

Stillwater man creates NS fishing fly

By HELEN MURPHY

STILLWATER – Bill Carpan of Stillwater has created what may become the official fishing fly of Nova Scotia. His winning entry in a contest by the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters was announced Saturday at the Atlantic Outdoor Sport and RV Show in Halifax.

“I certainly was surprised,” Carpan said Tuesday. “A lot of people got excited about it (the contest) and participated in it...The reason I thought the contest was a great idea is that I think it will bring attention to sport fishing in Nova Scotia and especially the Atlantic salmon. We need all the help we can get right now. That kind of attention will help the St. Mary’s River Association and the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters to get support for doing conservation work.”

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contributed photo

Bill Carpan created this attractive fly which could become the official fishing fly of Nova Scotia.

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A fly tyer for close to 40 years, Carpan says he learned the art originally from a book by Helen Shaw, which is still available. "But between then and now I have attended seminars and had lessons from Warren Duncan of New Brunswick and Jim McCoul of Brookfield - Jim is at least a two-time world champion fly-tyer."

Carpan has also taught fly-tying, and encourages young people and those with disabilities to give it a try. "There's also the possibility for some people to make money doing it," he says.

"There are a lot of aspects to it, so it lends itself to people with different likes and dislikes," he explains. "One of the things that I like best about it is that it involves doing something with your hands which a lot of people find relaxing, like knitting. Plus you're producing something, and that's rewarding."

Carpan is past president of the St. Mary's River Association and has been a board member since 1984.

The executive director of the federation, Tony Rodgers, presented Carpan's winning entry to Murray Hill, director of Inland Fisheries for the province of Nova Scotia. The government will be asked to have the fly recognized as the official fishing fly of Nova Scotia.

The fly is called the "Nova Scotia Classic" -- Carpan will receive a \$1,000 prize. The fly is now the property of the federation.

The organization received 76 entries from the United States, Ontario, Quebec, and all of the Atlantic provinces with the bulk of the entries from Nova Scotia. This demonstrated that fly tyers from the province wanted to have a say in who may win, said Rodgers.

The three judges are all well know fly tyers in their own right and between them have written numerous books on the subject and articles for magazines on fly tying and fly fishing. They were Don MacLean, Paul Mariner and Brian Sweeney.

The judging was done on a blind basis. All of the flies were identified by a number and the identity of the tyer was kept secret until they made their final decision. It took two hours to come to a decision with some debate over the final five flies.

The Nova Scotia Classic by Bill Carpan:

The black hook that this fly is tied on symbolizes the coal seam that runs through the province that has fueled our industries for decades. The red nose of this fly represents the

ochre used by the first people of Nova Scotia the Mi'kmaq and embodies their contribution to the province. The white represents the background of our provincial flag and foam from the waves that crash on our rocky shores. The blue is a reversal of the colours found on the cross of Saint Andrew symbolizing Nova Scotia's link to Scotland and blue skies that crown us. The red in the middle of the fly stands for the Royal Lion set in the centre of our flag and Shield of Arms. It also signifies our attachment to Canada and its flag and to the Nova Scotia service men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. The golden tail and lower body of the fly represents the prosperity of Nova Scotia and it's pointed up in the direction we want it to go. The silver body represents the strength of the province, its people, and it runs the length of the fly.

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