

Gordon Van der Spuy

Fly Tying Workshops for 2014



This year I'd like to run another series of workshops, but I'd like them to be more intensive than they were last year. A lot of the stuff I did in 2013 was foundation type stuff but now I'd like to carry on from where I left off and go into more detail. What I also want to ideally do is make the groups smaller so that I can concentrate more on giving the guys individual attention. I'd prefer a maximum of 5 guys per group as this will ensure that the guys do some quality work as opposed to just having a general idea of what they are doing. This was evident from what I learnt out of last year. In the smaller groups the guys retained a lot more and I was also able to go into a bit more detail. I can still do larger groups but I'd prefer smaller groups, it will cost the guys more but they will get more out of it too.

I will still run beginners programs too as there is always a need for the basics. I can run these two programs simultaneously but this only really works with smaller groups as beginners do need a lot of attention.

The two programs I want to run are as follows



Beginners Program

This will cover what I did last year

1. Basic entomology.
2. Hook and thread selection, as well as good thread technique.
3. Material selection- How to go about selecting quality materials that make a real difference to the end product.
4. The pinched wrap.
5. The half hitch and whip finish.
6. Proportion and balance- what is it all about.
7. The mechanics behind good fly design and how form follows function.
8. Dry flies- the mechanics behind tying decent dries will be covered with the emphasis on tying decent parachute hackles.
9. Thinking beyond the pattern- becoming a thinking tyer.
10. Pre planning the fly before you tie it.

This introductory course will cover both nymphs and dries with the focus on establishing a good tying technique which can then be utilised to cover a wide range of pattern applications.



Advanced Program

This program goes beyond what books and magazines teach and will cover,

1. Thread control- how good thread control and technique can be used to minimise bulk and optimise pattern performance.
2. Material manipulation- tricks on how to get 'problem' materials to do what you want them to do.
3. CDC- how to select the best feathers and how to optimally exploit the qualities that these feathers provide, a wide range of CDC techniques will be explored.
4. Soft hackle techniques- the concept of folding hackles will be explored as well as other soft hackling styles.
5. Tying traditional Catskill style patterns- this exercise is aimed at getting students to understand dry fly materials a bit better as well as how to get the most out of them.

6. Tying and fishing micro patterns- how to effectively tie and fish these little flies, principles that work.
7. Deerhair- how to select the best hair for the job at hand and how to get those solid tightly packed bodies that one always sees in the American magazines, will also cover how to get a good finish on these flies.
8. Artistic tying techniques that are simple look good but are also relevant in everyday tying.
9. Tying a traditional wet fly, the idea behind this is to get students to understand older tying techniques which still have merit in this modern era- wet flies are very effective but rarely fished in the South African context. My aim is to get the guys to open up this fantastic can of proverbial worms and get the traditional juices flowing again.
10. Working with quills in all shapes and sizes- an often underutilised material that has a zillion great applications



Details and Fee

These workshops will take place over a weekend to be arranged on the Friday evening and then go through all the way to Sunday afternoon, in effect, two and a half days of intense tying.

The fee is R6000 per workshop. This includes all materials used as well as my transport. Participants need bring only their vices, tying tools and threads. Lunch is not included.

A minimum of 5 participants is needed with a maximum of 10 allowed, larger groups than this are impossible to effectively teach, this I know from experience. The smaller groups are best in my experience, sure, it does cost the guys more but they do get more out of it too.

Accommodation and venue must be provided by the workshop organiser. With smaller groups we can possibly do it in the comfort of someone's home around a dining room table, we just need to make sure that the lighting is good.

I also need a projector set up with the camera on so participants can see what I'm doing. Some form of a black board with chalk or a white board of sorts will also be good if one can organise it. I found explaining things quiet good through drawing what I was actually talking about. The idea is to take the whole workshop idea that I established in 2013 and streamline the course to ensure that the guys get the most out of it. These workshops are also ideal for those guys who are keen competitive anglers.
