

Module 3 – Mayfly Fishing

What are Mayflies?

1. Mayflies are slender insects that spend most of their lives as aquatic nymphs, then emerge as adults with delicate, transparent wings and two or three long filaments on the tail. They are available to trout all year round and are one of the more important food sources in our local lakes.
2. **Pass out Vials and Photos**
3. In our local lakes
- 4.
5. there are two main types - callibaetis and hexagenias
 - a. Callibaetis are
 - i. The most numerous in this area and most important for fishing
 - ii. Smaller, usually .25- .75 inches long
 - iii. Have brown, grey, olive or black colouration
 - b. Hexagenias are:
 - i. Normally found in the larger windier lakes
 - ii. Much larger, usually 1.25- 1.75 inches long
 - iii. Commonly yellow, tan or light brown in colouration

What is Mayfly Fishing?

Mayfly fishing is the use of mayfly nymph or adult imitator flies to catch fish.

Why do you Fish with Mayfly Patterns?

1. Mayfly hatches tend to be large concentrated hatches that occur in shallow water. When this happens, large numbers of trout can focus on these hatches.
2. The nymphs are fast swimmers so if you are fishing nymph patterns, the hits can be jarring as the trout attack with speed.

3. The adult mayflies rest on the water surface for a while before they fly away. They are easy targets for trout. If the trout are keying on the adults, it can be a very fun dry fly fishery

When do you Mayfly Fish?

1. The best fishing is when a hatch is occurring
2. The largest and most intense hatches occur in the spring, often after the chironomid hatch has tailed off and the trout are looking for another good food source.
3. Cloudy and rainy days are usually best.
4. There are often smaller hatches during the rest of year, but generally they are light in nature. Results can still be rewarding if you fish during the hatch
5. Most mayfly hatches occur around midday, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, but can be of short duration, 5 minutes to 1 hour is not uncommon

Where do you fish with Mayfly Nymphs?

- 1) Mayflies prefer to spend their time in weedy, shallow areas in lakes with clean water
- 2) Fish the hatch locations, look for the adults sitting on the surface and / or flying away.
- 3) Sometimes you can see the fish surface feeding from a distance.
- 4) After they fly they will leave their shucks (casings) behind on the water surface which will indicate where they have been hatching if you get there too late.

Fishing equipment needed

1. **Fishing Equipment needed:**
 - I. Fly rod set up with a floating or shallow sink (types I or II) line
 - II. Float (strike indicator)
 - III. Lots of leader
 - IV. Tippet material (6-8lb)
 - V. Small swivels
 - VI. Weights to keep your line straight
 - VII. Mayfly patterns. *Some of the more popular patterns are:*
 - a) *Adults – Adams, Blue Dun, Tom Thumb,*
 - b) *Nymphs – Hares Ear Nymph, Pheasant Tail Nymph, Skip Nymph*

How do you fish using Mayfly flies?

- 1) The best fishing is during the hatch.
- 2) Most of the time the fish will focus on the nymphs and you will see very few trout feeding on the adults. Nymph fishing will give you the best results during these times.
- 3) When the hatch is almost over the trout will start paying more attention to the adults this can be a good time to switch to the dry flies.

Fishing methods

1. Nymph fishing

- a. The most common methods are:
 - i. In shallow water, use a floating line, cast a nymph with a long leader into the hatch, let it sink and then do slow-to-fast retrieve.
 - ii. If it is deeper water, you can use a shallow sink or floating line, and use the count-down method to place your fly at the correct depth.
 - iii. Suspending a nymph under an strike indicator (float) in the hatch area. You should anchor first.
 - iv. Slowly troll the nymph with a slow sink (types I or II) or floating line through the hatch area.
 1. If using a floating line, use a small weight or swivel to sink the fly below the surface.
- b. Do not hang onto the fly line too firmly as the hits can be ferocious.

2. Dry Fly fishing,

- a. Look for rising fish
- b. Cast toward them with a dry fly on a floating line and medium to long leader (9-12 feet).
- c. Let it sit still
- d. Wait for the strike

Show rod set ups

Demonstration Equipment needed:

1. Photos of different life stages
2. Vials of sample insects
3. Fly samples
4. Rod set up with a floating line, indicator and the rest
5. Rod set up for naked fishing
6. 2 rods set up with sinking lines, fast and slow

7. Tippet material
8. Leader material
9. Swivels
10. Strike indicators
11. Small weights