



# CONEWAGO FLY FISHERMAN NEWSLETTER

Spring 2010

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

[www.worldfishingforum.info](http://www.worldfishingforum.info)

**Rob Bennett 717-677-4272 Eugene "Guido" Macri 717-762-9750**

email: [gene@flyfisher.com](mailto:gene@flyfisher.com); [gene@eugenemacri.com](mailto:gene@eugenemacri.com)

*Published by E. Macri Aquatic and Environmental Scientist and Riverkeeper*

## Meetings and Stockings

Our first stocking and meeting will be March 26, 2010 on a Friday at 9:00 a.m. at the stream. The stocking will consist of brook trout and maybe some tigers, followed by lunch at the Apple Bin Restaurant on route 234, east of Arendtsville at noon. Dinner at the mountain top lodge at 6:00 p.m. You are encouraged to bring a side dish of your choice and any beverages you desire. A second scheduled stocking based on the population of fish in the stream is tentatively dated on April 30, 2010 on a Friday. This stocking will depend upon stream conditions and analysis of our trout population. Whether the stocking occurs or not we will still have meeting at the Apple Bin at 12:00 p.m. for lunch. No dinner this time at the mountain top lodge.

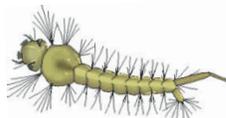
Enclosed find **2010 Mirror Tag** for your car.

## The Use of The Bridge

*Stay off the foot bridge till it is repaired. Gene fell off the bridge in November and luckily did not get seriously hurt even though nearly ravaged by a large brown trout.*

## Stream Report

As of February 24, 2010 the stream is low with snow packs on the banks of 2 to 3 feet. Parking access is limited and road is plowed out into the fishing shack. Water temperature is around 35 to 38 f. It has been a rough winter, however the fish have survived. The stream seems to be improving and we are now getting resident populations of brook trout. The spring stocking of brook trout seems to have survived quite well and these fish are in better condition than some of the brooks that were stocked in the winter. We will keep an eye on this population because if it continues to succeed we may reduce stocked brook trout numbers. As always keep an eye out for poachers and trespassers.



## Best Bets For Early Season

### Flies

Streamers: Wooly Buggers (all colors).  
Marabous, Matukas, and Black Ghost

Nymphs: Little Brown Stone size 14; Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear; Muskrat Nymph, Hornberg; Picket Pin; Large Black Stonefly size 8; Wooly Worms; Egg Flies; Red Midge Larva Worm and San Juan Worm

Dry Flies: Stimulators, Large Wulff; Bivisbles, Muddlers, Humpies.

Wet Flies: Brightly colored wet flies and smaller steelhead patterns will work.



## Handling of Fish

Please handle the fish as little as possible. If photographing do it quickly with removing the fly first, preferably with fish in shallow water.

### My Fly Fishing Websites

[www.flyfisher.com](http://www.flyfisher.com)  
[www.worldfishingforum.info](http://www.worldfishingforum.info)  
[www.limestoner.com](http://www.limestoner.com)  
[www.flyfishingforbrooktrout.com](http://www.flyfishingforbrooktrout.com)  
[www.flyfishingforbrowntrout.com](http://www.flyfishingforbrowntrout.com)  
[www.yellowbreechescreek.com](http://www.yellowbreechescreek.com)  
[www.letortspringrun.com](http://www.letortspringrun.com)  
[www.fallingspringrun.com](http://www.fallingspringrun.com)  
[www.bigspringcreek.com](http://www.bigspringcreek.com)  
[www.aquaticinstitute.com](http://www.aquaticinstitute.com)  
[www.eugenemacri.com](http://www.eugenemacri.com)  
[www.pennflyfishing.com](http://www.pennflyfishing.com)  
[www.pennflyfishing.com/forum](http://www.pennflyfishing.com/forum)  
[www.riverkeeperflyfishing.com](http://www.riverkeeperflyfishing.com)

**Guiding and Instruction  
Available**

# GENE MACRI'S EARLY SEASON HATCHES

## CONEWAGO CREEK

### The Quill Gordon

#### General Description and Habits

The Quill Gordon (also called the Gordon Quill) is an early season mayfly. Although this mayfly may not always have large populations it is a very good hatch if you happen to hit it at the right time. The nymphs are flattened and cling to the underside of rocks. They inhabit most riffles and faster water. The overall color of the nymph varies from mottled greyish brown. The legs and tails are also mottled greyish brown. It should be noted that the underside of the nymph is a more pale amber grey in most species. The nymph only has two tails and is the only mayfly genera that has two tails as nymph. The tails spread away from the body.

#### Emergence Patterns

The Quill Gordon emerges on most streams including the Conewago anywhere from Late March to Late April depending upon the environmental conditions.. The average time of emergence is usually around mid to late April on our private stretch. The emergence pattern may take two routes: 1) the flies will come off in some areas heavy and in other areas light 2) the flies will have more of an extended emergence but they will only emerge a few at a time. This type of emergence lasts longer. There is no accurate way to predict the type of emergence pattern that will occur. The second type of emergence period may last upwards of two weeks or more while the first will usually last less than eight days.

#### Nymphal Habits

Quill Gordon nymphs actually emerge underwater. The winged mayfly for the surface is sometimes nonexistent in terms of a dry fly hatch. Therefore, the trout take most of these flies in one of two stages: 1) nymphs at the bottom or slightly above the bottom of the stream and 2) as an emerger with wings. On some waters the fish do not seem to hit these flies at mid depths but usually hit only deep or right under the surface.

#### Fishing Methods

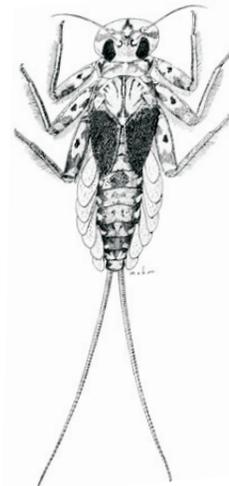
Fishing the nymph deep is the best method of catching trout prior and during the hatch. Either weighted flies or split shot around 12 to 14 inches above the fly will usually do the trick. Also, I prefer a direct upstream cast allowing the nymph to get deep quickly. It should be noted that on some days letting the nymph swing downstream and rise off the bottom can be effective with both the nymph and emerger. You should have a weighted emerger (or fish it with shot) and non-weighted version. You can also catch them some days using the emerger right under the surface.

#### Imitations

Here are some basic nymph and emerger patterns. NYMPH: Tails: Woodcock (greyish brown); Legs: Medium Brown Partridge or similar hackle; Body: Medium brown-greyish fur (rabbit is good); Wing Case: Dark Brown Mallard or similar feather. Optional gills: greyish brown marabou tied with gold wire along the abdomen. Thread: Brown. Hook Size: 12-14. For a weighted version you can use wire underneath the body or you can use medium copper wire to rib the body with and this will add weight. A decent imitation of an emerger is to tie a similar fly with a lighter body and grey-brown wings on the side. Standard Flies that will work fairly well. Nymph: A light greyish brown **Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear**. For the emerger a Gold Ribbed Hare's Wet Fly; You can also chop the wings about half off on the wet to make an emerger pattern

#### Scientific

Genus: *Eperous* Species: many different



# GENE MACRI'S EARLY SEASON HATCHES

## CONEWAGO CREEK

### The Blue Winged Olive

#### General Description and Habits

The Blue Winged Olive is a common mayfly on both freestone and limestone streams. This mayfly has many species but for the most part they look pretty much alike. The Blue Winged Olives usually have multiple generations in most streams. They are an unusual mayfly for anglers because most fly anglers fail to spot them. The nymphs vary in color from brownish red to olive with brownish amber underbodies. In some streams especially in early season some nymphs are more greyish brown.

#### Emergence Patterns

The nymphs will emerge all year on some stream especially limestone spring creeks. But even on freestone streams these mayflies will emerge on warm enough days in December or January. These mayflies vary greatly in size during their emergence period. Early in the season they may be as large as a size 14 on some streams. As the year progresses these mayflies tend to get much smaller and by the end of the season they may be around size 20. The female spinner (imago) lays her eggs underwater. These mayflies will emerge whenever the waters are in the 40's.

#### Nymphal Habits

The nymphs usually inhabit currents on the sides of the stream and in some waters towards the middle. However, the nymphs tend to be in shallower water than other mayflies.. The nymphs are small and are quick little swimmers. The nymphs will live on debris, rocks, vegetation and anything they can grab onto anything they can get. The nymphs tend to tuck their legs underneath them when they swim. When the nymphs emerge however, they tend not to swim. They usually drift downstream in a sort of gaseous bubble or in some cases they may crawl onto something and emerge. This is especially true of nymphs which emerge along the shore.

#### Fishing Methods

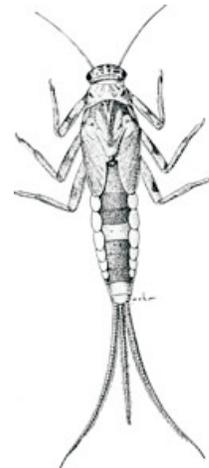
The imitations of these flies can be fished deep, mid water, just below the surface and on the surface in a floating style. All methods work. Emerger patterns will also work especially when fished near the banks. The duns are often hard to spot against the sky because of the blue grey wings. I encourage you to use binoculars to scan the water. All types of patterns will work for the duns from hackle to no hackles. I like simple poly winged or hen hackle for spinners. A sunken spinner will sometime be deadly for these flies due to the female laying her eggs underwater.

#### Imitations

One of the best imitation for the nymph is Sawyer's Pheasant Tail tied in sizes from 14 to 20. Here's another pattern that I tie that works. Nymph: Tails: Imitation wooduck; Body: brownish-olive fur ribbed with fine gold wire. Wing Case: Black feather of any kind. Legs: amber imitation lemon wooduck. Legs are tied beard style underneath the thorax. Duns are typically greyish wings with olive-reddish brown bodies. Tails: Amber grey (2). You can also tie up emerger pattern by adding some short wings (grey). Spinners which are sometimes important vary in color with clear tinted wings and lemon crystal amber bodies.

#### Scientific

Genus: *Baetis*. Species: *tricaudatus* and many others



# **Fly Fishing Tips for The Conewago**



**by  
Rob and Gene**



## **Observe First: Fish Later**

We watch guys just jump in the stream without ever taking a look at what's in the water, on the water or even in the vegetation nearby! Use your binoculars to look at the water's surface etc. Do not just start casting. Most guys seem to think the fish are dumb on this stream. Think again. We have two strains of wild browns and wild bows. Some days they may be easy to catch but most of the time they are not. Even the brookies can get tough especially due to such clear conditions. When you get into the stream just stand there for a few minutes. Most of the time if you have spooked the fish they will come back if you wait.

## **Clothing Does Count!**

We are not talking about fashion here but about colors. We can usually spot some of you from the road! So what do you think the fish see!!!! Bright clothing including hats are a NO NO! Wear muted colors like dark tan, green, brown etc. The trout can sometimes see you in the mirror too since this section of the Conewago tends to have a very light stream bottom in most places.

## **Casting Too Much for the Size of the Stream**

If you watch the fly fishing shows on television and believe them than you will not be very successful on streams like the Conewago. Measure your cast. Do not use 35 feet of line when 15 feet will do. This is not a stream for long casts. You are spooking the fish for hundreds of meters! If you have a 9 foot rod and a 9 foot leader you already have around 17 to 18 feet of reach. Now add about 10 feet of line and you have nearly 30 feet of reach. You are not throwing dry flies on the Yellowstone River.....you are on the Conewago.

## **Use a Wading Staff and Use Stealth**

This stream is tough to wade and easy to spook fish. Use a staff and move slowly. Use a stealthy approach and you'll get closer to the fish which means you can cast shorter distances and have a higher percentage of hooking fish. With a longer rod on this stream (at least 8.6 feet) you gain an advantage in controlling the line, controlling the drift, and in striking so think about adjusting your style to the type of stream that the Conewago is.

## **You Are Hunting First and Fishing Second**

Try and find your fish before you start fishing. The Conewago is so clear it often resembles a spring creek in its turbidity. So try and find the fish before you cast. If you have a partner stand on the high banks above the stream and watch you fish you will find that the fish are moving more than you believe when you enter the stream. The trout in the Conewago will move around a lot due to the temperature and depth changes as well as lighting conditions. The bigger browns will control an area and move slightly up or down from that section but the brookies and rainbows will move more and the browns are more territorial.

## **Leaders and Tippetts**

Always use the heaviest tippet you can get away with. Sometimes it's not the diameter of the tippet but how the tippet behaves. Softer tippetts will sink quicker and stay out of the way of the fish. Tippetts that float on top of the water will scare fish. Avoid using braided butt leaders which can spray water droplets from the butt section. This may not be a problem in the spring but will be when the stream is low. For streamers use at least 4x and tie a good knot. Pinch your barbs down and sharpen the hooks with a hone. It's easy to dull the hooks even with a dry fly on the rocks on the Conewago.