

Issue 194

TROUT FISHER

Fly focused but totally transferable

Spring 2025



WAIOEKA WEEKEND

North vs South ~ Our Backyard Spoils Us ~ Cressy Cane 2026

Modern Hollow-Built Bamboo Rods: Old Is New Again

My Nail Polish Collection ~ Three Mile Dam ~ Flyfishing in Wales

USE YA B\$0&*#Y INDICATORS!

Issue 194

TROUT FISHER

Fly focused but totally transferable

Spring 2025

ISSN 2230-6420 No part of this magazine may be reproduced without permission of the publisher. Any articles carrying a © copyright symbol also require permission of the author(s). All enquires to Peter Storey: peter@nztroutfisher.co.nz.

Cover: Ideal habitat for Rainbow Trout (John Gommans)



WAIOEKA WEEKEND

2

A report of John Gommans and Clive Shaw visit to the eastern Urewera National Park river last December.

Loops or Rings?

12

Peter Storey focuses on leader to tippet connections, aiming to land even larger selective Te Arawa Lakes rainbows with finer tippets, in 2025/26.



Our Backyard Spoils Us

16

French on Fishing with Daryl French features Lake Otamangakau, the Whanganui and Hinemaiaia river and the Ngongotaha Stream.

Modern Hollow-Built Bamboo Rods: Old Is New Again

22

Chris Fiddes explores the history of hollow cane rod building.



HOLLOWING: Cressy Cane 2026

30

Nick Taransky expands on the characteristics of hollow cane and how these will be demonstrated in next year's Cressy Cane symposium in Tasmania.

North vs South

34

Todd Storey compares Lakes Tekapo and Tarawera.



"USE YA B\$0&*#Y INDICATORS!"

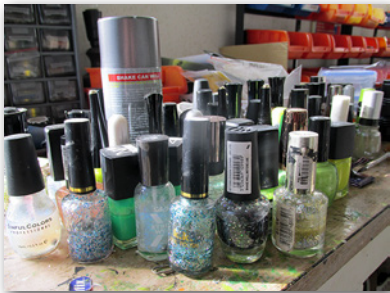
40

Andrew Harding features his sliding and 'shuttlecock' indicator setups, when and how to use them.

Fly-fishing in Wales

52

A visit to the River Usk with Nick Moody.



My Nail Polish Collection

62

Part 11 of Confessions of an Addicted Salmon Angler, by Larry Burke.

New Tackle

68

From Manic Tackle Project.



Waitaki One Pan Trout

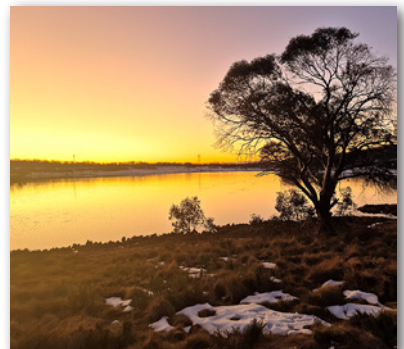
70

Wild to the Table with Tony Smith features a simple one pot camp meal.

Three Mile Dam

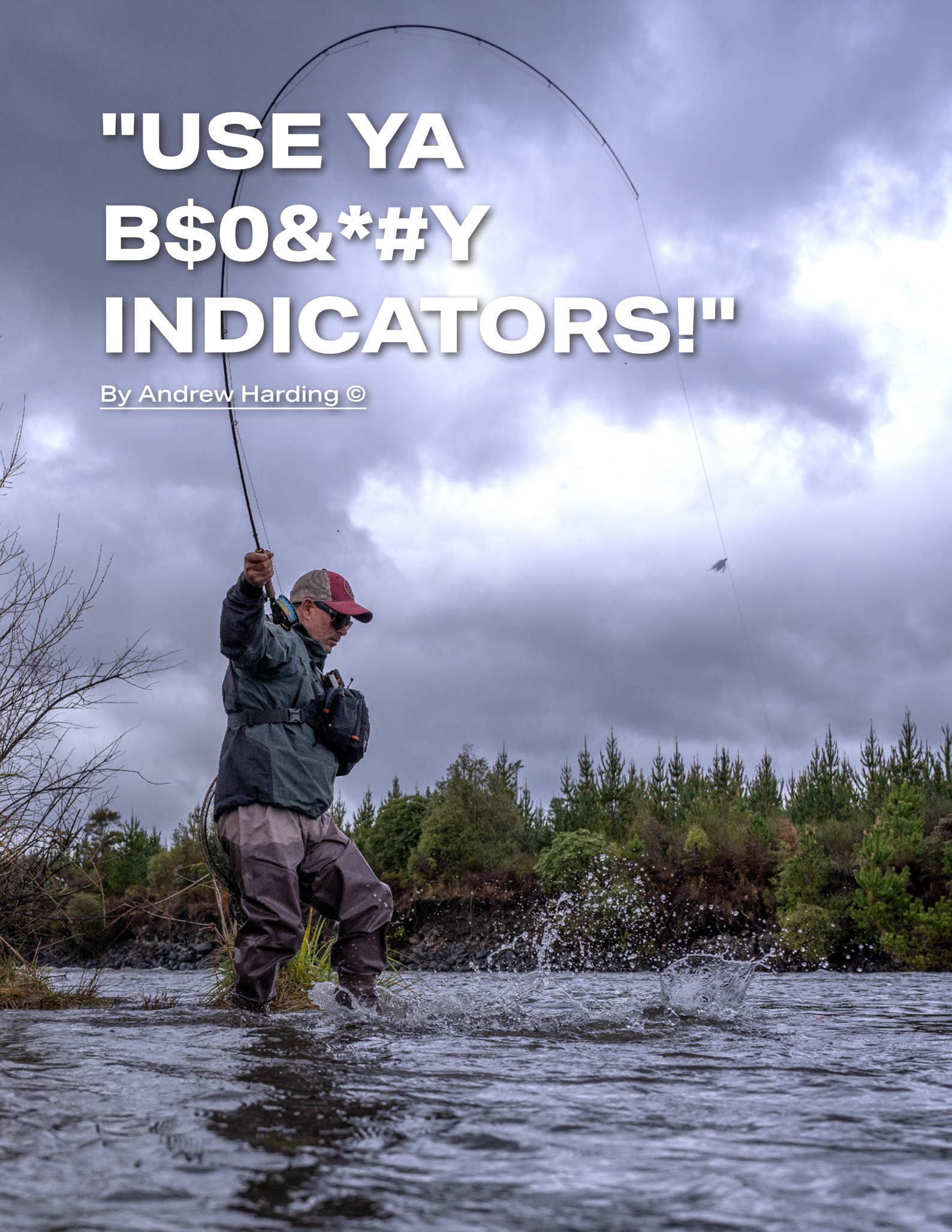
74

Matt Hoole visits one of the lesser-known Snowy Mountains stillwaters in Spring and the depths of Winter.



"USE YA B\$0&*#Y INDICATORS!"

By Andrew Harding ©



No, I'm not talking about the frustration when following a Ford Ranger driver, completely oblivious to the function of that wee stalk on their steering column... but rather the trance-like fixation we get watching a tiny piece of fluff bobbling down a rivers' current!

I was first introduced to indicator nymphing as an eager teen in the early 90's. Back then, indicator nymphing was a dirty word; it was a method that took a back seat to swinging lures on heavily-weighted shooting heads flung on broomstick 9 weight rods. Those "hoity-toity yuppies from the city and their new fan-dangled methods have no place on the mighty Tongariro with their gaudy fluffy shuttle-cocks! Trout eat meat, not tiny insects!" How far we've progressed.

More recently, we're seeing a noticeable shift from the precise, technical world of indicator nymphing, back toward the more traditional appeal of swinging large lures down and across; many anglers rediscovering the thrill of aggressive strikes, the satisfaction of covering huge amounts of water, and the simplicity of casting and letting a big fly swim with purpose. But make no mistake, there's a unique thrill in watching an indicator suddenly dip below the surface on a well-placed drift, a moment of anticipation met with surprise! As a kid I can well remember float fishing for herrings at the local wharf, the excitement when, blip... it's gone! Much like float fishing, the indicator becomes your visual lifeline to the unseen world below. Trout often take nymphs softly, without a visual cue, and these takes can easily go unnoticed. Your flies silently drifting until that subtle twitch or sharp plunge of the indicator signals a trout has taken your nymph. It's a heartbeat moment where instinct kicks in and lightning quick reflexes take over, unless you snag hard into a submerged branch, then the expletives fly...

Besides, the simple reality is, for the vast majority of the time on NZ rivers and streams, that we simply cannot see trout due to a myriad of reasons; most commonly, glare from lack of streamside vegetation, or roily fast water heads making spotting virtually impossible in the tumultuous whitewater.



When and where to use an indicator while nymphing? Do you in fact need to use one at all? I must confess to using indicators less and less each year, rather relying on a lifetime of experience and instinct in examining a trout's behaviour, scanning for the subtle clues a trout has taken your nymph, such as the flash of the mouth, the weave, the lift, or the turn and follow, all signs you're in for a hookup. Eliminating an indicator completely also has massive benefits on sighted fish where wind and tricky currents come into play. Here, going indicator-less allows a nymph to drift FAR more naturally WITH the current rather than being pulled AGAINST a current – we see this all the time, and seasoned browns can often sense an unnatural drift a mile away! Rainbows are slightly more forgiving... in fact... a LOT more forgiving! Trout are highly tuned to the way food moves in the current, and if your flies don't drift naturally, they're far more likely to be ignored. Position yourself to match the current, mend your line when required, and adjust your indicator and fly weight so your flies are ticking just above the riverbed. A convincing drift is what turns interest into takes.

But we all have to start somewhere and using such a visible clue to a take as an indicator is a godsend for new anglers to the sport; also, for those getting on in years and any others whose lesser level of eyesight can really put a downer on their time on the river.

There are practical reasons to use an indicator too. In many situations, using an indicator is a fantastic method to regulate the depth you wish to present your flies – it really does have so many similarities with traditional float fishing. This is particularly true when nymphing lakes, where you need to set your nymphs at a certain depth to be suspended just above bottom features like dense weed beds, or through a particular column of water – this can be as little as a few centimetres in some situations.

