

## **Guides Corner- Chris Scalley**

Many beginning fly fisherman are overwhelmed with all the many different aspects of fly fishing. Not just casting techniques, but also the many components that attach the fly to the tippet, which attaches to the leader, which attaches to the fly line, then attaches to the backing and finally all this stuff connects to the reel itself. This is so different than any other type of fishing that many guys throw that fly fishing outfit back into the closet and keep fishing with their old faithful spin equipment.

I recommend you remember why you began fly fishing to start with. Most are interested because fly fishing is so unique and you enjoy the challenges of a new technique that may give the fish an edge. The best way to describe the components of a fly rod, one must look at the original fly rods, reels and lines from 200 years ago in England. The original fly rods were made of bamboo, which is structurally stronger than steel and light weight. We replaced bamboo with fiberglass and more recently with carbon fiber, making today's fly rods four times lighter. The original fly lines were made of woven silk treated with lard to help it float and to allow it to slip efficiently through the rod guides. Now we use braided dacron encased in PVC plastic. The leaders were made from "cat gut" stretched to various diameters then knotted together to create a gradual taper to end or "tip" of the leader. The tip of "tippet" is the last section which attaches to the fly was actually a piece of horse tail hair. So now when you walk into a fly shop, you can at least understand why tapered diameters are measured with the same system as cat gut, but now this has been replaced with nylon most likely monofilament or fluorocarbon materials. They may think you are crazy if you ask for horse tail hair!

Tight Lines!  
Chris Scalley