

## Learn how to tie flies this winter

More than a decade ago, as my passion for fly fishing really began to take off, I spent an enjoyable day on the water with a friend who pulled a flybox out of his vest and offered me a few flies to try.

The flies were lined up in neat rows, and he had a half-dozen or so of each size and pattern. It was a nice selection — more impressive, I thought, because he tied all those flies himself.

In the back of my mind, I told myself that someday I'd learn how to tie flies of my own — maybe.

Complicating matters: Also lurking in the back of my mind was the knowledge that I'm not the craftiest bear in the woods. Not overly handy, either, to tell you the truth.

If I'm making confessions here, I might as well go for broke: In kindergarten, I nearly flunked our unit on "scissors." Come to think of it, I never really mastered the art of coloring between the lines, either.

My art projects as a young kid typically turned out looking like what you'd get if a drunken baboon had stolen a pile of construction paper, a few pipe cleaners, some glitter and a bottle of glue.

Therefore, the thought of trying to create beautiful — or, for that matter, strictly functional — fishing flies was a bit daunting.

Grab some feathers, a hook, some thread and some fur? Make it into a fly? Cue the drunken baboon.

Over time, several early mentors reassured me. One — Don Corey, an accomplished fly-tier — held up his huge paws and showed off fingers that were roughly the size of kielbasa.

"If I can tie with these things, you can tie, too," he told me.

Then he did me a huge favor — a favor I'm happy to return to you today.

He told me about the Penobscot Fly Fishers and their beginner's fly tying classes. I enrolled in the classes, eventually joined in at a few more advanced workshops and learned he was right — more or less. Though I'm no tying artist, I can tie my own flies. They will catch fish.

And, best of all, the activity is a ton of fun.

Here's the great thing: The Penobscot Fly Fishers aren't alone. In many towns around the state, fish and game clubs, Trout Unlimited chapters and adult education providers offer tying classes at this time of year.

For those in Greater Bangor, the Penobscot Fly Fishers will begin their annual eight-week basic class Jan. 4. This year's course will be staged at the Penobscot County Conservation Association in Brewer and will run from  
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JOHN HOLYOKE

## Aspiring pro angler is one of only a few taking advantage of ice-free December



GABOR DEGRE | BDN

Jonathan Carter of Glenburn (above) catches a smallmouth bass while fishing on Alamoosook Lake in Orland Wednesday. Carter, an aspiring professional bass fisherman, took advantage of the unusually mild weather to get in some fishing time (top) before the lakes freeze over.

## Open water opportunity

BY JOHN HOLYOKE  
BDN STAFF

On a December morning when most of the rest of the state's avid anglers were left wondering when they'd get to venture onto a frozen pond, Jonathan Carter of Glenburn took matters into his own hands.

The aspiring bass fishing pro fired up his BassCat boat on Wednesday and headed out onto Alamoosook Lake in Orland for a couple hours of open-water fishing.

Even a decade ago, what Carter was doing would have been unthinkable — and illegal — as the state's lakes were closed to fishing during late fall, with most opening up for ice fishing in January.

New rules enacted over the past five years have opened up many lakes and ponds to year-round fishing: Put in your boat if there's open water ... or ice fish if the ice is safe.

Still, on this midweek morning during a decidedly mild late autumn, Carter's was the only boat on Alamoosook.

He said that's often the case at this time of year.

"Out of all the Maine tournament anglers that I know, there are probably five who still have their boats out and are fishing," Carter said.



GABOR DEGRE | BDN

Fishing rods lay in a small patch of snow aboard Jonathan Carter's bass boat while he was fishing on Alamoosook Lake in Orland on Wednesday.

For Carter, fishing as much as possible is a means to an end: He wants to be a full-time bass fishing professional, and these sessions on nearly frozen lakes — the water was 38 degrees — serve as his off-season workouts.

"It's really good this time of year, if you find the fish," he said. "And every time I'm sitting at home, doing nothing, I think that I'm not getting any better. The more experience you get, the better you get."  
*See Fishing, Page C8*

## I-Minute Hike: Peter's Brook Trail, Blue Hill

**Difficulty:** Easy-moderate. The hike is 1 mile, out and back. The trail travels gradually uphill on the way to the waterfall. Exposed tree roots, rocky areas and a few muddy areas makes footing tricky in some spots.

**How to get there:** In the Blue Hill village, at the intersection of Route 172 and Route 176 (also known as East Blue Hill Road), take Route 176 and drive 0.6 miles east, then park on your right at the AB Herrick Memorial Landing on Peter's Cove. The trailhead is across the road from the parking area, on the east side of the bridge over Peters Brook, and is marked with a blue and white Blue Hill Heritage Trust sign. A trail kiosk that includes a trail map and visitor registration book is located in the woods just a short distance from the road.

**Information:** Traveling through a quiet mossy forest of conifers, the 0.5-mile Peter's



AISLINN SARNACKI



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Watch the video  
bangordailynews.com

Brook Trail follows the lively Peters Brook uphill from the ocean to a beautiful waterfall. Constructed and maintained by the Blue Hill Heritage Trust, the trail lies on a conservation easement and is open year-round for the public to enjoy.

Draining from the uplands east of Blue Hill village, Peters Brook (sometimes called Big Peters Brook) tumbles through the forest to empty into Peters Cove, which

is a part of Blue Hill Bay. Little Peters Brook also empties into the cove.

In my search for background information about the property, I learned the Blue Hill was founded in the mid-1700s, and John Peters was among the town's earliest settlers, according to the Blue Hill Historical Society.

A noted land surveyor, Peters moved to Blue Hill in 1765, and by 1790, his estate was the largest in town, consisting of 35 acres of copper mining land, 35 acres of pasture and 1,692 acres of wild land.

Throughout his years in Blue Hill, Peters became a shipbuilder and owner, and he was involved in a local sawmill and grist mill. In 1815, he built a mansion atop a hill on Peters Point, west of Peters Cove. That building is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The public can enjoy the shore of Peters Cove at the AB Herrick Memorial Landing, owned by the Blue Hill Heritage Trust. A combination of a sandy beach and rocky shoreline, the landing is a great  
*See Hike, Page C4*

A waterfall on Peter's Brook marks the far end of Peter's Brook Trail in Blue Hill.

## Different gun, same futility

### Muzzleloader season extends frustration

BY PETE WARNER  
BDN STAFF

Breaking out the muzzleloader can be viewed in a couple of ways. Yes, it is proof positive that a white-tailed deer was not harvested during the regular firearms season.

Then again, it is a potential reprieve to the frustration of coming up empty in November.

I approached the recently completed muzzleloader season with considerable optimism. That mentality was the direct result of what happened a year before, when it took only a couple of hours in the snow-covered woods on the first day out to put a charge of venison in the freezer with a brand new CVA muzzleloader.

I knew full well it wasn't going to be nearly as easy this time  
*See Hunt, Page C9*