

Tenkara 101 with Bill Seitz

1. Tenkara on the Crooked River

- Water clarity is generally best during the non-irrigation season (mid-October to mid-April); however, the river fishes well all year. Even though the river looks muddy during the irrigation season, the fish can see your flies.
- A Tenkara rod is a great tool for tight line/ Euro nymphing.
- With tight lining/Euro nymphing, the catch rate varies from 65 to 90 percent of the fish that hit your fly.
- The long Tenkara rods greatly reduce the need to mend.
- When tight lining with a drop shot rig, you are always in contact with flies.
- When using a drop shot rig you will feel the fish take your fly, but watch sighter for movement signaling a take by the fish.
- Whitefish usually do not move the sighter; they will usually stop sighter movement.
- Bobber (a suspender) and drop shot combination are very effective way to nymph.
- 10colorstenkara.com is a good forum for info
- Tenkara, The Book by Daniel Galhardo is also a good resource

2. Flies

- Bowticon, a foam emerger, is an effective fly for stillwater trout feeding on midge emergers. It is a great fly to use with a Tenkara rod on lakes.

3. Tenkara Rods

- A rod with a 7/3 rating means top 30% percent has flex-fast action
- A rod with a 6/4 rating is a good nymphing rod and, overall, a good rod for most Tenkara applications.
- A rod with 5/5 rating is a slow action rod
- Occasionally rod segments will get stuck (goggle "Tenkara rod stuck segments" to see video on how to free the stuck segments).
- To free a snagged fly, collapse the rod from bottom to tip. Put finger over the collapsed segments and hold Lillian. Grab the level line to free the fly.
- When buying a Tenkara rod, buy extra tip section to have as backup.
- The new norm for regular fly fishing rods used for tight lining/euro nymphing is a 10-11 ft rod with a 3 or 4 wt. action.

4. Fishing techniques

- Hold rod with index finger on top of rod pointing straight down rod so you cast where you point.
- After you hook a fish raise to the rod to the 12 o'clock position to get the full flex of the rod to play the fish.
- Don't try to play a fish with the rod at a 45 degree angle. It can result in stuck segments.
- It is easier to land a fish with a line (not including the tippet) no longer than the length of the rod.
- Make an effort to learn how to "read" the water (e.g., seams) (Dave Hughes has a good book called "Reading the Water")

- Stand perpendicular to where you think fish will be holding. Cast upstream to allow the flies to sink to the bottom where the fish might be located. Always focus on bucket. Try to make your casts up stream at an angle no greater than 45 degrees. Always fish up river.
- Systematically fish a grid. Make 8 casts/grid block, move out towards the stream center a step or two, repeat. Continue until you've fished the best water. Back out then move two steps upstream and repeat.
- Dry/wet fly Presentation – Cast up stream to a 45 degree angle. When casting, the rod moves back from 10 -12 o'clock motion on cast. Wait for line to unfurl behind you before casting to 10 o'clock position. Let fly hit water first. Pulse, pulse, pulse, pulse (count of 4). Pick up and cast again.
- Dry fly/wet fly presentation #2 - cast straight across and pulse (count of four), same as above allowing the fly to swing down and across.
- Dry/wet fly casting #3 - cast straight across, drag free drift, pull fly a little, drag free drift, pull, repeat until it doesn't drift anymore.
- Wet fly casting - cast up and let weight sink. Lead sighter at 45 degree angle to water as it drifts downstream. High stick in middle of cast to keep sighter same distance above water line and fly at same depth. Can let swing below you.

5. Line Info

- A 000 weight level fly line for is good for lakes especially when the wind is a problem. Use the running level line of an old 4or 5 weight line to do same thing.
- Level Line equal to length of rod. AKA leader. Can put tippet ring on end of level line for quick retie of tippet line between level line and tippet.
- Some Euro nymphing lines are shorter than the rod (typically about 8-10 ft. for a 12-13 ft.) You may need to lengthen the tippet.
- Level lines can be fluorocarbon or mono. Level lines are typically 10-14 lb. test.
- Use Maxima. It is stiffer. Also use Trilene Sensation or Stren Yellow for level lines (they have good visibility).
- Pool noodles cut/shaped make great inexpensive line holders.

6. Tippet Info

- Wet flies/nymphs use fluorocarbon tippet.
- Dry flies use nylon tippet
- P-Line FloroClear (spool of 300 yards) in 6 or 4 lb. test is a good inexpensive option for tippets.
- Seaguar Invizx Fluorocarbon is also good for tippets (4 lb for streams, 6lb for lakes).
- When fishing dry and wet flies, use a 3-5 ft tippet.
- Line formula for nymphing with a bobber:
- Make a loop about 3" using Dacron fly line backing using a double surgeon knot to make knot at end of loop. Attach a level line to the dacron loop using clinch knot (3 full turns for heavier line, 5 for light line). Use a girth hitch to attach the dacron loop to the Lillian on the end of the rod. Get Dacron wet before casting otherwise may come undone. You can also use an overhand knot to attach the level line to the lillian.
- Complete line Setup with only one dropper: 11' level line with end attached to lillian with an overhand knot. Tie a Perfection loop knot or a figure 8 (double overhand knot)

to other end of the level line. You can also attach a 2m tippet ring to the end of the level line. The 1st tippet section (about 4-5 ft long) is tied to the Perfection loop with a clinch knot. Insert bobber at this point to 1st section of tippet (adjust location later). Attach the dropper fly to the end of the 1st tippet using a non-slip loop knot (loop should be 1 to 1 ¼" in length). Attach a 2nd tippet section (about 15-20") to the 1st tippet section with a clinch knot. Attach a point fly (bottom) to the 2nd tippet section using a non-slip loop knot (make loop 1 to 1 ¼"). Attach a short piece (6-8") of tippet material to the 2nd piece of tippet above the point fly using a clinch knot. Tie a figure 8 knot to the short piece to tippet to prevent the split shot from slipping off the tippet (this is called the drop shot).

7. Additional Equipment Info

- Never fish bobber on level line. Bobber is attached on the tippet.
- Always tie bobber on so it runs in a straight line with the current.
- Formula for making a bobber-Double stick/white tape, plastic Q-tip body for innards, red derailing tape around outside of rolled up double stick/white tape. Find Brads Roe Bead Pegs at Sportsman's Warehouse for adjusting and holding bobber. See Pics below.
- It is best to use a bobber when even distance between bottom and top of river is even. Adjust bobber to allow fly to flow freely by letting weight frequently touch the bottom. If the weight frequently gets caught up on bottom of river reduce the weight or shorten the distance between the weight and bobber. If the weight does not touch the bottom during the drift, add more weight or lengthen to distance between the bobber and weight.
- When using a sighter, it is always above the water surface!
- Sighter-use two colors. Tie line using Uni Knot on micro swivel between level line and 1st section of tippet. Attach a colored tag (fly line backing) using a uni-knot as indicator/sighter. The tag is attached to the tippet and should be adjusted so the weight occasionally taps the bottom.
- Length from weight to sighter should be avg length of deepest part of the stream section you are fishing.
- Sighter should be 6" – 2" from top of water.

