

Chasing Trout in the Chill - Beating the Cold and Catching More

With Jason Randall

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, our host for tonight's show. On this broadcast, we'll be featuring Jason Randall and he'll be answering your questions on Chasing Trout in the Chill - Beating the Cold and Catching More.

This show will be 90 minutes to length and we're broadcasting live over the internet. If you'd like to ask Jason a question, just go to our homepage at askaboutflyfishing.com and use that 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 broadcasts. 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 podcasts. So if you [00:01:00] have to leave early, you can return to 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 would sure appreciate it if you'd share a podcast. And when you do use hashtag, ask about fly fishing and hashtag fly fishing. In fact, if you have a moment while you're listening to the show, you can do it then and we'd really appreciate it. The content of this broadcast is copyrighted and the property of The Knowledge Group, Inc. doing businesses Ask About Fly Fishing. When we return, we'll be talking with Jason Randall about Chasing Trout in the Chill.

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Before we introduce Jason, 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 and fill out the form, and we'll announce the winners at the end of the show.

We'll also be giving away a book courtesy of Stackpole Books. It's gonna be one of Jason's books, and we're gonna let you pick from one of his three books, and that will be the prize. Now here's how you can win. You must be the first person to answer the question that I ask at the end of the show. And the question will be something that Jason and I talk about during the show.

So take good notes, pay [00:03:00] attention, and when the time comes, submit your answer along with your name and location, using that text box on our homepage and type fast. That's all I can say because the first person in, will get to win one of Jason's great books.

Tonight our guest is Jason Randall. Jason is a veterinarian certified in Fish Health and Medicine. He is also a member of the World Aquatic Veterinarian Medical Association and Society for Freshwater Science. He has been an outdoor writer for the last 10 years with articles appearing regularly in American Angler, Eastern Fly Fishing, and many other outdoor magazines. His first book, Moving Water: A Fly Fisher's Guide to Currents was released in 2012 and it studies the effect of current on trout, their prey species and presentation where vertical layers of the current create drag and requires adjustments to improve nymph fishing success.

He published a second book Feeding Time: May Fly Fishers Guide To What, Where and When Trout Eat, and that focuses on matching your [00:04:00] fishing strategies, the trout's feeding strategies, especially when targeting large trout, because if you know the five W's for large trout feeding who, what, when and where and why, then you can catch them regularly.

And Jason also published an additional book, which was, uh, let's see, Jason, that was, uh, hold on.

Jason Randall: That was Trout Sense. And that was the third book in the trilogy. It's a fly fisher's guide trilogy. And so Trout Sense was a fly fisher's guide to what trout see here and smell. And then the fourth book that came out a few years later was Nymph Masters Fly Fishing Secrets of Expert Anglers.

D. Roger Maves: Right, right. So we've got three of those. I missed one of them on our website, so if you need to find out more information, you can find those on the right side of our homepage. But yeah, I mean, Jason's put a lot of words to paper, let's put it that way. And it's all good. It's all good. So, hey [00:05:00] Jason, welcome back to, uh, Ask About Fly Fishing. We've done a few shows with Jason over the years and they're always entertaining and enlightening and educational. So folks, um, you're in for a treat. So welcome Jason.

Jason Randall: Thanks Roger. It's great to be back. It's good to talk to you again. I look forward to seeing you at the Denver show. I think you've made it out there several times and, uh, we've been able to catch up a little bit out there.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, it's in my neck of the woods. I think the last one I was really sick and I didn't go up for any of it. So, but yes, this year I'm feeling, you know, pretty good. I just have to stay away from my grandchildren, you know, that's,

That's those little germ bugs, you know, they're just germ factories and every time I watch them, I, uh, I get sick it seems like. But, um,

Jason Randall: Yeah, they're like 3-year-old incubators.

D. Roger Maves: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. And I've got two, one that's one and one that's five. And they're right in the thick of it right now, so.

Jason Randall: Oh, that's a bad.

D. Roger Maves: But anyway,

Jason Randall: Yeah, same. Same.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. [00:06:00] Okay, good. So, uh, here we go. Yeah, we're talking about fishing in, uh, winter and I noticed there were some people that had sent in questions and stuff from Canada and Yeah, it's always a winter in Canada, I guess. Right?

Jason Randall: I was up in, in winter, I was up in Canada, I think it was in the summer though, and was fishing on the Bow River, which is a magnificent, magnificent fishery in, in Canada. And I noticed the, uh, guy on the radio, the news broadcaster said, well, hey, you know, there's two seasons in Canada. There's winter and July.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. I know. I grew up in Alaska, in Anchorage, and. It was a very short summer for us kids, but long days, but short summer. And I remember they had a graph in the Anchorage airport when you, you know, and it showed that the tour, it was kinda like a bell curve when the tourists came to Alaska [00:07:00] and it was like a flat, except for like.

June, July and August it went like, whoop, whoop, you know, up and down just for those months, and then that, that was it.

Jason Randall: Oh yeah. Hey, they get a bump up in March though, for the Iditarod. My wife and I, Joe, were up at the Iditarod several years back, veterinarian thing.

D. Roger Maves: Oh.

Jason Randall: It was an amazing experience. You learn so much and you talk about adaptation to needs. It was obviously cold there and those dogs are under such a tremendous subject column and physical demand. Yeah. The one I came home with after helping as a veterinarian at the Iditarod was the average intake of calories for those dogs that are on the trail. Do you have any idea what that might be, Roger? Understanding that the normal human consumption of daily calories is about 2,500. What would you guess for one of those sled dogs?

D. Roger Maves: Oh boy. I don't know. 3,500?

Jason Randall: Yeah. Would you believe [00:08:00] 12,000?

D. Roger Maves: 12,000? Oh my gosh.

Jason Randall: Yeah. 12,000. And so you talk about adapting to conditions. Yeah. Those dogs are consuming 10 to 12,000 calories a day, and it was an eye-opener.

That's the one thing I think I remember most about that Iditarod experience.

D. Roger Maves: Oh, nice, nice. Well, I wish trout were consuming those kind of calories a day. It would catch a lot more, wouldn't we?

Jason Randall: Well, you know what? The truth is that they wouldn't have that number of calories anywhere near available because the amount of food in the Winter River is tremendously different than that. What we see in the summer, in May and June, it's actually down, it's down by almost two thirds. So the amount of available food in the river goes down tremendously, and trout have to adapt to that. And their own metabolism changes drastically on water temperature too. So, you know, there's a balance there. And the more we understand that, the more predictable trout [00:09:00] become. And yes, we can definitely catch them in the winter.

D. Roger Maves: Was there a particular experience or observation that made you realize winter trout fishing required a whole different mindset?

Jason Randall: Well, like life's most effective lessons for me that it's always come with a dose of humility. And certainly my first expeditions to the Winter River were abysmal failures. And it wasn't until I put myself kind of in the position of the trout and understood the circumstances that they faced and how they adapted to that and the river, as we mentioned, so different than it is in the summer and how they had to respond to that.

So I think when I finally realized all that, then I found that yes, trout are pretty predictable in the way they respond. And they change, obviously, they change their locations, they change their feeding strategies. [00:10:00] And their whole priorities are much different in the winter than they are in the summer.

D. Roger Maves: What triggers them transition from uh, say their summer lies to their winter lies? 'cause they do move right to different parts.

Jason Randall: Oh yeah, they do. They do. And their priorities change as well. But the major trigger is gonna be water temperature, photo period would certainly have something to do with that as well available light has something to do with that as well. But I think, you know, if we look at just kind of some truisms, universal truth that trout really need three things from a feeding lie. They need food, obviously if it's, there's no food, there's not a feeding lie, they go to the feeding lie, like you go to the dinner table, they go there with the intent to eat, they look for reasons to eat that rather than reject it.

The next thing that they need from a feeding lie, since they are in stationary position, obviously they need something to bring that food to them, right? They need current [00:11:00] then to bring that food to that stationary position. And the third thing that they need. In a feeding lie is safety and protection. A certain amount of personal security in that position.

They don't want to end up being someone else's meal, so they wanna be safe. And that's kind of the ranking system that they use. And water temperature, that's a little bit warmer, say 55, 60, you know, in the low sixties. But when that water temperature falls below 50, they go into a an entirely different mode.

Remember again, that the amount of food that they have to eat, potentially eat is much less. Their metabolism is at a much lower level, and so they're not burning as much calories, but their priorities change. They're not on that aggressive feeding pattern. Food is not priority number one. In fact, priority number one is ...

Safety and protection. They just wanna [00:12:00] live through the winter. They don't wanna be a winner kill statistic. They know they're gonna lose condition and body mass in the winter. They just want to survive it. So they go into energy conservation mode. They're looking for slower, deeper water that offer a high degree of safety and protection.

They'll eat food if it's there, but their current preference also is gonna be much less. They don't wanna spend those extra calories. They want to have maybe deeper, darker, slower water. Worse food is still somewhat available.

D. Roger Maves: Now, am I correct that some trout will move upstream to find different lies, or is that, am I correct about that?

And if so, why? Or why not?

Jason Randall: Well, yeah, I think, you know, there's maybe a misconception that just that trout move upstream always in winter. But in fact, for those fall spawning species like brown trout and brook trout, they move up into their spawning habitat [00:13:00] in fall. And because the water is often warmer near the source, especially if it's spring source or you know, maybe from a tail water where that upstream water might be cold or it might be warmer in the colder temperatures of winter, they oftentimes stay there.

And so they go up perhaps to spawn and they just kind of hold over up there because of the warmer water. And so I think one of the strategies that we often hear is that we need to move upstream to that warmer water closer to the source.

D. Roger Maves: Hmm. Now I always wonder, you know, I look at streams here in Colorado and some of them are pretty skinny in the wintertime, and I'm like, how did these fish winter over? In fact, even just down here in the valley, it's called Deer Creek and it is just a little creek. I mean, most of it freezes over and I'm wondering where those, you know, there they've got brook trout in there, but I mean, I just don't [00:14:00] understand how they can make it through the winter, I guess, you know.

Jason Randall: Well, you know what, they, again, if you put yourself in their position from their perspective, just think of this, Roger, if you were outside in a snow storm, a blizzard, and, and you know, the temperature was falling and this, the wind was howling and you had put on as many layers of clothes as you had, and you were already shivering.

You know, if you found a place that was five or eight degrees warmer, you would immediately feel a little bit more comfortable and at ease. And if you could get out of the strong wind or in the trouts situation, the strong current, you would also feel some relief from that. And so I think for them, when they find those types of waters where it might be a few degrees warmer, there might be some relief from the current. Maybe it's by uh, a spring input or a ground seep where there's a little bit warmer water coming into the stream. Those are places [00:15:00] where I think you would typically

find trout, especially if there's the ideal kind of trout lies, where they're a little bit, maybe a little more concealed. A little darker water. Deeper water with that medium slow moving current.

I remember one time I was fishing up on the Ruby River. And there was a sign that said, warm Spring Creek. And the first thought that came into my mind is, oh, this would be a great place to fish just down below that in January or February. 'cause that is truly a warm spring coming in. Boy, that difference in water temperature would be a real relief for trout. And you know that trout are, they're called ectothermic. We are endothermic, meaning that we respond to changes or discomforts in temperature, thermal distress, if you will. We respond by shivering or we respond by sweating if we get hot.

Well, trout don't do that. And so the assumption then I think we sometimes erroneously [00:16:00] come to is the fact that they're indifferent to temperature. If they don't respond to it, they don't mind temperature change. Well, that's not true. They're very sensitive to temperature changes, but the way they respond is they just go seek out the warmest spot they can find with giving them the relief from that thermal stress.

So they're gonna find a little bit warmer water, get a little bit, you know, some relief from the strongest portion of current. And so, you know, I see people that are fishing in skinny, shallow riffles where the water's faster and in January or February and, and I've done that as well too in the past. But I think that's not the ideal position to find trout.

They change positions and locations in the river. And I think if we anticipate that, we know that then trout as a whole, not only just in winter, but as a whole, they become a little more predictable. And if they're more predictable, then they're more catchable.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. Well, leads me to [00:17:00] my next question of how can anglers identify warm groundwater seeps or springs that attract trout in the winter?

I mean, what you just described, warm springs. Uh,

Jason Randall: It helps if there's a sign.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: If there's a sign on the, on the road

D. Roger Maves: With three arrow arrows pointing and flash

Jason Randall: That right.

D. Roger Maves: Lights and

Jason Randall: Yeah, that helps.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. I've never been that lucky. Okay. So, um, yeah,

Jason Randall: Well I think you can identify warm water inputs in my streams here in Wisconsin.

I'll notice that there's ground seeps in areas where there is a influx of, uh, warmer water in the winter. Oftentimes those areas are. Maybe a little spongy when the rest of the ground is frozen solid. You can kind of perceive that walking on the bank. Sometimes you'll notice them, uh, because they'll have cattail and certain types of vegetation that will indicate that there is a [00:18:00] groundwater source there that's bringing a warmer water into the river.

Sometimes those areas too, like on a recent snow, you know, if the water temperature is in that 40 range and the ground temperatures, air temperature's all about freezing. But this one area. Is a little, if there's a new snow or something, that area has already thawed the snow and you don't see snow on that area, and that remains a little softer when you walk on it. I think those are clues, but also I think you can read the terrain too, and kind of notice where there's lower areas and you can get those telltales by vegetation as well. So you can tell, sometimes there's fog on the water too. There'll be just a little whisks of fog where that water temperature is just a little bit warmer in that area.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's interesting. Or maybe lack of ice if it's icing around the edges where there isn't ice, I suppose, and yeah.

Jason Randall: Yeah, yeah, that's true.

D. Roger Maves: I [00:19:00] think you had mentioned, I think in the article that you wrote about discharge zones appearing greener or where everything else is brown, or why does that happen and how reliable is that as a clue.

Jason Randall: Yeah, that's something I would normally see maybe in the summer months where things do get a little drier and the grass starts to brown out and you see one area where there's, uh, a little greener character to the vegetation, but also differences in character. I look for, you know, like water crust and some of those, you know, those small low vines that oftentimes are around groundwater inputs and those areas tend to stay a little greener than in the winter as fall goes into winter.

And they also, when the ground freezes up, those are the areas that tend to stay a little spongy underfoot. And I think we can identify 'em. If you know that river pretty well in the summer, you can kind of anticipate that too in the winter.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. Well, we need to take a quick break, but when we [00:20:00] come back we'll talk more about locating trout and uh, reading the water and so forth and so that we can catch more in the winter. So hang on folks and we'll be right back.

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You're listening to Ask About Fly Fishing Internet Radio, and we're talking with Jason Randall about Chasing Trout in the Chill - Beating the Cold and Catching More.

If you'd like to ask Jason a question, just go to our homepage at askaboutflyfishing.com and use the Q and A text box to send us your [00:21:00] question. We'll receive your question immediately and we'll try to answer as many of them as possible on the show tonight.

Jason, I always ask my guests what's going in your fly fishing world? And so, uh, yeah, kind of enlighten us as to what plans do you have over the winter here?

Jason Randall: Well, it's been a fun fall. I've been pretty busy doing a lot of fishing and I've got a school coming up in Missouri with a group called Fly Fishers at the Crossing, looking forward to that. And, uh, I just came back from a training clinic with the youth team USA and that was so much fun and very enlightening.

You go out there, I was invited out by Josh Miller, the coach of team USA youth, and uh, taught a few sessions and a couple programs, but, uh, you would learn so much. And I think that's the beauty of our sport is, is that you never quit learning. And so it was a great experience. Met a lot of wonderful young anglers and a lot of other instructors too, that shared information.

And it was just a [00:22:00] great experience, I think. I think that's really an important part of our sport. Yeah. You can always learn more and become a better angler because if you stop learning in our sport, you're the best angler at that point, you'll ever be.

D. Roger Maves: Plateaued. Right? Plateaued.

Jason Randall: Exactly. Exactly.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: And so it's been a fun fall. I've got the holiday period off. I'm gonna be off between Thanksgiving and Christmas, be celebrating with my family and, uh, enjoy.

D. Roger Maves: Nice.

Jason Randall: Um, that time. And then, uh, it's, uh, after the first few years back on the show and educational circuit.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Yeah. Are you gonna be out in Denver this year?

Jason Randall: I will be, I missed it. Last year, I, I was in Argentina, which is not a bad thing, but uh, I sure do miss that show. It's one of my favorites.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. I've got some friends going, I don't know, you may know, uh, Terry and Wendy Gunn.

Jason Randall: Mm-hmm.

D. Roger Maves: Down, they're going down to Argentina next week. I think so.

Jason Randall: Oh my goodness. Yeah. It's [00:23:00] beautiful. If you ever get a chance, if you haven't been or if you have been, it's a wonderful place.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. I'm going down there with them, but in the spring, but to, uh, Chile for some big brown trout, so.

Jason Randall: Oh, sounds great.

D. Roger Maves: Looking forward to that. Yeah. Yeah. Well, good. And now how, if people wanna follow you, uh, get a bit more of education from you, where's the best place to find you?

Jason Randall: Well, probably the best is just to hit me up on Instagram. It's @jasonrandallflyfishing, and I do post a lot of educational material on there, especially if there's something that we might discuss tonight. I might put up, you know, a relevant illustration or something, a photograph or something that might help explain anything that we might cover tonight.

And certainly in, in other educational programs. There's a lot of stuff on my Instagram site that is educationally oriented. You, you might see, you might see the odd picture, my dog or my [00:24:00] grandkids too. So you have to, you have to enjoy that as well.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Okay, good. Great, great. Well I look forward to seeing you in Denver, uh, this year or next year actually, the year's almost gone already. Right?

So back to our questions. What are the most common mistakes you see anglers make when they're trying to locate winter trout? You had mentioned the riffles. Yeah. Before.

Jason Randall: I think it's a habit. Yeah. A habit we all fall into is just to go back to our favorite spots. And, uh, spots where we've had success before.

And it might have been, you know, a spot that was really productive in May or June, but it's gonna be a ghost town perhaps in January or February. And just understanding how trout adapt to the winter conditions, how the river changes in the winter conditions. And I think that allows us to anticipate where we're gonna look for trout. It's, it's entirely different places than we might look for them or [00:25:00] find them in the summer. So typically I like to look at, in rivers, I like transition areas.

An area where there's an intersection of two water types. Maybe it's a tail out of a riffle. Or run where that water depth will get deeper and the current speed will slow because all the food that's carried up in the faster water in the, uh, riffles gets deposited and dumped and kind of settles down into the open mouth of waiting trout behind those transition points as the water deepens and slows. But I typically find that trout may have their noses stuck right up against the, the change in current and speed and depth in the summer months, but in the winter months, they might be hanging back

a little bit into the tail out of slower areas of those transitions where the water's a little deeper and the current's a little slower.

So that's just one example of where I might look for trout in the winter compared to where I might find them in the summer. And it would be a [00:26:00] little further behind the, the, uh, transition zones where the water is already moving slower and its deeper offering availability of food.

And offering slower, current and deeper water for protection in energy economics. So again, if you're that guy that's trying to get out of the snowstorm, once you get a little bit warmed up and once you get out of the wind and the howling driven snow, you're like, oh, okay, well, I think I'll have a cheeseburger. You know, you will eat. But when you're really stressed in that condition where you're just absolutely frozen and shivering, once you find that little bit of a warmer position where you're a little more comfortable, then food becomes something that comes up.

D. Roger Maves: Is there such thing as a too slow current when it comes to winter holding water?

Jason Randall: Well, I think they still need at least trout that are in that middle stage of life where they're on stationary feeding lines. They still need current for the food delivery that is the [00:27:00] conveyor belt of food. Now, larger fish that are more what we call piscivores, where they're more meat eaters, that's a different scenario a little bit, and you might see them in slower than the expected current. But those trout that are usually in the range where we target most with fly fishing techniques of dry flies and nymphs, you know, those are the trout that are, might be between 10 and 18 inches. Those are, they're still gonna need some, uh, degree of current than to position themselves for food.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Okay. We did get a, let's see.

Couple questions in here. Let me, uh, this one is just, it's kind of funny, but I'll, and you kind of covered these things already, but James up in Idaho, he wrote and he says, the five things that I love about cold weather, trout fishing, one no mosquitoes, two less chance, let's chance of getting dehydrated. Three, no complex hatches. Four are western tail water shrink [00:28:00] concentrating fish in specific areas, and five midge hatches, uh, that makes, that makes winter fishing sound pretty, pretty, uh, enticing in my mind.

Jason Randall: I think, I think James has got it dialed in. I mean, I know he makes a lot of really good points. I mean, if you look at the, uh, available food that trout have in the winter, midges is a number one food source. midges and scuds, those are what we see most in the natural drift in the winter.

So, I mean, that's right on. So midge fishing is, uh, I like midge fishing too, especially. It could be really, really cold, but if you get a. The first real good sunny day after some cloudy days, sometimes I think that can warm up the stream bed, the sun's rays can warm it up. And you can see, uh, I saw the most prolific midge hatch I think I've ever seen on the Northfork River in Arkansas. And it was the first sunny day after several cloudy days. And boy, it was dynamic. The other thing you can [00:29:00] sometimes have happen is, uh, blue-winged olives. If you've got a winter generation of blue-winged olives, you can see something like that happen under the same circumstances.

But yeah, I agree. No mosquitoes, you know, and, and there's less anglers too. You don't get as many anglers out in the January than you do in May.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. You missed that one, James. You better add number six to your list. Fewer anglers. Yeah. Yeah. But, uh, yeah, it's, it's all true though. Yeah. And the, you know, the less mosquitoes or no mosquitoes is really important in Wisconsin where you fish a lot.

Jason Randall: Oh, yeah.

D. Roger Maves: Right.

Jason Randall: Oh, that, that is very true. Yeah. Very true. But again, yeah, I love it. I love being out there. I love the peace and solitude of the Winter River and, and the no mosquitoes, the less angling pressure, and again, making those adjustments to catch trout. You're gonna have a good day.

D. Roger Maves: [00:30:00] Yeah, yeah. Did Trout behave differently in free stone streams versus Spring Fed Rivers during the cold months?

Jason Randall: You know, I think they do, but on a different scale, you know, they act the same, but it's a different scale. I think if you look at a, a tailwater, it's just one. Giant input of, uh, comfortable water. Then, you know, you can kind of relate that to the Spring Creek, which has multiple smaller inputs of, of, uh, warmer water.

So I think if you look at it from that standpoint, maybe a tail water is just an aggregate of several, maybe quite a few spring water inputs At the same time, it's just making us tremendous input of, uh, warmer, more comfortable water.

D. Roger Maves: Right, right. Yeah. I'm wondering, you know, this tail waters, do you think trout that are further downstream will tend to move up into those waters? Uh,

Jason Randall: I think so.

D. Roger Maves: During the winter month?

Jason Randall: Yeah, I think so. Yeah. Yeah. It depends on, you know, what we call a thermal [00:31:00] behavior of the river. If it, uh, rivers, um, gain or lose temperature on a very predictive rate. And so I think if you really look at it from that standpoint, then I think they become something that you can predict as well as what the trout are gonna do.

Rivers radiate all their heat off at night to the blackness of outer space. If it's a cloudy night, it's like an insulating blanket. They tend to hold their temperatures a little bit more on cloudy days. They don't warm up as much in the winter. You know, it's a solar race that have more to do with the thermal behavior of streams and rivers than solely the air temperature that we might perceive.

D. Roger Maves: Phil, can you reword your question about current? I'm not, it doesn't really. I don't really understand what you're asking there. Maybe you could resubmit it now. I'll take care of it.

Okay. Yeah. This is [00:32:00] another one from Phil in Kentucky. He says, are larger trout less selective about what streamer they will hit in the cold? Because food sources tend to be relatively small.

Jason Randall: Yeah. You know, streamers are, are I think, an effective tactic in the winter. They can be. What I like is, I like a warming trend where the water temperatures are on the rise and trout are feeling just a little bit of a happy boost from that, and they get a little more active. They're a little more willing to chase, I think, at that point. And you don't have to put it right on their nose and in front of 'em. I think those make good streamer days the opposite when the water temperatures tend to be falling and it's overcast and cloudy and you know, you're kind of in that funk of winter.

I think that those times you really have to be kind of right in front of the trout. They're maybe not quite as willing to move for flies. They might not be as eager to chase something. [00:33:00]

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. There was another question from Mike in Richmond Hill, Canada. Asking about streamers is just in general asking about do you use them very often in the winter time?

Jason Randall: I don't use them as much, you know, become maybe more of a nymph fisher and dry fly fisher. I love streamers. I don't throw them as probably as often as I should, and, uh, I won't profess to have a great deal of knowledge or expertise with streamers. I throw 'em as probably as, as well as the average guy, but I probably just don't have as much experience with streamer techniques as I do with the others.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Talking about tactics and presentations, what adjustments should anglers make to drift speed, weight, depth, or do we just follow what we normally would do?

Jason Randall: Well, again, I usually, um, my winter go-to fly patterns are gonna be midges and scuds because that's what the trout are seeing in the winter. Those are the blue plate specials that are available in January and February, [00:34:00] and so I'm usually knowing that the insects and most of the food forms that trout feed on in the winter are in a smaller state of their development. Like most of the insects, when they go through their winter dormancy, which we call diapause, it's not a hibernation, it's more just of a diapause. It's a dormancy, a less period, a period of less activity. They usually do so in a less mature state. Then you might find them in April or May where they're getting closer to emergence, and so they're usually smaller. They're usually less developed.

That goes for most of the insects and a lot of the crustaceans as well. And so I'm usually gonna use smaller flies to imitate those mid-stage nymphal life forms. And so I don't wing casings on most of them because wing cases on, uh, nymphs are something that you see later in the developmental stages closer to emergence. So I'm using a lot of [00:35:00] impressionistic flies. I'm gonna use a lot of small pheasant tails, a lot of waltz worms, a lot of flies that are maybe could imitate a smaller scud, but also could imitate a small insect immature insect.

And so those would be kind of my go-tos at that point. And I don't need a lot of weight in the slower moving water. I just have to have a controlled sink. So if I'm nymph fishing, which I'm usually gonna be doing in winter, unless there is some type of a midge hatch or a blue-winged olive hatch or something like that, or even winter generation of stones, winter stones can sometimes be fun too.

Then if I'm fishing slower, deeper water, I just want, I don't need a heavy fly that'll sink and hold and position in faster current. So I, I'll usually use size sixteens and size eighteens with maybe two millimeter beads or something size appropriate, and I just kind of do this measured sink. I'm allowing them to kind of [00:36:00] slowly sink.

Rather than bullet to the bottom. I don't use a lot of paragon in the winter for the same reason. I don't need that system to get depth and hold depth in fast water.

D. Roger Maves: Oh, that was a lot of good information there, Jason in Kentucky. I hope that answered your question. He was asking about go-to patterns in winter months, and I think Jason just covered about all of them there.

So yeah, that's interesting about the stages, immature stages of insects and how that affects your fly design and choice. I think that's super interesting.

Jason Randall: Oh, it's huge. Yeah. If you're out in.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: Yeah. Like if you're out fishing in the summer in, in Colorado and you're on the green Drake hatch, I mean all those flies, both dry flies and nymphs will be representative of that activity right at that point. So your nymphs are gonna be mature looking nymphs are gonna be large, are gonna have highly developed darker wing cases. They're gonna be, [00:37:00] you know, very active. You might even present those with a certain degree of animation in the drift too, rather than it's strictly dead drift in the winter. Um, maybe a little less likely to animate a drift and maybe going more towards a dead drift. If I'm, you know, like in a spring blue-winged olive hatch, or I'm in a, you know, green drake hatch. Those things are zipping all over. I'm more likely to use a little more animation in my drift.

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm. Okay. Okay. We were talking about, you know, trout moving more slowly in winter, does that affect your timing when setting the hook or redrafting, or that's something that isn't, doesn't change for us?

Jason Randall: You know, I don't know that it's really changed for me. I mean, I'm, I'm certainly cognizant of the fact that they might be a little more sluggish. You know, the fish may play a little different when they're hooked, but I haven't really noticed if they're willing to commit to the fly and I can do a good job of selling the fly as a salesman.

[00:38:00] Usually my hook sets in and everything else. It's usually fairly much the same.

D. Roger Maves: Very the same. Okay. Okay. Time to take another break, but hang tight folks, and we will dig in more with Jason on, uh, Cold Weather Trout Fishing. So hang tight. We'll be right back.

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Okay, let me just check here. Okay, here's the long one that came in on the internet here. Jason, let me read this out to you. Since the new craze in fly fishing seems to be the euro techniques, how effective would you rate that nymphing method versus good traditional double nymph rig and with a suspension device, especially since you mentioned correctly that the trout tends to be in the deeper lies.

I can't imagine you not catching your fair [00:40:00] share with the standard nymphing rig or high sticking. Rick Parish in North Carolina. Sent that in.

Jason Randall: Hey Rick. I was just out in North Carolina fishing about three weeks ago and, and we had good water temperatures there. We were on the Tuckasegee and fish pretty well. But, again, I love euro nymphing, and so it is one of my, uh, one of my favorite techniques. But when you're talking about the slower moving water where there isn't as much disparity in current speed from top to bottom, I think a good suspension device can produce fish in winter conditions. I certainly have some preferences.

I think too often we use the largest plastic orb, but it's like a Christmas tree ornament. And I think if we go to the smallest type of suspension device, something that's a little more subtle, I like a lot of yarn indicators. You know, Pat Dorothy's got his Dorothy indicator. I like the New [00:41:00] Zealand style for suspending lighter flies.

And I think that works really well in the winter if you're gonna choose a suspension device. The thing I like about that is when it lands, it doesn't spook fish. And I think that cold water conditions really do concentrate fish. And we see them kind of in groups or pods, but if you spook 'em. They're still going to go off any feeding activity that they were doing, and you'll actually see them kind of get closer together in more of a defensive huddle, and you'll know when you spooked them, even if they're kind of in a communal aggregate to begin with, if you spook them, they're gonna tighten up and go into defensive huddle.

I think the larger suspension devices tend to be, you know, pretty off-putting to trout. And so, especially when I'm using these smaller winter flies based on the food forms that a trout are seeing, I like those really subtle suspension devices, like a New Zealand style indicator or a small, you know, yarn indicator of another [00:42:00] type.

And I think where suspension devices sometimes are most prone to failure is in faster current. When there's a lot of disparity between the surface current and the bottom current, where the trout might be in that larger flotation devices, then to have a good grip on that faster current, and I think they drag your flies along at a faster speed than would naturally be appearing to the trout.

And so, but in that slower current with smaller, more subtle indicators, like a smaller suspension device, small flies, I think you can do pretty well.

D. Roger Maves: So Jason, are you saying that the orange pickle ball that I use for this extension device is too large?

Jason Randall: You could see,

D. Roger Maves: Hey, I gotta do something, I gotta do something with those old pickle balls that I can't use anymore on the courts. See, you know so,...

Jason Randall: They're good for something

D. Roger Maves: Why not.

Jason Randall: Yeah, I, you know, I think that goes with the evolution of our sport. I mean, when we, 20 [00:43:00] years ago, I mean, we were using golf ball size devices and they're, they weren't very sensitive. You couldn't get a really good drift with them. And you know, you miss more trout than you caught.

But I think with some of these newer products they're getting, you're gonna be catching fish.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Lots to choose from. That's for sure. I mean, gosh, you know, I think back to the old days when I started fishing, and I think the first ones I used were those little, um. Adhesive round dots, you know that?

Jason Randall: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

D. Roger Maves: Remember the, yeah. You don't see those much anymore, but

Jason Randall: They gummed up your line. I know.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah.

Jason Randall: We won't mention any products specifically, but we certainly have come a long way.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Good. Well, um. Brad in San Diego, California wrote in, he says, do you consider drop shot nymphing an effective method for winter time, cold temperatures and water?

Jason Randall: Well, I kind of [00:44:00] equate drop shot methods with like check nymphing in the euro nymphing realm where it's gonna be a little heavier rig, more geared towards faster water, where you need to kind of keep those flies in the zone, you know, zone closer to the bottom. And so those aren't the typical water types that I find trout in the winter.

And so, although drop shooting does meet the three goals of nymph fishing, as well as as many other systems. The three goals being, you've gotta get your flies down to the trout at the level where they're feeding. We call it either the strike zone or the target zone. Whether it's fast current or slow current, it changes and the fast the current, the more narrow that strike zone is and the more compressed it is to the bottom.

The second goal of nymph fishing is to get an effective drift, and that's a natural drift. At the speed that the natural organisms are drifting at in that layer. So if it's near the bottom in fast water, that means [00:45:00] it's moving slower than the overhead currents above. And then the third goal of nymph fishing is to have an effective means of strike detection so that we know, rather than putting on your pickle ball strike indicator, um, you know, that isn't very sensitive, we need something that's actually gonna tell us when a trout picks up that fly.

And so I think drop shotting, you know, again, it's, to me it's like, uh, it's very similar in, in, uh, many respects to the, uh, euro nymphing categories we used to call polish or check nymphing, where you're dealing with heavy flies and faster current, but it wouldn't necessarily go to those techniques in the Winter River because

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm.

Jason Randall: I think the trout are typically in different water types.

D. Roger Maves: When you find. Uh, an area that looks promising to fish. Is there any particular way you work that area to be more effective?

Jason Randall: Yeah, I do. Yeah. And I think, you know, when you find one fish in the Winter River, you typically find [00:46:00] many, I think the cold water and also low water conditions regardless of season. Also, they all tend to congregate or concentrate fish.

And so typically I'll find fish in that suitable habitat, and I'll usually work from back to front and a group of fish trying to hook a fish and then pulling them back not to disrupt the rest of them, because you'll know when you disrupt 'em, if you can see the fish, you'll actually see them tighten their group and it's a defensive huddle.

Just like schooling fish, they tighten up their ranks to look bigger and more intimidating to other predators. And so you'll know if you've, if you've alerted the pool and I think you have less chances of alerting the pool if you work from back to front and try to pull those fish away and downstream of spooking the rest of the group.

D. Roger Maves: What about a, a stretch of water that is more pocket water? Are fish holding in there in the winter or are they moving out of there in other parts of the river?

Jason Randall: No, they do [00:47:00] aggregate in pockets as well, because they can find current relief there. And it's usually a little deeper water. Remember that pocket water zone are depositional areas, and so food ends up being deposited there.

They're like the corners of your living room where the dust bunnies gather. You know, the food gathers that. If you look at pockets, they're usually behind the pockets. There's usually softer substrate, you know, kind of, it's a little more softy and silty behind a pocket, a few feet behind the pocket, and then all the detritus.

Live there, you know, it gets pushed there too. The decaying plant and animal material accumulates there, know that also the midges and the scuds that typically are predominant in the winter, natural drift are all detritivores. So when they get deposited in those pockets as the silt and debris does, they stay there because the food is there. 'Cause that's the food they eat. And so there's a lot of studies in [00:48:00] streams. That show that there's a higher concentration of like scuds in those pockets. And so the trout line up on the trailing seams of those pocket water, you know, the ones that trail behind the pocket or the boulder, and they, they're on the intercept route catching food as it starts to sweep into that deposition area.

A study outta Michigan showed that there's five times as many scuds on the lateral edge seams of a river as there is in the central part of the river. And that's because the current pushes the food to the lateral edge seams. And so that's another place to drop a, a midge or scud. Uh, they both kind of aggregate to those types of areas. So pocket water, I think is an effective technique. Again, look for the maybe a little bit further down from the pocket along those trailing seams with the current is a little bit less, the water might be a little bit deeper, but if you can find those features, I think you'll find trout. [00:49:00]

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Now we got, this is probably one of your friends, but, uh, I got a question on the internet from Lombard, Illinois. Uh, ring a bell.

Jason Randall: Oh, no. Okay.

D. Roger Maves: Uh, okay. So, and I'm gonna answer this question first, so.

Jason Randall: Oh, good.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Eric. Eric says, any wisdom on how an angler's happy hour selection changes in winter months? Versus summer happy hours. Yeah. So,

Jason Randall: Okay.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, I have some goat, I mean, scotch is always straight up as just flying with the eight.

I really like how Rusty

Jason Randall: Oh, goodness

D. Roger Maves: nail.

Jason Randall: Yeah.

D. Roger Maves: And good Port is also nice for me. So, but go ahead Jason. I just, I had to answer that myself so

Jason Randall: Well, I like your answers too. There's nothing wrong with those. But Eric is, Eric Camfield is, uh, he is the director of Alter Fly Fishing Ministries. And we've had a long friendship and, and relationship over the years.

It's just a wonderful group that serves [00:50:00] fly fishers and ministry kind of merges, you know, faith and flow, if you will. And we've shared many a Moscow Mule together following some of the programs that we've done. And Eric's a marvelous fisherman as well. And just a delight to our sport.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Great.

Jason Randall: So my, didn't answer that question. My drink preference and apple sour apple. Moscow Mule.

D. Roger Maves: Oh, okay. Yeah. Yeah. It looks like Kenny from Missouri knows that too. Uh,

Jason Randall: I gotta keep, keep up.

D. Roger Maves: This other friend of yours when the temperature drops and it seems maybe only midge fishing is best, when do you decide it's time to call it a day and grab a Moscow Mule and sit in your living room and look out the window? Right. So yeah. Got some funny friends out there.

Jason Randall: Oh yeah. Yeah, they do. These guys are great guys too. And Kenny, Kenny climbs is, uh, another real influence in our [00:51:00] sport as well. And he runs a program for men's anglers and serving men in that type of environment as well. And he's got a group called Fly Fishers at the Crossing that's got over 300 members in it, that just tremendous guys and tremendous fishermen and just an effective, wonderful group of people.

D. Roger Maves: Great. Great. Terrific. Nice to have good friends like that.

Jason Randall: Yeah. Do think sport is full of them, don't you think?

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: There's so many wonderful things and our sport attracts us. Just the right kind of people.

D. Roger Maves: Right, right. Time to take another break, but we'll be right back and talk more about Cold Water Fishing with Jason Randall. So hang tight. We'll be right back.

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Jason, we have a question here from Phil that he clarified here and we've been talking about streams and stuff, and he has a question here about lakes. He says, uh, much like a current in a river, wind-driven wave action in lakes, is often seen as pushing fish to feed where the waves have pushed food? Do you think that idea holds up in winter conditions or is it best to find warmer water wherever the wind is blowing?

Jason Randall: Well, it sounds like Phil already knows more about stillwater fishing than I do.

D. Roger Maves: Okay.

Jason Randall: I do know that much, that wave action and, you know, I know kind of the basics about stillwater fishing and honestly at the training camp that, uh, we did, there were some, you know, because stillwater fishing Ponds lakes, or locks are part of the competitive world, they have to be able to fish those as well.

They had some really great talented stillwater fishermen out there, you know, like Sean [00:54:00] Crocker and some of those guys. I learned a ton out there, but I won't profess to have any great deal of expertise in, in stillwater. I do know the wave action can push food around. I know a little bit about the littoral zone and the profundal zone, but honestly Phil, I'm gonna pass on that question because I just don't have the background in that area.

D. Roger Maves: Okay, good. Okay. That's fine. Let's see here. Okay. There's another, um, how should anglers decide whether to change flies versus adjusting presentation?

Jason Randall: Oh, that's a great question.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Is that different in the winter than it is in the summer for you?

Jason Randall: It's gonna apply to both conditions.

D. Roger Maves: Okay.

Jason Randall: In any conditions is, is that I find myself changing flies a lot less often than I used to. I mean, I used to just paw through my fly boxes trying to find the hottest fly, you know, and wondered why that didn't work and went on to the next. But typically now I know. It's more relevant and applicable [00:55:00] than nymph fishing because when we're nymph fishing, we're not trying to match a specific hatch or a specific condition.

We know that trout are feeding from a wider array of food forms, and they'll accept the wider way array of flies than as a result. So I think they're not as fly specific. As long as we have a good fly that might pass for a number of different food forms, we're in pretty good shape. So what I usually do, rather than changing flies, is I change me.

I change, maybe it's me, I'm presenting it wrong. Maybe I'm, I'm not getting the drift that I think I am, and so I'll try to change or I'll change depths if I'm nymph fishing, maybe I'm not reaching the strike zone. Maybe my flies aren't where I think they are. I'll also, if I've tried a few dead drifts and I've not had success, I'll try a few animated drifts.

I'll try to maybe do a little bit of jig to that fly. Or if it's a squirmy worm, maybe I'll shake the rod tip a little bit to make that worm [00:56:00] dance or leeches too. You can do a hand twist retrieve on some of those things that add a degree of animation. If it's a hopper, I'll twitch it back towards shore and I'll scade a caddis. I'll also like to do an egg laying caddis where I'll put a dry dropper, but I'll put my dryly on a tag dropper, maybe five or six inches with a weighted nymph, maybe, you know, 24 inches below, and I'll dab that on the water surface using the weighted dropper to kind of anchor and draw that fly back down. So I find myself changing something about the way I'm presenting the fly, and then if, if that doesn't work, then I'm gonna change flies.

But I find myself also changing more. Especially in nymph fishing for depth and, uh, that type of thing than I do for the specific by itself. If I open my nymph box and showed it to you, you're gonna see about maybe six patterns and they're all organized by weight, more or less, I think.

D. Roger Maves: Mm-hmm.[00:57:00]

Jason Randall: The tendency in our sport is we have so many different flies. We don't even know where we got these flies. We only have three of 'em. Um, you know, but we still keep 'em, you know, that we haven't used them for 10 years at the, that old 90 10 rule is that we use 10% of our flies 90% of the time.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. So that's a very good thought. And we should probably all process that.

There's a, uh, place here on the North Fork River in Colorado. That's, uh, North Fork of the Platte, um, right near me. And I was down there one day and I was, and this was, I've changed up since then, but I had a full vest on, right. I mean,

Jason Randall: Oh, yeah.

D. Roger Maves: You know, I must have had, uh, eight, you know, different fly boxes in there.

I mean, it was like putting on a 20 pound backpack. Right. You know,

Jason Randall: I used to carry a hardware store around with me iLink in t like a, the old tin guy.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. And this guy, he had like [00:58:00] nothing. And I mean, he just had his waders and his rod, right? Yeah. And he was talking and he says, yeah, he says, I was trying to tie something on, I don't know. We got in the conversation. He goes, well, I've just really simplified. And he took out his little pocket and his waders. It was like an Altoids box, right. You know? Yeah. You know, mint box, metal box. He opened it up and I don't know, he had about 20 flies in there, rattling around all pretty much nymph patterns, you know.

He goes, this is all I carry anymore, and that's it.

Jason Randall: Yeah.

D. Roger Maves: What it up?

Jason Randall: I've gotten that way myself. Yeah,

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah. I've switched over to a little chest box, you know, and trying to take what I need for that day. I should know what I need for that day. I shouldn't be carrying around green drakes when it's May in Colorado or something. You know what I mean? It's like

Jason Randall: That's true.

D. Roger Maves: We need to do more research before we go out. I think many times. But anyway, [00:59:00] go ahead. Take it from there.

Jason Randall: Yeah, I used to.

D. Roger Maves: How do you organize?

Jason Randall: Yeah, I mean, I've got a few flats of nymphs and a couple of other patterns, leeches and a few jig streamers and stuff. And then I've got a box of dry flies that are more universal, that have passed for multiple different species. But I've moved away from carrying around a lot of flies that I don't use, that I picked up at some river that might be very specific for that river, but it's really not something that I use again.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Do mall degrees of warming, trigger feeding, and is there a way for anglers to recognize that and take advantage of those short windows?

Jason Randall: Yeah, and I think it has more to do with sun too. You know, notice that air temperature changes a lot more rapidly in both directions rising and falling than the water temperature does.

It's more, air temperature is more labile, it [01:00:00] changes more rapidly. But sun, it's like for you, if today here in the upper Midwest, it was maybe, I don't know. 42 degrees or something when I woke up and you know, I went out first to go out and walk the dogs and it was kind of chilly, but I went out two hours later and the sun was out.

It was only two degrees warmer, but I didn't use my coat. It was because the sun was out. I felt warmer. And I think that happens with trout as well. I think when the sun warms up the stream bed a little bit, the insects get more active and I think it happens to the trout as well. They might perceive it and get just maybe a little more happy in that happy mood.

D. Roger Maves: Can that work in reverse too? I remember I was up on the Bighorn River one year and it was, I think we were in Sep end of September, October, but it started snowing and then this blue-winged olive hatch just came off. I mean,

Jason Randall: Yeah, yeah.

D. Roger Maves: Thousands and thousands of [01:01:00] blue-winged olives all over the place. And it seemed like when it got.

Colder. The snow, I don't know right at that moment triggered them and it wasn't alarming effect. I don't know. Is that possible?

Jason Randall: Well, I think blue-winged olives, yeah, they do like those cloudy, misty days and maybe those little bit of a snowy day in the winter, and I think if you do have a little bit of sun on the stream bed and for maybe a while or even a day or two, and then all of a sudden you get that weather moving in, I think that is a trigger for blue-winged olives for sure. That's kind of the classic blue-winged olive weather.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Greg Nichols in Loxley, Alabama says, how do you keep your line from freezing up on the rod in the island? I know. We, we all have that problem.

Jason Randall: I don't, yeah.

D. Roger Maves: Oh, you don't? Okay. Okay.

Jason Randall: You know it is a problem and you can dip your rod tip in the water and that drives it, that thaws it out for about five minutes, and then [01:02:00] that water freezes again. So,

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: But what I find myself doing is I just really shorten everything. So I'm gonna be shooting from shorter range and so. For me, if it's dry fly, I don't have that much line outside the rod, so I'm not recovering 40, 50 feet of wet line through my guides and then recasting it. And for nymphing the same thing.

I tend to just kind of keep that line outside the guides. I don't recover it through the guides and I just recast, maybe I'll hold some slack or excess line in my line hand and then play that out rather than bring it onto the reel. That type of thing as well.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah. Interesting. Yeah, I, I was with February once in Colorado and we had that problem, but then my reels started the, the,

Jason Randall: Yeah,

D. Roger Maves: The drag and the reels started binding up.

Jason Randall: Yeah. See I don't recover a lot of line.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. So I [01:03:00] fixed that by taking, uh, my little flask of scotch outta my vest and pouring it into my reel.

Jason Randall: Yeah, there you go.

D. Roger Maves: The alcohol wasn't freezing, so, uh, it loosened it up, but, uh,

Jason Randall: That'll work. But I just don't recover. I don't recover slack line into the reel. If I can avoid it, I'll just hold it outside the reel in my slack hand and in my line.

D. Roger Maves: There you go.

Jason Randall: Then you try to adjust to it. I don't know. How do you, do you have a secret to keeping your rod tip and your guides from freezing up out there in Colorado?

D. Roger Maves: No. No.

Jason Randall: I mean, I don't know if there is. I don't know it.

D. Roger Maves: I was wondering if there's a, if you could put silicone in them or something. I don't know. I don't know, but, um,

Jason Randall: Well, maybe somebody can chime in here in the last half hour and give us an idea.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah, yeah. Anybody out there know. Yeah. Okay. Now this is the next section we're getting into too. We talked, uh, several of you wrote in Jason in Kentucky about got to patterns. Camille in Dallas, just wanted to recognize you. We kind of went through [01:04:00] that. Jeff in Calgary on Canada. Only place to fish in Calgary in the winter is the bow. What flies do you recommend for Walk and Wade, your previous recommendations?

Jason Randall: Yeah.

D. Roger Maves: Stand there as well.

Jason Randall: In the Boat River, they've, they've got a real advantage up there. They've got those two water treatment plants up there.

What is that called? Fish Creek and I can't remember the name of the other one, that bring in a warm water source to the river. And they also bring in a lot of nutrients. As matter of fact, you can see it in overhead, satellite images in the summer. You can see this green change following those inputs. And so it's very well processed.

It's a kind of a state of the art wastewater treatment facility. It's really elegant, but it does bring in warmer water and it does bring in higher degree of nutrients. And so I would probably be just fishing downstream of those spots. And I think, again, my fly [01:05:00] choices would be relevant to the composition of the winter drift in that river. And I think it would still be, I still think I would at least start with those midges and see what happens.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Okay. Phil, um, down in Apex, North Carolina, asked for cold weather fishing. Where is one of your favorite locations to go, and why Do you have a go-to fly for this location? Yeah. Where do you do your winter fishing?

Jason Randall: Any, well, you know,

D. Roger Maves: Dates or areas.

Jason Randall: The Florida Keys.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah. That's Belize is where I go.

Jason Randall: Argentina's nice.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: But yeah,

D. Roger Maves: Anywhere south of the equator, right? Yeah. Yeah.

Jason Randall: I love fishing. My home water's in the winter now in Wisconsin. Our trout streams closed October 15th, so the first Saturday in January for the spawning of our brown trout in brook trout, our native species here.

But you know, when that [01:06:00] season opens up, I love fishing. You know, my home waters. I've got a tradition where a buddy and I go out and Tom Starman and we fish the opening Saturday, and one time we did it in Wisconsin, it was like eight degrees. And we met, you know, I had plenty of coffee and we sat in the cars with the heaters running and we both ran out, caught one trout and said, okay, see you next year.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: Um, but I, I enjoy it. I enjoy fishing my home water in Wisconsin and, and again, I do a lot of small fly fishing and, uh, my go-to flies would be the ones we've pretty much already mentioned. The ones maybe that we didn't mention. I use a lot of frances as well, and. Some of the, the smaller nymphs like that really are effective because

D. Roger Maves: The, what flies? I'm sorry, could you repeat that?

Jason Randall: The france flies. Yeah. I use a lot of france flies in different colors. It's a thin bodied, small, very lightly weighted fly, but it passes [01:07:00] for so many different things. I mean, you could mistake it, uh, trout could mistake it for a small in, uh, insect, or it could even pass for a, a, a small, uh, scud.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. Let's take the last five minutes and talk about our comfort as fly fisher.

Jason Randall: Stay in the truck and drink coffee.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Come back next year. Yeah, I'll have to use that one sometime. Uh, Greg, in St. Louis, what type of winter gloves do you prefer? Wool or synthetic do you use?

Jason Randall: I tried to use those fingerless gloves until my fingertips were numb and then I, I went away from those and I've got a old pair of sims that are synthetic that I use for steelhead fishing here in the upper Midwest.

And I do like those, but I don't like heavy gloves. I don't like wool gloves 'cause I can't feel anything with it. And I would actually, you know, if I could get away with it, it wasn't that cold, I would avoid gloves altogether and just rotate my hands in my [01:08:00] pockets once in a while because with the lighter leaders and tippets and materials that I like to use for nymphing, especially in that lower, clearer water of winter, I need to feel that in my fingers. And so I get frustrated if, uh, if I, I, I am using something that prevents me from having that feel.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Yeah, that makes sense. Phil wrote in here, he was asking about how to keep your hands warm and he says, I might change flies more often if I could feel my fingers.

Jason Randall: That's true. That's true.

That's where the truck comes in handy again too. You go sit in there, warm 'em up in the heater, and then change fly .

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. So Phil, you, if you were listening earlier in the show, remember Jason said that, uh, he doesn't change flies as often anymore as he used to?

Jason Randall: No,

D. Roger Maves: that's so you could. Yeah. So you, you, you don't have to change that off. Just get the fly where the fish is, right?

Jason Randall: Yeah. And that's true. And, and again, if you can [01:09:00] change something with you, either if you're euro nymphing, change your cider angle to give a little bit different look to that fly, you know, or give it a little different sink type of characteristic. Something that'll change that, and it might trigger that. But you know, all kidding aside, you know, I do love to be out there on the water and, uh, if I get cold, my hands get cold, I shove 'em in my pockets. I dress for it.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: I wear something that will break the wind. I wear some real dense, almost like an Icelandic wool sweater, sometimes under a, uh, a rain jacket, even if it's not raining, because that jacket will break the wind. And then I have head protection. And sunglasses are a must too, especially if you get a lot of glare on a sunnier day.

D. Roger Maves: Oh yeah.

Jason Randall: But if I'm dressed well, all kidding aside about hovering and being in the truck, I'm out there on the water. Um, because if I do it right and I'm in layers, I'm pretty comfortable. And if my hands get cold because I do have a thinner glove on, I just stick 'em in the pocket and [01:10:00] take a break for a minute and just enjoy the.

D. Roger Maves: Take a break. Yeah,

Jason Randall: The peace. Yeah. Peace and quiet of the river. Let my hands warm up, and then I'm back fishing again. So I think making some of those adjustments again will keep you comfortable and keep you on the water.

D. Roger Maves: Well, I'm gonna read, Kurt wrote in a note here on the internet. I think he's tried everything, but I'm gonna read this to you.

He says, how do you keep your feet warm in the winter? Mine tend to shut down. I hydrate and take aspirin. That helps. But I have to take off my boots and waders to rub them and warm them up. Tone warmers, run out of oxygen, and my waders, and shut off too quick.

Jason Randall: Yeah,

D. Roger Maves: True. So you haven't talked about's all feet, any,

Jason Randall: Well, actually, if you're, if you're in the water, sometimes that can actually be warmer.

The water is 40 degrees and the air is, uh, 10 degrees above zero. You know, being in the water can actually be a solution. But there are days where it is just tough, you know? And then,

D. Roger Maves: Yeah.

Jason Randall: Being an upper Midwest steelhead junkie, I love to go steelhead fish and try to [01:11:00] get out there for those migratory species at least once or twice or three times a year.

It gets pretty cold. It honestly does get pretty cold, and you just have to try to make whatever adjustments you can and then be sensible about it too. If you really can't get over it, then take a break and go have a cup of coffee.

D. Roger Maves: Is there, and you being a veterinarian, is there anything you can tell us about safely landing and releasing trout because of their state and winter, state of being not as energetic, maybe not being able to recover as easily as in the summertime with Yeah, you commend then.

Jason Randall: Yeah, I think that's true. You know, and, and again, you know, they're, they're a little more sensitive to energy loss. They don't have the ability to replace lost energy as quickly. So, you know, fighting 'em for a long period of time in winter conditions could really exhaust 'em to the point of, you know, being very detrimental.

They may not be able to replace the energy they lose because [01:12:00] of the limited availability of food. So, but typically winter trout don't play that hard and aggressively in those conditions 'cause they're a little bit sluggish. And so they're a little, usually a little eager or easier to get to the net. And I think if you can get their, again, fighting fish, if you can get their head to the surface, you can just kind of walk 'em across the water or surface.

If you get their head on the water, you've landed the fish, you just have to bring 'em to the net, And so I think getting 'em to the net a little quicker will help avoid depleting their energy reserves.

D. Roger Maves: Last question from Phil in Apex, North Carolina. Jason, you're a great author and your books are great. Well, we see another book from you?

Jason Randall: And I know Phil really well too.

D. Roger Maves: Oh, okay. Okay.

Jason Randall: He, he's a great guy. I've known him for many years at a very serious, very, uh, intellectual angler. Really good. I enjoy the conversations we have together, but I think no. I really haven't had, uh, [01:13:00] I think you get to the point where you've said what you're gonna say in the sport.

I think I, I'm at that point in, uh, at least in written form. I love to teach in person. I love to do presentations. I love to do the shows I love on stream and on water teaching. I do a lot of that one-on-one teaching in small groups. And I think I've really, really kind of enjoyed that so much that I don't think there's another book in my future.

D. Roger Maves: Okay. All right. Well, good. Totally understandable. Totally understandable. Well, unfortunately we're out of time. We gotta wrap this up and as usual, you know, we could keep talking all night long about fly fishing. Uh, there's always something to learn and always something to share. As you said, it's a great pleasure to share.

But we need to, to move on for tonight. We are gonna give away our prizes here, a one year membership to Fly Fishers International, a one year membership to Trout Unlimited, and one of Jason's books, courtesy of Stackpole/Headwater books. So hang tight and [01:14:00] 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 and fisheries.

From protecting spawning sites 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 Trusts today. Again, that's btt.org.

Just a quick reminder to everyone, before you leave our website tonight, please take a minute and give us your feedback about the show.

You can find a link on our homepage in the section or tonight's show that says, what did you think of the show? Just click on the link, 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 registration database. If you didn't register for tonight's show, it's too late now, but [01:15:00] make sure you do so for our next show, though you don't miss out on a chance to win one of these great prizes, if you are one of the lucky winners, we'll contact you after the show and so that we can collect your information so that we can deliver your prize to you.

So first, we'll give away a one year membership to, uh, Fly Fishers International. To learn more about FFI go to flyfishersinternational.org. If you don't win tonight, I suggest you join. Anyway, they're a great organization to support. The same with TU both great organizations. Let's see here. Our winner for that is Mike G of. Gia Veoni in Alabama. Sorry Mike, if I destroyed your last name. But anyway, congratulations. We'll get your membership going for the FFI and we'll be contacting you after the show to do that.

And then our one year membership to Trout Unlimited. Again, a great organization to support tu.org is where you go to find out about, [01:16:00] more about Trout Unlimited tu.org.

Our winner for that is Mitchell pre peritz. Uh, again, I can destroy last names readily here in Michigan. So, um, so Michigan and Alabama are represented tonight. That's great. So Mitchell, congrats on winning that TU membership.

And now a chance to win. Uh, one of Jason's books. Oh, Eric says, you have a good way of using forceps to tie flies and cold temperatures.

All your friends out there, okay, I'm just clearing my queue here. You get out on the riff raff. Okay, so this is gonna, I've never done this before, but, and I can't let your friends win this one. So the question is, I mentioned three drinks, cocktails that I like in the winter months. Name one of 'em. Name one of 'em that Roger likes. Now [01:17:00] you can't say Moscow Mule because that's Jason's. So name one of the three that I mentioned, and then you'll win one of Jason's book. See if anybody was listening to our laughing,

Jason Randall: Hey, I, I could name them.

D. Roger Maves: You good? Okay. Okay, okay. Okay. Well you already have all your books so you can't win Jas. So it'll take them a minute because there's a slight delay and then they have to think and then they have to type and they should be all warm. Their fingers should be working, they shouldn't be outside and yeah, I think I got a winner. Well, I should know, right? Yeah. James in Idaho Scotch is one of my favorites. And Greg, you had one right too, but you're second in line. Rusty Nail, Kenny, you got it right too. They got, they were listening. They were listening. Yeah.

Jason Randall: All right,

D. Roger Maves: So, but the first person in was James and James. Been a long time listener of the show. So James, send me your, send me your shipping information [01:18:00] so I have that and take a look at Jason's books and pick one out that you like and I'll get Stackpole to send that over to you. So

Jason Randall: You should buy 'em a drink, Roger.

D. Roger Maves: They're good choice. I should buy him a drink. Why?

Jason Randall: Yeah. Well, 'cause he won, he guessed your drink.

D. Roger Maves: Oh well. He's getting one of your books. Okay, well James, stop on by. I've got plenty of scotch, port and, uh, the scotch and drambuie for a rusty nail. So, uh, yeah, just don't stop on by. You're welcome to a drink anytime. You too, Jason.

Jason Randall: Okay, I will.

D. Roger Maves: Yeah. Hey, uh, Jason, appreciate you being on the show again with us. Always a great show with you and a pleasure to talk to you. And thanks so much for sharing all your knowledge. We all appreciate that.

Jason Randall: Oh, thank you. It's been a pleasure. Good night.

D. Roger Maves: Yes, good night.

Hopefully all of you have found the podcast archive on our website. If you haven't yet, just look for the link in the top line of our menu. In that archive, [01:19:00] you can search for all of our past shows, over 425 shows, I think can search by keyword, keyword, phrase, uh, whatever you'd like. You know, whether it'd be trout, tarpon, winter fishing, things like that. Go ahead and explore. I think you'll be, uh, pleasantly surprised.

Our next broadcast will be on November 19th, 7:00 PM Mountain 9:00 PM Eastern. On that show. I'll be interviewing Rick Kustich and our show will be on Great Lakes Winter Steelhead - Chasing Chrome in the Cold. Some more winter fishing for you guys and gals out there.

Rick is just getting started when icy winds sweep across the Great Lakes and most anglers pack it in. Rick shares his proven strategies for finding and catching winter steelhead and freezing conditions.

Discover how these powerful fish adapt to the cold and what flies trigger their strikes, and the best techniques for slow deep presentations when water temperatures drop below freezing.

Whether you're a diehard steel header or dreaming of your next to your first chrome in the snow, Rick's insights will help you to turn your winter's chill into your [01:20:00] hottest season yet.

So be sure to add that to your calendar. You can do so on our website just below Rick's picture, it says add to calendar. Pick your favorite calendar, add it to your calendar, and we'll see you live on that show.

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

And 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 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.