

Blasts from the past

New Season, New Hopes and Aspirations

As the season gets underway, **Stevie Munn** reveals three more of his favourite old flies which still do the business today.

To me March begins what is the real fishing season in my part of the island. My local rivers and a few stillwaters open for the brown trout fishing which is customarily what I do in March and April whether it's fishing a local stream or drifting a large lough fishing the duck fly. Of course, with a bit of luck I'll get out for a spring salmon at some point maybe on the river Drowes. All happy

other species. Throw in pike and some saltwater stuff and there is too much fishing and not enough free days. I love the beginning of a new season!

The three flies I'm giving you this month are all great early season flies so make sure you dress a few for you fly boxes. I have great faith in these patterns and I know they will also work for you, hopefully on many occasions.

Tight lines in 2011!

FACT FILE

Stevie Munn has fished many places in the world but grew up fishing on rivers and loughs of Ireland where he now often guides. He is a Hardy Greys Academy endorsed game angling instructor, and helps run teaching courses in Ireland and host trips to Canada and other destinations. He is a member of the Association Professional Game Angling Instructors qualified in Fly Casting and Fly Tying (APGAI-Ireland) and also a qualified Advanced Professional Game Angling Instructor in Fly Casting (APGAI). He can be contacted by email:

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thoughts! I hope this year our season in Ireland is not affected by the big freeze that many of us endured this winter. Jack Frost certainly held very strong and long icy grip this year, with temperatures at all-time low, so this may or may not affect everything in the coming months. I guess it might well affect our fly life, making some hatches of flies late.

But for now I'm going to think positive! To be honest, before I start a new fishing season I'm always filled with new hopes and aspirations as I come out of my winter hibernation. I start planning where in the coming months I want to fish apart from my local throws. My fishing year now is never long enough as there are so many venues I want to fish for trout, salmon and some



This fly is a variant of a fly my father used in the 1970s and possibly before, which he called 'The Pet'. He always said it was an old sea trout fly, but he used it for almost all his fly fishing at times as it works on river and loughs for trout and even took the occasional salmon. To me it's basically a Peter Ross without the wing and tail. That said, it's a very useful fly and you should you dress some of them believe me you will not be disappointed. The pattern shown

THE BLACK PET

Hook: 6-16 wet fly

Tying silk: Black

Body: Silver or pearly Mylar with black and claret dubbing

Rib: Silver oval tinsel or wire

Hackle: Black hen or webby cock

Head: Varnished thread

here evolved from his and has worked for me and some of my customers who I've tied it for. It's very good at duckfly time on the loughs and has also taken many trout on rivers and stillwater fisheries, so it's a very useful pattern, just like its predecessor. I sometimes dress it with silver or pearly Mylar, but both ways on their day have proven deadly. If lough fishing, it's a good pattern to put on that unpredictable middle dropper, dressed in sizes 14 to 10.



I just thought I would put this salmon fly in this month between these two trout flies, as The Executioner is an extremely versatile fly, attracting sea trout, grilse, and salmon in spring and summer and in the past few seasons it has become very popular pattern in my part of the world late in the season for big Lough Neagh run brown trout (dallaghan). It has been successful for

THE EXECUTIONER

Hook: Size 8-14 salmon double

Tying silk: Red

Tail: Golden pheasant crest

Butt: Thin flat silver tinsel with an inner butt of red floss

Body: Flat silver tinsel

Ribbing: Thin oval tinsel

Throat: Black squirrel tied as underling style

Wing: Black squirrel or goat hair with jungle cock cheeks

Head: Red

many anglers, including fly tyer Andrew McGall, who rates this fly very highly. Like the other two flies in this feature, black and silver are a great combination in any fly pattern. I have also been told this fly works very well for sea trout and grilse in Lough Currane in Co Kerry. This is my kind of no nonsense, hair wing salmon fly, and I fish it with a heavy dose of confidence.



This fly is a variant of the Blae and Black, a very old pattern and a fantastic one. In my research of this fly I have not found a date. Most books suggest it's a fly of Scottish origin and some tell me it's linked to another truly great old fly, the Black Pennell. If this is true, and it seems likely as the Blae and Black is similar to the Pennell but with a blae wing, this fact may make the fly Edwardian, and most likely devised by an Englishman, H Cholmondely Pennell. The Blae and Silver is a

THE BLAE AND SILVER

Hook: 6-16 wet fly

Tying silk: Black

Tail (optional): Pheasant tippet or blood red feather

Body: Silver tinsel or Mylar

Rib: Silver oval tinsel or wire

Hackle: Black hen

Wings: Grey duck, medium starling or hen blackbird

Head: Head: Varnished thread

very much underrated fly, but that said I have found it is an excellent choice on our loughs and rivers. It works well throughout the year, but is extremely useful early and late season. Recently, in a conversation with my good friend and successful lough angler and fly tyer Gerry Taggart, this fly came up. He tells me he has also done well with it on Loughs Melvin and Sheelin, dressed on size 10 and 8. I sometimes use JC cheeks at duckfly time. It's a great point fly.