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2010

FROM TOOLS TO BOOTS TO TYING MATERIAL,
THE TOP NEW INNOVATIONS FOR FLY FLINGERS

TOP FLY TACKLE

BY WAYNE PHILLIPS

THE FLYFISHING RETAILER WORLD Trade Expo in Denver last September may have been smaller than usual owing to the economic climate, but excitement still filled the air as manufacturers displayed their latest wares. Responding to the recession, many companies delayed introducing more costly products and instead unveiled less expensive items—but still featuring amazing innovations. Here are the products that impressed the most.



BEST FLY LINE INDICATOR FLY LINE

With the ever-increasing popularity of nymph fishing with strike indicators, RIO's Indicator Fly Line is indeed timely. Even the largest indicators turn over thanks to the line's short front taper and thick-diameter tip. In fact, the highly visible tip itself can function as an indicator. The line also features RIO's XS technology, which produces a super-slick, dirt-repelling tip. Plus, the DualTone colour system alerts the angler to the line's perfect loading point, while welded loops at each end allow for knotless connections. *RIO, (208) 524-7760; www.rioproducts.com*



BEST FLY-TYING MATERIAL LUCENT CHENILLE

Montana Fly Company's Lucent Chenille has fly tiers buzzing. It's a shaggy, estaz chenille available in 22 different colours and three sizes—large, medium and micro—on a standard-sized spool (the large chenille comes in ultraviolet, giving it tremendous brilliance and flash). Unlike most chenille, with just one fibre length, Lucent Chenille has fibres of many lengths, giving flies a fuller, denser appearance. *Montana Fly Company, www.montanafly.com*



BEST SCISSORS TWISTED LOOP SCISSORS

Long synonymous with high-quality fly-tying scissors, Dr. Slick has added an innovative new model to its lineup. Unlike regular scissors with side-by-side finger loops, which restrict finger movement, the new Twisted Loop Scissors allow the tier's fingers to remain apart. Like all of Dr. Slick's scissors, the Twisted Loop features incredibly fine points and razor-sharp blades. Plus, it has a burnished finish to prevent glare from the tying lamp. *Dr. Slick, 1-800-462-4474; www.drslick.com*

BEST FLY ROD IMPERIAL SWITCH FLY ROD

With two-handed Spey rods dominating the steelhead market, St. Croix is introducing the Imperial Switch Fly Rod, designed to be cast with either one or two hands. While the 11-foot Switch Rod can cast great distances, it's also capable of fishing shorter lines. The fast-action, four-piece rod is available in line weights 5 to 8, making it perfect for travelling anglers, too. *St. Croix Rod, 1-800-826-7042; www.stcroixrods.com*





BEST BOOTS PREDATOR KLING-ON WADING BOOT

With felt-soled wading boots linked to the spread of invasive species, boot makers are increasingly turning to soft rubber soles. Case in point: Korkers' new Predator Kling-On Wading Boot. As with felt, the soft rubber sole grips slippery rocks, but you can also add studs. The durable upper, meanwhile, features mesh openings for water drainage. Best of all, this boot boasts the unique BOA stainless steel lacing system—simply turn the dial to tighten the laces for a snug fit. *Korkers, (503) 723-7100; www.korkers.com*



BEST HAT OUTBACK HAT

Made from waxed-cotton fibres, Tilley's new Outback Hat is waterproof, durable and easy to care for. The surface of traditional waxed-cotton garments is impregnated with wax, but Tilley uses cotton fibres that are waxed before weaving, making for a softer, non-sticking surface. The Outback is available in British tan in both medium- and broad-brimmed styles. *Tilley Endurables, 1-800-363-8737; www.tilley.com*



BEST ACCESSORY SHARK TOOTH

Spools of tippet material are the bane of fly-fishers—the line unravels too darn easily when you reach for nippers to cut it. Loon Outdoors solves this problem with a line cutter mounted to an elastic band. Simply wrap the elastic around the spool to hold the tippet material in place, then feed the line out through a brass grommet and into the Shark Tooth cutter. When you need more tippet, just pull out more. Simple, yet ingenious. *Loon Outdoors, 1-800-580-3811; www.loonoutdoors.com*



BEST DESIGN MP THREAD THROUGH BOBBIN

The design of fly-tying bobbins has been static for years. Now from Switzerland's Petijean Fishing Equipment comes a real innovation. The MP Thread Through Bobbin is perfectly balanced, and features a movable clip to adjust thread tension. The threading system is so simple it can be used blindfolded, while replacing standard thread spools is a snap. Plus, a slot near the end turns the bobbin into a great dubbing twister. What a breakthrough. *Petijean Fishing Equipment, (011) 41 26 481 1779; www.petijean.ch*



BEST FLY-FISHING PANTS ROCK JEANS

Every angler can use an extra-tough pair of pants. Look no further than RailRiders' Rock Jeans. Made from soft, durable Yukon canvas nylon, they're all but indestructible. Plus, they dry quickly, and look good enough to be worn out to a late dinner after fishing. A double front and seat guarantees extra-long life, while the zippered and regular pockets offer secure storage. *RailRiders, (617) 484-5910; www.railriders.com*

BEST REEL PRINCESS

Following its introduction in 1958, the Hardy Princess became the gold standard of fly-fishing reels. With a diameter of 3½ inches, it was ideal for 5- or 6-weight fly lines. Lightweight, yet tough and durable, it also featured the legendary Hardy check pawl drag system, which produced a distinctive sound when a fish tore off line. Inexplicably, Hardy stopped production of the reel in 1996. Thankfully, the folks at Hardy have come to their senses, and the classic Princess is back in production for 2010. *Hardy, (250) 746-1899; www.hardycanada.com*

BEST COLD-WEATHER GEAR UV BUFF & PRO SERIES GLOVES

UV Buff is a simple tube of fabric that can be worn dozens of different ways on your head and neck to block 95 per cent of the sun's harmful UV rays. The Buff can also provide a screen from wind and dust. The Pro Series Gloves, meanwhile, are made from synthetic suede and provide UV protection as well. Plus, the Diamond Grip palm allows for a better grip on your fly rod. *Buff Canada, 1-866-473-3639; www.buffcanada.com*

THE FUTURE OF FISHING?

The Moffitt Angling System, featuring hookless flies, certainly caught my attention at last September's Flyfishing Retailer World Trade Expo in Denver. The system has also caused minor controversy in angling circles, precisely because of the way it hooks fish. In a nutshell, the hookless flies are tied on rubber shafts, threaded onto a leader and kept in place by pulling them through a tippet loop. So, how are the fish hooked? With a circle hook tied to the end of the tippet. When a fish takes the fly, the angler goes through the motion of setting the hook as per usual, ultimately pulling the fly free and hooking the fish instead on the outside of its mouth with the circle hook. Enter the minor controversy: some argue the tactic is akin to snagging. For its part, Moffitt contends the revolutionary system was designed precisely to minimize the handling of fish that are to be released, thereby increasing their chances of survival. Plus, the fish still has to attack the angler's presentation in the first place for the system to work. Check it out for yourself on Moffitt's Web site: www.moffittangling.com.

