

# Rise Forms

Reading rise forms is exciting and helpful



## Rise forms give away much information

Presence, food form, direction, depth

Enthusiasm on spotting fish goes a long way, but what discriminates a person's expertise from the mainstream angler is an inquiring mind. Those who simply accept things as they find them from one trip to another predictably waste a lot of time and effort in trial and error. On the other hand,

those who try to understand why a particular method does or does not work gain the knowledge to tailor their tactics correctly to the prevailing conditions. They

Continued on 4

### Rise Styles

Rise forms give away a lot of information and more than that there is a fish present.

Page 2

### Sub Surface Boil

One of the most common and misinterpreted rise forms is the sub surface boil.

Page 3

### Fish Shadows

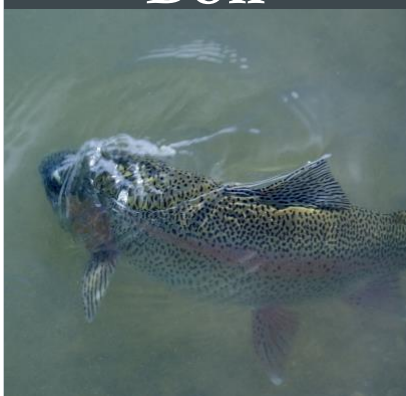
Watching the substrate is critical in pinpointing stationary fish.

Page 5

## Rise Styles



## Sub Surface Boil



## Head and Tail



## Nebbing Rise Form

## Rise Styles are clues to food form, direction and depth.

Rise forms give away more information than just the presence of a feeding fish. They may also provide clues to the food-form, and it may be possible to deduce the direction and depth of a cruising trout, although this is more relevant to lakes than rivers in many cases. Long quite glides along river banks with steeper drops into the water basin will also show a cruising fish direction as the move through easy flowing water. It is important, though, to treat all conclusions as a rule of thumb rather than gospel. A trout's behaviour may depend on other factors such as a fish's confidence, familiarity, and previous experiences with artificial flies

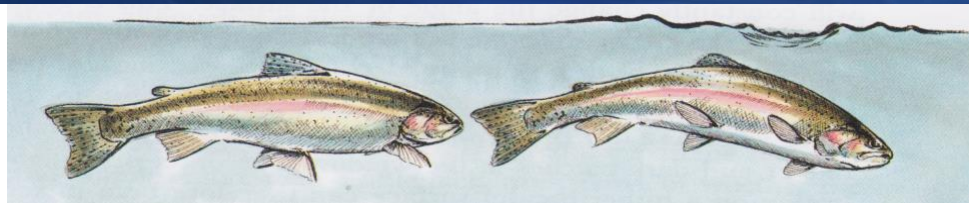
or simply individual preferences of the stalked fish.

### Clues to Diet

One of the most common and misinterpreted rise-forms is the **sub-surface boil**. It can be viewed in both lakes and flowing water. It is indicative of a few food clues on both types of water and is often over looked mostly on calmer waters in lakes than in rivers where it mostly goes unnoticed. It is present on flowing waters and can be associated with larger food items such as minnows, backswimmers, and large emerging mayfly nymphs. It is very distinguishable as a swirling boil of water. Often this is a positive attitude.

## Basic Rules of Thumb

- Observation is key. Never second-guess what you think you may have seen. Your mind doesn't play with you in those senses. Trust in what you saw and investigate it deeper. Take your time doing so.
- Scan right to left when searching for fish positions or movement. This is a military style of training used for spotting things out of the norm.
- Where appropriate gear to view what is going on below the water surface and in the water depths. (See polarized glasses and hats.)



## Sub Surface Boil

This happens when a trout has to react quickly..

This materializes when a trout has to react quickly before its prey can escape and may indicate a chase after scurrying caddis flies, Caddis pupa's, travelling Sedges, adult Stoneflies, backswimmers near surface or minnows. In other cases it can be behaviour to out maneuver a schooling group where competition is aggressive for food items from others in the pack. In the latter case of minnows, there is usually a tell tale sign of fry scattering near the surface to escape the pillaging marauder. If minnows are not noticed then it can be likely that another food form is present and that the trout feel that it has an opportunity to elude them, so a fast reaction in either case is required from the predator that will create the sub surface boil. This is an

indication of a positive feeding behaviour or also knows as an appetite mood. The attitude of fish, which are actively feeding is in many cases aggressive. An example also is trout often splash through the surface to intercept fast moving nymphs, such as the caddis pupae and corixae. Hot breezy conditions, allows the wings of emerging insects to dry out more rapidly. This then can force the trout to intercept the insects during the emerging stage instead of the dry stage. This sometimes results in splashy rises, but is still a subsurface boil type of activity and here is the misinterpretation. Since trout have less time to intercept the insects at the surface before flight. These conditions are often very frequent throughout our hotter and more humid summer days.



become more dependable, which then proliferates their self-assurance to develop tactics further to even greater effect. As time moves forward I would like to share a few perspectives into areas that will provide the groundwork for many of the strategies we will describe throughout an anglers passage. The idea should be to help an angler decide, for example, when it is better to use a nymph or a wet fly pattern, even if a trout is preoccupied with dry flies. Reading rise forms should give some clues into a trout's current feeding habit. This would apply to flowing waters and lake waters. Their rise forms will also help you to shape your own considered opinions on the best choice of rod, reel, line and leader in conjunction with the fly and presentation best suited to the fish and its location.

To much detail makes it difficult to sort out the trees from the forest. So we will take as many short cuts as we dare in an attempt to ensure that the

understanding is properly focused towards an angler's principal objective.

First to do this well an angler needs to wear the appropriate gear to view what is going on and to see in the water. A wide brimmed hat is best, but a ball cap will work just not as well. Wide brimmed hats will shadow out any sun near your face and your eyes at many different angles to the sun. This will help reduce glare and allow your eyes to dilate appropriately.

- **Get a quality pair of polarized sunglasses.** The right sunglasses are essential when trying to spot fish. Sun on the water causes a lot of glare, making it quite hard to spot fish. A polarized glass removes that glare. With the right colour of lenses the opportunity is also increased dramatically. In the fishing sport the lens colour that is often selected is a gray type of lens colour. This is not always the best choice as yellow or orange lens can often be better in finding fish in the shadows of weed beds

and obstructions in the water column.

- **Fish midday.** Fishing early and late when fish are more actively feeding increases your odds of spotting and catching them. However, for learning to spot fish - and consequently better understanding their movements, preferred lies and feeding habits - the middle part of the day when the sun is high overhead gives you a better advantage in many scenario's. A high midday sun means there is less glare on the water surface to contend with as the sunrays become more vertical, allowing you to more easily see into the river or lake environments.

#### **Approach with stealth to the streamside with care.**

How you approach a stream is critical to your success. Always walk gently, never stomping your feet. Keep low, even squatting or crawling if the fish are spooky. Get on your knees if need be with your kneepads on to protect your waders. This

Continued...



### lakebed.

Watching the substrate is critical in pinpointing stationary fish. Even the most experienced angler has struggled spotting the actual fish holding in its lie. Millions of years of evolution have given trout an amazing ability to blend in with their watery backgrounds, but there is a trick you can use: look for the fish's shadow.

Selecting the correct lenses for your needs is particularly difficult but very critical at this point of the game. Among some choices are polarized lenses, which are incredibly popular and also more expensive than normal protective lenses.

Polarized lenses offer specific protection from UV rays and are particularly suited for some activities. But, despite popular theory, polarized lenses don't embody significantly

increased UV protection. Their main advantage lies in their function.

### Understanding Polarized Glasses

Sunlight is absorbed or reflected in many directions. Sunlight reflected from a horizontal surface, like on water is often reflected back horizontally, producing a very strong glare. For us, it means that water reflections cause a lot of interference with our vision on the water.

Normal sunglasses provide basic protection against both vertical and horizontal UV rays. However, they don't diminish the glare from reflected horizontal rays.

Polarized glasses have a built-in, laminated filter that permits only vertical light rays to pass through, and almost totally blocks horizontal rays to eliminate glares.

## Do you need polarized Lenses?



If you are an angler then start using polarized lenses immediately. On the other hand, if you're just looking for increased sun protection for your eyes, consider whether darker lenses might do the trick but fish spotting usually works better with yellow and orange lenses.

Most leading manufacturers of glasses offer models with polarized coatings and you can find them at most sunglasses outlets. So, when the sun casts glare into your eyes, reach for polarized lenses. It will reduce the risk of cataracts well later in life.

This is most noticeable when fishing, since you can suddenly see through the surface, which was previously clouded by the reflections from the sun and sky above.

Polarized lenses are most commonly associated with sunglasses, though there are normal prescription glasses with polarized coating as well.

### Who Needs Polarized Lenses?

The people who find the greatest use for polarized lenses are those that work around or on the water, like fly anglers. Because such lenses reduce glare, it is easier for anglers to view deeper into water for fish or for fish holding obstacles.

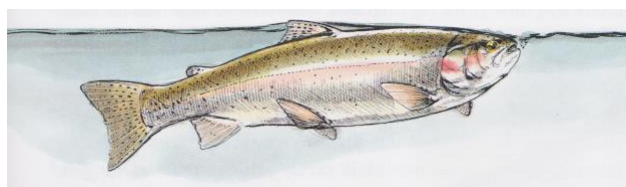
This can make a huge difference in fishing, since an angler can get a more accurate look at fish habitat and the more complex movement of under water currents.

## Head and Tail



Head and Tail Rise Forms are not much different than sub-surface boils. The movement associated with a head and tail rise is not very different from the sub surface boil, except now the fly is so high in the water that the trout cannot help breaking the surface. The head will appear first as it takes the fly, followed by the body as the fish turns downwards with its prey. This suggests that the food is a nymph that is close to the surface – most probably at some stage of emergence into an adult.

## Nebbing Rise



There is no reason why a trout should not exhibit the same head and shoulders rise to a fully-fledged adult insect on top of the



surface. However, a fish will expend less energy by sticking just its nose or neb out of the water. A trout that exhibits a Nebbing rise intercepts an adult fly quickly. This is an aggressive movement but has a minimum calorie burn. Anglers often interpret this Nebbing rise as being a subtle rise form. But in fact it is very aggressive and consistent fish behaviour when a trout feels at its utmost comfort. These are easy fish to stalk and will be the most obliging to taking an emerger or a dry fly. If an insect has no chance of escaping, the trout may want to conserve as much energy as possible. Spent spinners or trapped terrestrials flies are not going to leave the water in a hurry, so the trout can afford to sip the fly gently from below the surface. Often this will produce the simplest dimple and sometimes there will be no sign at all other than the fly being sucked downwards by an invisible vacuum cleaner. Sometimes there is an audible gulp, which has led to the term “gulpers”. The trout will close its mouth on the fly immediately, so the sipping or dimpling rise requires excellent reflex on the anglers behave.

## Smutting



If trout remain high when taking dry flies, it



is invariably a indication that there are great numbers of tiny insects on the surface. This smutting behaviour, which is more prevalent in still water, but occurs because the most efficient manner to feed is to go into vacuum mode. Such fish have a tiny window of surface vision, but that is all they need when the food is so abundant. This small window also makes them very easy to stalk.

Splashing rises happen when a trout has to act quickly before its prey can escape and may indicate a chase after a scurrying caddis fly, midges or even a small fish. In the latter case, there is usually a tell tale sign of several fry scattering near the surface to escape the trout. In still water it is worth looking for other evidence of fry to avoid a misinterpretation. And if none are present then the focus is likely a fast moving aquatic insect. Hopping midges can bring this out in a trout's behaviour as the midges are drying their wings and they make a few false take offs and landings. This hopper scenario with midges is a hugely overlooked part of the midge life cycle. Very few people recognize this behaviour and mixing of an action with a reaction from the trout is seldom understood. Between the hoopers and the Smutting rise is found frequently on lakes during a chironomid hatch. Tight lines and clear clean water to you all.

## G.G. (Gary) Hanke

Fly Tier, Instructor, Guide, Author, Outdoor Photographer

Gary has been fly-fishing and fly tying from a very young age. As he grew in this sport guiding, instructing, lecturing and offering work shops he continuously pushed himself to top levels of accomplishment that final rewarded him as team "Captain" at the 35<sup>th</sup> World Fly Fishing Championship – 2016 in Bosnia. Being an ambassador for Canada during this event and being able to participate in the fly-fishing worlds greatest skills event was his ultimate pleasure. Today Gary is the founder of the Southern Alberta Fly Fishing League and Eastslopes Distributor Ltd. that wholesales top quality fly tying and fishing gear from Europe. He lectures and provides workshops almost weekly at all levels in this great sport. If you have an interest in a workshop, presentation, Fly Practicum (a half day of helping improve your current skills) or a guided trip, he has prices available upon request.



## My Fly Life

Edmonton, Alberta

Face Book Pages: Alberta Fly Fishing, Southern Alberta Fly Fishing League, Eastslopes Distributor Ltd.

You Tube Videos: Gary Hanke

Instagram: Gary Hanke

Twitter: Gary Hanke @1Garhan