



## Club Meeting: Get to Know Your National Marine Sanctuary System with Vernon Smith



**D**id you know that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) manages a network of underwater parks around the nation, encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters?

Vernon Smith, national media coordinator for NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, joins us this month to provide an introduction to the marine sanctuary system and the various fishing opportunities they provide.

A life-long angler, Vernon is a relative newcomer to fly fishing, a sport he once thought was too complicated to learn and enjoy.

However, after having spent hours standing waist-deep in cold water and experiencing the joy, frustration and Zen of fly fishing, Vernon now worries that he — and his wallet — may be succumbing to fly fishing's addictive spell. We hope you can join us for our March club meeting!

Join us on Zoom: **March 9 at 7pm** — We'll email you the link.

# Beginner's Fly Tying: Dark Cahill

By Don Fine

The fly pattern which I have chosen for the March Beginner's fly tying is the **Dark Cahill** dry fly. First, a brief history of the Cahill fly pattern. In the 1880's a New York railroad worker named Daniel Cahill developed a fly that became famous all over America, the Light Cahill. When he wasn't fishing or tying flies, he was a brakeman on the old Erie and Lackawanna Railroad. While the Light Cahill is a great general imitation of summer mayfly duns, a variant of this the Dark Cahill is a great imitation of some of the spring mayfly duns.

In our Beginner fly tying series, our participants have tied a spectrum of fly patterns ranging from nymphs, wet flies, streamers, terrestrials, worms, etc. Each pattern was chosen for our sequential monthly tying sessions to provide the beginner with an understanding of how to use and apply different materials in fly composition, integrated with basic techniques for tying a spectrum of fly imitations of natural fish foods.



Dark Cahill

The Dark Cahill will be the *first classic dry fly pattern* which our class will learn to tie since our series began early in 2020.

And while the Dark Cahill dry fly is most likely outside the “top ten” beginner fly patterns endorsed on the internet, the tying steps and technique used in creating this fly are perhaps simpler to perform, albeit virtually the same, regardless of which mayfly dun imitation a fly tier would pursue.

## How to Participate in the Next “Fly Tying at a Distance” Session

No later than **March 15**, head to the PVFF website to sign up for our *Fly Tying at a Distance* event. We will mail you the hooks and materials needed to tie this month's flies. All instructions for tying these patterns will be available online by **March 17**. Then consider sending us a photo of your fly and/or you at the vise to [contact@potomacvalleyflyfishers.club](mailto:contact@potomacvalleyflyfishers.club).

# Advanced Fly Tying: Join Us on March 17th at 7pm

By Larry Forte



Our next Advanced Fly Tying session will be Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. Randy Underwood is going to show us how to tie two awesome flies for blue gill — The **Panfish Wiggler** and the **Bluegill Killer**.

At our last virtual tying session, we all learned how to tie a copper john, shown above.

Interested? We would love for you to join us. Here's how it works. Each participant is responsible for

leading a tying session for a monthly meeting during the year. You select the fly and show how it is tied during the meeting. If we have 12 members, you would lead the session once per year.

If you are interested, please let me or Don Fine know. You can sign up on our website or you can email me at [lbforte@verizon.net](mailto:lbforte@verizon.net). Hope to see you on the 17th!



# FLY FISHERS INTERNATIONAL

## Are You a Fly Fishers International Member?

PVFF is an affiliate member of Fly Fishers International (FFI). We pay annual dues to them and get a number of benefits due to our affiliation. Part of our FFI dues is a \$3 surcharge for every PVFF member that is not an FFI member. As a result, we

include the question “Are you an FFI member?” on our membership application. If you are, say so and we save the \$3. And if you are not a FFI member, give it a thought. It’s not a bad group.

## Congratulations to Dave Folkerts

Congratulations to Dave Folkerts who was recently appointed to the Chesapeake Council Board of Fly Fishers International. Potomac Valley Fly Fishers is an affiliate. FFI, PVFF, and Project Healing Waters (PHW) will all greatly benefit from Dave’s great

leadership and this learning opportunity. We see it as a two-way street as he will learn what’s going on in the region, nationally, and internationally and share that with us, as well as share some of our perspectives. Way to go Dave!

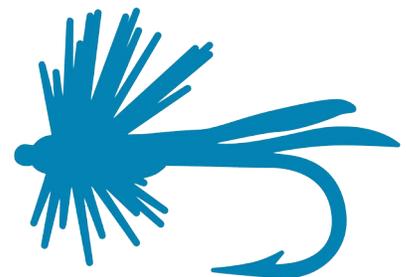
### It’s Time for the Spring Fly Swap

As we have for the past few years, our club will host a spring fly swap for 2021. Here are the details: tie twelve flies to be shared with other members participating in the swap. Traditionally, we would do the exchange at our May meeting. If we don’t meet in May, you have the choice of the following:

- Mail your flies to me.
- Have your flies picked up.
- Drop your flies off at my house.

Once I receive all the flies, I will sort them and mail them back to you. You will have twelve different flies all tied by club members. If you would like to participate, please send me an email at [plantprotection@comcast.net](mailto:plantprotection@comcast.net). Due date to participate is March 15.

— Dave Keane



# Project Healing Waters: Olive Woolly Bugger

By Andrew Frutiger



In our 12th installment of online fly tying seminars, Colin took the veterans through tying the always versatile Woolly Bugger. This fly will attract almost any North American fish, in any condition, year round. For this session, Colin chose the most effective color for our area (olive) but also noted that black, white, or chartreuse can work as well.



Woolly Bugger

The group started with a size 8 hook and added lead wrap to help get the fly down into deeper water faster. Other components included 6/0 thread, marabou (tail), flash (less is more), hackle (optional if you want more of a leech pattern) and chenille. By the end of the session, everyone was tying like a pro.

Story Time with Larry focused on what many consider the most productive form of fly fishing, nymphing. This sub-surface technique puts your fly where the fish spend the vast majority of their time eating and when done right — although not as visually appealing as dry fly fishing — catches a lot more fish.

Larry and the panel focused the session on the effective use of tandem rigs or fishing with a strike

indicator. Whether using a tandem rig (with a dry fly on top and nymph below) or using a strike indicator, the goal is to get the nymph to bounce along the bottom where the trout expect it. Other insights included not letting the dry fly or strike indicator drag your fly, as this will cause it to look unnatural and thereby avoided by hungry trout. It is also imperative to keep the line tight for the set, so keep your rod tip up.

If you have any questions or would like to participate in any of our upcoming fly tying sessions at Fort Detrick, please reach out to me at any time at [andrewfrutiger@yahoo.com](mailto:andrewfrutiger@yahoo.com) or go to our Facebook page at *Project Healing Waters — Frederick Chapter*.

# Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary

By Karen Baker



Given the topic of this month's club meeting, I was inspired to learn more about a marine sanctuary in our own backyard.



Mallows Bay is a small bay on the Maryland side of the Potomac River in Charles County. The bay is the location of what is regarded as the "largest shipwreck fleet in the Western Hemisphere" and is described as a "ship graveyard." The site was declared a National Marine Sanctuary in July 2019.

The new sanctuary is only about 40 miles from Washington DC, and is most known for the remains of over 100 wooden steamships known as the "Ghost Fleet." The ships, built between 1917 and 1919, were part of America's engagement in World War I. The

war ended before the ships could be used so many of them were scuttled in the Potomac River. The overgrown wrecks now form a series of distinctive islands, intertidal habitats, and underwater structures

critical to fish, beaver, and birds.

The Ghost Fleet is a gateway to recreation and educational opportunities — walking the shore, paddling through history, or fishing its waters. Kayakers can follow an interpretive water trail or steer their own course through the relative solitude of these waters. As the site is close to home and an easy day trip, maybe it would lend itself to a fun and informative outing for the club members. I plan to check it out sometime soon and will follow-up with more information. Stay tuned!

# Conservation Corner: The Great Eastern Brood

By Dave Keane



It's happening this year! After 17 long years, Brood X will dig their way up from the ground and will invade our neighborhoods, yards, and landscapes.

Nymphs will emerge mid May through June when the ground temperatures reach approximately 64 degrees Fahrenheit. Millions will emerge simultaneously in great numbers to help prevent predation.

Once above ground they will climb up on trees, fence posts, and other vegetation to shed their exoskeletons and inflate their wings. This process of hardening off can take 4-6 days.

The male cicada will “sing” by flexing his tymbals, a drum like organ found on their abdomen, to attract a female to mate. The female will then deposit her eggs into small tree branches by cutting a slit in the bark. She will deposit 20-30 eggs in each slit and they will mature in approximately six to ten weeks. These slits or grooves can cause “flagging” or die back in young trees.

Eggs will eventually hatch out and young cicadas will begin feeding on tree fluids (xylem) within the groove. The nymphs will drop to the ground, burrow to find roots and stay underground feeding on roots for the next 17 years.



with netting. The netting should cover the entire tree and the mesh size should be no larger than 1 centimeter or  $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Larger mature trees will survive just fine, so skip the unnecessary pesticides.

## Benefits to wildlife

Birds, raccoons, frogs, skunks and FISH will all benefit from this onslaught of food, even your cat will enjoy some. The nymphs also aerate soil as they emerge — and when the adults die and decay, they will provide nutrients to plants and vegetation.

## Enjoy them!

Don't worry, cicadas don't bite or sting and they are actually quite tasty to eat! These crazy critters only come around every 17 years, so embrace this natural phenomenon.

## Match the Hatch

Tie some cicada flies and get out and catch some fish. Here is a link to some great patterns: [flytyer.com/the-year-of-the-cicada](http://flytyer.com/the-year-of-the-cicada)

## What do they look like?

17-year cicadas will be approximately 2" long with red eyes, orange and black bodies, and transparent wings. Occasionally you will find a blue-eyed cicada.

## Concerned about your trees?

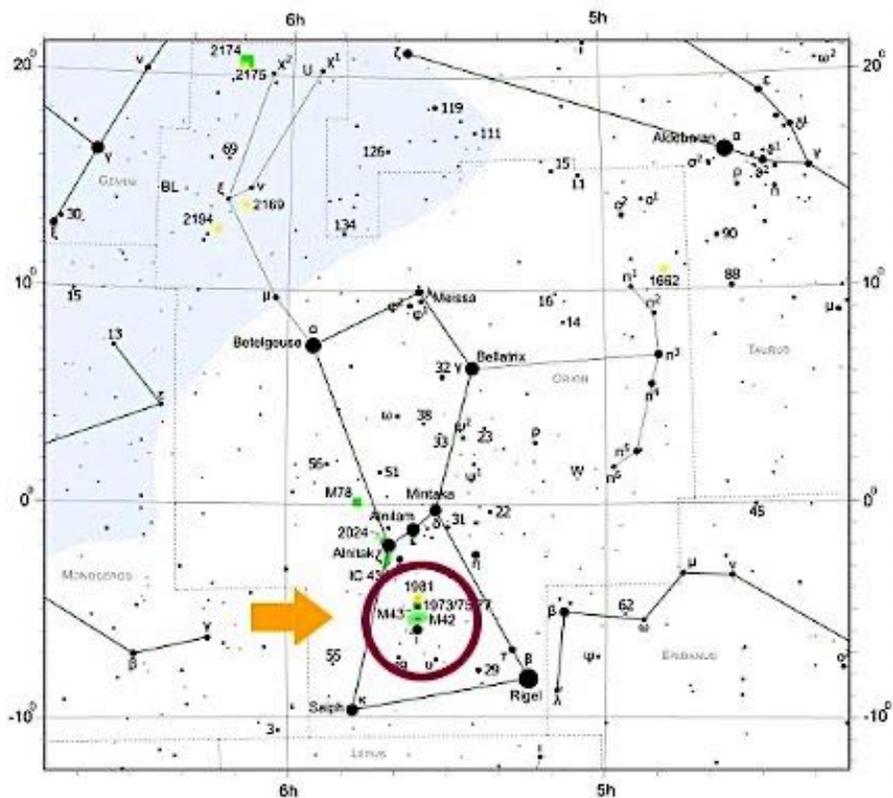
Damage can occur in young trees from females depositing eggs in small branches. Please don't spray your trees with pesticides. If you are concerned about a small tree, protect the branches and crown

## Astronomy Minute

**Back to the Pleiades** – Mars will be sliding past the “tiny dipper” during the first week of March. The red planet will have its closest conjunction with the Pleiades on March 3. Look for it as soon as it gets really dark. Don't worry if we miss it due to bad weather; the show will be repeated February 4, 2038.

**Back to Orion** – Find the three stars of his belt and look downward to see a grouping of fainter stars, which look like a hanging sword. About halfway down the sword is a fuzzy area. Try binoculars! It's the Orion Nebula. Gas and dust are coming together to create new stars. There are lots of nebulae in our galaxy, but this is the easiest to see. Good luck!

— Russ Hanson



# Fishstration: On the Joys and Frustration of Fly Fishing

By Dennis Allen

I'm not a trout fisherman naturally. I come from down south where fishing means largemouth bass, stiff rods, baitcasting reels, and crankbaits or spinners or plastic worms. I used to own a bass boat with a depth finder, 75HP motor, and live wells sprinkled around the deck. Trout? Fly rods? That's



something done by “other” people up north, I’ll stick with real fishing. Then I moved up north, fell in love with the area (and a girl) and thought I’d like to try fly fishing.

They say if you give a man a fish, he has fish for a day. If you teach him to fish, he needs rods, reels, waders, flies, etc., etc. For the new fisherman, that’s sooooo true. And lord knows I’ve got ‘em now. Orvis, Beaver Creek Fly Shop, Amazon, and Mastercard have made sure I have everything. And what I didn’t buy, my friends at PVFF have filled in. And I also have the books, the magazine subscriptions, the YouTube and Orvis videos, and though I never met them, I remain in awe of the legends such as Kreh and Clouser. Over time, I am also gaining an appreciation of the legends we have as active members in PVFF as well.

But then there’s the little matter of the fish. They seem unimpressed by my equipment, the books I’ve read, the videos I’ve watched, or the fact that I know some real fishermen and fisherwomen. I’ve cast (if you can call it that) into all the right fish spots, on the right days, with the right flies – or so I thought,

but found little cooperation among those slippery critters in the creek. We’ve stared eye to eye (they call it sight fishing), watched the fish as they watched my fly go by with barely a nod to my fully equipped, well read, and awestruck existence. If it weren’t for the outdoor noises around me, I’m sure I could have heard the sound of laughing fish.

Joy comes with the morning, the psalmist says. Or, in a more earthy version — hope springs eternal. I took a trip in Tennessee last year and my guide had me catching trout all day. Also, this fall I was fishing — not catching — one afternoon at Catocin Creek when one of our club legends stepped in the water with me and had a fish on within minutes. Both the guide and my new friend made it look easy and proved it can be done.

So I’ll get there. Lucky for me, PVFF has started a formal mentoring program, I signed up immediately, and now I have a mentor, one of our PVFF legends. I fear his work is cut out for him. In the meantime I’m going to enjoy the outdoors, enjoy my new friends, and keep on keeping on. Let’s enjoy the spring!

# Last Cast

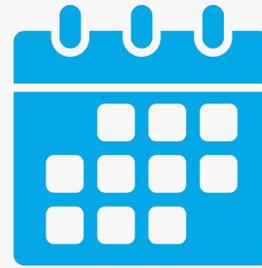
By Andy Mekelburg

It's all about timing. A couple of days ago we got four inches of snow, on top of 12 inches from previous storms, now we have weather in the 50's. What's a fly fisher to do? I don't know, but I can tell you what I've been doing — tying flies. Between the Advanced Fly tying, where Larry Forte tied the Copper John, then Beginner's Tying, where Don taught the Prince Nymph, I've been working on increasing my collection of useful flies. With the insight from those two and lots of practice, I'm slowly improving my "biots" results. Both programs have been excellent and so useful to building up the fly box.

So with March coming in, let the fishing begin! Thanks to Mike Holland, who is coordinating our outings, we are starting to get some on the calendar. None for March, yet, so let him know if you're ready to lead a trip somewhere. Also, with the season starting, the Mentor Program should be up and running soon — contact Kevin Haney if you're interested. We already have four mentees.

We have some great things coming up this Spring: the casting clinic, the fly swap, the outings we're scheduling. I'm particularly excited about Bob Clouser appearing at our May general meeting. Looking forward to hearing from a living legend.

This is the most optimistic time of year. The flies are boxed, the rods and reels are prepped, all the other assorted stuff is ready to be found, somewhere. While no fish have been caught, yet, there are many that have popped up in your imagination — the conditions are great, clear smooth water, starving fish looking for that particular fly you tied for it (probably a mop fly), no weeds or growing bushes to get snared on. Only one thing better — making it a reality. See you out there!



## Calendar of Events

- Mar. 9** Virtual Club Meeting — Join us on Zoom at 7:00 PM (the link will be sent out via email)
- Mar. 15** Beginner's Fly Tying Online Sign-Up Deadline
- Mar. 15** Spring Fly Swap Sign-Up Deadline
- Mar. 17** Beginner's Fly Tying Instruction Available on PVFF Website
- Mar. 17** Advanced Fly Tying Group — Join us on Zoom at 7:00 PM (the link will be sent out via email)
- Mar. 25** Board of Directors' Meeting Conference Call, 7:00 PM

## 2020 PVFF Offices & Directors

President.....Andy Mekelburg  
Vice President.....Dave Keane  
Secretary.....Karen Baker  
Treasurer.....Dennis Allen  
3 year Director.....Dave Dowiak  
2 year Director.....Troy Kitch  
1 year Director.....Russ Hanson  
Past President.....Larry Forte

**POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS**

**P. O. BOX 3001**

**FREDERICK, MD 21705**

[www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club](http://www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club)



**FLY FISHERS**  
INTERNATIONAL



**POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS**  
**MEMBERSHIP and RENEWAL APPLICATION and LIABILITY RELEASE**

**Year** \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers (PVFF) is (1) to promote fly fishing as the most sportsman-like and enjoyable way of fishing and the most consistent with the preservation and wise use of our resources; (2) to provide advice, suggestions and assistance to club members; (3) to publicize the best practices and techniques of fly fishing, fly tying, fly casting and other related subjects; and (4) to maintain liaison with other organizations of sportsmen and conservationists. By my joining PVFF voluntarily, I understand there are risks involved and will not hold the PVFF club, board of directors, and officers responsible for any injuries, accidents or death as a result of participation in the activities of the Club. I also grant PVFF permission to photograph me and/or my family at any activities and also to publish them in our monthly newsletter, at the meetings and any PVFF fly fishing functions.

Website: [www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club](http://www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club)

The undersigned being in agreement with the above does hereby apply for membership/renewal in the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers.

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First)

If family membership, other names: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address for e-mailing newsletter \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Fly Fishers Int'l (FFI) member? Circle **Yes or No**      **Yearly Dues:** \_\_\_ \$15 single \_\_\_ \$20 family      \$ \_\_\_ Donation

How did you hear about PVFF? \_\_\_ Friend \_\_\_ Facebook \_\_\_ Newsletter \_\_\_ Fly Shop \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Interested in a volunteer position? \_\_\_ Officer /Board of Directors \_\_\_ Committee/Chair \_\_\_ Banquet \_\_\_ Trip Organizer \_\_\_ Teaching Fly Tying \_\_\_ Other Activities

**Please make check payable to Potomac Valley Fly Fishers or PVFF and mail with completed form to:**

**David Dowiak, PVFF Membership**  
**8920 Bloomfield Road**  
**Frederick, Maryland 21702**

**Dues for calendar year Jan 1-Dec 31**

**Cash** \_\_\_\_\_ **Check #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Amount** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
**New** \_\_\_\_\_ **Renewal** \_\_\_\_\_ **Life** \_\_\_\_\_