

# STREAMSIDE

Volume 22 Issue 1

Periodical Newsletter of the Dame Juliana League

Winter 2016

## A Reel Tail by Emerson Cannon



Fellow DJL members, we have another year to work together. Our early goal is to get enough people to come to our **Learn to Fly Fish Course** so that we can have it. How can you help? Here is how:

Please go on Facebook and go to Dame Juliana's page. First thing to do is Like the page. This will have all of the people that are associated with you on Facebook know that you like the page and maybe they will look at the page. Next is to go to our website [www.djlflyfishers.org](http://www.djlflyfishers.org). Just having more people visit the site helps. While there go through the site.....become familiar with the site. Save it as one of your favorites. Look where we have information about the course. The course is Saturday, April 23, from 9 am until 4 pm and it is held at the Phoenixville YMCA. Next we want you to tell as many people as possible to try and sign up. Have people go to the website to sign up for the course. If our entire club talks this up, hopefully we will get more people to sign up and attend. If we all do this, the course will be a huge success. Please put out a good word!

Get ready for our other big doings. Our first big work day will be the stocking of French Creek. The date is not set yet but will be on our Facebook page and our website as soon as we find out. If we go on past practice, the day would be Feb 17 but that is only a guess. Sometime near here. We usually stock on a Wednesday and can fish right away. If you can come ...we need you. The next thing we need you to do is come fishing on French Creek after we put the fish in the stream. Have fun catching those early season fish.

Our first meeting presenter for the spring will be Jan 25 when **Katy Dunlap** / Eastern Waters Project Director for Trout Unlimited will speak about TU's Headwaters program. This should be interesting as we can ask her ideas about TU's initiative in this area. Next up will be our own **Matt Romano** speaking Feb 29. **Matt Romano** will do a presentation on Project Healing Waters and Photography while fishing. So again, see what the people at Project Healing Waters are doing with fishing with our veterans. And then, find out tricks from a professional photographer just how to take pictures of our fish, the surround-

ings and any other areas that you might want. On March 28, **John Shaner** of Hardy and Graves will present a fly fishing program on **Spiders and Soft Hackles** - The History, Flies, and Techniques. John does this presentation all around the country and it is fantastic. John was going to do this last year but was snowed out. Hopefully, this year the weather will be better and we can see this superb presentation. Our last meeting of the season will be April 25, when we'll have **Bob Ballantyne** speak about **Fisheries Biology and Species Preservation in Yellowstone National Park**. Bob will review how projects are carried out in the Park as well as the new Soda Butte project. It involves removing the invasive brook trout population.

Finally on Saturday, May 7 there will be a **Casting Clinic** at Towpath Park, Pottstown, PA. We will have our IFFF board certified casting instructor, Mike Costello, showing us the details about our casting. Mike will go around and work with you

*Reel Tails is continued on page 3*

## Winter-Spring 2016 Meeting & Event Schedule

Meetings are held at the Kimberton Fire Co. Fairgrounds Meeting Hall.  
Doors open at 7:15 PM. Meeting begins at 7:30PM.

### January 25 (Monday)

Featuring **Katy Dunlap**, Eastern Waters Project Director, Trout Unlimited

### **PFBC's Headwaters Initiative**

February 23 (Tuesday)

### **Spring Float Stocking of French Creek's Fly Fishing Only Area**

Volunteers needed—12 Noon—Meet at Progressive Machine Lot

February 29 (Monday)

Featuring Outdoor Photographer **Matt Romano**

### **Project Healing Waters & Fishing Photography**

March 28 (Monday)

Featuring **John Shaner** of Hardy & Greys

### **Spiders and Soft Hackles**

April 23 (Saturday)

### **23rd Annual Learn to Fly Fish Course**

Phoenixville YMCA—See DJL website for details and registration information

April 25 (Monday)

Featuring Outdoor Writer **Bob Ballantyne**

### **Fisheries Biology and Native Species Preservation in Yellowstone National Park**

May 7 (Saturday)

### **Casting Clinic**

Featuring IFFF Certified Casting Instructor **Mike Costello**  
Towpath Park, Pottstown—Registration details to be announced

## Tight Line Nymph Rig

by Domenick Swentosky (article reprinted with permission from TROUTBITTEN...Life on the Water)

Almost eight years ago, I made some adaptations to my nymph rig that completely changed the game for me, tripling my catch rate and adding a new spark to my passion for fly fishing. Suddenly, a whole new set of techniques and achievements were possible on the water, and I was catching enough fish to feel like it wasn't just luck anymore — I had some control over the outcome. My casts, my drifts, my fly selection, and (most importantly) my ability to focus and adapt became the reason that I caught fish or I didn't. I soon realized that the old excuse of "the fish just weren't on" was usually a cover-up.

I like to give credit where it's due, so I'll mention that it was the long talks with both Loren Williams and George Daniel that helped me come to understand these few simple principles. Their knowledge came from the competition fly fishing circuit, but since I'm not all that competitive when it comes to fishing, I borrowed the main elements and eventually eschewed a few of the restrictions like continuous leader taper, no split shot, and no suspenders (indicators) — I bend all of those rules whenever I believe doing so will catch more fish.

These three elements of my nymphing rig changed: I took fly line out of the mix, I allowed only one diameter of tippet under the water, and I added a sighter. Two of these elements are about eliminating drag — and when it comes to nymphing, getting true drag-free drifts while being in enough contact to detect strikes is where the real fun begins.

### No Fly Line

For upstream, tight line nymphing, fly line is a real handicap; it adds weight and causes drag by sagging off the rod tip and pulling back on the nymphs. That subtle drag may seem slight, but the difference between a great drift and a lousy drift is in the fine details. By using a very long butt section in the leader, the nymphs can be presented relatively drag free. When casting without fly line, it's the weight of the nymphs and the leader itself that are carrying the flies to their target. In essence, the weight of the flies (or split shot) *pulls* the leader to the target, while with a traditional setup, it's the weight of the fly line that *pushes* the leader and the flies to their destination. After casting nymphs without fly line for a while, you realize that you never really needed it.

### One Diameter Under the Surface

Another place where traditional nymphing rigs create drag is in the tippet section. Tapered leaders (whether hand tied or manufactured) most commonly start their taper a couple feet from the tippet end, so while fishing all but the skinniest of water, part of

the taper is under the surface. That's a problem.

I tied my old style of nymphing leaders in a way that resulted in the diameters of 4x, 3x, 2x, 1x, and sometimes even part of my butt section being submerged in some of the deepest pockets. To me, the big revelation was how the thicker diameters were being pushed by the currents more than the thin diameters. It's one of those things that I never gave much thought to back then, but it makes perfect sense. The upper part of the taper in a leader is more than twice the diameter of 4x tippet. Now consider two kites in a strong wind: a large kite that is double the size of a small kite will offer a lot more resistance — you can feel it as you hold the string. Likewise, the thicker diameters of a leader under the water offer more resistance in the current — and that equals drag. Is it really that much drag? Again, the difference between a great drift and a lousy drift is in the fine details. Add a few small details together and you get big results.

A tippet of any diameter will incur some drag. That can be managed, but the real problem with my old nymphing rig was in having multiple diameters under the water. My tippet section was being pushed around at different rates, creating various degrees of drag and slack while making it difficult to stay in touch with a tight line method. Having only one diameter of tippet under the water solves that problem.

### Sighter

A third element to an effective tight line nymph rig is the sighter — a colored piece of material tied into your leader to help visually track your line. It not only aids in strike detection, but also helps judge the depth and location of your nymphs. There are many options for sighter material, and I carry a number of them. Sometimes, when fishing is tough, I find that simply changing the type of sighter that I'm using improves my catch rate. I carry sighters made from fly line backing, braided running line, furred monofilament, coiled monofilament, and straight monofilament. I carry the mono sighters in different colors, and it often helps to use a couple of contrasting colors built into one sighter. The point is to *see* the sighter, and if I can't see it immediately after my cast, then I change the color or type.

### Leader

Tight line nymphing rigs can be very basic in design. I've tried leaders with elaborate tapers built from a half dozen diameters of various materials (I'm a leader junkie), but I keep coming back to a very simple formula that works for me: a long butt section, a transitional piece, a sighter, and then the tippet.

*Nymph Rig is continued on page 3*



*Pennsylvania has some of the finest trout fishing in the U.S.*

**Reel Tails** *is continued from page 1*

individually. This is a fantastic opportunity to improve your casting stroke...what a deal!

So come out to the meetings this spring. Go fishing on French Creek. Report back to us how you did on French Creek at the meetings. Improve your casting by attending the Casting Clinic. Take lots of pictures and next year give a presentation of a trip you did or a presentation of your local fishing at local streams.

Thanks and have a great spring!



## Wanted: 2016 Chester County Conservation Camp Campers

Each year the **Dame Juliana League Fly Fishers** sponsors two youngsters, ages 11-14, to attend the **Chester County Conservation Camp**. This full week, sleepaway camp will be held from July 10-16, 2016 at Paradise Farm Camps in East Bradford Township. The Camp's mission is to educate youth through experiential learning in a safe, caring outdoor camp setting. Through adventure based activities, campers explore local natural resources, experience varied ecosystems and learn the value of stewardship of the environment. The camping program strives to build understanding and appreciation of local and global conservation issues. If you know of a youngster that likes to have fun in the outdoors and might enjoy learning about the environment through hands-on experiences, then this camp is for him/her. If you are a club member and would like to send a qualifying child (at no charge) to this Camp please email us at [djlffpa@gmail.com](mailto:djlffpa@gmail.com).

More info see [www.chescocamp.org](http://www.chescocamp.org)

## Coming: Our 23rd Annual Learn to Fly Fish Course

On Saturday, **April 23, 2016**, the League will be holding its **23rd Annual Learn to Fly Fish Course** at Baker Field Pavilion at the Phoenixville YMCA. We know, it seems like a long ways away, but we had such a tremendous response the past few years we wanted to be sure everyone was aware of the date now in case you know of someone who is interested in learning how to fly fish. As of this writing we already have 11 people signed up. The class should fill up quickly so don't delay.

If you know of anyone who is interested please have them visit our website [www.djlfflyfishers.org](http://www.djlfflyfishers.org) for more information and to **download a registration brochure**. Those interested in attending can also call 610-574-3503 (leave a message) or email [djlffpa@gmail.com](mailto:djlffpa@gmail.com). The cost of the all-day course is \$50 and pre-registration is required. Please send registration information to:

**Dame Juliana League**  
P.O. Box 178 Kimberton, PA 19442

**Nymph Rig** *is continued from page 2*

This is how I put it together:

20' — 20-lb Maxima Chameleon

2' — 12-lb Maxima Chameleon

8" — 12-lb Red Amnesia

8" — 10-lb Gold Stren

8" — 8-lb Green Amnesia

4-6' — 4X fluorocarbon tippet

I originally made these key changes only to my tight line nymphing leader, but eight years later I now find myself rarely taking this long leader off my spool. Instead, I use the long leader for almost everything — suspender fishing, streamer fishing, and most dry-dropper fishing. The only times I use a shorter, traditional leader are when I'm dry fly fishing at distance and sometimes for swinging wets at night. I'll write about adapting this long leader to other tactics in a future post.

The other day, a friend asked me what nymphing books he should own.

"Do you have **Trout Tactics** from Joe Humphreys?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Do you have **Dynamic Nymphing** from George Daniel?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Well, that's all you need."

I really believe that. All my other fishing books gather dust after a thorough reading, but I refer to this pair constantly, learning something new every time I turn the pages. Together, they are a comprehensive resource, and everything else you need can probably be learned by fishing a lot and just thinking about it — think hard.

Also, if you are looking for a good primer on tight line techniques, or if you would like to improve your game by understanding the basics completely, I often recommend **Devin Olsen's** three part series on his blog: **Euro Nymphing 101: Parts 1, 2 and 3.**



## Coming: Spring 2016 Float Stocking-Volunteers Needed

On Tuesday, **February 23, 2016**, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission assisted by the Dame Juliana League will be stocking the **Fly Fishing Only Catch & Release** area on French Creek. This will be the first of two stockings on French Creek for 2016. This stretch receives about 1100 trout each year, a mixture of browns and rainbows. We will be using 2 or 3 float boxes to cover the entire 0.9-mile stretch. Each float needs about four (4) able bodied men and/or women to handle the boxes. Chest waders, a wading staff and warm clothing are a must. We will meet at 11AM at the Progressive Machine Tool parking lot on Pughtown Road, about three miles east of Route 100.

This PFBC sponsored event is a lot of fun and a good experience so if you are interested in volunteering please contact (ASAP) our stocking coordinator, Dick Allebach at 610-933-1846 or email him at [rsallebach@verizon.net](mailto:rsallebach@verizon.net) to sign-up or obtain additional information. Dick will acknowledge your response. Thanks for your participation!

**Dame Juliana League  
Fly Fishers**

P.O. Box 178 Kimberton, PA 19442

**Officers and Board of Directors**

President- *Emerson Cannon*

Vice President- *Vacant*

Secretary- *John Burgos*

Treasurer- *Bob Molzahn*

Membership- *Mike Ferraro*

Sponsor Relations- *Joe King*

Fly Fishing Course/Newsletter- *Bob Molzahn*

Outreach- *Ted Nawalinski* Website- *Tim King*

Board Members- *Dick Allebach, Troy Dunn,*

*Bob Moser Jr., Mike Costello, Jack Mickiewicz*

*Member dues per calendar year are  
\$20-Individual, \$25-Family.*

*For new members please add \$5.*

*Newsletter Editor- Bob Molzahn*

*Articles, news, and fly tying tips are  
gratefully accepted.*

*Please send them to rfm1949@comcast.net*

**Dame Juliana League Fly Fishers**

*is an affiliated member club of the*

**International Federation of Fly Fishers**

*Visit our website at*

[www.djflyfishers.org](http://www.djflyfishers.org)

*Send comments, inquiries and address  
changes to djffpa@gmail.com*

Located on Rt.  
23, Just West of  
Phoenixville,  
Next to Staples



Open 7 Days  
A Week  
Visa • MC  
Dis • Amex



**Chester County's Largest  
Fly Fishing Specialist**

**• EXOFFICIO & BUZZ OFF CLOTHING**

**St. Croix • Loomis • Okuma • Air-Flo**

**• Rio • Temple Fork Outfitters**

**• Cortland • Ross Reels • Renzetti**

**• Dr. Slick • Fishpond • J.P. Ross Rods**

**• Flymaster • Sunrise And More!**

**Wide Variety of Flies & Fly Tying Material**



**• Books & Videos • Fly Tying Classes**

**• Knowledgeable Staff**

**610-933-7200**

[www.frenchcreekoutfitters.com](http://www.frenchcreekoutfitters.com)

**ORVIS®  
DOWNINGTOWN**

BRANDYWINE SQUARE SHOPPING CENTER

70 QUARRY ROAD, UNIT K (off Rt. 30)

DOWNINGTOWN, PA 19335

*Over 10,000 Flies*

*Extensive Selection Of Fly Rods,*

*Reels, And Lines*

*Fly Tying Materials And Supplies*

*Casting Lessons And Trips Available*

Tel/610-873-8400

Fax/610-873-3830

[www.orvis.com](http://www.orvis.com)

*"A Sporting Tradition  
Since 1856"*



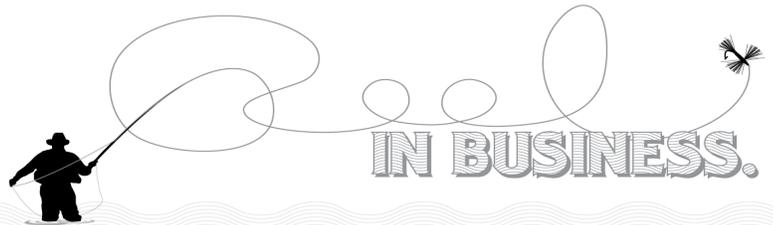
**TCO Fly Shop**

**Tulpehocken Creek Outfitters**

2229 Penn Ave • Reading, PA 19609

610.678.1899 - voice • 610.678.4029 - fax

[www.tcoflyfishing.com](http://www.tcoflyfishing.com)



Branding / Advertising / Marketing / Web Sites / **Creative Small Business Solutions**

[www.VirtualFarm.com](http://www.VirtualFarm.com) | Cultivating Business Personalities.



**THE  
SPORTING  
GENTLEMAN**



128 Glen Mills Rd, Glen Mills, PA 19342

610-361-2001 [gentsporting@gmail.com](mailto:gentsporting@gmail.com)

[www.sportinggentleman.com](http://www.sportinggentleman.com)



HARDY

ORVIS

SAGE



**Downingtown Bicycle Shop**  
**833 W. Lancaster Ave.**

Cannondale  
Giro  
NightPro  
Hoffman  
Continental  
Profile  
Hollywood  
Shimano  
Blackburn



Raleigh  
Thule  
Park  
Haro  
Bell  
CateEye  
Terry  
Lake  
Primo

**610-269-5626**

[Downingtownbike.com](http://Downingtownbike.com)