

# Tight Lines

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON FLYFISHERS CLUB INC.



# TIGHT LINES

The official newsletter  
of the Wellington Flyfishers Club inc.  
April 2026



## CONTENTS

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <a href="#">Club Meeting.....</a>   | <a href="#">2</a>  |
| <a href="#">President's Page.....</a>                                     | <a href="#">3</a>  |
| <a href="#">Notice of Annual General Meeting.....</a>                     | <a href="#">4</a>  |
| <a href="#">Annual Photographic Competition.....</a>                      | <a href="#">4</a>  |
| <a href="#">Flybox Raffle .....</a>                                       | <a href="#">4</a>  |
| <a href="#">Report on Club Fishing Competition on the Ruamahanga.....</a> | <a href="#">5</a>  |
| <a href="#">Upcoming Club Trips.....</a>                                  | <a href="#">6</a>  |
| <a href="#">Flytying March 16th 2026.....</a>                             | <a href="#">7</a>  |
| <a href="#">Entries For Club Trophies.....</a>                            | <a href="#">8</a>  |
| <a href="#">Wff Facebook Page.....</a>                                    | <a href="#">8</a>  |
| <a href="#">March Club Trip Report by Rob Gourdie.....</a>                | <a href="#">8</a>  |
| <a href="#">Fly of The Month.....</a>                                     | <a href="#">12</a> |
| <a href="#">Hunting &amp; Fishing.....</a>                                | <a href="#">13</a> |
| <a href="#">On-Stream Day .....</a>                                       | <a href="#">14</a> |
| <a href="#">Useful Links.....</a>   | <a href="#">14</a> |
| <a href="#">Club Meeting Venue.....</a>                                   | <a href="#">14</a> |
| <a href="#">Newsletter Contributions.....</a>                             | <a href="#">14</a> |
| <a href="#">Committee Meeting.....</a>                                    | <a href="#">14</a> |
| <a href="#">Helpdesk.....</a>   | <a href="#">15</a> |
| <a href="#">Website.....</a>  | <a href="#">15</a> |
| <a href="#">Club Membership.....</a>                                      | <a href="#">15</a> |
| <a href="#">Fees 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026.....</a>                    | <a href="#">15</a> |
| <a href="#">Receive The Newsletter via Email .....</a>                    | <a href="#">16</a> |
| <a href="#">Club Mission.....</a>   | <a href="#">16</a> |
| <a href="#">Committee.....</a>  | <a href="#">16</a> |

**Cover:** Paul Baker (*Rolling River looking up towards Mt Owen*)  
*Any articles published in this newsletter are the opinions of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the club as a whole or other members of the club.*

# CLUB MEETING

Monday 6 April 2026, 7.30pm

Tararua Tramping Club Rooms  
4 Moncrief St, Mount Victoria, Wellington

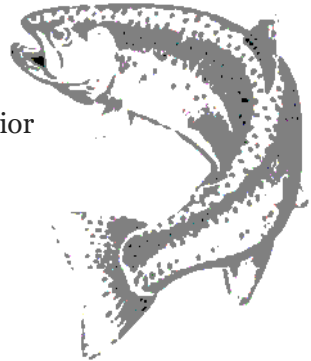
## A PRESENTATION BY STRATO and COSTA COTSILINIS On Trips to Argentina

### EVENTS THIS MONTH

**Club Trip:** No trip has been organised for April  
(refer to President's Report)

**Fly Tying:** Monday 20th April - Pheasant Tail  
*for details see Fly of the Month...p12*

**On-Stream Day:** Sunday 26th April  
Ruamahanga River - Day Trip  
Phone Strato 386 3740 by the Wednesday prior



### NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to Tony Hocking, Shaz Niven  
and Thomas Murray

### REMINDER

**Wainuiomata River season ends on 30<sup>th</sup> April.**

Check Fish & Game regulations for other rivers before you plan your trips.

# PRESIDENT'S PAGE

For the last few weeks our house has been organised chaos. The spare room became the packing control centre. There were shopping trips, fly-tying sessions, packing and unpacking, a bit more shopping, and the final pack.

As I write this, Warren is off to Belize with another club member Brian Benson. They'll be fishing for snook, tarpon, permit and anything else that may come along. In case your geography needs work, Belize is in the northern part of Central America between Mexico and Guatemala. It is the former British Honduras.

Meanwhile I've been wondering about a couple of things.

We tried to run a river/ wader safety course for club members. I was surprised by the apparent lack of interest. A small number signed up but unfortunately sickness prevailed and a number had to drop out so we had to cancel. Thanks to Paul for his work in organising.

Do most of you think you can handle yourselves well in waders in rivers? Was it at the wrong time of year? Should we try organising another one?

One of the hardest tasks is to find speakers each month. Do you have thoughts about what you want from Club nights? What do you want from a club night? Is it just social or a time of learning or just entertainment? What is club night for you?

Feel free to email me your thoughts or even better write something for the newsletter.

There will be no Club trip in April as Strato is unavailable. If you have been on several trips before and could organise a trip, then talk to Strato before Club night.

The Club AGM is coming up in May. Please consider standing for the committee. I will be approaching a few of you.

The weather has been slightly more settled, so I trust some of you have been fishing. I look forward to reading about your trips in the magazine.

*Tight Lines*

*Heather Miller*

# **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that Wellington Flyfishers Club Inc will hold its AGM at its normal club meeting on Monday 4th May 2026 at 7.30pm at the Tararua Tramping Club hall.

Full agenda and associated papers will be published in the next magazine.

## **ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION**

The club's annual photographic competition will be held at the AGM on 4th May.

Please remember....

- You must have taken the photos
- Limited to 2 photos per person
- Photos must have a fly fishing theme or scene
- No specific size or orientation required

The photos will be judged by members attending the meeting.

The committee will decide which if any of the photos will become the next cover of Tight Lines.

## **FLYBOX RAFFLE**

### **Fund raiser for Capital Trout Centre**

This raffle will be drawn at the AGM on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May.

We still have tickets available in this raffle, get yours at the April and May club meetings.

# REPORT ON CLUB FISHING COMPETITION ON THE RUAMAHANGA RIVER

Seven keen anglers turned up at the Gladstone Recreation Reserve early on Saturday morning 14 March. The forecast for Friday afternoon and night was for rain and potential thunderstorms in the Tararua Range, the primary catchment for the Ruamahanga River. Paul had been watching the river levels closely and at 5:00 am the river flow at Wardells bridge was 4.4 cumecs and was only increasing slowly. Based on this we went ahead with the competition.

It seems we should have looked more closely at the Waingawa river flow, which had jumped from 3 cumecs at 2 am to 9.5 cumecs at 5 am! However, we decided the river was safe to wade and the first fishing session began at 8:30 am.

It turns out the Waingawa peaked at 6 am at 11 cumecs then dropped to 5 cumecs by mid-day, while the Ruamahanga increased from 5 cumecs at mid-day to 9 cumecs by 4:00 pm. Overall then the water we were fishing ranged between 10 – 15 cumecs over our morning and afternoon sessions. This had a significant impact on the fishing as it was difficult to pin down the best water to fish and technique to use. One feature of the increased flows was the debris and algae in the current making it difficult to differentiate a drifting fly among the debris. Wading wasn't easy and wide pools made fishing under the trees difficult.

We fished two 3-hour sessions shared between each pair of anglers. The anglers take turnabout to fish, each getting 1.5 hours fishing per session. The first session proved difficult in showery conditions. Strato adjusted best to the conditions and used a sinking line and lure to land six small fish. Paul was second for the session with two fish 36 cm brown trout and 43 cm rainbow on dry fly and nymph. Jarek stayed in contention with one small fish. Andrew had a fish on but unfortunately didn't get it to the net.

The afternoon was on different parts of the river and had improved weather, although the sun rarely broke through the cloud cover.

Strato drew downstream of the Gladstone bridge. A deep crossing at the bridge meant that he and Rod had to walk down the bank and scramble through the scrub to get to a point where they could cross the river. Once again Strato hooked a number of fish, but this time failed to get them to his net. Rod landed a couple of small fish to get on the board.

Jarek and Greg drew the water downstream of the Dakins Road picnic area. Jarek successfully landed two nice rainbows 47 and 49 cm.

Paul and Andrew fished upstream of Dakins Road, and despite covering a lot of water, struggled to find fish. Paul was fortunate in landing one small fish for the session.

The final result was Jarek 1st overall, with a 3rd and 1st place; Paul second with a 2nd and 3rd place; Strato 3rd with his 1st place in the morning; and Rod 4th with a 2nd place in the afternoon session. Paul Thompson graciously accepted reserve role and was unable to compete given the odd number of entries. With the low number of fish being landed, missed opportunities proved expensive in terms of placings. Overall, everyone enjoyed the opportunity to be out and test their skills and expressed their appreciation to Paul for organising the competition.

Paul

## UPCOMING CLUB TRIPS

|                       |                     |                               |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| April - Unable to do  | N/A                 | N/A                           |
| May 1st -3rd          | Manganui<br>o te Ao | Camping Trip                  |
| June 5th – 7th        | Turangi             | Auckland Club House           |
| July 31st -2nd August | Turangi             | Auckland Club House           |
| August 21st – 23rd    | Turangi             | Accommodation to be confirmed |
| September 18th – 20th | Turangi             | Auckland Club House           |

# FLYTYING MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup> 2026

A small but enthusiastic group turned up for flytying on Monday night.



We were also joined by Ross Gigg who brought along a selection of flytying equipment, vices etc which are now available from Hunting & Fishing or directly from Fly Shop NZ. The Red Setter is very easy fly to tie and has been very popular for Taupo anglers fishing for rainbows since it was invented by Jeff Sanderson in 1951.



There have been a few slight variations to the original tie, the most notable being generally they are now tied with a black tail rather than the original brown.

It didn't take long for all those present to each tie a few examples ready to be used not only in the Taupo area but anywhere which has good populations of rainbows.

# ENTRIES FOR CLUB TROPHIES

## **Biggest Fish**

Susanne Lang – 31/12/25

Hawkes Bay

7lb rainbow

## **Best Condition Factor**

Paul Baker – 10/1/26

3lb Rainbow 41.5cm long with a condition factor of 68.

Caught in Lake Otamangakau.

# WFF FACEBOOK PAGE

Checkout the latest news on the club facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/WellingtonFlyfishersClub>

# MARCH CLUB TRIP REPORT

## by Rob Gourdie

I was at a crossroads prior to going on this trip.

I hadn't picked up my fly rod since December and here it was late March and I knew why; I was increasingly frustrated by my lack of fish caught and I was contemplating hiring a guide to see if they could help me break my funk. So I signed up anyway for the trip with Strato and Phil. We arrived at River Valley Lodge Friday night, each of us managing a quick flick of a fly in front of the lodge before nightfall. I also baptised myself in the river unintentionally.

Descending on us later that night was a large group of competitors taking part in the Rangitaiki Adventure Race starting at 7 am the

next morning. This also meant they started in the kitchen next to our bunkroom at 5:30 am.

Loving that I could order a Flatwhite with my self-catered breakfast, we took off from the Lodge for the Mangaohane Bridge, about 30 minutes away on dusty gravel roads. Once there, Phil shot off upstream and Strato brought me to the first rapids and pointed out the prime spots for me to fish first. We were fishing double nymphs and indicators, although Strato did swap over to a Woolly Bugger later but to no real effect.

My third cast hooked one and I was hopeful, although I didn't get it to the net. We worked the pool on both sides with no further action and then headed downstream. We spotted some hefty browns patrolling the large swallow pools, but the water was absolutely gin-clear and we could both see each other easily. Again Strato gave me the prime spot in the rapids and things started to fire. The first time Strato came running as I was struggling to get my Mclean folding net out of its scabbard (it had been so long since it had seen daylight!). Success! Whilst most of them were my infamous "juvies" (juveniles), I was getting some great action bringing them to the net.

I was fishing a beaded Pheasant Tail and a truck&trailer unweighted black H&C. Across the day it was the Pheasant Tail almost exclusively that was getting the fish. I worked my way above the rapids to find even more luck with some bigger specimens sitting in the slack water where the foam line entered.

But it was here dear reader that I learnt another valuable lesson. Not once, but twice in a row, I hooked and deftly played two feisty rainbows towards my net only to have my second nymph catch on the net and pull the line tight, both times allowing the fish to break free and escape. It happened a third time after lunch too. I definitely need to improve my 'Net Game' but I did console myself that to get good at netting your prize, you have to bloody catch them in the first place...

Strato picked up a 5lb jack Rainbow just before we called stumps on the morning session. Phil reported he was convinced he caught the same rainbow 5 minutes apart!

We met back at our vehicles for lunch then headed downstream of the bridge for the afternoon spell. Phil grabbed the first set of rapids and Strato again gave me the prime spot on the next one. Sure enough, the fishing gods kept smiling and I pulled a couple more from the rapids as Strato chose to look on. Just at the top of these riffles was a bath tub sized piece of slack water in amongst the current. Sure enough, dropping in there we both started picking off more rainbows. Strato later landed a 5.25lb monster just as he was recovering his line and about to move to the next spot. A failed attempt to cross the river and we headed back up to just above the bridge. The river was low and we were standing on features that should have been submerged, whilst being able to look all the way to the bottom of the deepest pools and see everything in the river. It honestly felt like the river had been drained and we were walking up the empty river bed it was that clear.



We arrived at the last pool of the day, 20 feet deep at the base of rapids and we could see the black shapes sitting at the bottom. I adjusted my indicator and bang! A feisty 3.25lb rainbow hooked into action and I was chuffed to land it, keeping it for the smoker. A cast or two later and another one about 2.5lb rose up from the bottom and was into it. I was giddy with excitement by this stage.

We finished the day with a superb meal in the Lodge, the ingredients entirely grown on their farm. We regaled other guests at dinner with our fishing exploits and enjoyed a well earned drink from the bar.

My tally for the day: Hooked NINETEEN; Landed EIGHT; Kept ONE. That was a day for the books for me. I have to credit Strato as the quintessential Journeyman, happy to give others the opportunity

to get the same level of enjoyment from this noble pursuit that he does.



Sunday we headed to Springvale Bridge. After a long hike downstream to the cliffs, we worked our way back upstream. Today seemed to be a different story, with the long drive home calling and not wanting to burn all my re-found enthusiasm - I called it a day after only managing to foul-hook a 1.5lb hen. Strato persevered and just below the bridge struck a pool where he hooked 11 and landed 8. Phil also landed 5 above the bridge. Strato had managed a stop off at the Manawatu on the way up where he landed 14. Our total landed between the three of us on the Rangitikei was 42 in the end.

This trip was exactly what I needed. After a pretty frustrating spell, it brought back the excitement and confidence that keeps us all coming back to the river.

Rob

# FLY OF THE MONTH

Fly tying is sponsored by [Fishscene](#)



**Monday 20th April 2026, 7.30pm** - Tararua Tramping Club Locker Room  
(Access through side door on north side of building)

## Pheasant Tail Nymph

There are numerous variations of this pattern



The Pheasant Tail nymph is one of the most useful nymph patterns. Rainbows and Browns love them because the nymph imitates a wide range of naturals.

### Materials

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Hook      | Kamisan B175 #12 & #14 or TMC 3769 #10-18                         |
| Tail      | Fibres from pheasant tail   |
| Gold rib  | Copper wire   |
| Body      | Pheasant tail fibres (over lead wire if extra weight is required) |
| Wing Case | Pheasant tail fibres  |
| Thorax    | Peacock herl or hares fur or copper wire                          |
| Head      | 2.8mm gold, brass or glass bead – optional extra                  |
| Legs      | Hackle or pheasant tail fibres                                    |

If anyone has suggestions for fly patterns they would like to see tied at the fly-tying meetings please let Strato know (386 3740).



*Come and see our*

*Great selection of Fly Tying materials*

*and Fly Tying equipment  
(Including Fly Shop NZ)*

Other than for specials, Club discount 10% is available on flyfishing purchases with your membership card.

**The Flyfishing Experts  
Hutt Valley Hunting & Fishing NZ  
8 Te Puni Street, Petone.**

P O Box 33 206, Petone, Wellington, New Zealand  
Telephone: 0064-4-589 9500

## **ON-STREAM DAY**

**Next onstream day** – Sunday 26th April - Ruamahanga River Day Trip . Onstream days are opportunities for members who are new to flyfishing to learn from an experienced angler. It is your responsibility to have a current NZ sports fishing licence. These can be purchased from Hunting & Fishing, 8 Te Puni Street, Petone, or online from Fish & Game. Contact Strato (386-3740) before 9pm on the Wednesday prior to get details of where to meet. Limited numbers can be accommodated and acceptance will be on a first come first served basis

## **USEFUL LINKS**

For a list of useful links including licences, river flow levels, weather sites and organisations please visit the club website.

<https://wellingtonflyfishers.org/links>

## **CLUB MEETING VENUE**

Tararua Tramping Club rooms - 4 Moncrieff St, Mount Victoria, Wellington. For a detailed map and instructions on getting there please visit the club website <https://wellingtonflyfishers.org/club-meetings/>

## **NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS**

Please visit the Website for details relating to newsletter submissions <https://wellingtonflyfishers.org/newsletter/>

## **COMMITTEE MEETING**

6 pm, second Monday every month. For additional details please see the club website <http://wellingtonflyfishers.org.nz/committee>

## HELPDESK

Helpdesk is an opportunity for those attending club meetings to have their questions answered. This is a chance for newer members to have fly fishing mysteries unravelled. Tying techniques and problems, rigs, knots, fly selection, issues, casting, how to and where to go. Bring your problems and try the Helpdesk out.

## WEBSITE

The club website and facebook pages provide online information, contact details and useful inks. <http://wellingtonflyfishers.org.nz>

## CLUB MEMBERSHIP

To join the club: collect a form at a club meeting; download a copy from the club website; or phone a committee member. Mail the completed form to PO Box 14006, Kilbirnie, Wellington 6241, or hand it in at the next meeting with your subscription and joining fee.

**Meetings** are held at 7.30 pm on the first Monday of every month except January at the Tararua Tramping Club rooms, 4 Moncreiff Street, Mt. Victoria, Wellington.

**Tight Lines**, the club newsletter is published monthly, except January, and is also available to club members via email as a pdf – contact the editor to be added to the distribution list.

## FEES 1 APRIL 2025 - 31 MARCH 2026

| Full member or family membership | Junior membership | Joining fee | Overseas Newsletter (Email only) |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| \$35                             | no fee.           | \$10        | \$35                             |

**Enquiries** [wellingtonflyfishersclub@gmail.com](mailto:wellingtonflyfishersclub@gmail.com)

## RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL

As a club member you should receive a copy of the club newsletter via email if you are not receiving club emails please see the website for details. <https://wellingtonflyfishers.org/newsletter/>

## CLUB MISSION

To establish, maintain and conduct a club for the encouragement and promotion of flyfishing and all activities pertaining thereto.

## COMMITTEE

|                     |                       |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| <b>President</b>    | <b>Heather Miller</b> | <b>386 3049</b> |
| Past President      | Strato Cotsilinis     | 386 3740        |
| Vice President      | John Gamble           | 027 517 5825    |
| Secretary           | Rod Lawson            | 021 119 4115    |
| Treasurer           | Carmen Cotsilinis     | 027 611 8088    |
| Newsletter Editor   | Linda Brown           | 027 230 4770    |
| Librarian           | Warren Horne          | 386 3049        |
| Website             | Scott Garelli         | 021 325 032     |
| Facebook Editor     | Susi Lang             | 027 564 6008    |
| Club Trips          | Strato Cotsilinis     | 386 3740        |
| Helpdesk            | Hal Levine            | 027 4200 482    |
| Fly Tying & Casting | Strato Cotsilinis     | 386 3740        |
| Club Competitions   | Paul Baker            | 970 2595        |
| Committee           | Peter Buxton          | 027 472 3455    |
| Committee           | Peter Irwin           | 021-499-582     |



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