

Magic on the Rivers

a guide to learning the ways of
fly casting, fly tying, rivers,
and the fish within



A Youth Outreach Program

ATLANTIC SALMON FEDERATION

P. O. Box 5200, St. Andrews, NB E3L 3R4

or

P. O. Box 807, Calais, ME 04619

www.asf.ca

CONTACTS:

Debbie Perry, Education Coordinator
506-529-1384 asfcc@nbnet.nb.ca

Tom Moffatt, Education Specialist
506-529-1022 asfweb@nbnet.nb.ca



INTRODUCTION

Take up a REAL magic wand...

Swish and flick...A casting rod with a fly on the end of a line combines concentration of effort with satisfaction of a very special knowledge. It is perhaps the closest thing in the real world to raising and using a magic wand like the one used by *Harry Potter*.

Swish and flick...The rhythm, timing, movement and coordination between mind and arm must all be put together so that in real-world magic a thin line arcs through the air and delivers a small piece of hair and feather far out in a river – to exactly the place you intended.

Like the lore of magic, fly casting and fly tying have a history going back to medieval times and beyond. It has ‘treatyses’ written in the 15th century, and stories from later centuries coming from Scottish streams, the mists of Quebec rivers and from the roaring cataracts of Newfoundland. There are giant fish of more than 40 pounds from northern New Brunswick and never-ending discussions on the best ways to use equipment and to focus one’s mind.

This program is designed to help this magic happen, but it also takes individuals who see the magic and adventure in this sport. Each module is meant to completely fill a 2 1/2 hour period but some may find that a more leisurely pace is needed. The program is also designed such that it can be used both in the summer season and during the more inclement weather of fall, winter and spring. In fact, it may be most useful in bringing forth both the memories of fine days on the water just when the bleak, cold rain and snow are falling.

While the *Atlantic Salmon Federation* has been putting together this program, it is very much a team effort. Individuals like Joan Wulff and Stackpole Books and many others have given us permission to use their material, bringing special approaches to the program materials. Members of the *Fredericton Fish and Game Club* loaned us a set of excellent flies that are fundamental to their fly tying teaching program that has been in existence for a half century.

We look forward to hearing your views on the program modules, for testing and modifying materials is part of the process of turning the magic of angling into reality for those who are open to it.

Above all, have fun with the materials.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Welcome to *Magic on the Rivers*. This set of modules includes an array of facts, lessons and resource materials that covers almost anything a beginning Atlantic salmon and Salmonid angler will need to know.

The purpose is to assist those teaching young adults the pleasures of salmon and trout angling. It does so in light of the need for these 21st century anglers to practice conservation ethics that match the needs of the rivers and the fish.

TOPICS

Fly casting, fly tying, lines, knots, reading a river's currents, live release skills, ethics, etiquette, safety, natural history of species, and an introduction to restoration are all here. So too are background materials, such as an atlas of North American salmon rivers, and a guide to the trout species encountered in northeastern North America.

HINTS ON USE

READ CAREFULLY THE TABLE OF CONTENTS!

It gives an overview of the topics covered, and anyone using the guide needs to understand the scope of topics covered.

It is intended that *Magic on the Rivers* be flexible enough to accommodate a variety of approaches.

The material can be step-by-step

guide, or it may be used as a “reminder” to a teacher of topics to discuss, but using the instructor's own favourite method.

Depending on the instructor's approach, there may be a wish to “mix and match” the materials of different modules.

Instructors may wish to photocopy some of the materials but not others.

Remember, this is a teaching resource – meant to be helpful, but not to be a straightjacket.

Most importantly, have fun while doing this program.

Here is an overview of the modules:

MODULE 1

Fly casting – Two approaches are planned. Joan Wulff's Fly-O approach is already included. It has the advantage of being more useable in the winter season. Mel Krieger's approach will be included soon, for the many angling groups that prefer to use full-sized rods they probably already have available.

MODULE 2

Fly tying – *Magic on the Rivers* can either be used to supplement those methods, or to be the principle method used.

MODULE 3

Reading a river, natural history of salmon, and the fly rod – All

essential to feeling at home with a river.

MODULE 4

Ethics, Live release, Safety and Regulations – this module is core to the next generation of salmon anglers taking care of their own resource, yet understanding the heritage surrounding it.

Note the many materials on live release.

MODULE 5

Trout species, salmon rivers, and how to play the fish – this module contains major resource materials that will help any angling instructor expand the knowledge base of students, and understand the lives of other salmonids.

MODULE 6

ASF, other organizations, and using resource people in a module – this module is focused on the angler's wider community, including a primer on the Atlantic Salmon Federation's structure, and the range of organizations that share goals.

FINAL WORDS

Magic on the Rivers remains a tool and a work in progress! Tell us the ways in which you use it, and about the groups you use it with. Share the magic, for the future of the rivers and those who come to love the angling experience.

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Swish and flick...

Fly casting can be the adventure that will take you to special hidden pools nearby or to distant rivers with roaring falls. It is a direct connection between us and the rivers and streams in our environment.

In this case a hidden stream in Maine is surrounded by golden leaves in autumn.

