

THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY FLY FISHER'S, INK

FLY FISHING FOR STEELHEAD WITH BRIAN FLECHSIG



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The Brer Possum

“Fly fishing should be as simple as possible.” is the approach Brian Flechsig takes. Flechsig is the owner of Mad River Outfitters, a Columbus fly fishing shop. He made the trip to Cincinnati to speak to the club on steelheading. Flechsig guides for steelhead on the tributaries to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. Although he also fishes Montana, Alaska, and other famous waters, Flechsig claims that “within a day’s drive you have some of the flat-out best fly fishing in the world. Period.”

Flechsig discussed the techniques that work in the slow moving, shale bottom streams found in the local waters he fishes. According to him, a 10’ rod is critical to work the high-stick dead-drift technique he recommends. He loads his reel with a 5-7 WFF with a leader of his own design. The 3’ butt section is 20 lb. Amnesia with a 3’ section of 12 lb. Maxima and 3-4’ of tippet. Flechsig uses 3X the most, but moves one size lighter or heavier if he is break-

ing off or not hooking up in clear water.

In keeping with his KISS philosophy, Flechsig rigs split shot 4-6” above the fly and uses an ice fishing bobber. This rig is drifted along shale shelf and other type edges exclusively. “Edges are where I fish 100% of the time,” he declared.

Flechsig completes his rig with a variety of patterns in sizes 10-14. Glo bugs are favored as well as black stone flies. Also mentioned were sucker spawn pattern, green caddis flies, frammus, black sparrows, Teeny nymphs, and a fly called a Brer Possum.

At the meeting, Flechsig’s video “Steelheading Made Simple” featuring himself and Jerry Darkes was available along with several other of his books and videos. If you missed the meeting, Flechsig’s products are available on his website, www.madriveroutfitters.com, or come see him at NKFF’s May meeting.

Flechsig’s Top Steelhead Waters

- Vermilion River
- Rocky River
- Chagrin River
- Grand River
- Ashtabula River
- Conneaut Creek
- Elk Creek
- Walnut Creek
- Cattaraugus Creek

“Steelheading Made Simple” By Brian Flechsig and Jerry Darkes

Video review

by Mark England

What would the perfect fishing video look like? Lots of action shots of cart wheeling fish and flying water, right? Throw in some great scenery, entertaining hosts, some “secret” fishing tips, and maybe a bikini-clad blonde. Well, this video didn’t get that last part, but it’s got most of the rest. If you want to get pumped for steelhead on a winter afternoon, slip this into the VCR.

Flechsig and Darkes, both guides and outfitters for Great Lakes steelhead, stick to what they know best—how to catch steelhead in the tributaries of Lakes Erie and Ontario. They have lots of film of quality fish, some engaging banter, and clear explanations of their rigging methods.

Finding fish is the most difficult part of any trip for me. The video contained little on accessing Ohio’s steelhead waters and only one short scene illustrating

how to read the water of a typical pool and where the steelhead will lie.

If you want to head north to some great year-round fishing, get out of your armchair and borrow this video from the club library or purchase it from Flechsig at www.madriveroutfitters.com. Then get rigged and head north!