

# the taut line

the newsletter of the north coast fly fishers



Volume 18 Issue 3

November 2004

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## Fly Fishing Northern Canada – Part 1: Anticipation

by Mike Skoczen, NCFF

It was just after 8:00 PM when we arrived in Cochrane, Ontario hoping that the hand drawn directions that the outfitter sent us would lead us to our final destination the following morning. My two fishing partners, Rick and Mark, and I were a bit run down from the trip but obviously excited about the next 6 days. My day started some 15 hours and 700 odd miles earlier in Cleveland and the next morning could not arrive fast enough. We had booked a fly-in trip and intended to fish for Walleye, Northern Pike, and “remote” Brook Trout that were reportedly well worth the trip. None of us had ever fly fished for Northerns and the prospect of catching a brook trout a lot bigger than 6 inches was intriguing. Seven months had passed since Mark’s wife called and asked me to plan a fishing trip that would serve as his Father’s Day gift. Now that we were so close to wetting a line, the anticipation was killing us.

We passed the time during the long drive rehashing the details of our preparation for the trip even though we had already done so in what must have been hundreds of emails leading up to the target date. We dug through our fly boxes to show off the different flies that we tied and discussed articles or books that we read regarding our destination and our expected targets. We made bold statements about who held that one secret fly that would out produce all others on this trip and joked with each other about who “the skunk” would partner up with on this trip, openly admitting that we hoped that it would be none of us. I tied up some pike leaders using both hard mono and steel wire as a tippet (the hard mono worked better but that is a story for another day). The anticipation of

the adventure ahead of us kept building with each mile that we put behind us.

We found our hotel, checked in and got some dinner before resting up for our final leg of the journey. With the aid of a full stomach and a few drinks I fell asleep thinking about the pike that I would be fighting with the next day.

Morning came and found all of us wide awake before 7:00. We got dressed, visited the continental breakfast, and decided to try and find our way out to the “air port” early, we weren’t scheduled to fly out until 11:30. We took our time and arrived just before 9:00. As luck would have it, the group that was to fly out before us was late and the outfitter decided to give us their time slot. We got checked in, paid up, received the normal safety talk and then got our gear weighed in. The outfitter normally allows for 80 pounds of food and gear per person, a tough task considering that we needed enough food (and beer) for a week. Even though we thought we planned carefully we came up almost 80 pounds over our total limit (someone had brought some extra gear that they could not live without) but again as luck would have it, we were also getting the larger of the two sea planes (the Beaver) and were not charged for the extra weight.

As we waited for the pilot, the maintenance crew told us about how they had to spend three nights at our camp the previous week to repair the damage caused by a bear over the winter. We were less than an hour away from our destination now and even the crew’s musing about who was slowest amongst us could not lessen the anticipation,

*continued on page 7*

**IMPORTANT! – November Membership Meeting at Lake Farm Parks**

The Taut Line Newsletter is a publication of the North Coast Fly Fishers, Inc (NCFF) who is solely responsible for its content. The Taut Line is published ten times yearly from September through June, under the direction of the Director of Communications, NCFF. All inquiries should be addressed to:  
Taut Line Newsletter  
P.O. Box 312  
Painesville, Ohio 44077  
Attn: Dir. Of Communications

The North Coast Fly Fishers (NCFF) is a 100% Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF). Its purpose is to promote fly fishing as the most enjoyable and sporting method of fishing. We are committed to provide education in the best practices and techniques of the sport, including fly tying, fly casting and fish and water conservation. Our members are committed to maintaining a current membership in the FFF



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Clip art courtesy Dave Whitlock,  
[www.davewhitlock.com](http://www.davewhitlock.com).

## November Membership Meeting

**Wednesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004**

*Lake Farm Parks  
8800 Chardon Rd.  
Kirtland, Ohio*

***Beginner Fly Tying  
& Favorite Fly  
6:30 - 7:45 PM***

***Guest Speaker  
Dennis Potter  
8:00 - 10:00 PM***

## Help Wanted!

The Board of Directors is looking for a hard working, dedicated person for the Secretary position on the Board. Good note taking, attention to detail and computer skills are a must.

If you are interested and would like to serve on the board and give back to the club, please feel free to contact me at a members meeting or call me at home.

Doug Crouch  
President, NCFF  
Ph: 216.221.2994

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## November's Speaker: Dennis Potter

Dennis Potter, Michigan's "Rivergod," has been a fly tying fanatic since he spun his first "bug" over 25 years ago. Every one of the hundreds of dozens of flies he ties through Riverhouse Fly Company, reflect his commitment to maintain quality, simplicity, proportion and above all, durability. He has taught and shared his skills as a fly tying instructor for over 20 years. He now specializes in giving group classes and seminars using studio-quality, macro video equipment. He stresses technique and durability over speed and numbers.

Having fished extensively throughout the Midwest, West and Alaska, Dennis has the distinction of having caught and released all five species of Pacific Salmon on flies. On his beloved Au Sable in northern Michigan, Dennis seeks out the challenge of fishing the little fly hatches: midges, Tricos and Tiny Olives (the Tiny Black and the Tiny Green Curse) which drive some anglers to take up the game of golf, but pushes Dennis to the edge of "angling ecstasy".

Dennis will be tying some of his new patterns that Umpqua has recently added to their line.

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# *3rd Annual Northern Ohio Fly Tying Expo*<sup>TM</sup>

**January 15th, 2005**

**Brought to you by the  
North Coast Fly Fishers**

**Check our website for updates –  
[www.expo2004.ncff.net](http://www.expo2004.ncff.net)**

## NCFF Membership Renewal Notice

Dues can be paid at our NCFF membership desk if you come to the November Members meeting on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, or may be mailed to:

**North Coast Fly Fishers  
P.O. Box 312  
Painesville, Ohio 44077  
Attn: Membership Director**

Maintaining your membership with NCFF and FFF helps keep our club moving forward and our voice for our sport of Fly Fishing strong.



## FFF Membership Renewal Notice

The Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF) provides us with additional membership information to insure our 100% Club status is maintained. FFF membership numbers and renewal dates will be added to the membership roster used to check in members at our meetings.

Remember, every member of NCFF must maintain a current FFF membership to belong to our club.

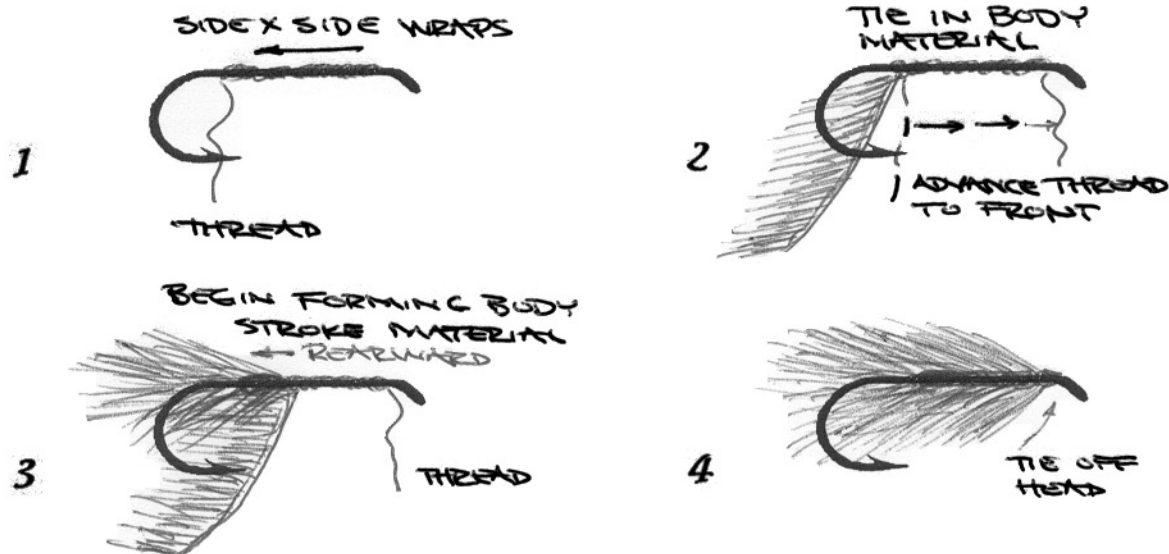
As a reminder, FFF sends all members a Renewal Invoice to their home prior to their membership anniversary date. It is requested that you pay your renewal directly to FFF to insure continuity of membership and to be sure you don't miss an issue of the Flyfisher. If you send your renewal payment to NCFF, your renewal may take 4-8 weeks before it reaches FFF. This is because we only pay bills once a month, and the request for payment must go through our Membership Director before a check can be issued at the next Board Meeting. Also, NCFF must pay an additional fee per check as well as paying for postage and envelopes. This cost is paid from everyone's \$10 membership dues, and is not the best use of our funds. Please renew directly to FFF.

If you have any questions, someone at the membership table can help you.

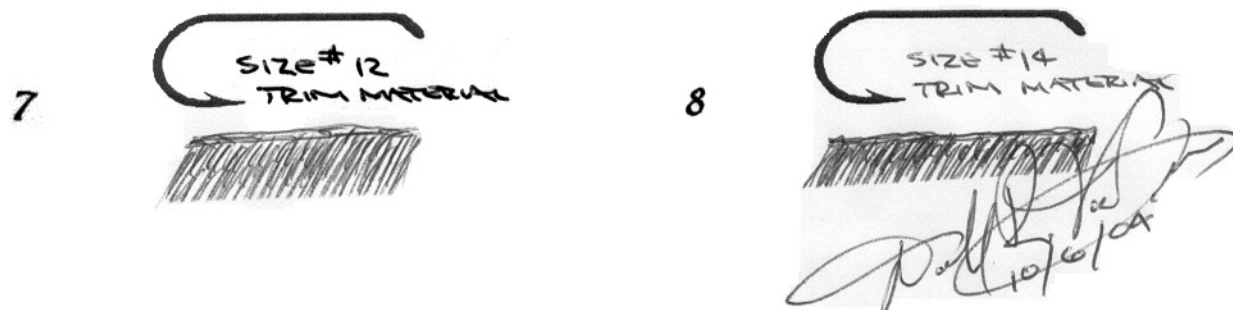
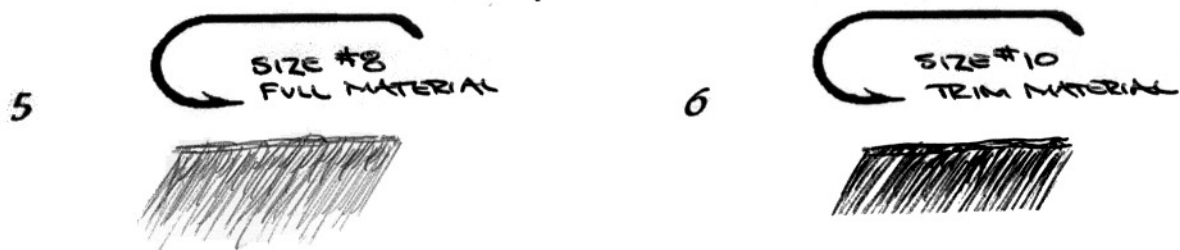
# NCFF Favorite Fly

## The Simple Creech Tied by Donald R. Van Buren

**Hook** Mustad 9671 Size 8-14      **Thread** Black 6/0  
**Body** Black (Raven) Boa (This is a Polyester material Mfg by Bernat)  
For size 8-hook use the material with out trimming. For size 10, 12 & 14  
hooks trim the material proportionally prior to tying on to hook shank  
using a wide material clip to hold the material during trimming.  
**Head** Finish Wet Fly Style



FOR SMALLER HOOK SIZE 10-14 TRIM MATERIAL PROPORTIONALLY



*North Coast Fly Fishers*  
**Holiday Dinner**

**Wednesday, December 1, 2004, from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m.**  
**Croatian Lodge Party Center, 34900 Lake Shore Blvd., Eastlake**

**Featured fly tier and guest speaker: Jack Gartside**

**Favorite Fly Tying Program lead by Robert Prescott**  
**for all who wish to tie that evening**

**Plus a Holiday Raffle, NCFE 5th Annual Favorite Fly Plate**

**Raffle (members only), 50/50 and our popular Fly Exchange.**

Dinner will be served buffet style. You can choose from Chicken Marsala or Wiener Schnitzel for your entree. Side dishes will be Home Fried Potatoes and Green Beans. Dinner also comes with a mixed salad, bread & butter, coffee & tea for beverage and home made strudel for dessert. A cash bar will be available inside the ballroom. The food is excellent at this facility. If you like home style cooking, you'll love their food. ***Dinner reservations must be paid in full by November 10, 2004 ... no exceptions!***

Sorry, but no refunds will be issued after November 3<sup>rd</sup> for any reason, and member purchased dinner reservations cannot be transferred to non-members without paying the additional \$10. Reserved tables are available for groups of 8. Full payment for all parties must accompany your table request.

You can mail in your reservation form and payment if you wish or drop it off at the membership table at the November Members meeting. Dinner reservations are \$20 per person for NCFE members in good standing, and \$30 for non-members. Non-members wishing to attend this event without purchasing a dinner can do so for \$15. (\$10 of the non-member fees can be applied to a NEW NCFE & FFF membership purchased thru the January 2005 monthly meeting.) The Croatian Lodge is a private venue not affiliated with Lake Metro Parks, and all walk-ins will be charged \$15 to defray the cost of our speaker.

**2004 Holiday Dinner Fly Exchange**

Another NCFE Tradition continues! Get ready for our annual "Holiday Dinner Fly Exchange".

Once again the Holiday season is approaching and we can look forward to our annual Holiday Dinner event. Good food, fly tying, raffles, a speaker, NCFE camaraderie and our "Holiday Dinner Fly Exchange".

The Fly Exchange is easy to enter and it is FREE!

1. Simply tie or pick out from your well-stocked fly boxes, six or more flies.
2. Place a note, card, with your name in side along with your flies. This is so the recipient can look you up and thank you plus swap stories about the flies.
3. Gift-wrap the package of flies.
4. Bring them to the NCFE Holiday Dinner
5. Place them on the table designated for the Fly Exchange.
6. Receive a ticket for your entry.
7. Later in the evening's festivities, tickets will be pulled and the persons with the pulled tickets will come forward, in the order their ticket was pulled, and select any gift-wrapped package of flies. This will continue throughout the evening until all fly packages are exchanged.
8. If you feel in a particularly good Holiday spirit you may enter more then one box of flies. You will receive one ticket for each gift-wrapped package of flies you enter.

Don't be like SCROOGE! Enter! It's Free! It's Fun!



**NCFE Holiday Dinner Reservation Form**

**Cost are \$20 for each NCFE member and \$30 for each non-member**

**Contact Information**

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Number of Members @ \$20 ea. =** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Number of Non-Members @ \$30 ea. =** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Grand Total =** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make all check s payable to North Coast Fly Fishers.**

**Send completed form and your check to:**

North Coast Fly Fishers  
P.O. Box 312  
Painesville, Ohio 44077  
Attn: Holiday Dinner

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# The Fly Tier's Corner

## Teaching Fly Tying – Second in a series

by Don Van Buren

Teaching fly tying is an educational tool that we can take advantage of as a club or as individual members to further our sport. Education is an important contribution that each of us can easily make!

This month's topic was going to be "What you need in tools and materials to get started with fly tying," with a little emphasis on materials. Lets start with a few rules, as mistakes can be costly both dollar and experience wise.

Rule #1 "Go slowly! Investigate and talk to experienced fly tiers". Be patient, and investigate your options. Remember, experienced tiers are a valuable source of information and most are willing to share or at least pass on a hint or opinion. The instructor and student should always err on the side of caution to avoid costly errors. An example of this is the student does not need a high-end vise to begin fly tying. Conversely, the student should not buy a cheap vise (referring to the vise construction) that will not properly hold the hook, and allow freedom of movement around the hook. I have seen many new fly tiers give up on tying simply because the vise was more difficult to work with than the act of tying itself.

Rule #2 "Buy materials to match the pattern recipe your tying". This is the safest way for a new tier to begin acquiring materials. The purchase of materials is probably the biggest cause of grief for the new tier. Many have made the common error of buying materials, especially with hooks and feathers, not suited for or compatible to the tiers current skill level.

A cautionary word about fly patterns! The beginner tier should start with tying fundamental patterns for wet flies, nymphs, streamers, steelhead, pan fish, bass, and dry flies. This represents a natural progression for improvement by tying more difficult patterns as your tying skills develop.

Lets get started with your basic purchases of equipment. We will start with

your choice of Tools, progressing through Hooks and Thread.

### Basic Fly Tying Tools (Minimum):

On the market today there is an unbelievable variety of fly tying tools, gizmos and gadgets available. Choose carefully and wisely, starting with the fundamental tools and their use, before investing in specialty or unique tools.

A good fly tying instructor will stick to the basic tools during the course of the lesson. His recommendations on tools should be very straight forward, avoiding the gadgets and gizmos available today. The student should follow rule #1 when purchasing tools. Listed below is a recommended minimum list of tools, buy the best you can afford:

- Fly tying light (very important)
- Bodkin
- Fly tying vise
- Tweezers
- Scissors (sharp and fine point)
- Hackle pliers
- Half-hitch tool
- Thread threader
- Bobbin

If you are thinking of buying a fly tying kit, there are two basic types available today. The first is the starter or beginner's kit, which usually has very low-end tools and materials. I usually recommend against this type of purchase. You can do better by buying the tools and materials individually and following both rules mentioned earlier. The second is the pattern specific kit. This type of kit typically is made up for a series of specific patterns. The quality of tools and materials usually is better than the starter or beginner's kit. The objective is to keep you buying kits over a range of patterns, etc. Again, I feel that the student would be better served by investing their money into tying lessons instead. I would also recommend joining a fly fishing club that has an education program available on fly tying, or taking lesson from a knowledgeable instructor.

### Hooks:

Remember Rule #2 "Buy materials to match the pattern recipe your tying." The choice(s) for hooks is almost endless with the many different styles, sizes and manufacturers available. I would recommend that you purchase the book "Hooks for the Fly" by William E. Schmidt as a reference to increase your knowledge of hooks. Listed below is a basic selection of hooks to get you started. These hooks are appropriate for wet flies, nymphs, streamers, steelhead, and pan fish:

- Mustad 9671 size #8 - Nymph, wet and some streamer patterns
- Mustad 9672 size #8 - Wet and streamer patterns

Dry flies will be addressed in a separate column because of the their size, the materials involved and skills needed to tie them, i.e., small hooks, delicate materials and specific detail to tying techniques.

The instructor/student should begin tying on size 8 hooks. This size is functional for catching a variety of fish (ultimately this is what you want to do), and is a good size to begin tying on. As the patterns you tie become more varied, advanced and intricate, you will begin to purchase other hooks to fit your tying needs. Remember Rule #1; "Go slowly, investigate and talk to experienced fly tiers" before increasing your hook inventory.

THREAD: Start with Black Thread in size 3.0 & 6.0 (The "Danville" brand is a good choice to start with). You will eventually graduate to several thread sizes, types and colors as your experience grows and you begin to tie a variety of patterns.

Remember, fly tying should be enjoyed! A friend once told me that when a hobby becomes too expensive be it time or money, it ceases to be a hobby and becomes a chore. So keep both rules in mind as you set out to becoming a fly tier.

Next month we will cover Feathers, Synthetic Materials, Hair and Fur.

# Lake Trout on Poppers

by George Vosmik

Who would have thought that Lakers that normally are caught from 20 to 100 feet below the surface could be caught on the surface? Well, I had seen a video of lakers being caught on the surface on one of the Saturday morning shows, about five years ago and I wanted to see if it would be possible at Nueltin Lake in Manitoba/Nunavit. Lou Sharpe and I booked the last days of the season to see if we could meet the lakers feeding for the winter, right on the top

We also wanted to catch the pike and arctic grayling, but we wanted to see how the lakers could be caught on the surface.

On the fourth day of fishing, the first three had been cold, cold and rainy and overcast, we actually saw the sun in mid-morning and caught some of the biggest pike we got on the trip. Good fish of up to 37" but no trophies of 40". So, on to the great shore lunch!

As we ate shore lunch of pike, beans and corn, we noticed several fish working on the surface about 100 yards from shore and another pod about 200 yards west of us. Grayling? Whitefish? Maybe we had found the lakers. Look at the size of that one dolphining! Maybe we have found them.

Hurry up and clean up after lunch and lets go! Our guide, Leon Sinclair steers toward the west pod. What are they eating? Well I'll be, they are eating size 12

caddis, and smaller black caddis. Well, in the video they caught them on Black and White poppers, and I've been carrying them for five years – that's the choice!

There's that big one! Cast to the ring! A little longer! Waaait, now twitch. He's got it, a dolphin take. No fooling around. And now he's down, down, down, all eight feet. Left, right, under the boat. Must be 35", a trophy fish?

But he's gone. Just slipped off. What is a boy to do? ...CAST DUMMY!!

Out goes the popper, oh damn, a knot in the line, well, just untie it, just about out! George, He took it he's running with it, says Lou Sharpe. Thanks Lou, got him tight. "Run, Run, Run, as fast as you can you can't catch me..." He runs right and left again and again but now he's coming up and into the net. Nice 28" fish.

And so it went for the next hour, active fish. Cast the popper to him and watch him eat. Like fishing for bass or bluegills – but 28" to 33" lake trout make the game quite different. Finally we got a shot at the surface feeding Lake trout and caught them!



## Fly Fishing Northern Canada

continued from front

I could almost feel the tug of my first pike on a fly.

The flight was smooth, enough so that the pilot let me fly the plane for a few minutes to the horror of my two companions. It was the first and probably the last time I will get to fly a plane. About 45 minutes after take off the pilot took control back from me and skillfully landed us on the small lake that was adjacent to the cabin we would be spending the week in.

After tying off to the dock we went up to inspect the cabin before unloading. The bear had come back again, causing some minor damage to the cabin windows but not much else. A can of bug killer with several large puncture holes in it lie on the ground. My guess is that the bear didn't like the taste of the chemicals and decided to go elsewhere.

The pilot offered to take us to a different lake that had not been visited recently by a bear. There would be no brook trout fishing opportunities at that lake but he promised that the pike fishing would be better. We now had a tough decision, we really wanted to fish for both pike and brook trout but without windows on the cabin, the bugs would be unbearable. After some discussion we decided that if we could repair the windows and keep the bugs out we would stay at this camp (oddy enough, the possibility of the bear returning didn't factor into our decision at all). We got some duct tape, repaired the windows and screens, decided that we would be safe from the bugs and unpacked our gear. Finally, the wait was over! I rigged up my 7 wt rod, grabbed my flies, and headed out to the lake to make my first cast.

To be continued...

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## Schedule of Upcoming NCFE Events

November 3	Membership Meeting Beginner Fly Tying & Favorite Fly Guest Speaker: Dennis Potter	<b>Lake Farm Parks</b> 6:30 - 7:45 PM 8:00 - 10:00 PM
November 10	Board Meeting	<b>Penitentiary Glen</b> 7:00 - 9:00 PM
December 1	Holiday Dinner & Membership Meeting Favorite Fly, Raffles, Dinner and Guest Speaker: Jack Gartside	<b>Croatian Lodge Party Center, Eastlake</b> 6:00 - 10:00 PM
December 8	Board Meeting	<b>Penitentiary Glen</b> 7:00 - 9:00 PM
January 5	Membership Meeting Beginner Fly Tying & Favorite Fly Guest Speaker: Les Ober	<b>Lake Farm Parks</b> 6:30 - 7:45 PM 8:00 - 10:00 PM
January 12	Board Meeting	<b>Penitentiary Glen</b> 7:00 - 9:00 PM

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[www.ncff.net](http://www.ncff.net)

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