sack of trash as you are leaving your fishing location for the day. The park has put trash containers along the path so you don't have to carry it very far. Remember there is a sign right along the creek telling everyone that walks along the path that the Flatland Fly Fishers club members are the ones who have adopted the creek as a conservation project. That means we are responsible for its cleanliness.

Camera Fund:

Last month I told you that education was going to start a drive for donations to purchase, for the club, a video camera and all the accessories necessary to do projections of the fly tying programs as well as enabling us to make short videos to show "how to's" of fly fishing to put on the web site. It should help enhance the education of the membership. I have set a goal of \$800 for the camera and equipment.

At the last meeting we started the drive with donations of \$110 from those attending. In addition the raffle brought in \$90. My company, Classic Destiny, will donate a 7 1/2 foot 4 piece 4 weight medium action fly rod with a burl figured case, Scientific Anglers reel, matching fly line and leader. The equipment will be raffled at the April meeting. Remember this is a fund raiser and the tickets will be \$5 each. Your donation may get you a very nice fly fishing outfit.

Fly Fishing 101:

Education will sponsor a special fly fishing 101 clinic on Saturday, April 4 at the Great Plains Nature Center Island Pond beginning at 12:30 pm and running about 4 hours. The cost of this class will be \$50. We will give instructions on what type of equipment to purchase, how to set up and how to use it. There will be vests, float tubes, pontoons kick boats, rods, reels, line, leaders, knots, casting instructions, tactics and techniques.

Fly Tying:

On Saturday, April 18th education will sponsor a fly tying clinic. It will be held at the Water Center on the Southwest Corner of Pawnee and Broadway behind the Police Substation. Starting time for the clinic will be 9 am. There will be a \$25 fee for this clinic to cover a small donation for the facility and tying material expenses. The instructors will demonstrate how to tie several kinds of flies and assistants will help the students with special techniques while they tie their flies.



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Name That Fly (May)

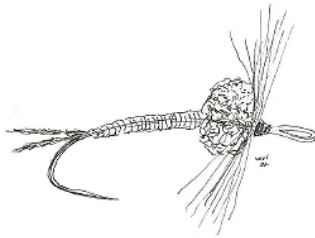


For a colored picture go to:
www.flatlandflyfishers.org

If you think you can identify this pattern attend the March meeting.

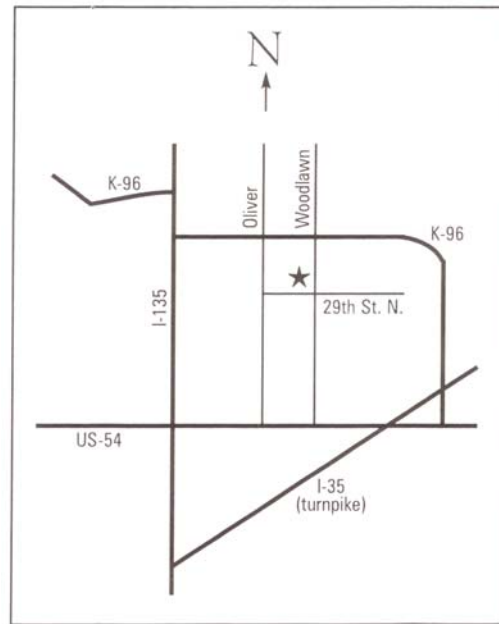
1. Put your name and name of fly on proper ballot and place in ballot box.
2. Officials of club will look at all ballots and place all correct answers into ballot box and one winner will be drawn.
3. Winner will get a copy of Bill Edrington's book and the fly, that was tied by Bill White.

Flatland Fly Fishers



P.O. Box 49164
Wichita, KS
67201

**Flatland Flyfishers meet monthly at the
Great Plains Nature Center, located at
6232 E. 29th St. N, Wichita, KS**



*The February fly was "Orange Asber". The winner,
Ron DeVaney, was drawn from all who had
correctly named the fly.*

**Be ready for a work day at the
Kanopolis Seep Stream in May. An
exact date has not been set.**



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