



The Evening

Hatch

THE NEWSLETTER of the MICHIGAN FLY FISHING CLUB

August 2009

Sweet smell of success? Pheromones used to fight sea lampreys

by Todd A. Schotts

A pheromone is defined as “a chemical substance that is produced by an animal and serves as a stimulus to others of the same species for one or more behavior responses.”

At our July 8 meeting, Dr. Michael J. Siefkas, a sea lamprey program specialist with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, gave us a behind the scenes look at how two varieties of a scientific perfume are being used to control sea lampreys.

Sea lampreys, of course, are one of the best known invasive species to infiltrate the Great Lakes. Native to the Atlantic Ocean, sea lampreys resemble eels, but unlike eels, they feed on large fish. They can live in both salt and fresh water and were accidentally introduced into the Great Lakes in the early 20th century through shipping canals. Today, sea lampreys are found in all the Great Lakes.

By the 1960s, lampreys contributed to the crash in our famed Lake Trout fishery. Before sea lampreys entered the Great Lakes, Canada and the United States harvested about 15 million pounds of Lake Trout in Lakes



An adult sea lamprey

Huron and Superior annually. By the early 1960s, the catch was down to 300,000 pounds. Lake Trout proved to be an ideal host because they and lampreys favor the same spot in the water column and temperature zone. They also favored Great Lakes watershed rivers and streams, which proved to be ideal spawning grounds.

The Lamprey has a complex life cycle comparable to salmon and steelhead. Fertilized eggs hatch into small, wormlike larvae that burrow into stream bottoms. The larvae feed on debris and small plant life for an average of three to six years before they transform into the parasitic adult. Adults migrate into the Great Lakes where they spend 12-20 months feeding on fish. The complete life cycle, from egg to adult, can take an average of five to eight years to complete. Sexually mature lampreys swim back up into rivers and streams to reproduce.

This is where pheromones come into play.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

August 1

**Picnic at Multi-Lakes
Conservation Club
CANCELLED**

August 8-15

Montana Trip

Slash E Ranch, near West
Yellowstone, MT
Contact: Al Haxton

August 12: Summer Meeting

Speaker: Dirk Fischbach

**Topic: Huron River Secrets – Big
Fish and Small Crowds**

Northville Community Center
303 W. Main St., Northville
7:30 p.m.



*Guide and author Dirk Fischbach
brings his expertise to August's
meeting.*



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Membership renewal reminder

All current club members should have received a membership renewal form for the 2009-2010 program year. Dues remain \$35 per year and provide entrée to the best fly fishing club on the planet and a host of speakers, activities and opportunities to polish your skills and share your tales of fish pursued, caught and missed.

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They are used to lure adult lampreys into traps. Once trapped, females are killed and males are sterilized. The theory is that the sterilized males will out-compete and crowd out untrapped males, helping to reduce the number of fertilized eggs and the overall lamprey population. Other lamprey control techniques include using lampricides to kill sea lamprey larvae in streams without harming other fish and wildlife and constructing barriers to block the upstream migration of spawning sea lampreys.

Trapping will be done in 10 U.S. streams and 10 Canadian streams in 2010 and 2011. One of the major research rivers is the St. Mary's River that connects Lakes Superior and Huron.

Ironically, sea lampreys are sometimes eaten by other fish. Attention fly tiers, if you decide to mimic the lamprey in its larval stage, we can talk about a pattern called Steel Gray and Blues with eyes. It's about six inches long and wiggles like a worm in the water.

Mark your calendars: It's time to pencil in September meetings

While the annual calendar hasn't been fully established, Corresponding Secretary Bruce Kramer is putting out the word to pencil in the following dates for the club's September meetings.

September 9, the **second** Wednesday of the month, will be a speaker meeting.

The MFFC Board is currently scheduled to meet on Sept. 16.

The Activity meeting is scheduled for Sept. 23.

Look to the September edition of *The Hatch* and e-mail blasts for any changes to this schedule.



An MFFC contingent embarks from the Spite Road access at the start of 2008's clean-up on the Holy Water.

Volunteers needed for September 12 Au Sable Clean-Up

It's way too soon to be even beginning thinking about the end of summer, but it's not too early to mark your calendars for the annual Au Sable River Clean-Up. The 2009 edition is scheduled for Saturday, September 12.

There are two marshalling locations.

The Anglers of the Au Sable efforts, which focus on the mainstream Holy Water and the North and South Branches, is organized out of Gates Au Sable Lodge on Stephan Bridge Road between M-72 and North Down River Road. Volunteers begin arriving at the Lodge at 9 a.m. and the activity formally gets underway at 10 a.m.

The Au Sable Big Water Preservation Association (ASBWPA) effort focuses on the water below Mio. Volunteers are asked to meet at the M-33 Access Site in Mio at 9 a.m.

Both the Anglers and the ASBWPA host a post-clean-up barbecue for their volunteers.

For information on the Anglers' event, check out the "annual river clean-up" section on the Events page of the Anglers' web site at www.ausableanglers.org. See www.ASBWPA.org for more information on the trophy water activities.

Fly Fishing Hall of Fame announces its 2009 Class

The Fly Fishing Hall of Fame has announced its 2009 inductees. All are recognized for their contributions to the sport and the community of fly anglers. The induction ceremonies will be conducted on October 17 at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum.

The 2009 Hall of Fame class is comprised of:

Bob Clouser: He is recognized as the inventor of one of the most unique, innovative, and productive fly pattern styles of all time, the Clouser Minnow. Originally designed for fly fishing for smallmouth bass on the Susquehanna River, it has become one of the most productive fresh and saltwater fly patterns ever. Through Bob's keen interest and education in pursuing smallmouth with a fly, his energy has brought attention to this species and elevated it to a game fish status for the fly rodder worldwide. Warm water fisheries are very similar to cold-water fisheries and require maintenance to keep fish healthy and alive. Clouser has been a champion in educating a new generation of fly fishers. Like James Henshall and his early works on black bass, Clouser engenders renewed respect for fly fishing for all warm-water species.

Roman Moser: Moser brings an international flavor to the class of 2009. He began his fly fishing career at the age of 15 as a fly tier in his native Austria. After receiving a master's degree in Natural Sciences, he taught at the Business Academy in Gmunden and supplemented his income as a fly fishing and casting instructor with Hans Gebetsroither (a good friend of Charles Ritz and Lee Wulff). Word of his expertise spread across Europe as he was using fly fishing techniques to catch local species of carp, walleye and pike. He added a gold bead to his nymphs and other proven patterns, which dramatically increased the number of

fish caught. This innovation not only created a new dimension to fly tying, but also led to the question: Is it a fly or a lure? Today beadhead patterns are highly regarded and recognized as one of the greatest improvements to flies of the past century. To improve and rebuild the rivers of Eastern Europe, Moser introduced the use of Whitlock Vibert hatching boxes with great success.

Dan Blanton: Blanton developed techniques now used throughout the world for fly fishing in deeper water with fast sinking lines and special flies. A prolific writer and noted columnist, his web site is considered among the most informative on the web. His signature fly, the Whistler is immediately recognized by all saltwater fly fishers.

Frederick Halford: He is the spiritual father of dry fly fishing. While he didn't invent the technique, he preached a gospel of dry fly fishing as a preferred method. Although one-sided in theory and practice, he promoted casting techniques, equipment, entomological study and imitative fly tying specifically for top-water fishing. His correspondence with Theodore Gordon is said to have sparked a revolution in modern fly

fishing and American fly tying.

George E. M. Skues: At the other end of the spectrum is Skues. Through his experiments and observations, Skues demonstrated that "in-surface" feeding was common among trout. Many dry fly fishermen of the period considered this to be heresy. Skues's work underscored the more modern philosophy that a skilled fly angler needed to be well-versed in reading water, insect life cycles, and understanding the feeding pattern of fish for on-stream success.

Gardner Grant: Grant is honored for his lifelong contributions in preserving, protecting, and promoting fly fishing. His resumé includes stints as president of the Theodore Gordon Flyfishers, the Federation of Fly Fishers, national director of Trout Unlimited, director of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, director of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, and chairman of the American Museum of Fly Fishing. He also is a founding director of the New York State Environmental Planning Lobby, organized Iceland's first "catch, tag, and release" experiment with Atlantic salmon, and arranged the first angling trip to Russia by westerners since 1917.



Frederick Halford (upper left) and George E. M. Skues (center) represent opposite ends of the fly angling spectrum. Roman Moser (above right) adds an international flavor to the 2009 Hall of Fame class. Bob Clouser (left), pictured with Doyle Letson, has been a headliner at recent Midwest Fly Fishing Expositions.

Calling all Club tiers: It's time to step into the spotlight

by Todd A. Schotts

Attention all MFFC fly tiers! The club's 2009-2010 program year is fast approaching and I'm looking for tiers to step into the spotlight as the "Featured Fly Tier" at our Activity Nights.

What do you need?

Do you have a vise (a fly tying vise, that is)? Do you have a pattern that's special to you, something unique to share with your fellow club members? If you do, then the "Featured Fly Tier" spot is for you.

As for flies, well it doesn't matter. It can be as simple as a Woolly Buzzer or a San Juan Worm or as elaborate as a Spey pattern or a fully dressed salmon fly. Maybe you'd like to demonstrate a fly that you designed.

If you're interested, contact me at dragoneyeflyz05@yahoo.com, by phone at 313-348-9101, or see me at one of our upcoming meetings.

Tight Lines and snazzy flies.



The MFFC counts among its membership dozens of talented fly tiers. Charley Stevens and Terry Herron are among the club members who've stepped into the spotlight as Featured Tiers.

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