



# CHICO AREA FLYFISHERS

## Short Casts April 2021

### Next General Meeting To Be Determined



Sometimes fishing gets in the way of business...That's the case here...For the first time, I'm sending out the April news letter in May.

We've been fishing in Montana and you can read an excellent report with pictures in this news letter by Elden.

The club has started having fish outs so be sure to read the list. And, let the person in charge know if you're interested in coming. They can answer any questions as well.

Our local fly shops have the latest information on what lakes and rivers are fishing the best.

The Mexico trips are on and filling fast. There are 3 weeks going for Dorado in September now. With openings in week three any maybe one or two in week two.

Take care. Sincerely, Pat Sleeper

## Luk Lake Fish Out

April 17th we had a wonderfully attended fish out and it was greatly appreciated by all who attended at Luk Lake, Rolling Hills. Those who attended were: Pete Wilk, Larry Willis, Don and Pat Sleeper, Fred Richelieu, Lionel Valley, Chrystal Chalmers and Ed Magalie and Tom Rosenow put this 1/2 day morning fish out together.

By late morning the trout were amazingly active and most were catching these large jumping trout! Thank you Brad Hinman and The Fly Shop for your help.



## Spring Fishing in Montana

Don & Pat Sleeper, Pete Wilk, and myself left Chico @ 6:00 am for Montana to fish the Missouri River out of Helena for 3 days; then, drive to Browning, Mt to fish on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation for 4 days. We Stopped in Elko to pick up Steve Mclean, load his and Pete's things in my car and leave their cars at a friend's house and the 5 of us headed on to spend the night in Idaho Falls. When we get to Helena, Montana, we are meeting up with Pat's cousin, Chris and Krystal Lewis who are driving from Troy, Idaho, and Jeff Bennett that lives in Ojai, Ca. and flying into Helena.

### April 21

The Chico group drove to Idaho Falls about 770 miles and spent the night. We had dinner at Milner's Gate Brewery. Good dinner and some good beer.

### April 22

We left Idaho Falls @ 6:00 am and arrive in Helena and got checked into our rooms; Helena is Montana's Capitol and I think one of the nicest towns in Montana. Steve and I spend 3 or 4 days every year in the fall fishing here, there are good restaurants and a brewery all within walking distance of the Hotel. We decided to walk to the Charley Russell Museum in the afternoon. The walk was fairly cold, windy and some snow (sign of things to come) Had a few beers at one of the Brewery's and a great dinner and called it a night. The whole group is together and ready to fish in the morning

### April 23

It's a half hour drive out to "The Gates of the Mountains", or little Holter Lake, or "Land of the Giants". So many names to this place I continue to be confused, but this morning the roads are icy and it is snowing so we are a little behind schedule. We all get suited up and meet our guides and get in the boat for a brisk ride across the lake and up the river. The weather conditions were a little tough. You were continually cleaning the ice out of your guides. We were fishing in a beautiful canyon up to the Dam that had blown out sometime ago; I think in the 30's (I am definitely not sure of the year) and there are large pieces of steel and concrete in the river. Most of the fish were in 18 - 20-inch range with some 24 to 25 inches with everyone catching good numbers of fish. It was a great day of fishing for sure.



## April 24 & 25

My best day of fishing was the first day, but by no means were the next two days slow, I think Chris and Krystal had one of their best and biggest fish days on the last day. All three days were very good fishing. We had beach lunches and a fire that felt very good every day and for the most part the weather was manageable, not extremely cold. We had wind that at times was very trying. Fished with 6wt rods, floating lines and indicators the whole time.

Our dinners consisted of eating at a sports bar the first night, Greek restaurant, an Italian restaurant, and the last night we stopped on the way in from fishing at the Grub Steak. All meals were good and filled with lots of great fishing stories.

## April 26

We all had breakfast at the Hotel. Steve had taken Jeff to the Airport early to head home and Chris and Krystal are heading back to Idaho. Don, Pat, Steve, Pete and myself head to the grocery store to purchase groceries for our 5 day stay in Babb, Montana. It was a 3 1/2 hour drive to the house which is on Duck Lake. Duck Lake, also, has some good fishing with lots of big fish; but, for some reason the fishing is down. The weather is cold and very windy while we unload our things into the house.

## April 27

The first fishing day, we drive into Browning which is about 30 minutes from the house to meet our guide David Parson who is a Blackfeet Indian, who are the only guides allowed on the reservation. We are going to fish Mission Lake which is an hour drive from Browning. The roads to the lakes we fished are not paved and you have to pay attention while driving along the levees; especially in my Honda where the ground clearance is not great, hence removing the plastic shroud from the front bottom of it.

Mission Lake is a large high desert lake. No trees for as far as you can see! The fish are cruising along the shore in spawning mode, very much like Pyramid Lake. We fished with 6-7wt rods and floating lines with indicators; and, mostly egg patterns, and leach patterns. Let me tell you, the wind can be relentless! It seems to blow 15-40 every day and "most of the time" all day! It was not that terribly cold, just windy. The fishing was slow, but all of us caught at least one fish a day and the fish are large.

In the afternoon we drove to Kipp Lake which is a smaller lake. Still windy but, you could see the fish cruising the shore. You could actually cast out and wait for a group to cruise by and drag your indicator with the egg in front of them and they would take. You needed a small indicator, a clear one worked good for me, as well. Pete did not use an indicator and just stripped a leach and egg on a floating line and did really well. In my opinion the fish were smaller here, more in the 18" class.

## April 28

Today we are going to 4 Horn Lake. Another High Desert Lake. Not a tree in sight! The fish in this lake are supposed to be fewer and bigger. I can confirm the fish were fewer and don't know about being bigger. Don't know if any of us landed a fish, but it was windy. Think it was over 20mph. So, we bagged it and headed to Green Lake.

Green Lake was located near the town of Heart Butte and the countryside actually had trees and was very pretty. Right up against the Rocky's, near Glacier Park. Here you could also see the fish cruising the shore line Everyone caught fish here pretty much with the same gear, fish were 18-20 inch.

## April 29

Instead of the 8:00 am meet time, we decided we needed to be the first to this location on Mission Lake, where we had seen several other fishermen beating up on the fish pretty well the day before yesterday. So, we moved our meet time up an hour, Pat and Pete are very happy (not) 7 am in Browning and headed out to the Lake. The wind is blowing 15 and gusting 25 mph. Cannot fish the spot. Wind is right in our face. So, we start traveling along the lake to find a fishable location. We drive to this location where Dave Walburn (owner of the Rock house we stayed in) had fished and done well. Well too late! Guys were already there and they are killing them. So... we drove all the way around the lake because the water crossing at the west end of the lake would have "floated" my Honda away. Fished a few spots with no luck and we stopped on the very east end of the lake and caught a couple very nice fish there.

So....we have another great plan for tomorrow. Get up another hour earlier to get to the "Hot" location.

On the reservation you cannot have felt soles and you have to have your equipment inspected: Waders, boots and if you have a float tube, or boat. The inspection is only good for 3 days so we decided to leave early and get our stuff inspected and be ready for tomorrow. No fee, just time consuming.

## April 30

Here we are, 6:00 am "in Browning" heading to Mission Lake. Love this drive; but, not as much as Pat & Don. For myself we'll see if I can tear some more stuff off my car. Good news: We get to our spot and no car damage or wind. Don't get it, the wind was blowing 30 at the house. Same fishing set up: Floating line, small indicator, eggs, an maybe a leach, or green egg. "Small is better". Started slow but got better. Everyone caught some big fish and a good number of them. I think some of them were 25-27 inches. They were big. Yeah, and the wind did come back!

The fishing was not as good as the fishing in Helena but I will come back. The dinners that Steve & Pat cooked were better than the restaurant we ate at in Helena, and time spent with Don, Pat, Pete, Steve, Jeff, Chris & Krystal was far better than the time spent fishing. This has been one of my best trips so far and hope there are more to come. Elden



## **Chico Area Flyfisher's Fishout Schedule 2021-22**

Future outings that Chico Area Flyfisher's provide to its Membership: These Club Fish-outs are designed to give fly fishers the best opportunity to catch fish and enjoy the outdoors. Our Club has many accomplished anglers who are willing to share their skills with others and you are only limited by willingness to become involved. From selecting promising locations and time, to helping those members new to the sport, we try to make these trips fun, exciting and successful.

Elden Hinkle and Tom Rosenow are our fish-out leaders. If you have one of those favorite spots that you don't mind sharing with others and would like to lead our fellow CAF members for a day of fishing, and fellowship contact Elden Hinkle ehinkle@aaproducton.com or Tom Rosenow troseNOW.chico@gmail.com

**This schedule may change depending on the fish bite or weather conditions and COVID 19 VIRUS status!!!.**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Fishout Leader</u></b>
May 15	Pingatori's bass fishing..Sat,..	RSVP: psleeper@sbcglobal.net
June 5th, 2021	Digger Creek (\$75. pp with 10 people max)	ehinkle@aaproducton.com
Sep 4 - 25	Dorado fishing, Mexico (three, one week trips...\$1,200.pp Double occupancy + 6 days Fishing \$750. pp Sep 11-18 (Week 2) (one or two openings); Sep 18-25 (week 3) has openings.	www.patsflyfishing.com - 530-345-1197
Oct/ Nov	Little Grass valley Reservoir	Elden Hinkle-ehinkle@aaproducton.com
Jan 12-17, 2022	Picachos Lake, Mexico:	Pat Sleeper 345-1197, psleeper@sbcglobal.net (limited spots, please reserve ASAP-Thank you)

\* TBD - To be determined. (COVID AND WEATHER)

## **CAF General Meeting "Speakers" 2021**

We truly look forward to seeing you at our next meeting; and, hearing "your" fly fishing stories! Your excitement is ours!

CAF meets 9 months out of the year; and, presents a variety of exciting fly fishing-related programs throughout each year. Each meeting includes: monthly fly-tying demonstrations; variety of raffle prizes; refreshments; and, the very best stories about Northern California Fly fishing from our members. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month; location: "The California Park Pavilion" on California Park Dr, Chico, CA. Live Fly-tying presentations: 6:30 p.m. @ General Meeting 7:30 p.m.

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Speaker</u></b>	<b><u>Program</u></b>
June 9	TBD	
July-Sep	No Meetings - have fun fishing!!!	
Oct 13	TBD	
Nov 10	TBD	
Dec 8	Pizza feed	

# Fly of the Month, April, 2021

## Chernobyl Ant

By: Ray Narbaitz

I had always wondered why the Chernobyl Ant was called that. It looks nothing like an ant, and if it did, it would be the Godzilla of all ants. Turns out, it actually started as a fly trying to imitate an ant, and sort of mutated into the fly we know today.

The fly came about in 1990 when a group of guides on the Green River would meet for a few libations after coming off the water and began to work on an ant pattern that would be easy to see. At first it used mostly natural materials, but as time went on, foam came into more widespread use, and that became the main ingredient. Rainey Rider, a woman who came up with a lot of foam bodied flies and once had a thriving business selling foam for fly tying provided materials and some advice. The guides would work on the design, tie some, take them out on the water and come back and tinker further. At that time, as it grew in size, it was tied pretty much in black with one layer of foam. A guide named Allen Woolley added the final touch by putting the rubber legs on it. When asked what he called it, he opined it didn't need a fancy name, "It's just a damned ant." Yeah replied guide Mark Bennion, "But it's a (expletive deleted) Chernobyl Ant." The name stuck.

In the 30 years since then, the fly has seen countless variations on the theme. It's tied in different sizes, one or two layers of foam, many different color combinations, with wings, without wings, thicker foam, thinner foam, foam sighters for wings and many different materials for the legs. It has been called a Stonefly imitation and a Terrestrial. Through all of that, a couple of things about it have remained constant. For reasons that are not always clear to us, fish regularly eat it, and it makes a great fly for a dry and dropper combo. It also has shown itself to be more than just a Trout fly. Bass will take it readily, either jerked across the surface or taken in with long pulls leaving a V wake across the water. In smaller sizes, it's also a hit with fish like Blue Gills and Sun Fish.

While there are many ways to tie the fly, I'm going to show you how to tie a pretty basic Chernobyl. You can do your own research or use your own creativity from there. Most of this fly I stole.....uh.....borrowed from a video by one of my all-time favorite tyers, Charlie Craven.

Hook: It calls for a 3X long hook like the TMC 5263, but I find that the hook gap gets pretty narrow in the smaller sizes. I prefer a 2X long hook like the 5262 from 4 to 12.

Thread: Use 140 denier in black like Ultra or UTC that can be flattened out a bit.

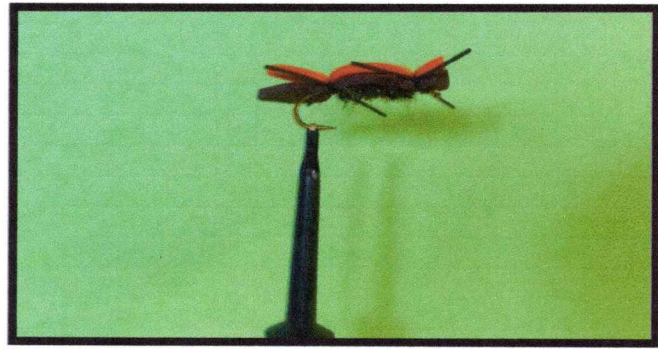
Over Body: Use 2MM closed cell foam in Black and Tan, Black and Yellow, or any other colors that you like.

Under Body: Dubbed, Chenille, Crystal Chenille, Thread...etc.

Hackle: Dark Brown or Furnace, the size is immaterial because it will be trimmed.

Legs: Medium Round Rubber Legs in Black, although barred legs can also be used.

Wings: Again, your choice. One or two wings, foam, synthetics, or none at all.



1. Debarb the hook and place it in the vise.
2. Start your thread right at the eye of the hook and wrap it back all the way to the bend. You want a solid, thread base on the hook shank. Once you get to the bend, wrap your thread back a bit so it hangs just short of the hook point.
3. Cut a strip of the Black Foam about hook gap wide. If you have one, a guillotine type paper cutter is the best thing to use to make your cuts straight. Then cut another strip in the contrasting color you want to use, just slightly narrower than the black strip.
4. Cut the corners off one end of the strips. You can make it so it comes to a point or just slightly take the corners off. Up to you.
5. Measure the back of the Black Foam so you have a piece about a quarter of the hook shank in length. Place it on the hook with that amount hanging off the back of the hook; take a soft wrap around it with your thread, and pull the thread back toward you firmly, but not too tight. You want to have let your thread unwind so it is fairly flat before doing this, otherwise the thread can cut the foam. Now, take a couple of tighter wraps right on top of each other. Pull the long end up, take a few wraps around the hook shank, and then back over the foam tie-in.
6. Place the contrasting Foam on top of the Black strip, with the end of it just a tiny bit short of the end of the Black strip and tie it down the same way.
7. Tie in a strip of the Rubber Legs on one side, then the other with a couple of wraps, again with your thread wraps going over the top of each other. Adjust the legs to where you want them and take a couple of tight wraps.
8. Strip a few barbs off the stem of your hackle, lift up the foam, and tie in the hackle so it is tight up against the foam. Tie it so the feather is pointing back.
9. Use whatever you have chosen to be the body of the fly. In this fly I used Peacock Black Ice Dub. Wrap it up to two or three eye lengths short of the eye of the hook, tie it down, and cut off the excess.
10. Palmer your Hackle up through the body to the end of the body material, tie it down, and cut off the excess.
11. Trim the hackle all the way around the fly, taking care not to cut your thread or the back legs. Cut it off so there is just a bristle of feather sticking out. It's not necessary to try to make the cuts be the same length all the way around the body.
12. Pull your Black Foam over the body of the fly, making sure it is right on top of the hook, and tie it down a couple of eye lengths short of the eye of the fly, the same way you did in the back.
13. Do the same with the lighter, contrasting Foam.

14. Cut the Foam off square at the eye, it's OK if it hangs over the eye a bit, as long as it can be lifted enough to get to the eye to get your tippet through.
15. Tie in another set of legs, just like you did in the back.
16. Bring your thread under the body to the eye, whip finish and cut off your thread.
17. Cut your legs off all the same length. You want them long enough to give you movement, but not too long to get in the way.
18. Take a super glue-like Zap-a-Gap and put some on the wraps at both the back and front of the fly, including the whip finish.

Notes: The best place to get foam is a good Craft Store. They will carry it in sheets that will last a long time in a myriad of colors at a considerable savings to the price of specialty shops...Many people will tie a small piece of bright foam on top of the fly at the tie in points. The foam will bend upward and can be used to help see the fly. Some also think it helps the fly land correctly on the water. The Chernobyl Ant has a bad habit of not landing in an upright position.

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### In Memoriam: Jon Baiocchi 1965-2021

Where to begin?

Fly fisherman, naturalist, guide, educator, author, speaker, skateboarder, professional snowboarder, BMX and motocross racer, Jon Francis Baiocchi passed suddenly on Thursday morning, April 22, 2021 while guiding on his beloved Middle Fork of the Feather River, near Cromberg. He was 55.

Jon's remarkable and unconventional life began on November 15, 1965 in San Jose, California, two years prior to his parents, Bob and Lois Baiocchi, relocating their young family of six to rural Paradise to live closer to nature and native fisheries. Under the instruction of his father and elder brother, Jon had a rod in his hands by age 6 and was guiding professionally by 30 as "Baiocchi's Troutfitters".

The Jack London of the family, Jon's was a life well-lived. He recognized this and was grateful for it.

Jon is survived by his brother Joel, sisters Christina and Teresa, niece Luci Grace, nephew Justin, and an anthology of reports, videos, writings, and musings on fly-fishing and all things flora and fauna.

A memorial is being planned and will be announced as soon as possible.

Correspondence can be addressed to the Baiocchi Family at: P.O. Box 917, Mendocino, CA 95460

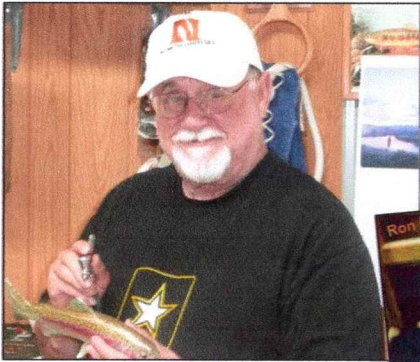
"I would rather be ashes than dust!  
I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze  
than it should be stifled by dryrot.  
I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow,  
than a sleepy and permanent planet.  
The proper function of man is to live, not to exist.  
I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them.  
I shall use my time."

# LOCAL GUIDES

Fish First  
Chico, CA  
(530) 343-8300

Sierra Stream & Mountain  
Chico, CA  
530-345-4261

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530.284.0861  
29615 Hwy 89/ P.O. Box 87  
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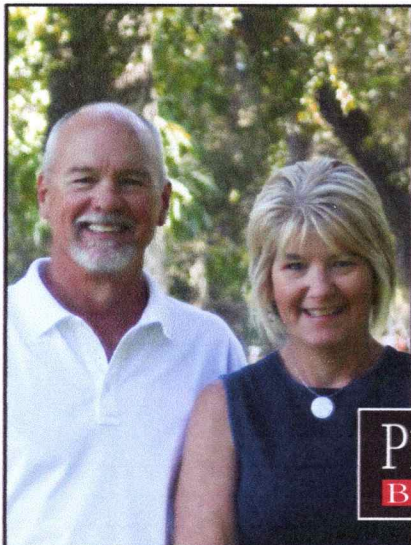
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