

## Tenkara Fishing - Back to the Future

Ceiriog Fly Fishers member and a former CFFC Secretary Steve Murgatroyd is a keen exponent of Tenkara fishing and wrote a published article for Fly Fishing and Fly Tying magazine.

Steve updated his article for the Club Newsletter to reflect his experiences of Tenkara fishing on the Ceiriog and this can be seen by clicking on the Tenkara flies below

Kind thanks to Fly Fishing and Fly Tying magazine for allowing us to reproduce it again

*In recent years I've done most of my everyday stream fishing with split cane rods, a simple reel, floating line and a few essential bits and pieces of tackle that can be carried in my pockets. Generally this approach has worked well and I don't think that I have caught fewer fish and I've certainly enjoyed my fishing and felt very content with my choice of tackle. The other great benefit is that I've convinced myself that I've saved money. By adopting my simplified approach and effectively turning my back on all the latest tackle developments I've been able, to a large degree, to live a fishing life that has been pretty much oblivious to the latest proclamations of the tackle industry's marketing men, until that is, I heard the 'T' word.*

*Now, I know that some people think that I am already living in the past by embracing bamboo rods and eschewing chest waders, but that is nothing compared to what has happened to me over the last couple of years. If I were to admit to you that the rod I have been using recently has more in common with the stuff that Walton and Cotton fished with then you could be forgiven for thinking that I have finally 'lost it'. In fact what I have 'lost' in my search for the simple life is the reel.*

*And Tenkara is what I have 'found'. Let's not get into talk about reinventing the wheel but this is another example of there being nothing new under the sun. History really does repeat itself – even in the sleepy backwaters of the angling world.*

*Tenkara is a traditional Japanese method of fishing the small mountain streams of that country, with very simple tackle. The Ceiriog, is, in many parts, perfect for this style of fishing. Typically a long telescopic rod of approximately eleven to thirteen feet in length with a length of line roughly equal to the rod length and comprising a furled leader or level length of line and a tippet and fly. The line is attached directly to the tip of the rod – no reel.*

*Tenkara is a beautifully pure and simple way of fishing when practiced on the type of small streams on which it evolved and the Ceiriog although a little overgrown in places is an ideal stream on which to give it a go. Another great advantage of Tenkara is; that by collapsing the rod you are able to access overgrown parts of the river that previously would have been by-passed.*

*You should try it; the long rod enables you to hold virtually all the line off the water enabling superb presentation and drag free drifts. If you are really brave you can try fishing the whole season through with just one pattern of forward hackle fly as many traditional Tenkara anglers do! For more information try 'Googleing' Tenkara or send me an email.*

*The biggest problem that I had when fishing the Tenkara method however, was what I should do with my 'spare' hand. Essentially Tenkara is a one handed style of fishing – because there is no reel or line to shoot or retrieve, the hand that doesn't hold the rod is redundant for much of the time. In the end I opted for holding a wading staff – essential anyway on the Ceiriog when wading. I did try putting my hand in my pocket, but that just felt too casual – I at least like to look like I'm making an effort. Some exponents suggest placing your free hand on your hip when fishing; but I fear that could generate some unkind rumours from some of the less charitable club members – something along the lines of not being a reel man!*

Steve Murgatroyd