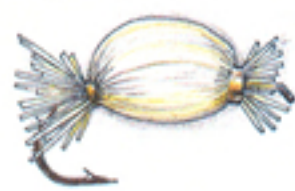


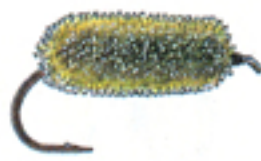
The lowly carp may be our smartest and most challenging freshwater gamefish.



Dave's Popcorn Bug



Furry Foam Bread & Crust Fly



Pellet Fly

JUNK FOOD FLIES FOR CARP

stalking the

# GOLDEN GHOST

DAVE WHITLOCK



LET'S CREATE A SUPER-FISH for fly fishing in the 21st Century. It should be smart, selective, strong, fast, almost indestructible, and plentiful in cold, cool, warm, and tropical waters from coast to coast and border to border. This super-fish should never need stocking, must coexist peacefully with other gamefish, feed on flies from top to bottom, and be as colorful as a Snake River cutthroat. Such a mysterious wonder-fish would be as valuable as gold, so we should call it something special; how about the "Golden Ghost?"

What fish could we cross to develop such a magnificent super-hybrid? How about first crossing a bonefish with a permit for speed, strength, wariness, selectivity, and prestige? For durability, let's cross this "per-bone" with a redfish and a cutthroat for brilliant color, ability to live in warm or cold waters, and a distinct willingness to feed from top to bottom on flies that imitate almost every conceivable natural food.

There's still one more ability that this wonderful fish needs to possess: the ability to survive man's pollution.

Resistance to acid rain, PCBs, heavy metals, siltation, and oxygen depletion, as well as disease and parasites, would be a distinct advantage. It looks like we'd have to find a stainless-steel fish for the final hybridization. The crazy twist to this fantasy fish idea is that nature has already evolved it for us, and it has lived in the United States for well over 100 years. It's been in Europe and in its native Asia much longer. This incredible fish is the *carp*, and I'm coming out of the closet to tell you that I've been quietly fly fishing for this "golden ghost" for over 50 years.



Dave and Emily Whitlock fish for carp on the flats of Green Bay on Lake Michigan. This golden ghost weighed 38 pounds. George von Schrader (top inset), author of *Carp are Game Fish*, poles his Boston Whaler (bottom inset) along the carp flats to make it easier to approach the spooky carp. Dave Whitlock photos. Jeff Edvalds background photo.