

# Susquehanna Fishing

Magazine

September 2010

**FREE!!!**

**Special Lure-Making Edition**

[SusquehannaFishing.com](http://SusquehannaFishing.com)



**End of season closeouts!**

**WE SHIP NATIONWIDE**



[www.paddleva.com](http://www.paddleva.com)  
(800) 442-4837

## FISH CALVERT COUNTY, MD.

*an experience you won't forget*

With fast, modern and well-maintained vessels ranging from 28' to 50', our boats can accommodate groups of 6 to 49. Fully equipped with state-of-the-art safety equipment and the ultimate in electronics, our captains offer world-class fishing for striped bass, bluefish, black drum, croaker, flounder, perch and more.

Fish with the finest fleet on the Chesapeake Bay.



Solomons - Chesapeake Beach - Breezy Point  
800-331-9771 • [www.ecalvert.com](http://www.ecalvert.com)



**Quality Products,  
Information,  
Customer Service.**  
**Dedicated to Kayak Fishing  
Since 2002**

**HOOK1**  
KAYAKFISHINGGEAR.COM

866-486-8412

Save 10% with this code - H1PA

[www.KayakFishingGear.com](http://www.KayakFishingGear.com)

**RIVERSIDE**  
  
**CAMPGROUND**  
and LOUNGE

[www.riverside-campground.com](http://www.riverside-campground.com)

125 S. Main Street  
Montgomery, PA 17752

(570) 547-6289

**"Back to the River" Bluegrass Music Festival**  
September 12th, Noon to 6pm  
[www.bluegrassbytheriver.com](http://www.bluegrassbytheriver.com)

*Susquehanna Fly & Spin*

Guide Service LLC

PA Licensed Guide, Steve Hancock



Fly and Spin fishing for Smallmouth Bass, Walleye, Musky, Carp on fly on the Susquehanna River Harrisburg, Pa  
Visit Us at [www.susquehannaflyandspin.com](http://www.susquehannaflyandspin.com)  
or Call Us at (717) 576-4217

Susquehanna Fishing Magazine, LLC  
13 York Road  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

Phone:  
570-441-4606

On the web:  
<http://susquehannafishing.com/>

Email:  
[susquehannafishingmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:susquehannafishingmagazine@gmail.com)

Publisher: John King Oast, Jr.

Initial Issue Release: February, 2010

Coverage: Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania  
(Susquehanna River Regions)

Susquehanna Fishing Magazine is a free print publication distributed through local establishments, and funded by participating advertisers. It covers the entire Susquehanna River regions of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, and helps to inform anglers about the most productive angling techniques, while promoting safety and responsible stewardship of the river.

Susquehanna Fishing Magazine, LLC and its contributors always recommend using caution whenever around the water. Always wear a personal floatation device, and practice responsible behavior when on the water.

*SFM content and submissions do not reflect the opinion of Susquehanna Fishing Magazine, LLC.*

**SusquehannaFishing.com**

# Contents

## SEPTEMBER 2010

### Monthly Sections

- 3 Special Interest.....Michael John Barton  
*The Rise of Fall*
- 5 Kayak Fishing.....Hank Hewitt  
*Kayak Fly Fishing the "River"*
- 11 Photos of the Month

### Feature Articles

- 4 Feature Article.....Bryan Wilhelm  
*Crafting Homemade Fishing Lures*

**Cover:** 'Tis the Season... A nice striper from Bryan Wilhelm

**FREE!!!**

## Susquehanna Fishing

Magazine

**ADVERTISE IN OUR NEXT ISSUE!**

*Reach your target audience!  
Print and digital availability!*

**Call 570-441-4606**  
[SusquehannaFishing.com](http://SusquehannaFishing.com)

### Special Interest...

#### ***The Rise of Fall***

*By Michael John Barton*

When I was a kid, I feared the transition from summer to fall. Nobody likes to see summer come to an end, especially if you've been dreading going back to school the whole summer. However, these days my state of mind is much different. Don't get me wrong, I LOVE SUMMER, but I have now come to love fall, too. My reason for coming to love fall is simple....

*Continued on page 9...*

## Feature Article...

### Crafting Homemade Fishing Lures

By Bryan Wilhelm

This is the first of what is to be a series of articles for anglers who may be interested in making their own fishing tackle. Like previous articles in SFM on making and fishing jigs, the purpose of this series is to introduce interested anglers to the procedures of tackle making. Subsequent articles will cascade through intermediate level projects, ending with more complex ones like making wooden crank baits, painted and finished to commercial quality or beyond.

We will begin with a simple project requiring only a few tools using purchased materials while learning elementary skill.

Stay with me through the whole series of articles to gain an understanding of how homemade lures are built and what makes a great lure work. Follow along...because all of the lures you make will attract and catch many of the Susquehanna regional sport fishes.

Our first project works magic on bass, pan fish and trout. It is the 1/8 ounce inline spinner.

There are just a few basic tools which are needed. They are: 1.Round nose pliers 2. Wire cutters. If you plan to continue making lures for a while, buy quality tools that will last for years. Many of the tackle component suppliers sell these quality tools.

Buy a kit of all the needed parts from your local tackle shop or one of the online/mail order houses like [www.lurepartsonline.com](http://www.lurepartsonline.com) (formerly Stamina Components) or [www.Jannsnetcraft.com](http://www.Jannsnetcraft.com). This will allow you to focus on learning tactile procedures of this craft without all the complications of trying to determine part selection, sizes and compatibility.

As we work, I will describe proper techniques and correct procedure and include photo examples to guide you. The results of your work will be effective fishing lures you will be proud to use.

Let's get started...

What follows are all the parts you will be working with:

- 6" piece of .031 wire with a readymade loop on one end
- Spinner blade
- Wire clevis
- 1/8" bearing bead
- Brass lure body
- Number 6 treble hook
- Colored plastic tube as embellishment for the hook shank

To become familiar with what we will do...if you have a computer or a way to go online checkout <http://www.youtube.com/user/JannsNetcraftTV>. Play the video...it shows all the steps we will go through to make our inline spinners.

Assembly –

1. Insert a clevis into the hole in a spinner blade.
2. Slide the blade clevis assembly onto the 6' wire perform with the convex or rounded side of the blade facing the pre-formed loop in the wire.
3. Slide a bead bearing onto the wire.
4. Slide a brass lure body onto the wire (as shown in photo no.1).
5. Slide a 1/2' piece of colored plastic tube onto a treble hook shank.
6. Bend the end of wire into an open loop 1" from the lure body.
7. Add the treble hook and close the wire loop. Your finished lure should look like this (see photo no. 2 of finished lure).

This is all there is to this. It is a nice and

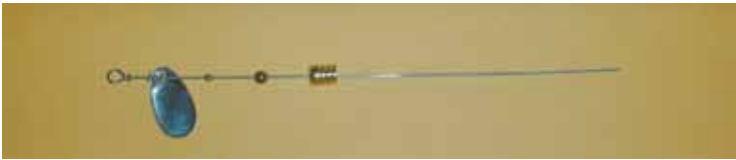


Photo #1



Photo #2



Photo #3

easy way, to make a great lure. I like easy! Improving your spinner – to reduce line twist while fishing, bend the loop end of your lure that the loop is off center from the shaft like this (see photo no. 3). This will reduce the lure tendency of rolling on the retrieve.

Now that you have confidence working with these tools and materials...start all over again with larger parts to make several ¼ ounce lures.

When finished, you will have produced a number of new lures to add to your fishing gear. Use these skills to create your own hand crafted lures. You can expand on what you have learned here to make very light spinners using plastic beads for fly fishing and huge spinners with larger blades and larger, heavier bodies for larger fish like musky.


I recommend fishing these 1/8 ounce lures on a 5 to 5 ½ foot spinning rod spooled with 4 or 6 pound test monofilament line. Inline spinner lures combine flash with vibration – a winning combination to catch crappie, small-mouth bass, largemouth bass and trout.

One tip for fishing spinners in moving water - cast across current. Immediately begin your retrieve when your lure touches down. Vary the speed of your retrieve to suite the flowing water you are fishing. Whenever the water color is murky or stained...try a spinner....and hang on!

*Have fun fishing!*

*Bryan Wilhelm is a multi-species light tackle angler with many years experience both as a professional and a sportsman on the lower Susquehanna River. His zeal for fishing grows each passing year. We look forward to him sharing his experiences.*

**HOLLENBACH'S  
BAIT & TACKLE**  
132 S. Front St., Sunbury, Pa. 17801



**Open 7 Days A Week**  
Live Bait • Rod & Reel Repair  
Full Line of Rods, Reels, Tackle & Many  
Other Sportsmens Needs

**SusquehannaFishing.com**

# *Kayak Fishing...*

## **Kayak Fly Fishing the "River" No Cast Technique**

*By Hank Hewitt*

Perhaps no other angling method has more confusion or misconception about it than fly fishing. In this article we're going to focus on two practical tools that when combined are highly successful at bringing fish to net, often when no other approach will.

The two tools which we'll be addressing are first, the kayak as an angling platform, and second, the use of the fly rod fished from the kayak. So you know where I'm coming from, when I go fishing, I go to catch fish. I look at my rods, reels, lures, flies, and kayaks as tools used to achieve my angling ends, that being, to catch fish. My focus is to be well-versed enough with my tools that regardless of the conditions I have the right implement, and know how to use it to get the job done. Unfortunately, when fly fishing gets brought into the mix many fall prey to a common misconception that the cast catches the fish. Well, I've yet to see a fish swoop down out of a tree to eat a fly. So many fly anglers often get so caught up in how their fly is getting to the water that they don't focus on what the fly is doing once it's in or on the water. It's my purpose in this article to explain how to fish the fly rod from the kayak while keeping casting to a minimum so as to keep the focus on effectively fishing, and ultimately catching. Of course, when stationary on foot, distance casting is often necessary. However, when one is in a kayak, the kayak cuts down the distance to the fish, and in the case of river fishing the kayak often moves right over where the fish are eating. Because we are dealing with river fishing, fishing from the kayak, and using the fly rod, let's keep things simple and first address the water types, then

the use of the kayak, and last a simple, effective way to present a "fly rod lure" to the fish in these areas.

I love fishing rivers because of the variety of ways the water moves, and the potential areas to find fish. There are long, slow-moving stretches of water, what we'll call a "pool". Then there are the shallow broken water stretches that for our purposes we'll call "runs". Runs, which are usually associated with elevation changes, eventually transition to pools. The transition area we'll call "tail outs". I'm not a gambling man as I have nothing to lose; however if I were to wager that I could catch a fish on the fly rod in one fly cast, from the kayak, on any given summer or fall day, the place I would say I could do this is where the broken water of a run transitions to a tail out, eventually slowing in velocity to the head of a pool. I did say one cast, and yes with the fly rod while fishing from the kayak, one cast could be worked effectively, well over a few hundred yards. Let's look at handling the kayak.

There are a multitude of virtues about a kayak as a fishing platform on flowing water. For me, the primary virtue is that the kayak easily floats through water depths measured in inches, and does so quietly. Here's the technique I use in the kayak to set my drift. First and foremost, keep in mind that when drifting through moving water in the kayak, I drift stern, back end first. So as I come up on the broken water I first address the water from a forward-facing position. This is done so I can see any rocks or obstructions in my path that could possibly be a hazard. Once I have corrected my course to avoid obstructions I spin the kayak so I am drifting stern-first. My paddle will eventually be set in my lap so I can handle the fishing rod, usually the fly rod. There will be some current formations that may spin or twist the kayak one way or another. To correct positioning I'll keep the rod in its normal hand and with the empty hand grab the paddle. I'll use my rod hand elbow to brace the paddle across my body, and either push or pull the paddle on my non-rod hand side through the water to correct my drift. After a bit of practice it



becomes quite easy. That's the extent of kayak handling needed to drift in the moving water. Let's now look at the use of the fly rod in this situation.

Here's a quick overview of the fly rod and the fly line I'm using. My preferred weight rod for the river is a 9' 8wt fly rod. It can handle a good range of weighted or wind resistant flies. It can also handle smaller flies. It also has enough backbone to handle smallies measured in pounds, and the occasional carp, channel cat, and possible musky. Last I can still pull the kayak up before a shallow rapid and get out to fish the fly rod on foot if I so choose. The fly line I use is a "weight-forward" floating fly line. In fly fishing terms it is written like this, WF8-F. The WF stands for weight-forward, the 8 is the weight of rod, and the F is floating. Fly lines have tapers. The diameter of line, front to back, tapers from a thin diameter called the "tip" to a thicker diameter, which is called the "head". The head will eventually taper back down to a thin diameter and this is called the "running line". There seems to be a million and one tapers on the market. For the technique we're discussing here any WF8-F line will suffice. The fly line where it goes on the reel attaches to backing. Reels are sized by the weight of line they can hold. Some reels are designed to hold a range of line weights. The fly reel should have at least 200 yards of backing on it. That's not to say you'll need that much backing, but it is important in how the fly line wraps on the spool. Dacron backing is the conventional running line used; however, I have gone to using 20# tensile Power Pro as backing. Doing this I get pretty close to 300yards of backing on the reel due to its thin diameter. At the forward most tip of the fly line, a tapered leader gets attached. The leader I tie is 4' of 50# mono, to 2' of 35# mono to a tip section of 8# mono 3' long. I use uni-to-uni knots in the construction of the leaders. That's a brief over view of my normal Susky kayak set-up for the fly rod. Let's get back to fishing it from the yak...

At this point we'll address the fly. Actually, what I'm using in the runs through the tailouts is a wet fly tied on a 1/32 ounce jig head. See the

recipe that accompanies the article. The 8wt fly rod has no problem tossing the weight of this presentation, when I decide to cast. It's tied to look like any number of critters or bait fish that the fish in the river will see as food. All one needs to do once the kayak is set on the drift is to pull about 5' of fly line out of the fly rod. Drop the jig and line onto the water. Strip about 10'-20' of line off the reel as you drift back and shake it out of the rod tip onto the water. Always watch where the leader meets the fly line. When that dips under the water use the rod tip to straighten the line and get tight to the jig because at this point the jig is connecting with the bottom. Simply lay the fly line, coming off the reel, under the index finger of the hand that is on the rod, and strip or hold the line with your off hand behind the index finger of your rod hand. You should occasionally feel the jig contact the bottom. When this happens quickly strip line in using very short quick 2" long strips until you no longer feel the bottom. You could also lightly twitch the rod tip up. I prefer the stripping technique. As the water gets deeper, shake out more line. Keep in mind that the leader is 9' long. It's simple to get the jig into the kitchen of the fish in quickly flowing water 4-10 feet deep.

So now your jig is down in the column, it looks like hapless food adrift through your quarries' kitchens. It comes across the nose of a 3# smallie, and it breathes it in, now what? Well, the first thing you feel is a breath-taking thud. Provided you have the line locked under that index finger and your other hand holding the line, the rod will double over and start convulsing violently, and your kayak will get spun around in circles or pulled in various directions. You can do one of two things to gain line on the fish. If it's a bigger fish it will run line out until the point that the line is coming straight off the reel. Fight the fish as you would any fish from the reel. Sometimes though when the fish goes to run it pulls you in the kayak before pulling out line. So just gain line back by pulling line across your index finger, and close that finger to lock the line to reset the hand pulling the line. I suggest having a decent sized net in the kayak with you to scoop

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

up the pooped fish. It only takes a few 2#-4# smallies on the fly rod, while catching them from the yak, to make the day.

If you have a fly rod, and get a chance to drift the river in a kayak, try this technique with any 1/32 ounce or smaller ice fishing jig, and hold on. If you have any questions e-mail me at [antoutfitters@gmail.com](mailto:antoutfitters@gmail.com).

*Tight lines, screaming reels, and safe paddling!*

*Hank Hewitt is a guide for Anthracite Outfitters, and owner of HCH3 Photographic Productions, LLC.*





*Continued from page 3...*

this is the time of the year when the fall feeding frenzy is on in full swing!!! When the air starts to become colder, and the days get shorter, the fish start to gear up for the long, cold winter that lies ahead of them. It is also at this time of the year that huge migrations of bait fish start to transition from shallow water to their deep wintering holes. Predatory fish take advantage of this migration, taking into consideration that this may possibly be their last chance to find food in abundance until the water temperature warms back up in the spring. That said, this is without a doubt the best time of the year to catch the biggest fish of a lifetime.

In the fall, bait is the primary focus. Find the bait, and you'll find the fish. In my part of the neighborhood this means combing water in the 1-8 ft range, with most fish coming out of water only 1-4 ft deep. Once the water dips below 60 degrees, smallmouth will start to school up in wolfpacks of up to twenty or more fish. If you stumble upon one of these schools, you can turn a bad day into a good day very quickly. Out of the whole year, fish are in their most aggressive state of mind during fall months, which can make your job rather easy, should you locate fish. I can't stress enough to follow your gut at this time of year, and hit all of the obvious places that you think might hold fish. Search shallow flats, underwater humps, ledges, and points; these areas are notorious for holding mega amounts of forage.

Lure selection is fairly simple when fishing for fall smallmouth on the Susquehanna River. I stick to using a line-up of lures that most anglers are pretty familiar with: deep diving crankbaits, rattle traps, suspending jerkbaits, topwater plugs, and of course a soft plastic tube or grub. Color selection can prove to be rather easy as well. I stick with only a few colors that have produced good numbers of fish for me in past years. Shad patterns, such as Sexy Shad, Gizzard Shad, and Tennessee Shad are all good choices. If the water is muddy, then switching to a color such as Firetiger may be the ticket. For soft plastic lures

I like to keep it simple; green pumpkin with some sort of flake has worked wonders for me in past outings. Just remember to match the hatch as best as possible! In most cases, the presence of the bait itself is what will trigger the fish to bite, not the color of the bait, so don't worry about bringing ten million different colors of the same lure .

Technique depends much on your location, and what type of structure you are fishing. If you are fishing an area of the river that is full of points, ledges, and channels, then there should be a pretty decent deep diving crankbait bite. Simply cast your lure to the water that is adjacent to the ledge you're fishing, start working your bait down to its maximum diving depth (which should be about 10 feet), grind your bait into the bottom, bouncing it off of rocks and other forms of cover, and work it back to the boat until it comes off of the ledge. When you stop feeling your bait digging into the bottom this means your lure is going over the edge of the ledge. When your bait has reached this point, slow your retrieve and keep your lure in the strike zone as long as possible. If there are no takers, keep working your way down the ledge until you make contact with a hungry school of smallmouth. Topwater is also a very good choice once the water dips below 60 degrees. I have had days on the Susquehanna where I have put fish in the boat all day long, all on topwater lures.

No matter which lure you choose, make sure to use the proper action rod for that specific technique; in the end it might help you land the biggest fish of your lifetime. So give some of these techniques a shot the next time you spend a day on the water during fall months – most likely it will be a day on the Susquehanna that you won't soon forget!

*Michael John Barton, better known as MJ, is an established tournament angler from Endicott, NY. MJ competes on the Bassmaster Open Circuit, as well as the Bassmaster Weekend Series. MJ is also a prostaff member for Vicious-Fishing, Ezee Jigs, and Paycheck Baits.*

## Hints and Tips...

By Bryan Wilhelm

### Bag the Flies!

When pestered by biting flies, try this remedy...

Put four copper pennies in each of 4-6 sandwich-sized Ziploc bags half full of water and hang them about your camp. It's amazing but true. They will leave you alone. It seems to work with any kind of water, too. Enjoy the outdoors!

\*\*\*\*\*

### Selecting a Fishing Hat

When buying a hat for fishing, pick one with a brim that is dark on the underside. This feature reduces reflected glare. When combined with polarized sun glasses, this system ensures the best visibility of what is in the water.

If your hat does not have a dark under bill, then color your hat with a permanent marker. Tight lines.

*Bryan Wilhelm is a multi-species light tackle angler with many years experience both as a professional and a sportsman on the lower Susquehanna River. His zeal for fishing grows each passing year. We look forward to him sharing his experiences.*

www.binghamtonbumperstickers.com



www.bumpastickas.com

Retailers and outfitters, contact us to discuss wholesale pricing  
Let us design a custom sticker for your business!



MARY LOU TOO  
Chesapeake Bay Charter Fishing  
Russ Mogel, Capt.  
(301) 855-0784 home (301) 928-3757 boat  
Toll Free 866-331-7329  
5510 Cheryl Lane, Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732  
www.maryloutoocharters.com  
fishonmaryloutoo@comcast.net

Koinonia Guide Service  
and Adventures  
Rod Bates  
717-805-7082  
www.KoinoniaFishingGuides.com  
"Making Lifelong Fishing Memories... One Client at a Time!"



**KAYAK KANOPY**  
kayakkanopy.com / 1-877-472-4867 / kayakkanopy@gmail.com  
LIFE IS A JOURNEY. ENJOY THE RIDE

## Photos of the Month...



*A Susky smallie caught on a Marsh Works shrimp rigged texas style, weightless.  
Submitted by Kelly Watson.*



*Ben Hynes with a thick 19 incher.*



# KNOWN FACT:

One good fish story  
deserves another.

**OCEAN**  **KAYAK**

Here's another Known Fact: When your essential gear includes an Ocean Kayak, you'll have a better day out on the water. You may not catch the big one, but you'll have a better chance of it. We pioneered the sit-on-top, and for years now we've been perfecting it for anglers like you. Which means every fishing kayak we build is swift, stable, and outfitted to give you every opportunity to reel in the big one.

JOHNSON  
OUTDOORS



[www.oceankayak.com](http://www.oceankayak.com)