

# *Tying Catskill-Style Dry Flies*

by Mike Valla

“Valla’s insatiable desire for perfection shows . . . . He has done his homework.”--Eric Leiser

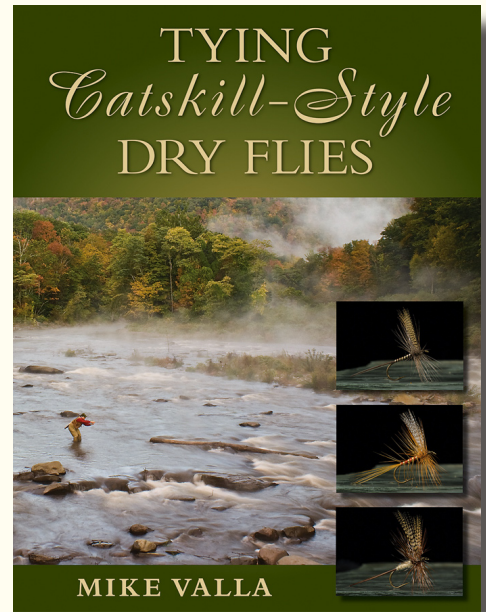
AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN, MIKE VALLA TOOK A BUS TO ROSCOE, NEW YORK, AND STARTED OUT ON A DAY’S FISHING adventure that would alter the course of his life. When famed Catskill fly tier Walt Dette found Valla fishing alone on the Beaverkill, and generously invited him back to fish again that summer, a close relationship with the Dette family began that would last for many years. Valla stayed with the Dette family during early teenage summers and throughout his college years, soaking up the Dettas’ fly-tying techniques, and the lure and lore of the Catskill fly-tying tradition.

Valla delves into the history of the region’s rivers, fly fishers, and fly tiers, blending their colorful histories with precise step-by-step methods on how to tie eleven fundamental patterns, including the Quill Gordon, Red Quill, March Brown, Light Cahill, and Bivisible. Through meticulous research and color photos of flies from the archives of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum and private collections, Valla provides a dynamic study of the tying styles of both the legends and, for the first time ever, the lesser known regional fly tiers, documenting the most comprehensive history to date behind a uniquely American style of fly that continues to grace the bins of fly shops around the world.

Like the rivers that course through the fabled region, Catskill fly patterns are constantly changing, and Valla also explores modern alternatives to traditional materials and methods and profiles contemporary Catskill tiers and the patterns they have designed for increasingly selective trout. According to Jim Krul, executive director of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, “This book is a must read for those who want to tie traditional Catskill dry flies or learn about the fly tiers, anglers, and rivers so important to our angling history.”

**Mike Valla** has published articles in *Fly Fisherman*, *The American Fly Fisher*, *The Conservationist*, and in a variety of other lay magazines and professional journals. He lives in Saratoga Springs, New York.

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