

## Why Fly Fishing?

Fly fishing is one of the few styles of fishing where you can have a good time without ever catching a fish. It's a type of fishing where casting can be as much fun as catching. Catching fish on the fly isn't about quantity. It's about the quality of the experience.

The attention to detail and technique make fly fishing one of the most artistic forms of angling. Watching someone who has mastered the fly rod is like seeing poetry in motion. Flies can be tied that are so realistic you can't tell the difference between what's fake and what's real, and in many instances neither can the fish.

Perhaps more than any other method, fly fishing requires a certain degree of skill in order to be successful, and developing that skill is where the true satisfaction lies. Learning to cast with precision is considerably more complicated than using conventional spinning or bait casting equipment. Imparting action to the lure is also more involved. And finally, hooking and playing a fish is unlike using any other type of tackle.

The appeal of fly fishing doesn't stop there. Tying your own flies either on or off the water can be an extremely rewarding experience. Imagine identifying the prey that a fish is feeding on, then having the ability to create something using artificial material that looks identical. Very few experiences in angling measure up to catching a fish on something you make yourself.

In specific situations, fly fishing can be the most effective way to present an artificial. In the early 1980's, coastal anglers in South Carolina discovered a new way to target red drum in the state's estuaries. When high tides flooded the marsh grass, the fish would move into the grass to feed, where they could be seen with their tails out of the water. Like any fish in shallow water, these fish were nervous and spooked easily. The slightest splash from a lure or live bait would cause the fish to scatter. Utilizing fly fishing tackle proved to be an excellent way to silently present artificial bait.

For better or worse, fly fishing has always had a certain stigma, most likely given by those who have never tried it, to be the domain of the sophisticated, whose participants include a tight knit fraternity of "gentlemen". In reality, fly fishing anglers are a diverse group who share the same passion for fishing as any other angler. When you make the perfect cast, to the right spot, and see or feel the initial strike, the feeling is exactly the same regardless of the method you employ. Because fly fishing can be as involved as you choose to make it, it isn't hard to find some aspect that isn't appealing regardless of the type of fishing you prefer. It's surprising that every angler doesn't own a fly rod and a box full of flies. Now that I think about it, after writing this, I think I'll go pick up the fly rod.