



The Vice



Newsletter of the Tasmanian Fly Tyers' Club Inc.

Volume12 , Issue Winter 2015

Inside: *Tiger Hut, Great Lake Beetles, RSL Tying Day and much more...*

Cover shot – Lake Echo

President's Report

Hi All

As my reign as President draws to an end I am writing this bit from the van half way across the Nullarbor in drizzling rain!

I think it has been a good year for the club with activities being well attended. This is due to Stoksey's organisation, the efforts of coordinators and those members who have been prepared to participate and have a great time. ..Thank you all. Regular events like the Penstock Weekend and the Macquarie River Trip and the Tiger Hut weekends continue to be highlights. Thanks to Henry Edgell and John and Scott Bignell for opening up their farm dams for some exciting fishing for monster rainbows and a great weekend in the shearers quarters. I am hoping our behaviour justifies a repeat visit.

Our Vice President has organised Monday Meeting activities that have maintained attendance and his performance while filling in for the President suggest that Guy could well take on that role. Thanks Guy. The Dinner was well attended, thanks to Jason Garret, who somehow found time to organise this event. Macca, with support from Delly, does a great job with the Shacks. The lake Lodges are in fine condition and ready for use with hungry fish itching to consume our flies, a new fridge to keep things cool, fly tying equipment to match the hatch, (thanks Laurie), a new fly screen door, (thanks Kenny Fisher) and plenty of wood.

The Fowler trophy aimed at promoting friendship and new fishing experiences was very well subscribed with 48 entries. Malcom Crosse and Glen Eggleton were awarded the trophy and all participants were the winners.

It is a great Club and we have no trouble maintaining a full book of members. There is fantastic knowledge between the ears of our members and we are quite good at sharing this within the club. Training in fly tying within the club is great and include the Tiger Hut weekend, weekly events run by Doug Miller on Wednesdays and Tony Dell's Monday meeting tie ins. New gear in the Peacock Lodge offers a new opportunity. The combined event organised by Steve Butler, and the "Dyeing" days run by Macca and Delly extends training outside the club which is part of our charter. Doug Miller has transformed the Vice into a publication any fly tying organisation would be proud of and has become part of the training mix.

The average age of club members has gone up by a year and the committee has proposed some well discussed constitutional changes that might help in the difficult task of recruiting new young and new female members to avoid longer term problems. I

think that we need to develop a training program as kicked off by Crosse if we are serious about recruiting Tim Lewis has made my life as president easy and is largely responsible for the smooth running of the Club. Andrew Blackwood has done a great job keeping finances under control. Thank you both.

Tight Lines

John Smith
President.

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Editorial

The days are starting to get a little longer and the magical start of the new season is upon us. I can't wait! The off-season has been spent tying a huge number of flies that will hopefully be even more effective than last seasons. My Wednesday fly tying nights at my place in Howrah have been in full swing from the beginning of the year and I know that Tony Dell has once again started up his regular sessions – much to the delight of everyone involved.

The Tiger Hut trip added many flies to my repertoire – with a particular focus on Damsels, Mud-eyes and Dragonflies. (I must write an article in the Spring Vice on these!)

In this edition there is a report on the Tiger Hut with lots of photos – once again Cubby has excelled himself! He gives credit to the whole team who do a great job but it is brilliant of him to continually offer to coordinate everything – a truly great Clubman!

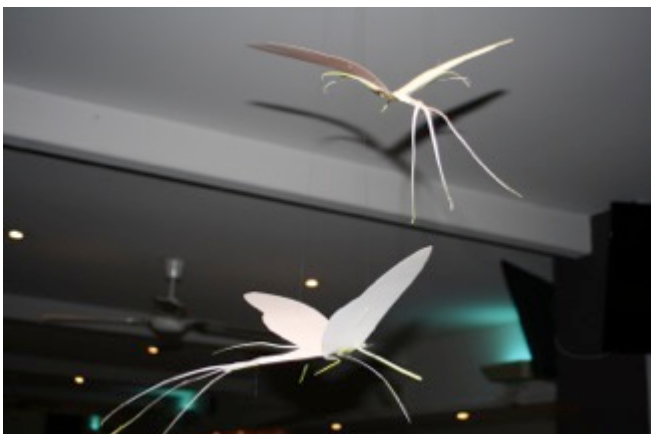
The Fly tying day at the RSL also is mentioned – what a great day for sharing ideas. Well done to Steve Butler for his organization of such a great day.

The Annual Dinner was held and was a great success. I have included some of the less incriminating shots for your enjoyment. Thanks to Jason Garrett for all his organisation and thanks once again to Laurie and Grace Matcham for their efforts in making the venue look even more wonderful!

It was good to see Club members doing extra work to make our fishing experience even better. Malcolm Crosse and Mark Quinnane featured on the IFS website recently clipping fins on Great Lake fish – well done blokes!

Thoughts now turn to opening weekend – where did you go? Some I know tried the Derwent some braved the wilds of the Central Highlands; others may undoubtedly have ventured to Tooms Lake where the IFS have released 4000 fish! I headed up to the Sorell Shack and to try my luck on the big ones at Crescent! You can read all about this at the end of this edition. Wherever you go I hope the new season brings you tight lines on every third cast!

DM



The boys at Spot On fishing tackle have kindly provided the Club with 4 vouchers to the value of **\$30** each for this year's **competition**. I'm sure everyone will join with me in thanking the lads for this kind support, and continue to patronise Steve's shop. Vouchers can be picked up from the Editor at your leisure!

So...Write the best story and win a \$30 Spot On voucher!

This time the award goes to... Neil Pinkard for his amazing history of the Great Lake Beetle –thanks Neil!

Have a go

Simply send your entry to Doug Miller
55dmiller@gmail.com



Tiger Hut 2015

Mid winter means snow, icy roads, short days and long nights. It also means that it is time to pack your bags for the Tiger hut weekend!

There is no colder spot in Tasmania than Liaweenee. It is about as remote as you can get on this little island of ours. It is just about dead centre of our Central highlands. This makes it perfect!



Every year for the last 21 years* there has been a mid-winter tying weekend. This year was no exception. Once again it was organised by Lyndon Cubbins and his usual team of helpers. There is a limit of 15 for this weekend and all spaces are eagerly sought after and highly prized. This year there was a good mix of regulars and some newer members.

(*some say different – a long debate!)



People started arriving early on the Friday afternoon, eager to get the prime tying positions and the closest bunks. Fires were set and the first drinks were poured – but don't let this fool you into thinking that it wasn't a productive session!



At around 7.00pm the evening meal preparations got underway and soup, oysters, sashimi and casseroles emerged. Red wine also featured prominently at this stage. It is not appropriate to go into too much detail of the conversations around the dinner table suffice to say that topics were wide-ranging and generally jovial in content.



Tying continued into the later part of the evening until only a small group of die-hards were left. Age had definitely wearied some of the crew!



You would imagine that the morning would be a late affair with not many flies tied, but this was not to be. One member – Macca - had tied two dozen flies before 7.30am! He said he couldn't sleep but he certainly set the standard for the day. His excuse was that he needed a lot of flies for his upcoming trips away. It was certainly impressive!



Mark Rampant was another tyer who was totally focused on producing as many traditional salmon flies as possible. This caused a lot of conversation and elicited some excellent ideas and tips.



The range of flies that were tied was amazing. The sharing of ideas, techniques and knowledge was generous and always insightful.



Some brave members ventured out for a walk in the light snowfall of the Saturday afternoon. Others sensibly decided that -5 degrees was something they didn't need to experience and continued tying happily until they returned.



The highlight of the weekend is undoubtedly the evening meal on Saturday night. Ashley Artis brought along his stainless steel gas-powered spit and managed to roast huge chunks of meat to absolute perfection whilst the other chefs in the group managed to produce a smorgasbord of delight in terms of roast potatoes, various vegetables, gravy, salad and more. It was all topped off with the infamous Mrs Mac Pies that were coveted by all. Not much tying was attempted after such a feast – rather a relaxed and warm evening of discussion ensued as plans were made, past adventures recalled and dubious encounters were raised.



Sunday morning saw yet another early start for some and the tying continued until lunch of sausages and pies heralded the end of the weekend. After a great group effort the Tiger was cleaned and restored to its original condition. In all it was another great weekend for the club. Many thanks must go to Lyndon Cubbins for his efforts in coordinating it all and to the whole group who contributed so much as a part of the team that made this weekend such a success.



Ad-Vice Tips and Tricks

Gadgets, gear and good ideas are always close to the surface whenever fly tyers get together. This section of The Vice features recommendations, quick reviews and tips to make the fishing experience even richer. Please feel free to send in any tips you might like to share.

Fly tyers are always looking out for materials that are cheap to buy that they can use in creative ways to enhance their fly tying. It is particularly satisfying when a commonplace item hitherto unused comes to the fore.



Chris Medwin caused a bit of a sensation at our recent Open Day at the Lenah Valley RSL. Using some rubber 'Grip Mat' from bargain stores like 'Shiploads' for a couple of dollars, he managed to create some of the simplest and most lifelike looking ant bodies I have seen.

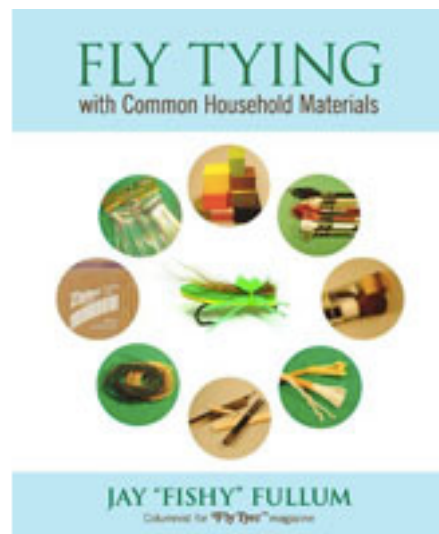


The technique, which Chris was told about and saw online somewhere, involves cutting off 5 little bits of the rubber, and simply pulling off a piece from either end of the row leaving 3 distinct sections of an ant. By tearing off the end pieces you leave little antennae stubs which look just brilliant!

The next step is to simply lash the ant body onto a size 14 hook, tie on a simple wing of something like deer hair, tie it off and go fishing. He suggests 'ginking' the fly to really make it float. It will be interesting to see what ideas some of the other creative tyers in the club develop from this fantastic idea – it certainly looks deadly!



One book that I have that looks at using common household materials for fly tying by Jay 'Fishy' Fullam. I am happy to share it with anyone who would like to look at it. Just contact me!



<http://www.theanglingbookstore.com/flytyingwithcommonhouseholdmaterials.aspx>

DM

Great Lake Beetle – a Mystery Solved?

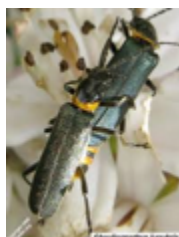


Some time ago I was given some fishing tackle that belonged to my wife's grandfather, and in one of his round Bakelite ALBA tackle boxes I found several flies, one of which I identified to be the pattern called 'Great Lake Beetle'. Ever since I have been endeavouring to identify which insect this pattern imitates.

This pattern is recorded in Max Stokes' iconic record, '**Tasmanian Trout Fly Patterns**' which was first printed 1978, and then reprinted in 1999. He attributes the pattern to the well-known fly tyers, Malcolm Gillies and W (Bill) McCausland. The pattern involves a black body with splayed wings made with "grizzle cock hackle feathers dyed reddish/orange".



The text states "This fly was originally created to imitate the **Chrysomelid Paroposis (sic) vulgaris** which often occurs around the Great Lake during summer or early autumn." I was told that this refers to a beetle commonly



known by anglers as a 'Gum Beetle', but I was sceptical that the pattern imitates the 'Gum Beetle' as it differs quite significantly from our usual gum beetle patterns which are simpler patterns (mainly a green/olive/grey wing case of raffia or foam over yellow/orange/brown body made from wool or seal's fur or similar dubbing – with or without 6 stubby legs).



Could it be an imitation of the Jassid or another beetle that has red or orange under the wings? At least the Jassid has red on its body!



My mate, Norm, then referred me to the renown book 'The Lure of Fly~tying' by "Fadg" Griffiths which includes a Great Lake Beetle dressing by JM Gillies who said that he copied the natural beetle "which when stranded upon the water always has the wings extended." Further, it says, "the pattern will take fish, in Tasmania, or in any part of Australia for that matter, as well today as it did when it first appeared upon the scene." Gillies was clearly proud of the pattern as he said, "It is a grand fly"!

The Great Lake Beetle dressing in this book is:

Tying silk	Black
Hook size	10-14 old scale
Body	Black cock's hackle, palmered closely on to the hook shank and then clipped to make a plump, well-formed body
Hackle	Dyed scarlet cock hackle
Wings	Two badger cock hackle tips, dyed scarlet, cut off so the ends are square

A side play was going on at this stage as Norm and Don conducted their own research to try to find '*P. vulgaris*' on the net. Part of their discussions related to the colour 'scarlet' possibly because gum beetles rarely have scarlet, but sometimes a copper or bronze colour – they do have many colour variations as evident in the selection below. Perhaps hackles that have been dyed orange would be closer to the natural beetle.

I still didn't feel confident that the GLB imitated the Gum Beetle. Further research was required.

The next development came after I downloaded an app on my iPhone called 'TMAG Field Guide to Tasmanian Fauna'. I keyed in "gum beetle" for no response, so I then entered "Paroposis" but no response again but I did notice that "parop" displayed 2 'Eucalypt Leaf-beetles', ie *Paropsisterna Agricola* and *Paropsisterna bimaculata*. (It appears that the

Latin name in Max Stokes' book was misspelt.) Was one of these the 'Great Lake Beetle'? Neither of their images looks like the pattern to me!



As the app had a contact address for more information I put the following questions to the experts behind this app "How many 'gum beetle' types are in Tasmania? Is there a 'Great Lake Beetle'?"

It wasn't very long before I had a response from Dr Simon Grove, Senior Curator, Invertebrate Zoology at TMAG "Thanks for your enquiry. The scientist in me wants to deconstruct your question. First, I'll assume that by 'gum beetle' you mean 'leaf-beetles that feed on eucalypts'. Then, I'll assume that we're just talking about the 'true' leaf-beetles in the family *Chrysomelidae*, and are restricting ourselves to the tribe *Paropsini* which includes all the large eucalypt leaf-feeders. That done, I can tell you that in Tasmania there are 8 or so described species in the genus *Paropsis*, about 17 in the genus *Paropsisterna*, and 6 in the genus *Trachymela*. Note, however, that there are quite a few further species in these genera in Tasmania that have yet to be formally described. If you'd like to learn more about these, I suggest checking the following paper: http://eprints.utas.edu.au/17460/1/2011_-_De_Little.pdf

So, from this, I deduced that what we call gum beetles should be called 'Eucalypt Leaf-beetles' and there are lots of different ones in Tasmania, including 8 in the genus *Paropsis* – so I read the paper by David W de

Little however none of them had the name *Paropsis vulgaris*. I was getting closer but I still didn't have the answer.

Shortly another email arrived from Dr Groves: "I still haven't answered the second part of your question, "Is there a 'Great Lake' beetle?" I'm afraid I don't know. There would certainly be leaf-beetle species restricted to the Central Plateau, and maybe even to the vicinity of Great Lake. I'll copy this email to the author of that paper, Dave de Little, who is an expert on these beetles and may be able to answer your question."

It wasn't long before Dr de Little sent me an email and a pdf of a page from a text which had a diagram of a leaf eating beetle which was labelled *Paropsis vulgaris*! **Eureka!** I now was able to believe that the Great Lake Beetle pattern imitates a Gum Beetle, but I still wondered which one.

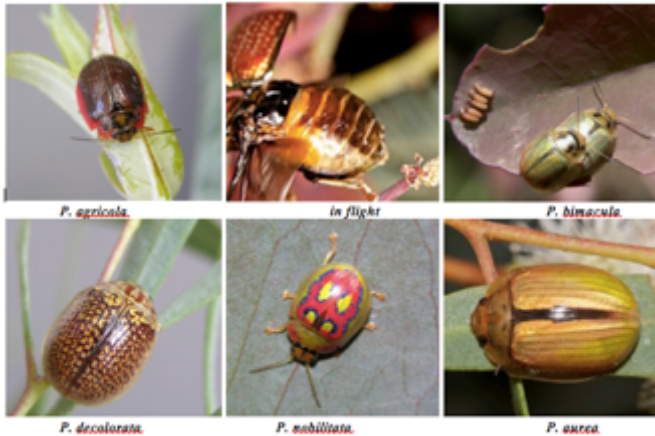


Dr de Little explained further: "The attached PDF is copied from Evans, J.W. (1943) '*Insect Pests and their Control*' published by Dept. Agriculture, Tasmania. Judging by the illustration, this beetle would now be placed in the genus *Paropsisterna* and formerly, genus *Chrysophtharta*. The illustration is not detailed enough to ascribe it to a species with certainty. The specific name '*vulgaris*' was applied by Chapuis 1877 to a species collected from Victoria to Queensland, but not Tasmania. It may be the same species as the Tasmanian species we know as '*variicollis*' or '*obovata*', both of which were also described by Chapuis (1877). Many paropsine species are quite variable depending on age and sex of beetle, and this led to much confusion in the nineteenth century when European taxonomists were describing long dead specimens forwarded by local collectors.

"The species of the genus *Paropsisterna* that are frequently stranded in lakes of the central highlands and fed upon in large quantities by trout are: *P. bimaculata*, *P. agricola*, *P. decolorata*, *P. aurea* and *P.*

nobilitata, and therefore all of these species collectively might be referred to as 'Great Lake Beetle'.

"I think the term 'Great Lake Beetle' is a trout fisherman's concept and not an entomologist's. It is therefore more correctly applied to a style of fly rather than an actual beetle species and it is probably modeled on a combination of all of those species I mentioned. Attached images show the variation in colours."



Post Script: I asked the following question of Dr de Little: "I note that the TMAG app states that the larvae can secrete a cyanide. Can the beetles? Do the beetles emit a cyanide? The reason I ask is that we have often observed that trout will often be caught when they have a gut full of beetles (so much so that they sound like a handful of wet gravel when palpated) yet they do not appear to be taking many beetles off the surface. Would the trout only be taking them after they sink? Would the beetles have a cyanide taste that dissipates after they have been in the water for some period? Or would the opposite be the case, eg the trout only take the beetle as soon as it falls onto the water, and not the ones that we see floating in the surface that have been on the water for a period which may have cyanide surrounding them?"

The answer that I received is interesting but not definitive: "Yes the larvae can secrete a defensive, cyanogenic fluid that can kill small insects. The adult beetles do not emit a secretion but when disturbed 'en masse' I have been aware of an odour – when I had a sense of smell! From the detail of your questions it sounds as though you have some research to do – these are questions better answered by fishermen than entomologists – unless one is lucky enough to be both!"

Summary: It is quite believable that the Great Lake Beetle pattern was devised to imitate a Gum Beetle on the surface of the water with wings open to display red/orange. However there is another mystery to be resolved – "Why don't we see trout feeding on gum beetles, sorry 'Eucalypt Leaf-feeder beetles', when the beetles are thick on the surface?"

Neil Pinkard

Bibliography:

- 'The Lure of Fly~tying' by F. A. D. ("Fadg") Griffiths 1978 ISBN 85566 398 7
- 'Tasmanian Trout Fly Patterns' by Max Stokes 1978 ISBN 85853 032 5
- 'Insect Pests and their Control' by J. W. Evans 1943 Dept. Agriculture, Tasmania
- 'Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Field Guide to Tasmanian Fauna' Project Manager Dr Simon Grove 2014 TMAG iPhone app

Fly Tying on the WWW

The World Wide Web is a treasure trove of information and tips for the fly tyer. YouTube in particular reveals a staggering number of responses to the most basic search. In this new trial section of The Vice the focus will be on some interesting tyers and techniques. If you have any favourites that you think should be shared with our members please send them in.

Finding the right feathers can make a real difference to the quality of your fly tying. We scour our local fishing shops for materials and support them as much as we can. Sometimes though you need to look further afield for the saddle, neck or patch that you so desperately need. EBay is one place where I have found some excellent stuff – often when it is being auctioned off from someone's grandfather's treasured collection. My best score was a beautiful jungle cock neck for the princely sum of \$20! Such bargains are not always so forthcoming so it is important to look further afield.



Tony Abel suggest this site The Feather Emporium (<http://www.featheremporium.com>) as being seriously good. He mentioned it to Ashley Artis who knew the owner very well and recommended him as an excellent dealer and a 'truly lovely man'. The Bargain Bin section in particular has some remarkably well-priced articles that will make your mouth water!

DM

Fly Tying Day - Lenah Valley RSL

A very successful Club event was held at the Lenah Valley RSL on Saturday July 11. An open invitation to other fishing clubs saw around 50 keen fly tyers spend the day chatting; sharing and learning from each other.



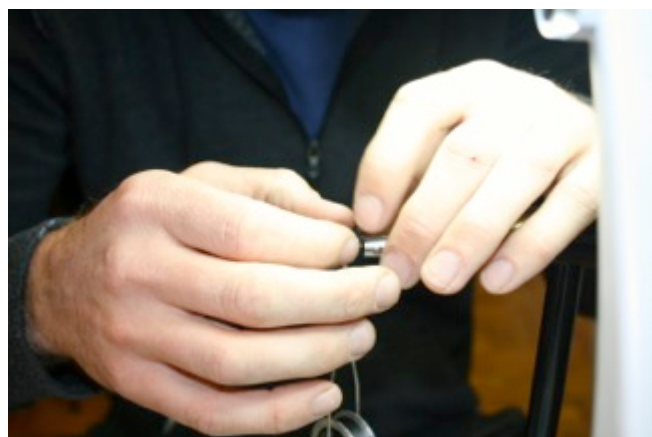
Organiser Steve Butler put together a great day with demonstrations on the big screen, a raffle and a wonderful lunch provided by the RSL at a very reasonable price. (He also managed to continue his quest to tie Bibio's in as many bizarre transformations as possible!)



Highlights of the day were undoubtedly the ingenious Ant patterns demonstrated by Chris Medwin using some rubber underlay that turn into brilliant Ant bodies. Chris was very generous with materials and advice to all who asked and was also able to demonstrate his techniques on the big screen.

A big crowd also gathered around Laurie Matcham who amazed everyone with his incredible skills at turning out lifelike prawn imitations out of some very basic materials. His ability to curl and tease feather and fur into the most realistic feelers and legs had to be seen to be believed!

It was great to see such a happy, inspired and inspirational group of people getting together to share their ideas and techniques and learn from each other. I am sure that this will become a regular feature in our mid-winter calendar. Hearty congratulations to Steve and the team who helped organise this great day!

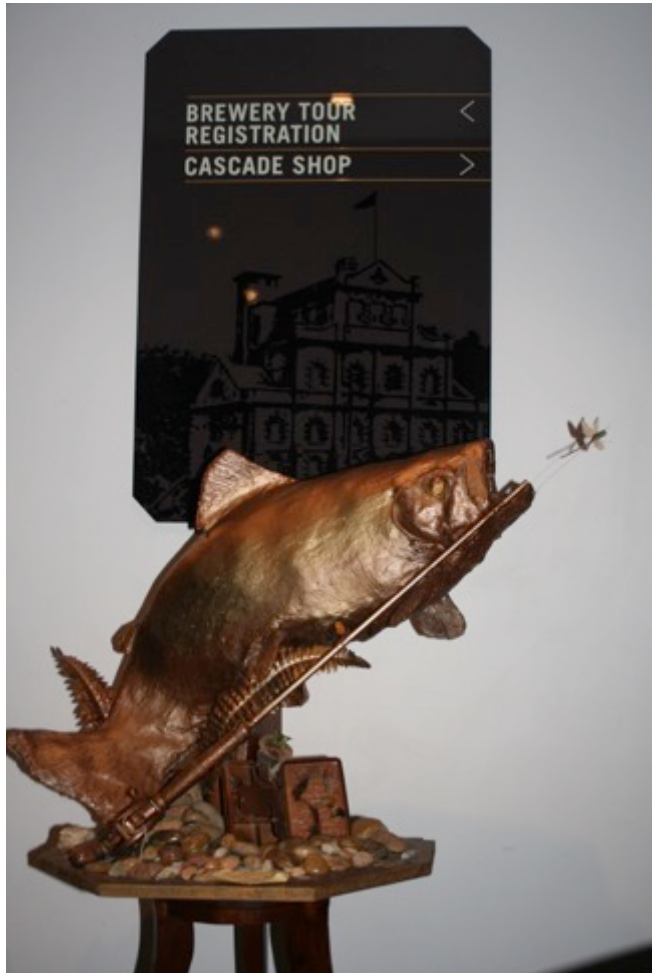


Fly Tyers' Dinner – Cascade Gardens

This year's Annual Dinner was a great success. The turn out was strong and the venue was excellent. Many thanks go to Jason Garrett for organising and coordinating the event and to Laurie and Grace Matcham who once again managed to make everything look really special with their beautiful and clever decorations.

The following shots are just an idea of what you missed out on if you didn't get there this year.

DM



Opening Weekend – Lake Crescent



With the forecast suggesting a full moon, snow to 300 metres, gale force winds and temperature hovering around the freezing point you would have to be mad to consider going fishing. Armed with all that information Tony Abel, Laurie Matcham and the Editor decided to head off for the season opener!

We decided on going to the Sorrell cabin, as it might be a little less freezing at the slightly lower altitude. We were also quietly enthused by John Diggle's hint that the big Crescent fish of last season were even bigger this year.

Laurie and I arrived at the Patrons Shack mid to late afternoon and Tony already had a great fire going. All there was to do was eat, drink and be merry in anticipation of the day's fishing. The Chicken Cacciatore was superb and the stories flowed well into the night. It was decided that a dawn start was a possibility but would depend on the weather.



We reached the boat ramp at 9.30am and stood gathering snow, debating whether or not to put the boats in. Tony was the one who made the first move and we followed his lead. How many others were there – none!

Tony headed to the marshes near the canal and the shack along Laycock Drive. Laurie and I headed down the lake to fish in the lee of the hills near the old shack shore. The wind was brutal! We fished hard – searching the muddy water with a range of flies that began with conservative fur flies to absolute monsters! The trout would either have had to sense the movement of these offerings or literally bump into them such was the visibility.

Tony managed to cast to a cruising fish of admirable size but was unable to get it to take. We didn't fare as well – only seeing a couple of galaxia. These fish were actually much larger than any I had seen before!

Finally – at around 3.30pm we called it a day and headed back to the fire and another great meal – this time courtesy of Grace Matcham.

Sunday dawned with welcome sunshine but gale force winds. Common sense prevailed and we decided on a leisurely breakfast, a thorough clean up and heading home before the snow really hit.

Tony told me that he managed to get a puncture just as the rain and sleet set in. he made it home in one piece though!

So, no fish, snow, sleet, winds. The season has started. Brilliant!

For payments to the club

BSB: 807 007

Account No: 12130456

Name: Tasmanian Fly Tyers Club Inc

Then email the details to

Andrew Blackwood: andrew.blackwood1@bigpond.com

Please remember to clearly identify yourself for ease of recording your payment

Club Website



Tasmanian Fly Tyers' Club Inc

Established in 1956, this club aims to encourage the arts of fly tying and fly fishing



<http://tasmanianflytyersclub.org>

