

Matching Eastern Hatches

With Henry Ramsay

D. Roger Maves: [00:00:00] Welcome to Ask About Fly Fishing Internet Radio, your source for learning more about fly fishing in cold water, warm water, and salt water. Hello, I'm Roger Maves, your host for tonight's show. On this broadcast, we'll be featuring Henry Ramsay and he'll be answering your questions on Matching Eastern Hatches.

The show will be 90 minutes in length and we're broadcasting live over the internet. If you'd like to ask Henry a question, just go to our homepage at askaboutflyfishing.com and use the Q and A text box to send us your question. We'll receive your question immediately, and we'll try to answer as many of them as possible on the show tonight.

And while you're there, make sure you sign up to receive our announcements so you don't miss out on any of our future broadcast. Just fill out the form on the right side of our homepage and we'll let you know when the next live show will be. This broadcast is being recorded and will be available for playback on our website about 48 hours after the show ends.

You can also find it on any of the podcast sites like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, PocketCasts, or wherever you listen to your podcasts. So if you have to leave early, you can return to [00:01:00] our website or any of the podcast platforms at your convenience and listen to the recording at any time if you're out and about on Facebook, Instagram, or X, which you're appreciated if you'd share our podcast.

And when you do, use hashtag ask about fly fishing and hashtag fly fishing. In fact, if you have a moment, do it while you're watching the show. That'd be great if you let other people know about the great content we have going on here and ask about fly fishing.

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Before we introduce Henry, we'd like to let you know about the great prizes we have to give away tonight for our drawing tonight, we'll be giving away a one year membership to Fly Fishers International and a one year membership to Trout Unlimited.

Now, if you haven't registered yet for the drawing, you can do so now. Just go to our homepage at askaboutflyfishing.com and look for the link under tonight's section that says, register for our free drawing. Click on that link, fill out the form, and we'll announce the winners at the end of the show. We'll also be giving away a copy of Henry's book *Matching Major Eastern Hatches* courtesy of Stackpole Books.

Now, here's how you can win. You must be the first person to answer the question I ask at the end of the show. And the question will be about something that Henry and I talk about during the show. And you must submit your answer along with your name and location using the text box on our homepage. So listen closely, take notes, type fast, [00:03:00] and hopefully you'll be the proud winner of Henry's book *Matching Major Eastern Hatches*.

Our guest tonight is Henry Ramsay. Henry is a fly fishing writer, custom fly tier presenter and photographer. He is the author of *Matching Major Eastern Hatches*, *New Patterns for Selective Trout* and co-author of *Keystone Fly Fishing Guide*, *The Ultimate Guide to Pennsylvania Best Water*. He contributes to fly fishermen and eastern fly fishing magazines and has appeared in a list of other books and publications.

His fly fishing career began more than 50 years ago on a stream in central Pennsylvania, and his travels have taken him to many of the best streams and rivers across his home state of Pennsylvania. As well as New York, Idaho, Montana, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, and other states. He conducts fly fishing classes and presents at many shows, Trout Unlimited Chapters and clubs in the eastern U.S.

Henry is also an act, is a contract fly designer for [00:04:00] Umpqua Feather Merchants and is a member of the pro staff for Daiichi Hooks and Regal Vise.

Henry, welcome to Ask About Fly Fishing Internet Radio.

Henry Ramsay: All right, thanks for having me. I'm honored to be here and looking forward to talk about fishing tonight, so thank you very much for the nice introduction.

D. Roger Maves: Sure, sure. Yeah, good to have you. And, uh, so we'll have to do my best to pick your brain tonight and share some of your knowledge with the folks listening in. So, uh, yes, just when I was going through your bio, it just kind of struck me when you said that you started your, uh, fly fishing on a stream in central Pennsylvania. How did that start for you? What was that first time?

Henry Ramsay: It was funny, Roger, and it was awkward at the same time. I had caught my first trout when I was five years old. Believe it or not. I released a darn thing. I don't know if it survived or not, but I released it and I remember I was fishing with a spinning rod on a creek and central PA, [00:05:00] and I had seen fly fishing in magazines and books and there is a man standing in the creek and I'm watching him cast, and it was just like watching ballet. It was beautiful.

You know, it was the first time I watched somebody actually casting live. And it was not only beautiful, but he was catching fish with regularity. And I was like a bug drawn to a light. I just kept getting closer and closer, wanting to watch this spectacle. And you know, I got too close and it took the guy off and he wound up yelling at me and, and I wound up scurrying away. I felt ashamed, you know?

And my family was back out in that same neighborhood a couple weeks later, and I saw the same gentleman on the creek. And uh, this time he came over to me and introduced himself and it just totally blew me away. He pulled a fly box out of his vest and in it were these neat little rows of flies that he [00:06:00] tied with feathers from his own chickens.

And I thought, my God, this is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen. It pulled it all together for me. And so I was 11 years old and I decided I wanted to be a fly tier notice. I said, tier and not fly angler.

D. Roger Maves: Right?

Henry Ramsay: I wanted to learn how to tie flies. I thought it was a, a beautiful connection with elements of nature, that it was something artistic, you know?

I mean, I used to like to draw and paint when I was a child, and so I was naturally pulled towards something that had an art element to it. And I just love that concept of imitating nature organically with these natural materials. So I tied flies for about three years before I finally got a fly rod and, uh, had the courage to start fishing with the darn things, you know?

So that's pretty much where this whole thing began. And [00:07:00] now, fast forward all these years later, I'm just a bigger kid that plays in the water doing the same thing I did back then.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's interesting tying, I forget who it was. There's a guy, I think a couple other people I've interviewed over the years that started out as tiers as well, and I, it's, yeah, quite unusual.

I think most people start fishing first, but yeah. That's interesting you approached it from a, an artistic standpoint and you know, looking at the flies in your book and you're beautifully tied and you do a great job. So maybe we can pick your brain about that a little bit tonight, about things that you do in the way of tying, but we got a question in on the internet already, and so I'll hit this before we dive in.

Phil in Kentucky wrote in and he says, the smallmouth shown in your photo is a beauty. Please tell us more about catching it.

Henry Ramsay: Oh my, every summer, I live in Pennsylvania and we have some wonderful smallmouth fishing here. During the [00:08:00] summer months when trout fishing tends to take a little bit of the back seat, I generally get out with a couple friends that have drift boats or rafts, and we'll do a couple float trips through the summer.

So that was on the Juniata river, which is in central PA, just northwest Harrisburg, tributary to Susquehanna. And it, it's a remarkable fishery, a beautiful river. And if the timing is right, the top water it can be fantastic. And what's really funny about that fish, that was the best fish of that day. And uh, you know, you don't put up all the pictures of the dinks that you caught throughout the day, but, uh, that fish never really broke the surface when it took that popper.

It just, uh, I saw it levitate like a submarine, and it was the most gentle take. It was like a trout taking a midge. It just sucked that popper under. And of course, you know, everything blows up when you set the hook on 'em, but [00:09:00] I absolutely love smallmouth bass fishing with a fly.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah,

Henry Ramsay: That was quite a wonderful day.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. Cool, cool. Well, let's talk about, uh, some of the hatches going on. What inspired you to write Matching Major Eastern Hatches and how does it differ from other hatch matching books that we might find for the eastern states?

Henry Ramsay: It's, it's a funny, that's really a, it's a funny question because I, uh, I've done the whole gamut of learning to tie traditional, classic flies.

I've learned to tie on the early 1970s, and it was a different methodology. The way that you learn to tie back then, you learn classics, casco flies, and old school wets and things of that nature. And somewhere along the line, I really got triggered by the writing of later writers like Coochie Anastasi and Swisher and Richards and some of the people that were [00:10:00] really heavily into that match the hatch game.

Ernie Schreiber, of course. And I started coming around playing with my own patterns. Uh, I was really inspired by Vince Marinello and still am and probably one of the most brilliant writers of our time. And I started going down this path of, uh, coming up with my own patterns. And a point came where I thought, my God, I can't remember what color dubbing I used for that pattern.

So I started writing all these things out, and then I'm starting to do tying classes at shops in different places. And I have people saying, you know, your stuff's unique. It's different, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And I thought, no, maybe there's a story to tell. So I had been tying for, uh. Probably 30 years, and I thought maybe I'm credible enough at this stage of life to start to put this thing together.

So I was fortunate to, uh, [00:11:00] meet Jay Nichols via my dear friend John Shaner, and submitted a couple chapters and Jay was really interested in doing the work. And we spent the next year and a half putting together the stories behind these flies. My fishing is really, what excites me most about fishing is this chess match of, of trying to interpret what's going on when the natural world with bugs and emergences and rising fish, or feeding fish and looking at a fly box as, as a solution to a challenger to a problem.

So I wanted to tell stories about that. How did this fly design come to fruition? What was the thought process behind it? And it was a heck of a lot of work. When you work with an editor like Jay, number one, he works to bring out the best in you and he works to challenge you to develop your thoughts. And when you get [00:12:00] a markup back, it's like being in fourth grade again with the red pencil marks all over your writing. You know?

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: It's all like, you're from Southeast Pennsylvania, but it was really a fascinating thing to work together to chronicle not just the patterns and the recipes behind the patterns, but the thought process and the logic behind the design.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: It's not, I wanted to come out and say that it's not just some random haphazard thing, you know, that the stars aligned and a fly came off the device that worked.

There was a lot of thought behind that and I wanted to express that.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. A lot of testing too, I imagine. Many of these

Henry Ramsay: Yeah. I like to call, call it research, you know,

D. Roger Maves: Research,

Henry Ramsay: You know what I mean? Anytime to put your tongue in your cheek and call it research or just fishing or whatever. But you gotta go with that one, Roger. I like that.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: Testing.

D. Roger Maves: Did you do all your own photography on the book, or did

Henry Ramsay: Uh, no. [00:13:00] No. That was remarkable too, because at the time I didn't own a digital camera, and so I bought a camera partly into the project and shot some of the pictures. But my dear friend Cathy Beck, who was really generous and what a wonderful soul and a great loss to the fly fishing community, but Cathy offered, she said, here, I'll, I'll offer you this portfolio of images.

And she was really, really kind and very supportive of that process. And then all of the time sequences were shot by Jay. And believe it or not, we shot all of those. It's like, uh, it's like going into a studio to record a song. We shot all of those pictures in the course of two days in a hotel room

D. Roger Maves: Wow.

Henry Ramsay: In central PA so that the backgrounds, the [00:14:00] lighting, the focal distance, all those things would be consistent from shot to shot to shot. And, and it was really a quite a discipline to put that together to play twister with cameras and strobe lights and wires and multiple tying vices so that you could show clearly how your hands are manipulating materials to show a step, to break it down into mechanical steps.

Because I wanted a book that someone could lay out on their desk and follow with clarity. And I have to be honest with you, there's a single hardest challenge of the whole darn book was writing the captions to support each of the photographs to state what's going on.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: You know, it's like writing, most of us know how to ride a bike, but how would you put that into words began with butcher foot on this pedal at this position.

So that was a bit of a challenge, but it was [00:15:00] a heck of a lot of fun and it was, I wanted an instructive book that was also had an a little bit of an entertainment thing and had some some educational thought processes behind the flies.

D. Roger Maves: Right. Yeah. Yeah. Cool. Well, let's talk about, next question is. Let's talk about someone new to Eastern Waters.

Uh, this applies to western waters too or central, but so how important is it to understand the insect life cycles compared to simply having the right fly or a fly that's working today that the guy in you from up the river or something?

Henry Ramsay: Man, that's loaded. That is a loaded question. You know, if you're gonna play the hatch matching game, I mean, let's be real.

A big thing today is euro nymphing. The flies don't look like anything found in nature, and it really is a thing of like searching drift lanes and wires in a [00:16:00] stream bottom, trying to get a drift front of a fish that might be in a mood to see.

A lot of the patterns don't really look like something in nature, but when that fish comes up with the stream bottom.

I think it's important to kind of have a bit of an understanding about life cycles and understand how these things interplay with the natural thing of a fish trying to survive by feeding in a stream environment or a river environment. And I think we don't necessarily have to understand the taxonomy.

It certainly enriches the experience, but being in a place where you're standing in a creek, having the right collection of flies in your vest or in your pack or in your fly box is really a key thing here in the east of Hendrickson is probably one of my [00:17:00] favorite fly hatches, but it's only here for a narrow window of the year.

So understanding when to expect them, what kinds of environments you might find them in. Understanding what the different stages of that hatch lifecycle look like can definitely put you in a better situation to be successful when those trout are looking up and looking at things in the drift as opposed to things that are tumbling along the bottom of the stream bed.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah. Let's talk about, since we're, I mean there's multiple species insects here that are on the east coast, but maybe we can kind of, we don't have time to talk about all of 'em tonight, but maybe we can kind of talk about the six most important, and so what do you consider like the six most important insect groups?

Henry Ramsay: Six, I would have to say

D. Roger Maves: Five, four. [00:18:00]

Henry Ramsay: Oh, wow. Yeah, it's kind of tough to winnow that down to a, a short list, but you know, the thing to really be aware of is. Here in the east, a lot of our waters at some point in time in

history were compromised either by industry, by agriculture, by resource extraction for quite a long time.

Acid rain, acid drainage has affected a lot of our streams in a dramatic manner. A lot of streams are in varying stages of recovery from prior exploitation or resource extraction. So one of the things that jumps out to me is caddis flies because they're more tolerant of point source pollution. So we're gonna encounter them on all of our waters compromised or uncompromised waters.

So it makes them terribly important. And if there was one caddis fly that stands out [00:19:00] amongst all of those, it would be, uh, the speckled sage, the hydropsycha species caddis, because they're definitely the most widely distributed. Not only here in the east, but across the country. So I would have to put that one at number one just because of probability and the

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm.

Henry Ramsay: Really extended emergence that's measured in months rather than weeks or days like the green drake for instance. Um,

D. Roger Maves: Right.

Henry Ramsay: Yeah. Number two, I would probably have to say the sulfur, because when you look at streams here in the east, and I'll pick on the Juniata River or uh, the little Juniata River, I'll pick on the Lackawanna River.

Two streams that were severely compromised by point source pollution for decades. And, you know, as these streams have cleansed themselves, have, you know, upgraded sewage treatment facilities and things of that nature, one of the first mayflies to [00:20:00] repopulate a stream or, or to ones we categorically referred to as sulfurs.

So we find those in streams that are uncompromised as well as ones that are heavily compromised. Those would definitely rank as the big two

Going beyond that, March Brown's pretty widely distributed, mayfly very common, brings a lot of big fish up to the top. They seem to thrive rather well in a lot of different streams.

Even ones that have been slightly compromised by industry or agriculture. Cahills would be another one that would fall into that bucket. Very adaptable, very common. I was doing some research for the new presentation. I'm gonna premiere in a couple weeks at mainline fly tiers. And you know, when you look at the bugs that we call Cahill, so there's better than two dozen species, and Stenonema, Stenacron and [00:21:00] Maccaffertium that we would all call a cahill if we caught one in our hand along the creek. So we're at four, right?

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: Midges?

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm.

Henry Ramsay: Can play a key role at certain times of the year, even on streams that have been heavily compromised. Chironomids are pretty adaptive to mild pollution, don't require as much dissolved oxygen as some of the more sensitive species. And the last one's not even a bug, I mean an aquatic insect, uh, ants.

D. Roger Maves: Ants.

Henry Ramsay: They're everywhere. They're, they're on nearly every continent of the world. They play such a key role throughout the year. And if you wanna see evidence of that be on the water when there's a flying ant hatch, because, uh, trout gets single-minded like teenagers and.

If you don't have a flying ant pattern in your box, you might as well just tuck your rod under your arm and, and enjoy the show because they, uh, trout really [00:22:00] key on, hard on ants. And I carry ants all year round.

D. Roger Maves: You know, you're not the first person that's mentioned ants, but I don't see people fishing with them a lot. I think it's kind of a underrated insect.

Henry Ramsay: Not in Pennsylvania, Roger.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, everybody's,

Henry Ramsay: No, no, not in PA because I know there's people on here from all over the place. But when you look at, at most of the really great ant patterns, they were born here in Pennsylvania. When you're going back to Bob McCafferty with the, the hard shell lead ants, it's a wet fly with lacquered segments and a soft hackle. I still fish those all the time. It's a remarkable fly.

Marinello, you look at the McMurray ant, Tommy Bolts ties a fantastic parachute ant pattern. A lot [00:23:00] of the great ant patterns found their birth year in PA, Marinello and, and Fox talked at them about the importance of ants at length. So we take them pretty serious here in PA. If you look at matching, we talk about all these different color variants, redheaded ants, cinnamon ants, black ants, carpenter ants.

Some of us tie 'em bright fire engine rig, and they all have a place and there's never a bad day to fish an ant and even, I don't know if you remember, uh, Ken Miyata

D. Roger Maves: Uhhuh.

Henry Ramsay: He used to write for fly fisherman mag. He did an article back in the 1980s about anting the hatch.

D. Roger Maves: Anting the hatch,

Henry Ramsay: And wrote a really brilliant piece on that.

And that inspired me when I was a younger guy and I still listen to that and I've done my own experiments fishing, uh, trico spinner falls, and just fishing [00:24:00] ants during a trico spinner fall

and something completely different from those tens of thousands of spinners on the surface. And those trout will take that ant without hesitation even when they're looking at a pattern target image of tens of thousands of cookie cutter bugs in the film.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah,

Henry Ramsay: They'll take that in.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Interesting. Yeah. Well, we need to take a quick break here, Henry. We will be right back and we will dive deeper into the eastern hatches of, uh, yeah. United States here. So hang tight. We will be right back.

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We'll receive your question immediately, we'll try to answer as many of them as possible on the show tonight.

Okay. Uh, Henry, I always ask my guests what's going on in your fly fishing world? And so tell us what are you up to now this?

Henry Ramsay: Ooh. Well, if you live in Pennsylvania, we've had the worst of summers. I think it began sometime in early June where it seemed like it either rained or it was a hundred degrees, or both nonstop. So it really, I had fished [00:26:00] pretty extensively.

I really, really love the early stone flies, one of my first hatches. You know, it's cold, it's nasty, but it's fun. It was a lot of fun, this year I did a trip out to Utah, camped along the Green River, spent a couple days float fishing there. I spent some time fishing the Provo, unbelievable baetis olive fishing out there.

Just so cool to watch. 18, 20 inch, 21 inch fish coming up, feeding on size 18 and 20 baetis olives we're in the middle of the day. We had a wonderful time with that. I got to catch, uh, my first Bonneville cutthroat on a little mountain stream in Utah, waiting through about a, a foot of snow, which was a remarkable experience.

Um, did some really good fishing in northern and central Pennsylvania. [00:27:00] Packed up a wet tent more times than I really like to pack up a wet tent, but really good fishing there. Got to spend

some time up in, uh, the Catskills, exploring some new waters up there, and then there was a heat and the rain, it's nonstop. Just seemed to put things on hold for a while. Some smallmouth fishing in the month of August and right now.

I'm in the process of finalizing a new presentation. Like I said earlier, I'm gonna roll out for the first time at a mainline fly tiers down in the Philadelphia PA area. Later this month, I've got a presentation at my home to chapter, getting ready in between all of that for a trip to Idaho in a few weeks, be going out and camping on the St. Joe River up in the panhandle.

This'll be my third time doing that trip. [00:28:00] So there's a lot of stuff. Building a presentation is pretty labor intensive, especially from a, a photography standpoint to not only get the bugs, but the fly patterns. I like to not just talk about taxonomy and show pictures of insects, but I like to do a segment I call what's in my fly box, where I talk about the patterns that I. Rely on for all the different hatches that I cover in the program.

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm.

Henry Ramsay: So, yeah, I was just shooting some images earlier tonight to make that visually appealing for my audience. So, uh, yeah, it's exciting. When I come back from Idaho, I'm looking forward to doing at least one or two more camping trips up to northern PA.

I really, really love fishing for a native brook trout up in the mountains. I have my little one man tent, a really simple [00:29:00] camping set up, and I go back in the middle of nowhere and live like a caveman for three or four days and drive home and shave and get dressed up and go back to the office.

But, uh, so a lot of good things to look forward to.

Whiskey and wood smoke. A lot of that

D. Roger Maves: Whiskey and woods smoke. Yeah. Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: Whiskey and wood smoke be a lot of that coming up in October.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Cool. Cool. Well, good, good. Sounds, sounds, sounds like you've been busy and gonna be busy, so, um, yeah, good luck with your next presentation there. Sounds like a

Henry Ramsay: Thank you

D. Roger Maves: Winner.

Okay. You've got Tucker Mc Elroy in Chicago wrote and he says, do you think that more emphasis should be placed on fly fishermen being able to identify nymph and pupa stages of may flies and caddis flies? And then he just comments besides knowing the general type, clinger, swimmer, crawler burrower, it would be worth it to fly fishermen if they could pick up a rock.

They would not only know the type, but what the adult would [00:30:00] be. So what, what are your thoughts on identifying all those stages when you talked about lifestyle? Like a little bit, but

Henry Ramsay: Tucker's a man after my heart. Okay. Because if you ever, ever come to one of my presentations, it's something that I talk about, you think about this thing let's you know, let's take the beginning of the month of the May, the start of the holy season.

If you go into a healthy trout stream and pick up a stone, it's covered with bugs. So how do you know which bugs are relevant at the time? And um, I try to show in my photographs how to determine what's a mature versus an immature larva. And the whole key is looking at wing cases, whether it's a stone fly or a caddis or a caddis fly or a mayfly.

When those wing cases turn black things are getting ready to happen. And those are the bugs that you really should be starting to think [00:31:00] about. I'm gonna fish in nymph and what's gonna be starting to pop tonight or in the middle of the day, what bugs are gonna be hatch and it's gonna be those larva forms that are getting blackened wing cases.

Ones that are more blended in with the rest of the body color are not ready to pop yet. So yeah, that's a great question, Tucker, when you begin

D. Roger Maves: There, there, you're talking about Henry. Henry, you're talking about they being able to predict the next stage then and be ready for that because rather than wait for it to happen and then react. Right?

Henry Ramsay: Right, right, right.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: So that's a great thing and, and really it is, uh, an interesting thing to be able to pick up a rock and be able to isolate and understand that the crawlers are usually gonna be hendricksons or sulfur, something to that effect. The [00:32:00] flattened crawlers are usually either going to be Quill Gordon, March Brown, something that we would call a cahill later on.

So understanding, making that correlation is really worthwhile. When I go to a new stream, I wanna learn that water. So, you know, I am one of those geek kind of guys that's, uh, leans his rod up against the tree and picks up some stones to see what's going on there. And it's really cool to be able to see that. And I can tell you, like for, uh, Keystone fly fishing was a great example of that because I had to go back and revisit streams that I fished, in my youth, some of those streams were really heavily compromised by point source pollution from paper mills and things of that nature, agriculture, and, you know, to flip over a strip, uh, rock and say, wow, you know, this creek is on the mend.

To see the diversity of bug life [00:33:00] that didn't exist there, you know, when I was a younger guy, is a remarkable thing. And to be able to say, yeah, that's March Brown nymph, that's a sulfur nymph, that's a golden stone fly nymph is uh, it definitely enriches the experience and

D. Roger Maves: Yeah,

Henry Ramsay: Like I said earlier, you can really help set up your success, being able to better predict what's gonna happen that day or within the next couple days on a creek.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah. Question from Jason Stacy in Kentucky he says, when matching a hatch, do you prefer to fly as a direct match or more of a general look fly?

Henry Ramsay: Yeah, that's the funny question. I really appreciate the question. Jason.

When you look at my patterns, one of the things that is kind of a funny note for me, I grew up learning to tie.

Studying people like Paul Jorgensen and Chauncey [00:34:00] Lively who were remarkable tiers. And they were going down this path of pairing feathers, burning feathers, or cutting feathers to shape, to create these defined wing on mayfly patterns, for instance. So I went down that rabbit hole as well. The flies were cool. They were beautiful, they worked.

They didn't always fish that well, they didn't cast well, worth a darn. But, along comes CDC, and I'm looking at this material and it creates this really vague thing, you know? So when you look at my patterns, you see that I try to match the body colors, the tails, the legs, and that thing with the hackle.

But then I throw in this shapeless thing when the form of CDC feathers, because CDC moves, it's a neat materials. I'd like to, I would like to say, Jason, that my patterns are kind of like a mix, if [00:35:00] that makes sense.

Because there's elements that are really a close match, but then other things that are more vague in nature, you certainly don't need to go down that path of making flies that are exact imitations.

But it's a cool thing. I just enjoy the heck out of that, and maybe that's just the tier geek in me more so than the angler geek. Maybe that's the way that that manifests itself. Yeah, but I get it.

D. Roger Maves: Okay.

Henry Ramsay: The whole thing of impressionism is, uh, is a cool perspective. I like to go a little bit more specific than impressionistic.

D. Roger Maves: We've got a couple questions that came in here on the internet. Dan Canali in Rockwood Ontario says, are comparadun the same as haystacks?

Henry Ramsay: No, they're not. The original haystack was the inspiration for the comparadun. [00:36:00] So I mean, they're very close to one another. One, one, the comparadun was inspired by the haystack, and Fran Betters was a fascinating man.

Yeah, he had some, uh, pretty cool thoughts on tying flies that would float well in the Ausable River. He tied a fly that floated, was highly impressionistic, and Coochy Anastasi took that to a higher degree, making it more customized with colors to imitate different species. Whereas Fran basically tied one iteration, as far as I'm aware, the more nondescript pattern called the haystack.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Okay. Another question from. Phil in, uh, Kentucky again, he says, how important do you find understanding insect hatches when going after smallmouth instead of trout? Is it understanding the role [00:37:00] of minnows in the watershed is, is as important as the role of insects?

Henry Ramsay: No. And it's funny, I don't know if my friend Brian Shoemaker's on here or not, Brian's a smallmouth guide in central PA and Brian will tell you that in his opinion, smallmouth bass are more intelligent than trout.

So him and I have good gentlemanly disagreements about that. You know, smallmouth bass are funny. I've never found them, they can be fickle, they can be particular, but I find that they can be more particular about presentation more than they are about pattern.

Like, uh, I love to fish the top quarter game for bass. It's visual. It's a cool thing to watch the reaction to the fly and the presentation of the fly, but there's a time to make noise and there's a time to let that fly be quiet.

I can tell you on the last trip that I did, if that fish didn't hit a pop or [00:38:00] within the first two to three strips of the fly, they were never gonna take it. It was like a reactive kind of thing. But I've never found smallmouth to be selective to an invitation of a particular minnow or a particular bug. I know there's days that one color may tend to fish better than another color On that. The last two trips that I did, uh, chartreuse or blue were the two colors. There's other times that I go out that they definitely want a white fly or they want a black fly, but I have never found them to be selected toward a particular bait fish.

D. Roger Maves: Okay.

Henry Ramsay: Or a particular insect, not my experience.

D. Roger Maves: All right. Uh, another break here, Henry. We'll be right back.

Henry Ramsay: Okay.

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If you'd like to ask Henry a question, let's go to our homepage, fill out that form and [00:40:00] send it in. We'll try to get a answer tonight on the show.

Okay, Henry, let's talk about mayflies or hold it. Let's see. Okay, this is a follow up question from that Dan Canali, he says, Henry referred to a flattened crawler nymph. Did he mean a Clinger nymph?

Henry Ramsay: Yeah. Yeah, I meant a Clinger.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Alright. Okay. There you go. Man.

Henry Ramsay: When I said flattened, I apologize. I meant to say, you know, a clinger nymph you know, quill gordon, march brown cahill.

D. Roger Maves: Okay, good. So mayflies poster child of hatch matching, can you kind of walk us through the major mayfly species anglers should be know of on the eastern coast?

Henry Ramsay: Okay. Here in the east, the mayfly season usually kicks off with a little baetis olives and it's a, uh, a late winter early spring proposition cold water. So usually the middle of the [00:41:00] day, a small olive color mayfly, usually a size 18. There'll be a fall brood. That's a, a successive generation of the same species.

In the fall, we have some streams where we can find baetis olives, you know, with three different emergences throughout the year. So a very important bug sticking within the early season quill gordons on some of our streams that really have great water quality that can be an important bug. The little blue quill is one of my favorite early season emergences.

Uh, a little mahogany colored mayfly, usually a size. I always wish that we had like a true size 17 hook because they're like, uh, in between a 16 and an 18. So I usually air with an 18 unless the water's a little bit heavier and I'll fish with a bigger fly. Probably my favorite early season hatch would be the hendrickson beautiful bugs.

They [00:42:00] enjoy a pretty good distribution. They really start to bring a lot of nice fish are starting to look up about the time that the hendricksons come on. The hendrickson spinner falls can really be, uh, intense fishing. There's usually just this little bit of a lull between hendrickson's and then the march brown.

And the march brown is really starts to get bigger fish looking, top looking up. I can tell you with confidence that some of the best fish of the year for me are during the march brown. The sulfurs are usually starting to hatch around the same time. We've got a number of different species that we collectively refer to as sulfurs.

And like I said earlier, they're really widely distributed, more so than many other insects that are more environmentally sensitive. Cahills will start to show if you're fishing up in, uh, [00:43:00] the Pocono area of Pennsylvania up into the Catskills, the big cornuta olives can be some really exciting fishing. Isonychias, a slate drake whatever you want to call them. And of course the green drake, everybody gets excited and dreams about the green drake.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: And if you're on the water, you know, and it's a spectacle.

D. Roger Maves: It is, yeah.

Henry Ramsay: And I'm always amazed that during the green drake, it's uh. Everything in nature is there. The ducks, the crows, the, the merganser. Everybody's there at the water's edge to feed on those darn green drakes.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah,

Henry Ramsay: Everything comes to the water and a lot of anglers. So those would be the big ones.

D. Roger Maves: Okay.

Henry Ramsay: So there's a lot of lesser, the brown drake can be a wonderful experience if you're on streams that have, uh, populations like Kettle Creek, the Sinnemahoning, the Allegheny River, and then tricos.

And there was a time that I would be on [00:44:00] the water a couple mornings a week, or at daybreak for the trico hatch. I haven't admittedly put as much energy into that in recent years, but yeah, I've done quite a bit, quite a bit of trico fishing over the years. So that's, that's pretty much the biggies. There's a lot of lesser bugs that can play an important role here and there, but I've just taking the skim at the top.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. We've got a couple questions on emergers here, so maybe I'll just combine a couple questions here. How do you tell when trout are feeding on the emergers, and what's your approach to fishing the hatch when trout are selectively feeding emergers?

Henry Ramsay: That's a great question. It's a super techy question too. I, which I love, in my personal opinion, there's no discernible difference in the rise form between a trout that's eating emergers, [00:45:00] taking upright wing duns. They really, there's not like a visual key in say the rise form. Spinner rise form is remarkably different than a trout that's feeding on duns or emergers, but duns and emergers look the same.

It's really about observation, but a thing that I think is bears importance is understanding. The bugs themselves. There's some hatches where an emerger pattern really isn't as important as it is with others. But an observation of mine is that there's certain species that have more of a challenge with hatching, and some of that can be environmentally induced, like baetis olives.

They're hatching in cold weather. Sometimes it's snowing, sometimes it's raining, sometimes it's very cold. And so this slows down the process. [00:46:00] It slows down that emergence process that things don't happen rapidly. Cahills hatch very quickly. March Browns can hatch very quickly, but those little baetis olives really seem to struggle because of the temperature and the weather conditions.

So when I'm fishing the baetis olive hatch. Nine times outta 10, I'm gonna start with an emerger pattern, and if that doesn't pay off, I'll, I might switch to a, a thorax dun, for instance. And the other hatches where I see that same kind of challenge would be anything ephemera. So think about Hendrickson's, think about sulfurs, think about PMDs in the west.

I really have no clue as to the why. I wish I understood that more and could convey that. But those three species seem to have more struggles than other species during emergence. So there [00:47:00] seems, in my opinion, an observation to be more casualties. So we talk about stillborns, we talk about stuck in the shuck kinds of things.

I have a collection of images that I've shot of Hendricksons that are stuck in the shock or crippled flies. And I really don't understand why. I've also photographed a lot of ephemera nymphs where you could see some kind of a defect in the larva that more than likely impacted their ability to have a successful emergence fly away and fall in love.

So there's certain hatches where I know instinctively my first reaction is gonna be to put on an emerger pattern rather than a dun. So I don't know if that's helpful or not. I wish I had some kind of empirical, you know, knowledge, statistics to wow the heck [00:48:00] out of people with, but I can tell you that certain bugs have, uh, more challenges than others. And I generally just start my fishing with an emerger pattern right off the bat.

D. Roger Maves: Would you ever fish a cripple with, uh, an emerger? At the same time,

Henry Ramsay: Um, I have, I have this pattern I came up with years ago and I call it a DOA cripple. And it's basically a dun pattern tied on a curve shank hook with more of a down wing. It has a trailing shuck on it. So what combines those elements of a partially emerged insect.

I have another emerger pattern. The DOA wasn't in matching. If we ever do a revision, I definitely want to do a chapter on the DOA cripple because it's, uh, it's a money fly for me and a lot of my friends and customers that buy them.

[00:49:00] The other one would be my half and half, which is, uh, just as it says, it's a pattern that's, uh, kind of like a freeze frame of a partially emerged mayfly. During those sulfur PMD Hendrickson hatches, that's usually one of the first patterns I tie on, that or the DOA cripple. And so I try to make the patterns imitate that partially emerged thing or that bug that's kind of been beat up in the process.

We were doing this with video content. I could show you and explain it a little bit better.

D. Roger Maves: Uhuh. Yeah. Yeah. Gary Kaufman wrote in and says, and he's from North Carolina, he says, regarding multiple flies, what condition determined the setup that you use, and do you use multiple flies?

Henry Ramsay: I don't use multiple flies from the [00:50:00] perspective of multiple species, so this is a beautiful question.

I always tell people, you can blow whatever you wanna blow on a fly rod. And I'm as guilty as many of spending a lot of money on a really good fly rod and, uh, a nice reel to attached to the darn thing.

But the best thing is what God gave is your eyes spending time watching fish some of the more technical waters. When I think of streams like the Henry's Fork, which I absolutely love to fish, the west branch, east branch of the Delaware, you know, some of these Penns Creek, you know, these places are bug factories and it's not an uncommon thing to have three or four bugs hatching concurrently. And you, you're stuck with this really cool thing of saying, which bug?

So I always tell people, just stop casting. Just take five minutes and stop casting. And you may have to do this on each fish that you [00:51:00] target, but stop and just watch that fish and look at the rise form. So I'm talking about focusing rather than just scatter gun, putting a fly all over a pool, hoping for a victim.

If you ever went hunting for geese, you know, you target one goose in the flock and not the flock when you pull the trigger,

D. Roger Maves: Right? Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: So I do the same thing when I fish a technical stream with, uh, multiple hatches. I'm looking at a fish, studying that fish studying its rise form. And what does it take? Is it chasing a swim up pupa and ignoring those green drakes? That happens all the time on Penn's Creek. Is it a casual sipping kind of thing? What's going on with the rise form of that particular fish? And then trying to winnow that down. Now, one thing that I'll often do is fish dry dropper during the march brown, a sulfur.

I might have a thorax dun [00:52:00] and a foot or a foot and a half, a tippet and a nymph pattern, or a soft hackle. So I'm trying to cover multiple stages of a given bug.

D. Roger Maves: Right.

Henry Ramsay: You know, and it's that thing of, you know, it's like a murder scene. You have to use some process of elimination, but it starts with just stop casting for a few minutes and watch, just look.

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm.

Henry Ramsay: And you might see a clue, you might see a bubble in the rise that tells you something. It may be something in the rise form. You might actually watch a bug disappear into a fish's mouth. And when you crack that code, man, there's not a better feeling if you've been working a fish and getting worked over by that fish and you finally cracked that code.

Oh my God, that's fantastic. That's, that's the stuff that I spent all winter dreaming about. And I know I'm not the only person on this call that has had that same experience when it all comes together.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Yeah, let's talk about caddis flies here [00:53:00] for a few minutes.

Henry Ramsay: Okay.

D. Roger Maves: Caddis flies often confuse anglers compared to may flies.

What key differences should we focus on when, when we're into a caddis fly hatch as opposed to mayflies?

Henry Ramsay: This is beautiful because I, I was reading the questions in advance of tonight's call and is really interesting. A story came to mind fishing October caddis on the St. Joe River in Idaho a few years ago, three of us fishing together a pool with rising fish everywhere.

And when we're fishing together as a group like that, we play this game of taking turns. One guy gets to fish for a little while and then we go through a rotation and we were all kind of getting schooled by these fish and rises everywhere, they're not eating dry flies, right? You can tell they're eating October caddis. It was the only bug on the water. And uh, so it's this thing of like [00:54:00] trying all these different October caddis patterns and nothing. And then it was funny, I was being a smart alec and I said to my buddies, I said, you know, guys, you just have to kind of conjure. You have to conjure a take. And I had a really big partridge and orange soft hackle in my box and went to the top of the pool instead of working from the bottom or the middle and started swinging this thing and caught a fish right off the bat.

So of course I said, see that guys? It's all powers of observation, blah, blah, blah. And they're like, okay, let's see. Do it again. And I did, and I caught another fish on the next cast. And that was it. One of the real challenges in a caddis emergence is really understanding, are they taking adults? Are they taking swim up pupa? Because the rises can look very, very similar, but they're really not. When you stop and your watch.

You don't see an air bubble. You [00:55:00] don't see a fish's head break the surface. A lot of times it's their tail that breaks the surface. They're following a swim up pupa and Pupa swim unbelievably fast. Uh, if you want proof, try to photograph one in a dish of water. They're scooting around like a motorboat.

So they'll chase a pupa up and they'll take it and turn. And sometimes when they break water, it's their dorsal fin, it's their tail, it's their back, and not their mouth. So a caddis hatch has that challenge that's always there. And I have to tell you, I think in the last five, six years or more, I've really changed gears on my caddis fishing.

I'm fishing old school north country spiders most of the time with amazing success. The flies, the way that you fish them, duplicates the, the illusion of a [00:56:00] pupa swimming to the surface to pop. You know, oftentimes they're taking it right at the end of the swing when the flies moving up through the water column to the surface and it's electric. It's fun, and the flies are beautiful and fun to tie. I still carry adult patterns and fish them extensively, but my default during caddis is to fish a soft hackle to imitate a swim up pupa.

D. Roger Maves: Interesting. Yeah. Yeah. What materials, you know, when you're talking about soft hackle and so forth, what materials do you like to use to create more lifelike, imitation, lifelike action.

Do you like CDC? Are there other materials you like?

Henry Ramsay: When I'm tying soft hackles.

I really kind of try to pay homage to those old tiers from the the 17 and 18 hundreds. So I really enjoy using those materials. It's a bit of tribute [00:57:00] in that, but those materials themselves are quite wonderful. I use a lot of partridge obviously, woodcock, coot has a big place in a lot of my soft hackled patterns. Starling, of course, but there's some other things that are wonderful. A Bob White Quail is a heck of a lot cheaper than Snipe and makes a pretty good imitation. Some of the different kinds of grouse, gamble's quail, California quail, I kind of like those more so than hen Hackle, and I probably tick off my people in the hackle industry.

I think they've ruined hen hackles. They're not soft and weddy anymore. They're like the rooster hackles that I was tying with when I was 10, 11 years old. They're glossy and I don't have as much web, so I really like land-based birds, game birds more than [00:58:00] anything else. I use chucker Partridge a lot, and of course silk thread is just such a cool medium to work with.

I use a lot of natural dubbings, use a touch dubbing technique to keep the dubbing really sparse so that you have that mixture of the silk color with the dubbing when it gets wet. I kind of really enjoy the alchemy of those kinds of patterns and pretty much stick with tradition. I don't do a lot of things like intermingling synthetics or bees or uh, CDC, you know, with soft hackle patterns.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Yeah. Okay. Okay. We're running short on time here, so let's talk about stoneflies. Now, first of all, that's something that's often overlooked in the east compared to the west. I know out here, I mean, I'm in Colorado and stone flies are a big thing out here. So what about eastern streams?

Henry Ramsay: Hmm, this is [00:59:00] a great question. I love this. We've got a lot of stoneflies out here, and they're important in different ways. We have the same Pteronarcys stoneflies here in the east that you have in the west to different species that are collectively known as golden stones we have those. The challenge is that they don't present themselves in.

Emergence density like you find on the Madison River with, uh, salmon flies, pteronarcys stoneflies. But here in the east, you can never go wrong fishing, a nymph imitation of any of those big stoneflies. And there's times where I do a little change up pitch and I'll fish like a big chubby chernobyl with a dropper net underneath it, and some faster water, and ones that look like a golden stonefly. Sometimes it works and [01:00:00] sometimes it doesn't work. But I play that once in a while. But the stoneflies that I really find to be important here in the east would be the early blacks and early brown stoneflies.

The main thing here in the east is that, you know, it's a closed season hatch. A lot of the streams that are stocked, you're not allowed to fish 'em during those months. But on the open streams. That are un stocked early black, early brown stoneflies can be absolutely electric. The fishing is phenomenal. It's cold. You know, it challenges me. I might fish an hour before my feet are numb and I'm back in the car warming up, and I'm back out then for a half an hour before my feet get numb. But I'll do that pretty religiously starting late January, right in the middle of the day when the water's, the

warmest. And the other one that really [01:01:00] is one of my favorite hatches among all is, uh, the yellow sally.

D. Roger Maves: Okay.

Henry Ramsay: What's remarkable here in our mountain streams across Northern Pennsylvania, they'll often start in late May, early June.

They'll hatching profusion just before dark, and it can be absolutely electric. And the other thing is that. Trout never seemed to get selective towards the yellow Sally. And even when we don't have those flies emerging in the evening, you can always find egg laying flies, mating flies that drop onto the water, fall into the water at any time during the day.

And you can't go wrong fishing a yellow sally is a search pattern anytime of the day from May through the summer months if you're fishing in the mountain streams, Northern PA, the Catskills. And in fact, my very first original pattern [01:02:00] was my yellow Sally that I wrote a chapter on in Matching. We later did a piece in fly fisherman mag on that.

And that pattern goes back to 1983, remains unchanged, and I fish those things religiously. So stoneflies are important here in the east. Maybe not the same species that we fish in the West. The smaller stoneflies can be really relevant at a big golden stone or a black stonefly nymph is never ever a bad choice if you nymph fish.

D. Roger Maves: Are there any common mistakes that you see anglers make when fishing a stonefly hatch or things that you do a bit differently than maybe others?

Henry Ramsay: Mistakes in a stonefly hatch being unprepared, it's almost a pity in a way. You know, mayflies and caddis flies get all the glory and a stonefly [01:03:00] hatch here in the east is really not as high on everybody's radar. So they get to the stream and they're unprepared.

And uh, you know, I've shared a stream with friends and all of a sudden we have a blizzard of isoperla yellow Sally's coming off and nobody has a fly. I got a box off 'em and I'm everybody's best friend in that moment. And so

D. Roger Maves: Yeah,

Henry Ramsay: That would be the big thing is being unprepared. And the other thing too, and this is interesting, when you look at an early black stonefly, they're black hence the name, right? And I see a lot of people tie that in a manner that imitates that fly at rest and imitates it by tying an all black fly, which sounds great, right? Cast that thing 25 feet and try to see it on the water.

You can't see a black fly and you cast it 25 feet out unless the light's just perfect. And the other thing [01:04:00] that's really important, Roger, is that when you watch those early stone flies on the water, they're never at rest.

They're having a heck of a time getting off the water so they're fluttering and skittering and moving.

So I purposely time mine kinda like a double wing type thing that I can skitter it. I can add some movement to the fly and trigger a strike and use a lighter colored material for the wings so that I can see the darn thing when I cast it 25 or 35 feet. So that's a big mistake, is that thing of being unprepared or tying a fly that looks like a fly at rest when those flies are never restful.

D. Roger Maves: Never restful. Okay, great, great. Good tips.

Midges, what situations make Midge imitations indispensable on Eastern waters?

Henry Ramsay: That's a great question. I do fish midges. [01:05:00] I don't fish 'em as much as I could, but. I can tell you in the colder months, chironomids play a huge role. We don't have a lot of bugs coming off as far as mayflies, and we don't have caddis flies that are coming off in cold weather.

But chironomids will hatch on a 40 degree afternoon in January, may only be an hour or 45 minutes, but it can sometimes be perfused enough to get fish starting to come up and sip midges on the surface. So I'll play that game when I get tired of looking out and sitting in the house and tying flies and dreaming about fishing. I don't do it as much as I could.

But, uh, another method, another time for me, beyond the cold weather, sometimes in the summer months, like right after our trico spinner falls are done for the morning. [01:06:00] It will often be followed by, uh, some midge activity, some caddis activity. So I'll spend another hour or so on a stream, oftentimes dropping a Midge Pupa under an adult caddis fly.

And, uh, I tag a lot of fish with that method as well. Some of our streams that are really heavily pressured sometimes force fish to adapt to feeding behaviors that are more protective. So I'll pick on the little Lehigh up in the Allentown Bethlehem area, it's a stream that flows right through an urban greenway, the middle of the city.

And a lot of people fish the little Lehigh, rightly so. It's a, it's a great stream, has a lot of historic value, generalizing ring and others, and those trout will focus on the tiniest things under the sun. In the name of protecting [01:07:00] themselves from anglers. Uh, so you can get into a lot of neat fun, uh, you know, fish and technical, you know, midge pupa patterns, midge larva patterns if you like fishing in size 24, 26 on seven x eight x.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: It's like running a vacuum cleaner. I do it when I have to

D. Roger Maves: Uhhuh.

Henry Ramsay: It's not something I my

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, not your preferred to.

Henry Ramsay: You know what I mean?

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: So,

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: Good question though.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Yeah, yeah. One last one here for you. How do you adjust your fly selection when conditions are tough and trout are ignoring the, the traditional hatch patterns?

Henry Ramsay: Can you repeat that please?

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. How do you adjust your fly, fly selection when conditions are tough and trout are ignoring the traditional hatch patterns?

Henry Ramsay: Ooh.

That's a really interesting question. There's some [01:08:00] hatches that, that I fish on. More technical waters where, um, I might carry, uh, a wider assortment of sizes being a really big thing.

A lot of times official refuses 16, but take an 18. So being aware of that and having a range of fly sizes can be one thing. And then looking at, at some of the hatches, you know, like the sulfur and the baetis olive, for instance, I carry a huge array of sizes, colors, and shapes, and, the sulfurs can range in color from really pastel yellow to a rusty orange color can be present in sizes from 14 to 20, can have both duns, cripples, emerges on the surface at the same time.

So in some of those cases, I carry a pretty wide range. [01:09:00] When I fish PMDs out west, I have a box of nothing but PMD patterns in all different shapes and sizes. Uh, and then, uh, and then the thing in there is don't be afraid to throw a change up pitch in there. I mean, baseball pitchers have it nailed down. You just don't throw a fast ball every time at somebody. Sometimes you have to throw a knuckle ball and just kind of, that might be what it takes to strike out a batter or, uh, get a fish in the net. So never overlook having an an or two in your fly boxes.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah.

Henry Ramsay: When they're really being snotty, throwing the curve ball. Throw 'em an ant..

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Otherwise what you're saying is basically you try to come prepared with a lot of the options for the hatch at hand, and try to work that hatch as much as possible and try to dial it in.

Henry Ramsay: Yeah.

D. Roger Maves: And then if it is not happening, then uh, yeah, then go to the ant, which is uh, or a beetle, [01:10:00] right?

Henry Ramsay: A beetle. Yeah. Yeah. I'm just digging that after I stop talking. At the end of the day, it's ask yourself, why are you doing this? And we don't call it catching, we call it fishing. Right?

D. Roger Maves: Right.

Henry Ramsay: And some days we get schooled and uh, you know, we go home and it's like you're cursing under your breath and you sit down and you take a fly pattern and you make a little minor revision to it, and you go out the next day and it works.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Henry Ramsay: So that's what this thing is all about. It's the learning, the relearning. That challenge and understand we're not gonna catch every fish. And you know what? I don't think it's healthy to catch every fish. Fly fishing should be something that's always at arms length or just outta your reach. It should be challenging.

D. Roger Maves: Sure. A little challenge. Yeah. Should be challenging. Yeah. That's why we do it. So.

Henry Ramsay: Amen.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. If you caught a fish on every cast, it would get boring real quick.

Henry Ramsay: Uh, I'd take a golf [01:11:00] or pickleball or something else.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. So, yeah, yeah, yeah. Golf is maybe a, a close second to being challenging. I'm not a golfer, but it seems like, uh,

Henry Ramsay: No, I'm not off.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah. There's um, some funny comedy routines that are out there about golf anyways, trying to hit that little ball, all those yards down to get in one single little hole, you know, so,

Henry Ramsay: Mm-hmm.

D. Roger Maves: Sometimes fly fishing seems easier, but, uh, I don't know. I'm not a golfer. Anyway, we've run out of time, but when we return, we're gonna give away a few prizes, a one year membership to Fly Fishers International, a one year membership to Trout Unlimited. And we're also giving away one of Henry's books, A Matching Major Eastern Hatches, courtesy of Stackpole books. And we have that right on our website, a link to that book if you want. You don't win, and you should go get a copy of it if you're fishing on the East. And, uh, want some exciting, well uh, design patterns, uh, check out Henry's book. So, um, [01:12:00] hang tight and we'll give those away in just a moment.

The Bonefish and Tarpon Trust works very hard to safeguard the future of our beloved flats fisheries from protecting spawning sites like threatened by unsustainable fishing pressure to securing historic funding to restore Florida's Everglades and estuaries.

Thanks to their members, they've expanded their conservation to The Bahamas, Belize and Mexico. There's still much more work to be done, and they need your help with your support, they can ensure that the flats fishery is healthy and sustainable now and for generations to come. Visit btt.org and become a member of the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust today. Again, that's btt.org.

Just a quick reminder to everyone, before you leave the website tonight, please take a minute and give us your feedback about the show to find a link on our homepage in the section under tonight's show that says, what'd you think of the show? Just click on that link and leave your comments. We'd really appreciate it.

Now it's time to give away our prizes. The winners for our drawings are randomly selected from our show's [01:13:00] registration database. If you didn't register for tonight's show, it's too late now, but make sure you do so for our next show so you don't miss out on a chance to win one of these prizes.

Okay, so the first thing we're giving away is, oh and if you are one of the lucky winners who contact you after the show to collect your information so that we can deliver the prize to you. So first, we're giving away a one year membership to Fly Fishers International. And to learn more about FFI, go to flyfishersinternational.org, flyfishersinternational.org. So now let's see, our winner for that is Gary Kaufman. Gary Kaufman in North Carolina. I believe Gary. Yeah. Gary asked a question tonight. So congrats Gary. I'm sure you'd be happy to enjoy your membership to FFI.

And now, uh, one year membership to Trout Unlimited. Learn more about Trout Unlimited, go to tu.org, tu.org. And both these organizations, if you don't win tonight, go support 'em. They help all of us, uh, with our fly fishing efforts and, [01:14:00] uh, conservation. Our winner for that is, let me see here it is. Joshua Fair. Joshua Fair? Or Ferrer in Pennsylvania. Oh, a neighbor of yours there, Henry.

Henry Ramsay: Former coworker of mine.

D. Roger Maves: Oh, he is?

Henry Ramsay: Yeah. Yeah.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Okay. Well congrats to Joshua and, uh, you know, as, uh, one of your membership to Trout Unlimited.

And now we'll give away, let me clear my queue here. Make sure there's no more questions hanging out there. Okay. One last question here. I'll throw it in 'cause I missed it. Uh, Dan Canelli, how important is the Mayfly spinner falls to the trout angler?

Henry Ramsay: Oh my gosh, critical.

D. Roger Maves: Keep it short,

Henry Ramsay: Critical. I mean, spinners are amazing. You think about this, most of our spinner falls, I should say most, many of our spinners fall on the water just [01:15:00] before dark. It's a magic

hour because it oftentimes a lot of really good sized fish come up. They have a predictable stream of food coming at them.

And what's more important than anything else is most of the predators that come after trout or on the roost, you know, the eagles,

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm.

Henry Ramsay: The osprey, the kingfishers, are no longer flying up and down the creek. So it's a safe witching hour. And I can tell you, I have caught so many big fish on spinners just before dark. I mean, I wish I had time to share some of those stories, but spinners are critical and so often overlooked by anglers that they're huge. And the beauty is that a lot of bugs will fall into a couple different colors when they mold into spinners.

A [01:16:00] rusty spinner. If you're only gonna carry one man, carry a rusty spinner in a bunch of sizes from 12 down to 20. And you can't go wrong with that. They're just, they're tough to see. And a lot of anglers overlook 'em because they're busy casting and not watching the water.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. Good. A little closing tip there for you folks, thanks to Henry, but let's give away Henry's book Matching Major Eastern Hatches courtesy of Stackpole books.

So I'm gonna ask a question, the first person to answer correctly, using that text box on our homepage, put in your name, your location, and your answer, and you'll win Henry's book Matching Major Eastern Hatches.

Okay. Henry mentioned his favorite early season hatch, which mayfly is that? Early season hatch with his favorite early season hatch.

So, uh, Henry takes a few seconds for them to hear that 'cause there's a slight [01:17:00] delay and then they have to type and then we get their answers. So we'll hang tight here while, uh, and keep pressing the refresh button until we get an answer. Come on here. Come on. Somebody's gotta know it. Oh, I think the first person that got it.

Let's see here. Yeah, Steven, well, Steven Sykes wrote in Hendrickson

Henry Ramsay: Winner winner chicken dinner.

D. Roger Maves: There you go. There you go Steven. Okay. Congratulations paying attention. That wasn't an easy, I mean that you only mentioned that once, so I'm impressed Steven. Paying attention.

Steven, in that same text box, send me your shipping address so we can get that over to Stackpole and get a book shipped out to you.

I've got your name, I've got your email. I just need your shipping address and we'll get that done and uh, shipped out to you. So congrats and thanks for playing.

Henry, [01:18:00] hey, thanks so much, uh, appreciate you being on with us tonight and sharing your knowledge. I don't even think we broke the surface, no pun intended, of, of your knowledge bank, but sure appreciate what you're able to share with us in the short time we had with you.

Henry Ramsay: Oh, it was a treat. It was a treat to be here, so thanks so much. You know, I'm honored to be on here. It's always cool to talk about fishing and bugs, uh, with like-minded people, so thank you so much.

D. Roger Maves: You're welcome.

Hopefully you've all found a podcast archive on our website. If you haven't, just look for the link on the top line of our menu. In that archive, you'll find all of our past shows, I think over 425 shows now, which you can search by keyword or keyword phrase like trout, tarpon, you know, mayflies, whatever. And I'm sure you'll be pleasantly surprised at what you find out there in our archive.

Our next broadcast will be on September 24th, 7:00 PM Mountain 9:00 PM Eastern, and on that show I'll interview Aaron Jasper.

Aaron's been on a show multiple times, by the way, so you can search him in the archive and see what [01:19:00] past shows he's been on with us. This coming show is gonna be, Fly Fishing Is More Than Euro Nymphing.

Euro Nymphing may dominate the rivers, but it's only part of the story join. Aaron. As he reveals why being a versatile angler makes fly fishing more rewarding and more productive from lessons learned over 44 years on the water to the balance between numbers and trophy fish to his top five insights. From 2025, Aaron's gonna share his wisdom that will help you catch more fish and deepen your love of the sport. Be sure to add this upcoming show to your calendar by just clicking that. Add the calendar button below his picture on our homepage, and then you'll be reminded and uh, be there for the live show.

We'd like to thank Fly Fishers International, Trout Unlimited, Bonefish and Tarpon Trust, Olympic Peninsula Skagit Tactics and The Ugly Bug Fly Shop, and also Water Master for sponsoring our show tonight.

Don't forget to visit our website at askaboutflyfishing.com and make sure you signed up to receive our announcements so you don't miss out on any of our future [01:20:00] live broadcasts.

Thanks for listening to Ask About Fly Fishing Internet Radio. We hope you enjoyed the show. That's it. Goodnight everyone and good fishing.