

**Thames Valley Fly Dressers Guild Branch**  
**Instructor's Report to AGM Jan 2024 at mid-point of 2023-24 Tying Season**

### Overview of Meetings

This is my first Instructor's Report since the December 2019 AGM just before Covid – much water has flowed under the bridge since then.

We have lost and gained a few members, endured two years of Zoom Meetings during Covid, changed our bi-monthly meetings from The Flowerpot Hotel, Aston to The Cherry Tree Inn, Stoke Row and moved to tying individually for our own fishing needs rather than fly-tying in groups under instruction.

### Members Attendance at Meetings

Season	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Location	Flowerpot	FP till Mar	Zoom	FP & Zoom	Cherry Tree	Cherry Tree
Av. Attendance	13.1	10.6	8.3	7.8	7.8	9
Low - High	9 - 16	7 - 13	2 - 14	3 - 14	3 - 15	4 - 12

Attendance suffered during the Covid disruption, with Zoom not lending itself to demonstrations, and the move to The Cherry Tree Inn has stretched some journeys.

### Fly Tying Instruction for FDG Awards

Our established Members have not been fly-tying for FDG Awards since before Covid; they are competent tiers and happy to be tying for their own fishing.

### Fly Tying Instruction

I regret we have lapsed the popular 10-minute demonstration at 9pm each meeting. Volunteers are very welcome to resurrect it! Unfortunately, we no longer have a TV screen in the pub for projecting demonstrations.

I plan to start a salmon fly tying course from the end of January: fishing flies, not classic fully dressed patterns.

### New Members

We are always delighted to welcome newcomers to our Branch –beginners, novices, and experienced tyers. Please ask your angling colleagues if they would like to come and join us. The Cherry Tree gives us good publicity on Instagram. We need more members – please get the message out that all are welcome!

### Asking for Instruction and solving problems

We have four FDG registered instructors in our Branch: John Watkins, Richard Bird, Richard Ellis and me. All our instructors and others can answer questions and solve tying problems. Please ask if you need a demonstration.

### FDG Tying Competition – Branch

We have not had a Branch Fly Tying Competition since 2019. Please let me know if you would like one in April.

### FDG Tying Competition - National

Please enter the national FDG Fly Tying competition. Looking back to 2019 we had three winners / runners up in the various classes. All of you are capable of gaining an award. Please submit an entry by 30<sup>th</sup> March.

### Materials

We all have stacks of 'surplus' fly tying materials and tools. Some of us have 'unlimited' access to game bird and waterfowl feathers & deer hair – if you need something, do ask before buying - it is probably readily available.

### Grayling Fishing

I'm sorry but I have failed to organise a grayling fishing trip this winter. We would love to find a grayling fishing location on the Rivers Test, Itchen or Kennett for a small group– could you suggest or arrange one?

Let me know if you are interested in a weekend grayling fishing on the River Dee, Llangollen in late September or early October 2024 staying in the Hands Hotel, or similar.

### Reservoir Fishing

Some of us will be boat fishing on Farmoor Reservoir all winter – if you are interested, do ask and join us!

The TV FDG 'Invictas' team of John H, Peter H, Richard E & Peter W achieved 7<sup>th</sup> place this year in the FDG annual John Watts boat fishing competition at Draycote Reservoir in August 2023. It was a tough day fishing.

### Next Year's Programme

If you have any requests for next season's programme or a fly pattern or demonstrations of particular tying techniques or would like to volunteer to demonstrate for 10 minutes – then please let me know.

I think our tying programme has become somewhat 'stale'. I would welcome your suggestions for change!

Peter Watson  
Windsor

1<sup>st</sup> January 2024