

New Life to Old Flies

By: Tom Deschaine

Fly box too full? Do they get crushed under the lids of the box? How about those 'slimed' and, 'water-logged' flies; not to mention those that have been repeatedly saturated in floatant. We can revive all those old flies with a simple, "do-it-yourself" technique!

This technique was shared with me many years ago by an 'old timer' I met on the North Branch of the Au Sable River, here in Michigan. Now that I'm an 'old timer' it's time to pass it on to you.

Throughout the year I take all my flies that need to be reconditioned, and place them into a jar. During the winter months, when the mood strikes me, I gather up the flies and some simple equipment and set out to refurbish them.



All that's needed are some nail clippers, a hemostat and an old whistling tea kettle. The kind that allows the steam to escape through a small hole producing a stream of hot steam.



Take the nail clippers and remove all the old tippet material from the flies. Now, holding each fly (one at a time), with the hemostat, place the fly in spout of steam coming out of the tea kettle. Using a soft rag or paper towel, wipe the fly clean. Place it back into the steam and repeat two or three times. This process will remove any wax, silicone, dirt, oils or lacquer that has built up on the flies.



If the flies have lost their shape due to crushing, just remove them from the steam and using your fingers, pull the fly wings, tails, etc. back into shape. This process will also have to be repeated a few times to bring the fly back to its original condition.

When you have finished, just allow the flies to air dry for a short period and place them back into their respective fly boxes. With just a short investment of time your flies will be restored to their original state giving you many more hours of good service and fun.

See you on the water...



Tom Deschaine is a retired school teacher who lives in Westland, Michigan. A life long hunter, fisherman and outdoorsman, he now has the time to share some of his thoughts ad experiences with us

Copyright 2009©Deschaine