

Allan Elliott
Federation of Fly Fishers
Certified Fly Casting Instructor

CASTING CORNER



Last week I went to Penstock Lagoon. My last two outings to Penstock saw me do a lot of casting but not much catching. I am pleased to say that this outing was much more successful

The main reason for my success (apart from being lucky to be in the right place at the right time) was my casting. The first fish was spotted within a couple of feet of the bank and only a rod's length away. One cast, one rise, one fish landed.

The second fish was one of a number working the reed beds just out of casting range. Trying to put a fly in front of fast moving fish at 90 feet proved to be difficult. Finally, after many long casts a fish found the fly and the second fish for the day was caught. These two fish proved to me once again that casting practice pays dividends. Being able to cast accurately at short distances and then throw a full fly line to reach a fish gives you the best opportunity to be a successful angler. And in case you were wondering they were both 5lb (I have the photos)

I'm telling this story to emphasize the importance of practicing your casting (and to boast about the two good fish caught). I have been following the Orvis Master your Fly Casting Program as outlined in last month's newsletter. It is difficult to find time to practice especially at this time of the year when the fishing is so good but time spent practicing pays dividends. When I can't fish I like to get out in the lane and have a few practice casts to targets or see if I can throw a full fly line.

Before our club meeting last Wednesday a few people had a go at Level One in the Orvis Casting Program but because of the unfavourable weather we didn't get very far. I'll make another attempt to run through the testing for anyone interested before next month's meeting. Although the hoop distances are quite short, unless you practice you will not hit them consistently. Those who had a go found it difficult having to use my rod so if you plan to be tested you might like to bring your favourite casting rod along.

Casting at targets is a bit different to casting to fish and we learnt a little more about that from Daniel Hacket's talk on leaders at our last meeting. When fishing you need to use a leader that will present your fly in a way that will entice the fish to take. Daniel advocates knotless monofilament leaders of 10 to 12 feet ending with about 6lb tippet. When casting to targets presentation is sacrificed for accuracy and short, heavy leaders are used hand tied with multiple lengths of nylon. I came across these formulae for leader construction used by prominent Australian casters. If you are serious about casting accurately or you want to turn over that grasshopper fly on a windy day one of these leaders would do the trick (if you have the patience to tie it.)

Ken Lucas	inches	C M		Ted Whittam slow	Inches	CM
.65	28"	71cm		.71	28"	71cm
.50	18"	46cm		.55	17"	43cm
.40	12"	30cm		.45	13"	33cm
.30	10"	25cm		.32	11"	28cm
.24	9 1/2"	24cm		.23	9 1/2"	24cm
	77.5"	196cm			78.5"	199cm
John Phelan				Ted Whittam Fast		
.60	32"	91cm		.65	38"	96cm
.50	15"	38cm		.50	14"	35cm
.45	10"	25cm		.40	10"	25cm
.40	7"	19cm		.30	6"	15cm
.35	5"	13cm		.24	11"	29cm
.30	4"	10cm				
.24	10"	24cm			79"	200cm
	83"	220cm				
G.T's						
.80	31"	79cm				
.64	20"	50cm				
.45	14"	36cm				
.24	10"	25cm				
	75"	190cm				

That's about all for this month's Casting Corner. Just talking about casting seems to have resulted in improved scores in the Sunday Casting Competition. As you will see from the most recent Casting Score Card, Bruce almost achieved the perfect score for his dry fly accuracy event. If we all continue to improve the 2012 Champion Casting Club Award will be ours again.