

Woolly Buggers — Do They Get the Respect They Deserve?

By Dave Rosset — From *Lines & Leaders*, newsletter of the Connecticut Fly Fishermen's Association

I have to admit that I like Woolly Buggers. So much so that there are times that I have to force myself not to use them. If there were a 12-step program for habitual Woolly Bugger chuckers, I'd be one of the first to sign up. Hello! My name is Dave and I fish Woolly Buggers. Welcome Dave!

What I can't figure out is why outside of the warm water environment Woolly Buggers don't get much respect. After all, it's probably one of the first flies everyone, including trout fishermen, learns to tie. And invariably when someone asks, "What's your favorite fly...?" Or "If you had only one fly...?" "The Woolly Bugger seems to be right there with an Adams or a Cahill or Elk Hair Caddis, or even a Gold Rib Hares Ear. In the book *Flies and Fly Fishing for Bluegills* by Terry and Roxanne Wilson, the Woolly Bugger is on their list of favorite flies. In fact, they mention that a friend of theirs fishes it almost exclusively for bluegills. My kind of guy.

Still there are those who snub their nose at the Woolly Bugger. You know the guys I'm talking about. Mention a Woolly Bugger to an upstream and dry guy and you're sure to get a look of disdain. And let me tell you, those down stream and wet soft hackle folks are almost as bad. I just don't get it. Why "I'm sure I even saw one of those guys trying to qualify for *The Great Outdoor Games* use a Woolly Bugger, although I think he was trying to be sneaky about it. When asked what fly he caught it on, all he said was that it was something that he had found in his box that, based on the current conditions, he felt would be the most productive pattern. Yeah, right. I'll bet it was a Woolly Bugger and he was too proud to admit it.

And as far as books are concerned, I've yet to see any written specifically dedicated to the W. B. Well, I have a few suggestions: *The Woolly Bugger in Fast Water*. *Thirty Years of Woolly Buggers*. *Standing in a River Fishing a Woolly Bugger*. Or how about, *Down and Dirty with a Woolly Bugger?* Of course there are those that are far better writers out there than I am, so I have provided you with the titles and you can build from there.

I like tying Woolly Buggers. They're easy and don't require a whole lot of skill. This in my case is a blessing. You can tie them in all different sizes and color combinations, weighted or un-weighted. Of all the combinations I have tied and tried, my favorite, and the one I have the most confidence in, is a black/olive tied on a #89672 Mustad hook with .020 lead wrapped on the shank and some crystal flash in the tail. I like fishing with and have had so much success with this particular fly that I have had to force myself not to fish it from time to time.

On a recent vacation out west, I had some apprehensions about doing any fishing. I even tried to get out of it by suggesting to my wife that since this was our vacation, I didn't want to take time away from doing things together by my going fishing. Not being much of a trout guy, my real reason was so as not to embarrass myself on a stream or river.

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it, my darling wife insisted that I should bring along my fly tackle. Because we had decided to visit Yellowstone National Park, it was there that I decided I would, if time permitted, do some trout fishing. In all honesty, I thought myself a fool if I did not fish in one if not several of its famous streams and rivers. Fortunately for me, it was terrestrial time so fly selection would be relatively easy. It was after wandering into one of several of West Yellowstone's fly fishing shops that all my apprehensions fell away like leaves falling from the trees in autumn. On every stream conditions board hung on the wall of every shop we went into, right up there listed with various hopper patterns, was Woolly Bugger! Hooray! I was safe and I had some in my fly box.

So it was there in the early evening as the sun was setting that I found myself standing in the Madison River fishing a Woolly Bugger waving a stick.



Your Editor

Let Nancy know what sorts of stories you'd like to see.
Call Nancy Howard at 663-1063 or email her at
rlogan@nwi.net.



P.O. Box 3687
Wenatchee, WA 98807-3687
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“RELEASE ‘EM ALIVE”



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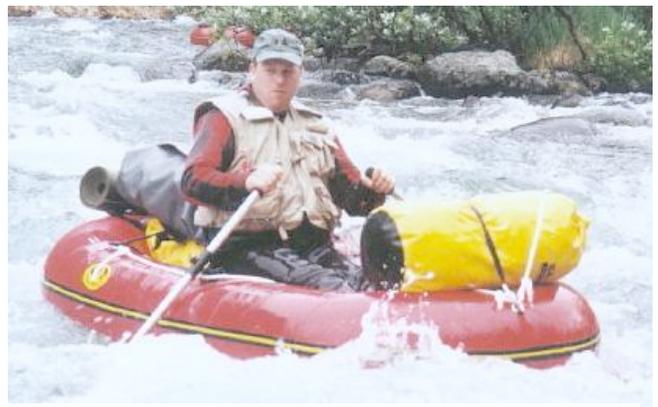
Fly Paper Catch and Release

Your 2005 Board is trying a new edition to the *Fly Paper* this year. We are going to try our version of a classified ads section. The title “Fly Paper Catch and Release” is just a working title. Please send your suggestions to Nancy Howard—or any board member.

We thought we would try a listing of items for sale, items sought, trips planned with extra spaces available, tickets or trips looking for a good home because the original parties must cancel...whatever interests us.

As our first ad, Jack Michel offers the following:
2 WaterMaster rafts complete with the following:
Oars with Oar extensions
Fins
Air Pump
Accessory bag with original equipment
Dry Bag

Both are used but in very good conditions. The current products and prices can be seen at www.kickboat.com. Both rafts are the Grizzly package. See them and talk prices by calling Jack Michel at 663-6130 days or 663-1735 evenings.



http://www.kickboat.com/grizzly_raft_package.htm accessed 2/7/2005

