

Secret Potions

By: Tom Deschaine



Over the years I've discovered there are two types of fly fishermen. Those who share their love of the sport and everything that comes with it and those who love to keep secrets. The secretive type always have mysterious flies patterns that catch giant trout or 'honey holes' that are so difficult to get to, it would be impossible to write down the directions. We have all known a couple of trout fishermen like that. They are in the minority, so I just tend to ignore them.

I consider myself in the first group. I enjoy sharing with my fellow sportsmen and most of them enjoy sharing with me. Today is just such a day and I'd like to share a couple of solutions with you that perform very well and will save you a lot of money.

Fly line dressing costs \$4 to \$9 for a very small quantity. Using a good product several times a season will add years of life to your fly lines. A good line treatment product will remove dirt and line contaminants. It will also reduce friction between the line and the guides allowing for longer casting. It will guard against fading and most importantly it will prevent cracking of the line. Years ago I stumbled onto an excellent product that is cheap, readily available and really fits the bill.

ARMORALL! It's available at most hardware and auto supply stores. You may already have a bottle around the house. It provides a very durable, slick, water repellent coating to the fly line and according to the bottle, it's non-toxic. It is very inexpensive and a bottle will last you for years. For traveling convenience it is even available in 'wipes'.



I spent several years investigating my next secret potion --- dry fly floatants. I was, and still am, disappointed with the commercial products that are available. The gels, pastes and powders are just too messy and expensive to use. Less than an ounce will cost \$5 to \$9. I experimented with dozens of products, including hair sprays, lacquers, water repellents, waxes, and a variety of home made concoctions (some of which were potentially dangerous mixtures).



Each product or compound I tried had faults. They were either flammable, toxic, left a slick on the water, or dissolved plastics. Some had strong odors, damaged hackle materials or did not provide enough buoyancy. Then --- suddenly --- last year I stumbled on the perfect floatant! Silicone Grout Sealer! The brand I use is by “Homax Products, Inc.”. I remove the applicator from the top of the bottle and pour the grout sealer into a small plastic pump bottle (environmentally sound). These plastic spray bottles are available where ever travel size toiletries are sold. I prefer the 2 oz. size. It easily fits into my vest or tackle box. It works great!



This product is not flammable, dries quickly and, leaves no slick on the water. It is odorless and does not damage delicate hackles or fly materials. It's a highly effective floatant providing tremendous buoyancy for dry flies. Just two or three puffs, a couple of false cast to dry it --- and you're ready to go! This product by Homax has made a true believer out of me. Admittedly, there are many brands of grout sealer on the market. Do they all work the same? I don't know. You might want to do experimenting on your own. But this brand works!

See you on the water.....

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