



GOING FOR THE ONE! BY ROD CROSSMAN

The Spey-Fly Advantage for Trout

What's all the excitement about using Spey tackle for catching trout? Glenn Zinkus tells us about the equipment, flies, and fishing techniques. It sounds like fun!

Little compares to the thrill of a fish

grabbing a fly swung through the water. Die-hard steelhead anglers know it, and so do guys who fish with wet flies. When a steelhead, salmon, or in this case, a trout, strikes a fly tethered to the end of a tight line, it's as if a jolt of electricity shoots up the rod, into your arm, and throughout your body. When the rhythmic Spey casting and swinging lull you into another world, this thrilling shock is amplified.

Trout Spey is one of the fastest-growing aspects of fly fishing, and certainly of two-handed fishing. Trout Spey opens up previously unfishable water and adds more techniques and variety to our angling. Perhaps, most of all, this growth is a reflection on just how much fun fishing Spey flies to trout really is.



CLARET CDL SOFT HACKLE

Hook: Daiichi D1260, size 10 or 8.

Thread: Black gel-spun 14/0.

Abdomen: Black Veevus Holographic Tinsel.

Rib: Small silver wire.

Thorax: Red Senyo's Fusion Dub.

Flash: UV pearl MFC Sparkle Minnow Body Brush.

Hackle: Black Whiting Farms Spey hackle and claret coq de Leon hen soft hackle.

Head cement: Solarez Thin.



ANDERSON'S BIRD OF PREY CADDIS (OCTOBER CADDIS)

Hook: Daiichi D1130, size 8 or 6.

Bead: Gold tungsten, but copper is also a good choice for tying the October caddis version of this fly.

Thread: Brown olive 8/0 (70 denier).

Tail: Hungarian partridge.

Body: Shrimp pink and tan UV Ice Dub.

Rib: Pearl Flashabou.

Legs: Hungarian partridge

Collar: Peacock herl.



SCULPZILLA

Shank: Your favorite straight shank, length to match the size of the fly.

Connector: 20-pound-test Dacron backing, Fire Wire, or Senyo's Intruder Trailer Hook Wire.

Hook: OPST Swing Hook, your choice of size.

Head: Cross-Eyed Cone.

Thread: Black gel-spun 10/0.

Underbody: Black Ice Dub.

Body: Black rabbit strip.

Collar: Red guinea hackle and black soft hackle.

WHAT ARE TROUT SPEY FLIES?

There are essentially two types of flies employed in trout Spey fishing: soft-hackles and streamers.

Soft-hackles are best used when there is some type of hatch occurring. Here in the Northwest, where trout Spey has become very popular, this means soft-hackles are effectively employed from the early-spring hatches of March browns and Skwala stoneflies to the last big hatches of the season, such as the October caddis. Effective soft-hackles include the gamut of styles from early English patterns such as a Snipe & Purple to 21st-century flies tied using the latest materials just released in fly shops. I most often swing soft-hackles with a trout Spey rod during hatches when I see visible evidence that fish are at the surface or just sub-surface. During times when hatches are predictable, I swing soft-hackles before, during, and after these events to get their attention.

Streamers, and the more recently developed Intruder-style flies, are the other genre of patterns common to trout Spey. Streamers and Intruders are used effectively year-round, and are the only type of flies many trout Spey anglers use. While many of these patterns look like steelhead flies, they are scaled down for lighter-weight trout fishing, and can easily be cast all day using 3- and 4-weight trout Spey rods. Streamers and Intruders require sparse, lightweight materials, lighter and smaller hooks, and are tied in colors that trout will key on with the occasional hot spot or trigger-point bit of color.

SPEY GEAR BASICS

Although trout Spey fishing can often be considered minimalist when on the water, with a rod, reel and line, box of flies, and perhaps a shooting head wallet, the scaled-down equipment and evolution of new gear can do one of two things: spin the head of a novice Spey caster into utter confusion or excite a gear head into a shopping spree of fly lines, shooting heads, and sinking tips for every

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Abdomen: Black Veevus Holographic Tinsel.
Rib: Small silver wire.
Thorax: Red Senyo's Fusion Dub.
Flash: UV pearl MFC Sparkle Minnow Body Brush.
Hackle: Black Whiting Farms Spey hackle and claret coq de Leon hen soft hackle.
Head cement: Solarez Thin.

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situation.

Today's ultralight trout Spey rods grew out of switch rods suitable for single- or double-handed fly fishing for trout. In more recent years, the growing popularity of trout Spey encouraged rod manufacturers to design and refine a new line of ultralight, two-handed Spey outfits. Many fly shops throughout the West have at least one person on staff who is into trout Spey and spends much of their time Spey casting and swinging flies on local trout waters.

The Watershed Fly Shop, in my hometown of Corvallis, Oregon, is a prime example of this type of establishment, and Troy Haeslip, owner of this great business, is one of those dedicated Spey anglers. Troy spends much of his time on the water swinging flies for steelhead and trout. Local waters where trout reside include the Santiam, Willamette, and McKenzie River systems, and a little farther afield flows the famous Deschutes River. Troy loves helping anglers learn both the basics and the advanced nuances of Spey fishing for trout. I sat down with Troy to review gear for trout Spey.

Trout Spey rods essentially overlap ultralight Spey rods, or what one manufacturer so accurately calls its "microspey" line of tackle. Available Spey rods range from the almost unthinkable 1-weight (which handles small rivers and trout beautifully) to 5-weight two-handers. Troy says most anglers steer toward 3- and 4-weight rods. He finds 4-weights the most versatile, and 5-weights to be a little big for many trout situations.

Well-known Spey angler and casting instructor Simon Gawesworth says that when selecting a rod, a good rule of thumb is to double the line weight to match the size of trout you will target. In other words, a 3-weight rod is suited for fish weighing up to six pounds, a 4-weight rod will work well for eight-pound fish, and a 5-weight rod can handle Alaskan rainbows and small steelhead. Of course, smaller rods are best suited for using lighter trout Spey flies, while

BRETT'S KLAMATH INTRUDER

Shank: OPST Steelhead Intruder Shank.

Connector: Senyo's Intruder Trailer Hook Wire.

Hook: Gamakatsu Octopus Hook, size 4.

Thread: Olive 10/0.

Eyes: Dazl-Eyes or your favorite dumbbell eyes.

Body: Olive brown Ice Dub.

Inner body wrap: Four strands of Krinkle Mirror Flash, four strands of barred olive micro rubber legs, and a few strands of Lady Amherst tail fibers.

Outer body wrap: Rust rabbit strip.



COASTAL MUDDLER

Hook: Daiichi 2220, size 8.

Thread: Gray-brown 6/0 (140 denier).

Tail: Natural coastal deer hair.

Body: Gold holographic tinsel.

Rib: Amber Ultra Wire.

Wing: Copper/blue grizzly Krystal Flash.

Thorax: Root beer Enrico Puglisi Streamer Brush.



CHOU'S FORTUNE COOKIE

Shank: Any straight-eyed shank.

Connector: Berkley Steelon nylon-coated wire.

Hook: Gamakatsu Big River Bait, size 6.

Thread: Olive 6/0 (140 denier).

Head: Black-nickel Cross-Eyed Cone.

Tail: Olive-brown MFC Buggerbou, olive-grizzly hackle tips, and olive Krystal Flash.

Body: Olive Ice Dub

Legs: Barred olive rubber legs.

Collar: Olive guinea fowl.





CHOU'S MOOSHOO MUDDLER

Shank: Any straight-eyed shank.

Connector: Berkley Steelon nylon-coated wire.

Hook: Gamakatsu Big River Bait, size 4.

Thread: Black 6/0 (140 denier).

Tail: Golden pheasant tippet dyed olive.

Rear body: Flat Mylar tinsel, color to match the fly.

Thorax: Olive-chartreuse Spirit River Bright Blend, brushed out and spiral-wrapped with a green grizzly saddle hackle.

Rib: Olive wire.

Collar: Golden pheasant tippet dyed olive.

Flash: Olive Angel Hair.

Wing: Olive grizzly saddle hackle, tips.

Head: Black elk belly hair.



SPADE FLY

Hook: Alec Jackson Steelhead Iron, sizes 8 to 4.

Thread: Black gel spun.

Tail: Deer hair.

Body: Black chenille, black ostrich herl, or black dubbing.

Hackle: Grizzly soft hackle.



NORM'S MINK ZONKER INTRUDER

Shank: Senyo's Micro Shank.

Connector: Black Senyo's Intruder Trailer Hook Wire.

Hook: Gamakatsu UV Octopus, size 4.

Thread: Orange gel-spun 14/0.

Dubbing ball: Light olive SLF Dubbing.

Tail flash: Pearl MFC UV Sparkle Minnow Body Brush.

Wing: Olive Micro Mink Zonker.

Spey feather: Chartreuse Whiting Farms Spey cape hackle.

Hackle: Golden olive speckled Whiting Farms coq de Leon hen soft hackle and a copper olive saddle hackle.

Head cement: Solarez Ultra-Thin.

larger rods can handle more sink tips and heavier flies.

UNTANGLING THE MYSTERIES OF TROUT SPEY LINES

Trout Spey lines are evolving, and manufacturers are adding new and different products all the time. There are basically two styles of lines employed in trout Spey: heavier Skagit lines and lighter Scandi lines.

Skagit lines are the workhorses of Spey lines. Their shorter, heavy heads develop a lot of power quickly in trout Spey rods. Skagit heads range from the super-short micro Skagits featuring 11- to 26-foot-long heads. Shorter Skagit heads are best suited to typical trout Spey rod lengths. Anglers new to Spey casting typically find Skagit lines easier to use because these heavier lines load rods quickly and give anglers more "feel" while casting. These lines are ideal for casting larger, weighted flies such as streamers and Intruders, as well as heavier sinking tips.

The popularity of Scandi lines for trout Spey is growing. These are lighter lines, and are a good choice for fishing on or near the water's surface. Scandi lines are essentially all front tapered and unroll very efficiently on the water. Anglers using Scandi lines achieve long distances, cast pretty loops, make soft presentations, and fish smaller flies effectively. Scandi line heads are longer than the heads on Skagit lines, with long front tapers, moderate belly lengths, and short rear tapers. A Scandi is my line-of-choice during hatches when I swing soft hackles.

Both Skagit and Scandi lines are available as modular systems where the components are assembled using loop-to-loop connections. A trout Spey line can also be purchased as an integrated line; that is, the running line and shooting head are all one piece, much like a regular fly line. A modular Skagit system works well for me when casting bigger flies and the loop-to-loop connections are unnoticeable. When fishing soft hackles during a hatch, an integrated

Scandi line works nicely for shooting line and strip-retrieving flies because there are no loop-to-loop connections going through the rod guides.

In the interest of keeping this simple, leaders used with Skagit systems are typically just lengths of tip-pet material; a three- to five-foot-long piece of 3X to 0X fluorocarbon will serve as a leader. For Scandi systems, a Polyleader or Versileader is preferred. Five- to 10-foot-long leaders are best-suited to Scandi setups.

When choosing a reel for your new trout Spey rod, increase the size from what you would use on a traditional single-handed rod; I prefer moving up a couple of sizes. For example, a four-weight trout Spey rod works well with a six-weight reel. In general, select a reel that, when loaded with backing and line, balances the rod when you place your upper hand in position on the grip.

There are many suitable reels on the market today for trout Spey, and aspiring anglers should visit their local fly shops to look over the range of options. Most anglers like the fast pickup of large arbor reels, but I find that a 3 5/8-inch-diameter Hardy Perfect balances my five-weight Spey rod and adds a vintage coolness to the experience. The only drawback is that I have to reel faster than I would when using a large arbor reel, but the sound of that vintage Hardy clicker is like music during a screaming run of a Deschutes River trout.

I am including a few favorite patterns for you to add to your fly box; the pattern recipes are pretty specific, but you can often substitute with your favorite materials. Pacific Northwest anglers, guides, and fly shops developed this selection. It includes soft hackles for fishing during specific hatches as well as a few searching-type soft hackles. There is also a selection of streamers and Intruders for fishing western waters and beyond. All are ideal for when you want to try your hand at Spey trout fishing.

Glenn Zinkus is a regular contributor to this magazine. Glenn lives in Oregon.

MINI STREAMER SPEY INTRUDER

Shank: Fish-Skull Senyo's Micro Shank.

Connector: Black Senyo's Intruder

Trailer Hook Wire.

Hook: Gamakatsu Octopus UV, size 4.

Thread: Orange gel-spun 14/0.

Dubbing ball: Light olive SLF Dubbing.

Tail flash: Silver MFC UV Sparkle

Minnow Body Brush.

Body: Olive MFC Bunny Brush.

Side feathers: Brown cape hackles.

Hackle: Burnt orange speckled coq de Leon hen hackle.

Head cement: Solarez Ultra-Thin.



THE PINOT FLY

Shank: Pink Senyo's Articulated Shank.

Connector: Black Senyo's Intruder

Trailer Hook Wire.

Hook: OPST Swing Hook, size 4.

Thread: Red gel-spun 14/0.

Dubbing ball: Claret SLF Dubbing.

Tail flash: Pearl UV MFC Minnow

Body Brush.

Rubber legs: Black barred pearl

Hareline Grizzly Flutter Legs.

Rear hackle: Claret speckled coq de Leon hen hackle.

Body: Claret MFC Micro Lucent Chenille.

Hackle: Claret saddle hackle, black cape hackle, and olive speckled coq de Leon hen hackle.

Head cement: Solarez Ultra-Thin.



THE BIG UGLY

Hook: Ahrex NS 110, size 8 or 6.

Thread: Brown gel-spun 14/0.

Tail: Coachman brown saddle hackles.

Body: Adams gray Davy Wotton SLF Mink Dubbing.

Rib: Amber wire.

Hackle: Coachman brown saddle hackle.

