



"WFI On The Fly"

**"WFI ON THE FLY"**

February 19, 2016

**6 More Weeks of Winter or Early Spring?**

On February 2 the big news was that Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow so that means that we were going to have an early Spring! We did try to have our own Whiting Farms Phil, a rooster. We discovered that roosters don't like popping their heads out of a tree stump, real or otherwise, they don't really care whether they see a shadow or not; they are more interested in crowing than trying to cooperate with us on how to predict the weather. It became quite apparent that roosters really don't care if there is 6 weeks more of winter or an early Spring. They are in a nice warm, cozy barn, why should they worry about the weather? We gave up on the idea of having our own Phil and realized we would just have to rely on Punxsutawney Phil. With temperatures in the 50's and 70's in other parts of Colorado, it looks like Punxsutawney Phil knows what he is doing. Hopefully, this mid-winter newsletter issue will help relieve the mid-winter doldrums, especially if it turns out that this warmer weather is just a tease before 6 more weeks of winter!

I recently came across the article that I presented to the "Fly Tying Summit I: Feathers and Plumage" held at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in 1998. It is still as interesting today as it was then so we thought of revisiting it in our Saddle Up with Dr. Tom column so everyone can understand fly tying feathers a little more. Western Anglers is our Featured Dealer in this issue. It is truly a local treasure on the Western Slope. Colette has given us some excellent advice. We are reprinting an article by Michael Gula on Schlappen. This is one of the greatest, yet still relatively unknown products of Whiting Farms. Pro Matt Callies, has some great tips using Whiting Materials so be sure to check that out. We have a Winner! Norm Domagala won the last fly tier challenge using Guinea Fowl. We had some great submissions so thank you to everyone who participated! Congratulations to Phil, not the rooster, but the real Phil of Whiting Farms.

**Read on to see what that's all about.**

Dr. Thomas S. Whiting and  
the Whiting Team

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## CLEVELAND PROGRAM OR FACINATING FACTS ABOUT FLY TYING FEATHERS BY DR. TOM WHITING

Fly tiers are some of the most knowledgeable people in regard to feathers because of their extensive and innovative use of feathers in the fishing flies they tie. But there are many fascinating facts about feathers that are not known by even the most experienced fly tier. Therefore, the purpose of my presentation is to try and provide an interesting and informative glimpse into the world of feathers to enhance the fly tier's appreciation and use of them.

First of all, what are feathers? I'm sure everyone thinks they know. But are you aware that feathers are actually just elongated, highly specialized scales? Birds evolved from reptiles approximately 160 million years ago, and since that time the humble scales of the lizard-like ancestor of the bird (archaeopteryx, meaning "ancient feather") have evolved into the staggering diversity and beauty that we now know as the plumage of modern birds. And these reptilian scales can still be found on the scaled feet and shanks of all modern birds attesting to their reptilian origin.

Second of all, feathers do not grow over the entire surface of the bird. I'm not referring, as an example, to the naked head of a turkey or vulture. Rather, feathers grow from the skin in discrete groupings known as feather tracts, which are called pterylae. And there are strips of unfeathered skin between these feather tracts, called apterylae, which typically are covered over and obscured by the neighboring feather tracts giving the appearance of full plumage

coverage. This concept of feather tracts is important to the fly tier in that distinctly different feathers often come from the different tracts. As an example, dry fly hackle comes from the capital or head tract and the dorsal cervical tract, and sometimes from the dorsopelvic or back/saddle tract. True spade hackle, as in classic Coq de Leon feathers, are from the humeral tracts, which are a relatively small patch of feathers situated over the first and largest wing bone, the humerus. What we at Whiting Farms call our "Soft Hackle with Chickabou" pelt actually encompasses most of the feathers from the underneath side of the rooster, properly called the pectoral, sternal and medial abdominal tracts. The different feathers from within each of these distinct feather tracts have been experimented with by fly tiers and incorporated into a myriad of tying applications. And of course the fly tying function each type of feather provides to the tier is totally different and quite unrelated to the function the feathers provide to the bird.

Feathers, to the bird, are much more than just for insulation or for flight - feathers actually have quite a multiplicity of functions. Some of the major functions of feathers are:

1. Temperature Regulation - tight to the body for heat dissipation, or fluffed out for insulation. Birds have small muscles associated with each feather which are able to raise or lower the feather angle relative to the skin for this insulation control.

2. Protection of the Skin - from abrasions, bird to bird encounters, and shade from sunlight to lessen UV light

damage. Feathers provide a surprisingly durable protective covering.

3. Flight - the primary flight feathers (furthest out on wing) provide forward propulsion by sculling the air, pushing it behind the bird. While the secondary flight feathers (between the body and primaries) generate lift by creating an air foil.

4. Aerodynamic Contour - to streamline the body form to aid smooth passage through the air. And in penguins and other diving birds an exceptionally streamlined body form to facilitate ease of passage through water, plus provide a functional shell within which a layer of air is trapped which shields the bird from the frigid water.

5. Camouflage - especially important in some ground nesting species.

6. Sexual Selection - particularly evident in polygamous males attracting females to mate with. Can be a survival disadvantage, i.e., the huge peacock train; the size and beauty of which represents a natural selection equilibrium between maximum female attraction versus hampered male survival through breeding season.

Some minor feathers and their functions:

7. Preen gland wick feathers - dispenses preen gland oil, important to feather maintenance and water proofing. The preen gland is situated immediately in front of the

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tail and is the only skin gland on a bird's body.

8. Powder feathers - feathers which intentionally disintegrate to a talc-like powder to provide feather to feather lubrication, electrostatic reduction and water proofing.

9. Ear opening cover feathers - rigid, grill-like feathers which let sound waves in yet keep debris out.

10. Rictal bristles - whisker-like tactile feathers surrounding the beak on nighthawks and other on-the-wing insect catchers. Highly enervated sensors which trigger rapid beak opening and shutting upon encountering flying insects while the bird is in flight.

11. Narial bristles - stiff, hair-like feathers which protect the openings to the nostrils. Particularly important to owls which fly through tree branches at night.

12. Whisper feathers - serrated leading edge of primary flight feathers on owls which modifies air turbulences along the leading edge of the wing for nearly silent flight within the audible range of the owl's rodent prey.

Besides having a multiplicity of functions, feathers also have highly specialized and specific growth patterns, both on an individual feather basis and over the life time of a bird, which address the changing functional needs of the bird through time.

First, feathers do not grow as hair does, which is characterized by a continuous extrusion of a relatively constant hair form. Feathers are also extruded by a follicle in the skin like hair, but they are fundamentally much more complex in structure, having a distinct tip, middle and base, often with radical differences

between each of these parts (i.e., a peacock tail plume). And unlike hair, feather formation continues only until completion, then ceases, until the feather is lost or molted and an entirely new feather is generated.

My theory of what is happening at the genetic control level to create the long, consistent dry fly saddle hackle Whiting Farms is known for is that the follicle is stuck in "tip" mode and doesn't ever progress to the feather "middle" mode, and so like a broken record or a computer loop, continues on churning out a continuous tip. I think this explanation is substantiated by the fact the saddle feathers on our dry fly roosters never "prime" or come to completion, but instead never cease growing or are even molted. We have selected for and "fixed" an aberrant trait for the benefit of fly tiers which provides no real benefit to the rooster yet surely has considerable metabolic and nutritional costs to them. The modern, genetic dry fly roosters could even arguably be viewed as just a life support system for follicles which extrude fly tying feathers, not unlike sheep and wool.

Another very important yet little appreciated fact is that each individual feather follicle has the potential to grow several, often radically different types of feathers, depending on the bird's life stage and/or the season. A single feather follicle can initially generate the baby chick's natal down, which is pushed out by the juvenile plumage, followed by the first basic plumage, which is succeeded by the second basic or alternate plumage often called the "nuptial plumage". Dry fly hackle feathers are the male form of the latter plumage type. An example of seasonal feather variation is the ptarmigan's plumage color; snow white

for winter camouflage and mottled brown for summer, very different feather colors out of the very same follicles. Although there are many species specific variations to plumage types, this is generally the format and demonstrates the multi-potential abilities of the humble feather follicle. Certainly feathers represent an awesome evolutionary accomplishment when compared to the modest reptilian scales of their origin.

Man over the last several thousand years has developed a myriad of breeds and varieties within the animals he's domesticated. He has done so largely by identifying, isolating, stabilizing and perpetuating novel mutations which have arisen in these domestic species over time. Breeds and varieties therefore can be viewed as just stabilized conglomerations of various mutations. In addition, multigenic characteristics which present normal, bell-curve distributions, such as body weight, have also been intentionally selected towards extremes in some breeds (i.e., Great Danes to Chihuahuas). The incredible diversity amongst dog breeds is probably the best example of the genetic plasticity of our domesticated animals.

Plumage colors and patterns amongst the breeds and varieties of domestic chickens are also classic examples of such utilization of mutations. The fly tier then makes use of these novel colors and patterns to create flies to imitate the insects which attract fish. The genetic control of these colors and patterns is a fascinating study in and of itself and is, in some cases, quite surprising. Take for example the well known fly tying feather pattern of "grizzly". Have you ever wondered how a

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chicken was induced to grow plumage of regularly alternating bars of black and white? It was a mutation which arose whose mode of action is akin to an auto immune effect whereby the pigment generating cells within the feather follicle (melanocytes for black and pheomelanocytes for browns) are periodically wiped out. During the pigment cells' regeneration time the growing feather is devoid of pigment - resulting in the white section of the grizzly. After the pigment cells regenerate, but before they are wiped out again, the black portion of the grizzly pattern is created in the growing feather. From this mode of action it can be understood that a grizzly is actually a black chicken whose pigment deposition is regularly interrupted rather than a white chicken with periodic bars of black pigment added to it. This example of grizzly illustrates a fundamental mechanism of plumage colors and patterns - that colors and patterns are created by the extraction or inhibition of pigments, not by the addition of them. It is an essentially negative control system.

Another interesting example of this negative control system, which is also of importance to the fly tier, is the color mutation of blue dun. There are at least 6 genetic ways to create dun, but the best known and most common is the incompletely dominant gene "Bl". This gene's mode of action is to markedly reduce the quantity or concentration of pigment the melanocytes and pheomelanocytes generate as the feather is formed within the follicle. The Bl gene, or "blue gene" as it is sometimes called, is incompletely dominant, meaning it does not have its full effect unless it has a double

dose of the gene; Bl Bl. With a double dose, and so its full effect, the chicken is nearly white or white with some splashes of color - Bl Bl, referred to as homozygous dominant. When it's in the homozygous recessive form, bl bl, there is no effect and the chicken is black; no pigment inhibition is occurring. With a mixture of dominant and recessive, Bl bl - referred to as heterozygous - there is a partial pigment inhibitory effect and the black is reduced to a blue or gray color. One limitation of this incomplete dominant mode of gene action is that when two blue dun birds are mated together they will not "breed true" and give only more blue duns. Rather, their offspring will only result in a ratio of 1/2 blue, 1/4 black and 1/4 white. Only black mated with white generates 100% blues (bl bl x Bl Bl gives only Bl bl).

One of the most astonishing facts about plumage colors and patterns is that their enormous variety is solely the result of the action and inter-action of only two simple pigments: melanin for the blacks and grays and pheomelanin for the browns, buffs and creams. The modification of these pigments (i.e., dilution, as in dun), and their placement within the feather (i.e., barring, as in grizzly), together and separately, are capable of generating the fabulous diversity of colors and patterns within the bird world. The only other pigment capable of being generated in feathers is green, and that ability is limited solely to some parrot-like families of birds.

The iridescence of feathers, as in peacock herl, is not actually a product of pigment primarily. Rather, our perception of iridescence results from the refraction out, through an over coating on feathers, of limited bands of light wavelengths giving the perception of brilliant color. Prove this to yourself by holding a Peacock "eye" up to a sunny

window and viewing the color of the feather with the sunlight shining through it. The feathers will not be iridescent at all, but rather a dull brown- its true structural color. This experiment demonstrates the difference between transmitted light (passing through the feather) and refracted light (reflecting off of the feather). This refraction of light is also why the brilliant iridescence of a hummingbird seems to shift color as the relationship between the sun, bird and viewer changes with any movement. The wavelengths of refracted light received by the viewer is what's shifting, not the actual color of the hummingbird. Plumage is truly one of the wonders of the world.

If you are interested in greater depth and breadth of information on feathers, genetics and hackle production, may I suggest a recently (1997) published book Rare and Unusual Fly Tying Materials: A Natural History, Volume II - Birds and Mammals by Paul Schmookler and Ingrid Sils. Within this photographically beautiful, large format book is a 50 page chapter on these subjects written by myself which I hope would satisfy any fly tier's curiosity on hackle and feathers in general.

Thomas Whiting, Ph.D.





Inside Western Anglers

Western Anglers has had a long history in the Grand Valley. Located in beautiful and historic downtown Grand Junction it has been the only local full service fly shop since 1994. We

are your local one-stop fly shop with a good attitude as well as the most current information on fishing reports, spots and what to use. We carry only the best brands, giving you the most quality gear available on the market, including: Whiting Farms , Scott Fly Rods, Sage Fishing Products, Ross Reels, Fishpond, Simms and many more. We price match and special order every day to offer anglers the best shopping experience on the Western Slope. We take pride in being able to offer a wide variety of Whiting Farms products and we are always willing to place special orders! If it is a guided fishing experience you are interested in, we offer hosted travel opportunities and have access to both public and private trophy waters.

While Western Anglers has been on the scene since 1994, ownership changed in 2015. After 26 years in the construction industry, Ned Mayers was ready for a change and had the opportunity to purchase Western Anglers. He is passionate about people and fly fishing; the perfect combination as the owner of a fly shop! His wife, Colette, is also very hands on with Western Anglers. She does the accounting and keeps the shop running behind the scenes.



Whiting Farms at Western Anglers

Western Anglers has been hosting a lot of events since Ned bought the store. During the winter season, every Saturday the shop hosts tying sessions with many great tiers including Whiting's own Phil Trimm and Tom Mullen as well as Whiting Pro Team member Tim Jacobs. One of the most popular events is the periodic after hours Ladies Night! It's not only a meet and greet but a time where ladies get special pricing deals and can share fishing info as well. In January, Western Anglers hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> Western Slope Iron Fly contest in conjunction with the Grand Valley Anglers, the local Trout

Unlimited chapter. It was such a huge success that they will be hosting another one on March 12<sup>th</sup>! Another increasingly popular event is the annual CARPOCALYPSE. On June 25, 2016 Western Anglers will host the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual CARPOCALYPSE! It has grown every year and is becoming a summertime staple of the Grand Valley. Last year's first place winner landed a total of 17 carp for a total of 296"! For more information on these great events, be sure to check out Western Anglers website and Facebook page!

We hope you'll come in as customer and leave as a friend, and maybe we'll even get to fish together if we're not working too hard! Please let us know if you have any questions and we look forward to seeing you in the shop. Thank you for giving us your business!



Iron Fly, January 23, 2016



## "COLETTE'S COOP"

### I Hereby Resolve to...

Like most chicks I spent a good deal of time the last week of December pondering what words I should peep upon waking the morning of January 1, 2016. I wanted to make a New Year's resolution. Why not? After all, it's a fresh start. Regardless of what resolution you commit to, the goal is to improve life in the coming year. Right?

Some people don't do New Year's resolutions anymore. It's a new trend. They never stick to them anyway, so why bother? Well "Chicken Poop!" is what I say to that. At least put forth the effort. If a chicken never TRIES to cross the road... it certainly WON'T ever get to the other side.

So I googled and found the top ten resolutions, thinking that surely I could find one of these that would work.

1. **Get in shape** (Whatever!)
2. **Start eating healthier food, and less food overall** (Sheesh, Chocolate and Red Wine ARE healthy!)
3. **Stop procrastinating** (How soon would I have to start?)
4. **Improve your concentration and mental skills** (Did you say something?)
5. **Meet new people** (I hate crowds!)
6. **Become more active** (You mean like DO something?)
7. **Become more confident and take some chances** (I drive fast every day anyway!)
8. **Earn more money** (Yeah! Where's Tom?)

9. **Become more polite** (Who me? Are you for real?)

10. **Reduce stress** (I'm not stressed. I'm not stressed. **I'm not stressed!**)

This is ridiculous, I thought. Who uses Google to find a New Year's resolution? I know what I need to change. Well, I pretty much need to change a lot of things. So I decided to use the same one that I have used for about five years now. I think I might have mentioned it last year.

I hereby resolve to be a Big Loser! See its win win situation. I can be such a smart chick sometimes. I resolve to lose weight, lose stress, lose clutter, and lose any other bad habit that I can think of. And if I don't actually do those things..... I am still a Big Loser! So this is one New Year's resolution I will certainly be keeping no matter what I do.

Whiting Farms made a New Year's resolution too! We have recently implemented some new inventory control features that will help streamline our inventory process. While we are still dealing with live birds, leading to variables and changes, we are hoping that these improvements will not only help us provide customers with better information but will result in improvements across the board in regard to inventory and processing orders. Thus, Whiting Farms hereby resolves to improve and streamline our inventory procedures. No, this does not mean we will suddenly have Cree in stock. But a fly tier can still dream.

With that said, I hereby resolve to close the coop doors and get back to work. I'm going to try to lose another pile of work. That could be interpreted in more than one way so let me just say that I won't toss it in the trash but will actually "Get 'er Dun!"



*Colette*



## PRO TEAM "SCOOP" BY ADAM KRONEBERGER

As I write the introduction to the following article, I am jamming out to some Shouting Matches to get some of my creativity to properly transfer from my brain to the task at hand. If you all haven't already felt or noticed some of the freshness that Whiting Farms has been brewing then let me catch you up to speed. We just completed a restructuring of our Pro Team in an effort to increase brand visibility and engagement with tiers around the world. This shake up should come as encouragement to our dealers because we are pushing the needle to engage more with the market place. Theoretically we could take a backseat and watch the show but instead we are choosing to party with the standing crowd! We are opening up the lines of communication with consumers and getting social! You can still find us in the usual places but we have a strong and growing social media presence not to mention a new website to be revealed in the very near future. As a company we are leaning in more and listening to our Pros for what the tying industry is demanding and seeing where we can get innovative. I guess you could say in some ways we are getting chatty and couldn't be more excited to help promote our friends in the industry and make new ones while we are at it! **With that being said, as you read the following article by Dr. Tom, you'll realize that we have always relied on our Pros for information which has led to some exiting product development along the way.** Thanks Pros! Adam

### SPONTANEOUS PRO TEAM

Many companies in the outdoor recreation businesses have what are commonly known as a Pro Team, whereby recognized experts are enlisted to promote their products. But the Pro Team of Whiting Farms had a profoundly different origin that was much more organic, and spontaneous, which arose in the early days almost by itself. It also has an interesting story, and a legacy that shaped what we are producing to this day.

Fly fishing, I think, is different than most outdoor sports. There is a sincerity of concern for the resource (the fish, water quality, the environment in general) that extends throughout the whole sport. **Hunters don't shoot their game** with paint balls in a similar act of **"catch and release"**. **But fly fishers, and fly tiers, are passionate about the entirety of the resource and the sport.**

This passion and concern extends even to the feathers that are used to tie flies. In 1989, when I was just wading into this endeavor to breed and grow roosters for their fly tying feathers, an array of individuals sought me out to offer their experience and ideas. They provided genuine help that had a profound effect on the evolution of Whiting Farms. I was not a fly fisherman nor a fly tier, but rather someone who was keenly interested in poultry and particularly genetics. Thus this seemed mostly like just an interesting project. I was somewhat surprised how interested others were in my little project, and how willing and eager they were to help.

I am afraid to name these individuals for fear of leaving someone out. But just a few of the initial ones include Jerry Toft, Dick Talleur, Dale Darling, Nick and Leila Wilder, Bernard Otelaro and John Schaper. They took it upon themselves to educate me on feathers, tying, grading, history, and even took me out fishing. If I was cynical, I might think they just wanted to help me produce better feathers for their selfish interests. But nothing could seem to be farther from the truth, as their genuine interest and patience showed their love of the sport and fly tying. So my foundation knowledge about fly tying feathers was materially enhanced by these generous early de facto Pro Team members.

All were also quite forward about suggesting other fly tying feathers they would really like to tie with in addition to dry fly hackle. This readily tapped into my tendency and desire to have a wide array of bird types and product lines to work on, and I almost recklessly went about acquiring other breeds and starting a myriad of potential products. Out of these suggestions came the American Hackle genetic wet fly hackle, the Brahma gray partridge substitute, the **Spey Hackle, the "winger" hen cape**, and acquiring the Coq de Leon from Spain- to name the ones that are established product lines today. Many avenues did not yield long term successes, to name but a few; Gray Junglecock (**wouldn't grow unsplit nails in the dry** climate of Colorado), exotic pheasant crosses (fun and interesting but too labor intensive and too small of markets),

invisible hackle (not possible) and Flatwing fly saddles (the saddles sold 100 MPH, but we could barely give away the capes). These early Pro Team members gave me the ideas, and my challenge was to develop the chicken lines to satisfy them. As the lines progressed I would distribute pelts to the Pro Team and they would provide me with guidance on what needed to be changed. Their involvement and encouragement was invaluable.

Later, when it was thought a formal Pro Team was in order, we put together several versions of what is known as the Whiting Farms Pro Team. At this stage, in the late 1990s, their function was more on public demonstration and publications and consumer contact then direct involvement with the R & D projects at the farm. Nonetheless I still get valuable feedback and ideas from these elite fly tiers. They continue to be our outreach, to connect us with the users of our products-while I am basically stuck back on the farm. So they too are invaluable.

Whiting Farms would not be the company it is today, nor producing the array of feathers we do, without the generous contribution of the entire history of Pro Team Members. Our Pro Team has evolved over the years much as Whiting Farms continues to evolve. We now have two groups; Pro Team and Ambassadors. Both of these groups are equally important in their continued contributions to the evolution of Whiting Farms, the hackle industry and fly fishing in general. My sincere thanks to you all, past and present.

Dr. Tom Whiting

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Adam Kroneberger  
Social Media Manager/Pro Team and Ambassador Manager of Whiting Farms  
If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Adam  
at adam@whitingfarms.com or at (719) 472-4961.

*2015/2016 WHITING FARMS PRO TEAM!*

*From the USA:*

**Arkansas**

Fred DuPre'

**California**

Ben Byng

Matt Callies

Steve Potter

**Colorado**

Pat Dorsey

Tim Jacobs

Merne Judson

Al Ritt

Rich Takahashi

Chris Krueger

**Florida**

Tom Logan

Drew Chicone

**Georgia**

Tim Ivey

**Idaho**

Chris Williams

**Montana**

Lars Olsson

**New Hampshire**

Peggy Brenner

**New Jersey**

Michael McAuliffe

**New York**

Bob Lindquist

**Oregon**

Norman Domagala

Phillip E. Fischer

**Texas**

Ken "Bo" Bohannon

**Utah**

Grant Bench

Curtis Fry

Clark (Cheech) Pierce

*Internationally:*

**Sweden**

Jan Edman

**The Netherlands**

Johan Klingberg

Martin Westbeek

**United Kingdom**

Christopher Reeves

*2015/2016 WHITING FARMS AMBASSADORS!*

*From the USA:*

**California**

Wayne Luallen

**Colorado**

Michael Gula

**Florida**

Mel Simpson

**Illinois**

Chris Willen

**Michigan**

Jon Ray

**Nebraska**

Sue Armstrong

**New Jersey**

Chris Del Plato

**New York**

Levern "Vern-O" Burm

**Oregon**

Marc Williamson

**Pennsylvania**

Kieran Frye

**Tennessee**

G.S. "Stack" Scoville, Jr.

*Internationally:*

**United Kingdom**

Matthew Pate



***Thank you all for representing and promoting Whiting Farms products!***

## FEATURED TIER

# Fishing for Salmon

BY MATT CALLIES

As more and more people begin to use two-handed rods for various applications, many will find that some integral materials are no longer available due to either regulation or lack of availability. Enter the ideal substitute: the modern day progression, as I like to call it. I've been chasing fish with a two-handed rod for nearly a decade! While I may not be the perfect caster, I can always ensure that my flies are on point. As we transition from spring water and higher flows that trigger these anadromous fish to enter many water ways, numerous different hatches begin. When I am tying for either trout or summer run anadromous fish, I have one goal in mind: I want my

flies to look like food while at the same time being provocative, rather than looking merely like an exact replica of the hatching insect. Many fish that enter various systems early on become rather trout-like and can be fooled on some pretty sparse patterns.

When I'm fishing these types of "crossover waterways" with large hungry trout and the possibility of new hungry steelhead, I focus mostly on the earth tone patterns that match stone flies, salmon flies, and other larger insects. I'll swing many of these patterns from summer



all the way through fall.

I tend to use mottled, flowy materials that are light in density and can lend themselves to longer shanks. Since the water may still be a tad high (depending on the year), I'll normally start with thicker, fuller materials like Schlappen. These feathers, when used in earth tones, can provide a killer look on the longer-sized shanks of many Spey-styled hooks. The

colors I'm after here are olives, oranges, and browns of various shades.

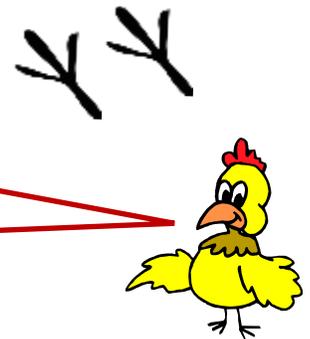
As the season warms and progresses into summer, I find myself using smaller hooks and transitioning to materials like coq de leon and brahma hen for more subtle approaches and crossover fishing.

When the nights and the rivers cool off and we drift into fall, I begin to transition back into larger patterns. I again use a multitude of longer feathers like coq de leon, bird fur, Spey hackles and brahma hen to ensure my arsenal is complete for all the rivers I wander!



I have provided multiple flies that I use for various applications and water situations for both trout and steelhead when fished on the swing. Since the trout Spey game has become an emerging market, many people have been gravitating from the nymph rig towards a style that feels more pure. I feel that these people are at the beginning of their journey, and while they may not yet be aware of it, they will one day hunt for anadromous fish as well. Hopefully some of these patterns can help you to guide them into the feathers they may need or desire.

A man decided to start a chicken farm and brought 24 to get started. A week later he bought another 24 and another 24 the week after that. When his friend asked how his chicken farm was coming along the man replied, "Not one of them has grown yet. I wonder if I'm planting them too deep?"



**"WFI On The Fly"****FEATURED PRODUCT****Re-Introduction of Whiting Farms Schlappen**

BY MICHAEL GULA

One of the quality benefits of genetically raising birds at Whiting Farms for the fly tying market is the range of products derived from each rooster. New since 2014 are the Schlappen products from Whiting Farms. Schlappen feathers are the feathers between true saddle hackle and the long, stiff tail feathers on a rooster. Up until this time, fly tiers had to put **up with the inferior "strung"** Schlappen offerings available through various fly tying sources. Those feathers, at best, measure **between 5"-7" and are limited in** their fly tying applications (collar hackle and palmer hackle on smaller sized steelhead/salmon flies).

Whiting Farms is the only company offering the widest range of Schlappen products to suit any fly tier's needs. **The fly tying applications** for these feathers are endless: wooly buggie hackle, palmered hackle on the largest steelhead/salmon flies, tail skirt hackle on bass flies, lateral lines on baitfish patterns, saltwater flies, pike/musky flies, and much more (read below)!

At Whiting Farms, Schlappen is offered in loose, un-sized ¼ ounce packages, sized under 6" ¼-ounce packages, as well as sized and **bundled 6"-10" and 10"-14" packages** of 36 feathers each. Now, fly tiers have choices for their **respective fly tying needs. Let's review** each of the Whiting Farms Schlappen products.

Loose, Un-sized and Un-sorted ¼-ounce Packaged Schlappen: Available in dyed over white and dyed over grizzly colors. These packages contain Schlappen feathers **anywhere from 6" through 14"**. As a non-sized product, the fly tier can separate and sort the various sizes of feathers available for their fly tying use. The widest range of fly tying applications. \$15.00 retail.

**Under (<) 6", ¼-ounce packaged Schlappen "Plus":**

Available in dyed over white and dyed over grizzly colors. Sorted and sized, these ¼-ounce packages contain a significant quantity of **6" or less Schlappen. These feathers** are perfect for wooly buggies, and other smaller palmered hackle applications. In addition, there is an ample supply of chickabout feathers (marabou substitute) and thighabout feathers (soft, webby smaller fly applications) in each package. A truly wide range of fly tying applications. \$15.00 retail.

**Sorted and Sized 6"-10" Bundled and Packaged Schlappen:**

Available in dyed over white and dyed over grizzly colors. These packages are meticulously sized **and sorted to meet the 6" through 10" criteria. Each package contains** three (3) bundles of twelve (12) feathers each, for a total of thirty-six (36) premium fly tying feathers. \$15.00 retail.

**Sorted and Sized 10"-14" Bundled and Packaged Schlappen:**

Available in dyed over white and dyed over grizzly colors. These packages too are meticulously sized **and sorted to meet the 10" through 14" criteria. Each package contains** three (3) bundles of twelve (12) feathers each, for a total of thirty-six (36) premium fly tying feathers. For the fly tier needing extreme length, this Schlappen is the answer! \$20.00 retail.

So, there you have it, the Whiting Farms lineup of Schlappen products. **And, as I'm sure you've read** by now... available in dyed over white and grizzly colors! However, Whiting Farms also has Schlappen in natural white, natural grizzly, natural and dyed black, and natural dun/dun grizzly colors, too.

For additional details regarding Schlappen, please contact Phil Trimm or Tom Mullen at Whiting Farms.



*Schlappen Buggie tied by Phil Trimm*



**FLY TIER CHALLENGE:** Whiting Farms has Schlappen and we are challenging YOU to see who can come up with the most unique use of Schlappen. Submit your patterns and photos to [orders@whitingfarms.com](mailto:orders@whitingfarms.com) by May 1, 2016 and you could win some Schlappen and a Whiting Farms 25th Anniversary cap!

The winner will be featured in the upcoming newsletter.

Good Luck Tiers!

"WFI On The Fly"

# GUINEA FOWL CHALLENGE WINNER



Congratulations to Norm Domagala! Norm won the Guinea Fowl Challenge from our November newsletter. Thank you to everyone who submitted an entry; they were all excellent! Below is Norm's pattern for the Guinea Fowl.

Lately I've been tying Comet style patterns for Salmon fishing in the Oregon Coast estuaries. Guinea feathers are great to use on the tails and collars. I use the barbs from the Guinea wing feathers for the tail. I cut off about an inch off the longest barbs on a wing feather and pinch the m form barbs feather well mark-feather nice



Orange Guinea Comet

and pinch together to the tail. The on a wing hold up very and the ings of the give the tail a mottled look.

I use 2-3 wraps of a American Hen saddle feather for the first collar and then I do 2-3 wraps of a Guinea breast feather in front of the hen feather. The mark-

ings on the Guinea feather show up better having the same color hen feather behind it, the 2 feathers add more body to the collar.

I like to take a bodkin to separate the tail and the collar barbs before I finish off the head with head cement. I use the Partridge Attitude Extra hook, it is a wide gape micro barbed heavy wire hook ideal for hooking large fish. I also use the same pattern in other color Guinea feathers, blue, pink, chartreuse are also effective color patterns to use.

### Orange Guinea Comet

- HOOK : Partridge Attitude Extra #2
- THREAD: Orange 12/0 Veevus
- EYES : Double Pupil Lead Eyes small FL Orange
- TAIL : Orange Guinea Wing Feather barbs
- TAIL FLASH : DNA Holo Chromosome Flash (2 -3 strands each side )
- RIB : Silver Veevus French Tinsel small
- BODY : Black Trilobal Antron Chenille small
- COLLAR : 2-3 Wraps of Orange Hen Saddle then 2-3 Wraps of Orange Guinea Breast Feather
- HEAD CEMENT : Hydro Clear Cure Goo

Thank You, Happy Tying... Norm Domagala



Phil Grading a Cape

## CONGRATULATIONS PHIL!

Please help us congratulate Phil Trimm in his new position as Whiting Farms Sales Manager!

Phil came to Whiting in January 2014. Over the past two years he has proven to have excellent product knowledge, grading and sales skills. In addition, he has been ready and willing to take on whatever task we have tossed his way and done so with a can do, positive attitude! Though we may not say it nearly as often as we should, we appreciate the skills that Phil has brought to Whiting Farms. For this reason we wish to congratulate him on his new position.

Thank you, Phil, for all that you have done these past two years and all that you will be doing as the Whiting Farms Sales Manager.

Sincerely,  
The Entire Whiting Farms Team  
(Chickens Included!)

PS: We tried to teach the chickens to clap....

But after a bit of time realized that chickens can't clap, they flap!



"WFI On The Fly"



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**Whiting Farms Mission Statement:**

*To produce the highest quality,  
value and selection of feathers  
for the fly tiers of the world.*

