What's coming to Stillwater Adventures? A new series of stillwater fly patterns!

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In the works for five years, my new series of stillwater fly patterns will be available in the spring of 2020. Developed to meet the needs of stillwater anglers, these patterns combine new materials with natural fibers to offer innovative stillwater patterns. A new **FliesbyVickie.com** retail web site will launch during the introduction of these eight fly patterns. Beyond my new flies, **FliesbyVickie.com** will also make available the fly tying materials used to tie my patterns, as well as rods, reels, and lines I have evaluated and tested to be well-suited to fishing stillwater.

The creation of my stillwater fly pattern series took years of design, testing, revision, re-testing and revising. Each design change was documented, the fly tested, and the field test results recorded. Those field results drove further revisions and improvements, which were documented, tested, and the whole cycle was repeated multiple times. The result was a fly pattern series that has successfully performed for the most demanding critics of all: trophy trout.



Vickie's Grizzly Bug

Traveling up to six months a year (fishing lakes in OR, ID, MT, NV, CA, WA and WY), I thoroughly test my flies in a wide range of lakes under varying conditions, and during different times of day and seasons. Once the materials and design perform the way I want, I then move the pattern(s) into production. It has taken me five years from initial concept to the final fly pattern.

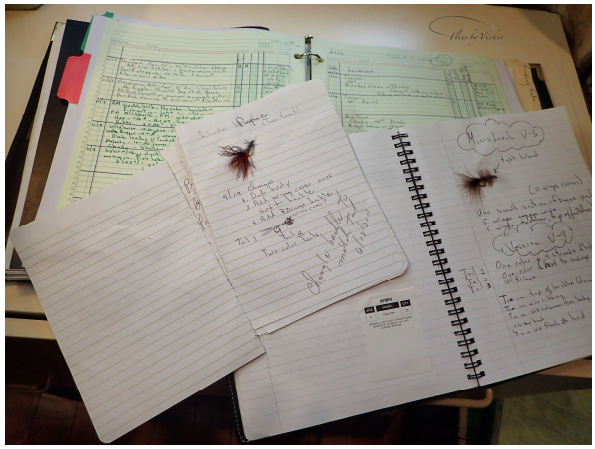
To give you an idea of the testing process for each pattern, the following example highlights what went into the development of the "Grizzly Bug" pattern.

Design Concept

Three years ago, I envisioned a leech pattern that was unweighted and proportionally smaller in size. Exact duplication of a leech was not my goal. Rather, I sought to create an impressionistic silhouette which was suggestive of various food sources trout eat such as darting fry, minnows, and undulating leeches.

Testing

As with all the patterns I developed, I made exhaustive study of entomology and paired it with actual time on the water. Since I spend half the year on the road fishing lakes throughout the Northwest, the Grizzly Bug pattern was extensively tested. I created pattern notes, then modified the pattern based on how it fished and how durable of the fly's materials proved to be. I documented every fish I caught and what pattern and color variation was used. I made modifications, recorded those changes, tested, and repeated this cycle multiple times.



Pattern Notes and Fishing Logs

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The design of my Grizzly Bug pattern underwent many changes. Originally, I used a shorter tail and tested various materials (rabbit, fox tail, partridge, short marabou, wood duck and various UV materials of varied stiffness, texture, width and color). I also tested numerous marabou colors to evaluate which was the most productive. Various material for the soft hackle was evaluated.

I ended up choosing a soft, oversized grizzly hackle. A manufacturer partnered with me to custom dye grizzly hen saddles to match the color of the marabou. The resulting soft hackle adds additional movement and color contrast to augment visibility.



Grizzly Bug at my fly-tying bench

The natural dubbing materials I chose created a buggy appearance. I added specific UV materials to both enhance the visibility of the fly and provide additional movement to create a silhouette that looked and moved like living, breathing food.

Final Design

Through this process of extensive testing, design, retesting and redesign, I selected four color variations for the initial launch: Black, Olive, Dark Burgundy and Burnt Orange. The black and olive imitate leeches. Burgundy and burnt orange are attractor colors.

The Grizzly Bug has been tested and proven to work in various forms of presentation. It may be fished from the surface down two or three feet, as a streamer along shallow shoreline areas, trolled, or fished vertically up through the water column.

I caught over twenty trout in one day, all 18-20 inches, using this pattern. Check out the video from that day al 18-22 inches. https://youtu.be/6Bw13-lM1Qs

Here's a closeup of the trout I caught in the video above:



Caught on Vickie's Grizzly Bug

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Conclusion:

All the stillwater fly patterns that will soon be available have been field-tested under varying conditions, at multiple locations, and during different times of day and seasons. Those test results have driven re-designs, which were then tested and redesigned again, based on the results.

I am excited about the introduction these patterns. It is my hope that these patterns be as productive for you as they have been for me.

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