



Fooling a fish is no easy task

Many serious fly fishing anglers inevitably end up learning how to tie their own flies.

Fly fishing has allowed for me to become an artist behind the vise, spinning and wrapping various furs, feathers and synthetic materials to a hook in efforts to replicate a food source that a fish would hopefully want to eat. Though I enjoy tying all types of flies, my favorites include streamers and warm water flies.

A few days ago, I was out fly fishing for carp on the lower Colorado River.



ON THE FLY

KIRK WEBB

I had multiple refusals from fish that seemed interested in my offerings, but only before turning away at the last minute and disappearing back into the depths just as quickly as they appeared. For whatever reason, those fish haunted me for the rest of the day.

My creative fly-tying juices always seemingly turn on once I am in bed attempting to sleep. I just kept picturing those massive carp and what I could have done differently to hook up. That's when it dawned on me that I was fishing the wrong color of crayfish the entire time!

I generally fish for carp using flies that are more rust or brown in color. Many of the crayfish I saw scurrying around in the shallows were actually a bluish-steel color with hints of pink and tan. I hopped out of bed and excitedly turned on the lights to my fly-tying cave. I tied half of a dozen flies that night, each one a little bit different than the other.

The next morning, I was prepared with a new arsenal of flies to try and a rejuvenated sense of enthusiasm and optimism. Upon arrival, I walked to the backside of a slough and saw a daisy chain of about eight to 10 carp mudding under some thick vegetation. I cast and slid my fly near the chain, where a carp tracked my fly, tilted its head down and sucked in one of my new crayfish offerings. Rarely do carp ever break the surface, but this carp was hot and breached several times.

Being able to see the fish take the fly is what attracts me to carp fishing. I live for that take and love watching the eat.

Failure often leads to success in fly fishing. I fail at fooling fish fairly regularly, but as long as you learn from your mistakes, you'll become a more successful angler.

This report is provided every week by Taylor Creek Fly Shops in Aspen and Basalt. Taylor Creek can be reached at (970) 927-4374 or taylorcreek.com.



Carole Huey Contributed photo

This photo, taken Aug. 18 on West Sopris Road, shows local Silt artist "Dan" painting Mount Sopris.

OUTDOOR SHOTS OF THE WEEK

Each week, we will publish as many of your photos as we can. Here are some submission guidelines to help you get your photos published on this page.

How to submit:

- Photos can be sent to go@aspentimes.com or go@postindependent.com. Please put "Outdoor Shots of the Week" in the subject line to help us understand where you would like your photos published.

- Photos should be a .jpg, and sized between 500kb and 2mb. This will allow us to run the photos as big as a full page. (Hint: Before you take the picture, double-check that your camera quality settings are set to "large" or "high.")

- Photos should include captions pasted into the body of the email, identifying the date the photo was taken, who is in the photo, who took the picture, where the photo was taken, and what was occurring in the photo. Photos submitted without this information will not be published.

Being a cross country spectator is infectious

I had never seen my dad run before the day I toed the line of my first high school cross country race.

My parents were skeptical about my decision to participate, but it was my senior year and my wood shop teacher, who was the coach, had convinced me to give it a shot.

My mother, skeptical and frugal by necessity, made me run the first two weeks of practice in old basketball shoes before she took me to buy proper running shoes.

Growing up on a small Iowa farm, basketball was my sport, as it conflicted the least with the important and time-consuming work of the spring, summer and fall growing seasons. It took some convincing on my part to be given permission to ditch the jeans and gloves

for a pair of shorts in August.

Running wasn't something that our family did, nor was it common to our family's experience. Once, years later, our neighbor called the house with concern because they thought something must be wrong as they had seen my dad running through the fields. Turned out it was me, running for fun, while home visiting.

I still get stopped regularly when I am home by people asking if I need help, assuming that my car is broken down or something is wrong.

But, on that warm, crisp fall day of my first meet, the starting gun went off and the excitement and energy of the moment consumed my dad, along with all of the other spectators, in a way that only happens in cross country.



MIKE SCHNEITER

In what other sport do the spectators get almost as much of a workout as the participants?

I don't remember much about that first course or what time I ran or where I finished. What I do remember is my dad waving his arms frantically in the direction of the runner ahead of me, yelling at the top of his lungs an energetic cry of encouragement and quickly running to the next spot from which to view the race.

My mother was more subdued in her participation, but the moment had captured her as well and surely surprised them both.

My dad had never run before — not a community 5K, a casual jog after work or a run/walk fundraiser. Yet, on the ride home he spoke of running with the excitement of