

Rod Holding Wading Staff Mary Ann & Joe Birsa

In late June, we decided to venture out of our house and do some fly fishing at a Northmoreland Lake, which is near where we live. On the way there, Mary Ann had a question: “Why doesn’t somebody make a wading staff that also holds your rod?” At the lake, the fish were not cooperating which gave Joe an opportunity to think about why and how such a device could be made.

Joe thought: “First, most of us are approaching elderly status, and it would be very handy to use two wading staffs for stability, but then what do you do with your rod? Also, it would be nice to use a single staff but have a free hand available for other purposes.

Mary Ann then said: “Further, having a wading staff that can hold their rod might help someone who is disabled and needs two wading staffs or someone who can only use one arm or hand.”

Hence the idea for a combined wading staff – rod holder was born.

Prototype Construction:

Our prototype of the device is made from PVC pipe, including the wading staff itself. I made the shaft of the staff from 1/2” SCH 40 PVC pipe (available in most hardware stores). I decided that I wanted the wading staff to come apart, so I added a 1/2” PVC pipe union at the midpoint, and just glued the upper end. I put a 1/2” PVC end cap on the shaft to prevent mud and stones from getting lodged in the pipe.

If you don’t want a wading staff with a somewhat wiggly PVC shaft, you can make a handle and adapter set that will fit over the shaft of a normal wading staff in place of the original handle.

My next problem was fabricating a holder for the rod. I made it from a section of 1- 1/4” SCH 40 PVC pipe. The internal diameter of this pipe is large enough for the butt of the rod handle. Different diameter pipe could be used for larger or smaller handles.

I used a router table to cut a vertical slot in the PVC that extended about 2/3 of the way to the bottom of the pipe and was wide enough to admit the reel seat. Not a very elegant way to do it, but it worked.

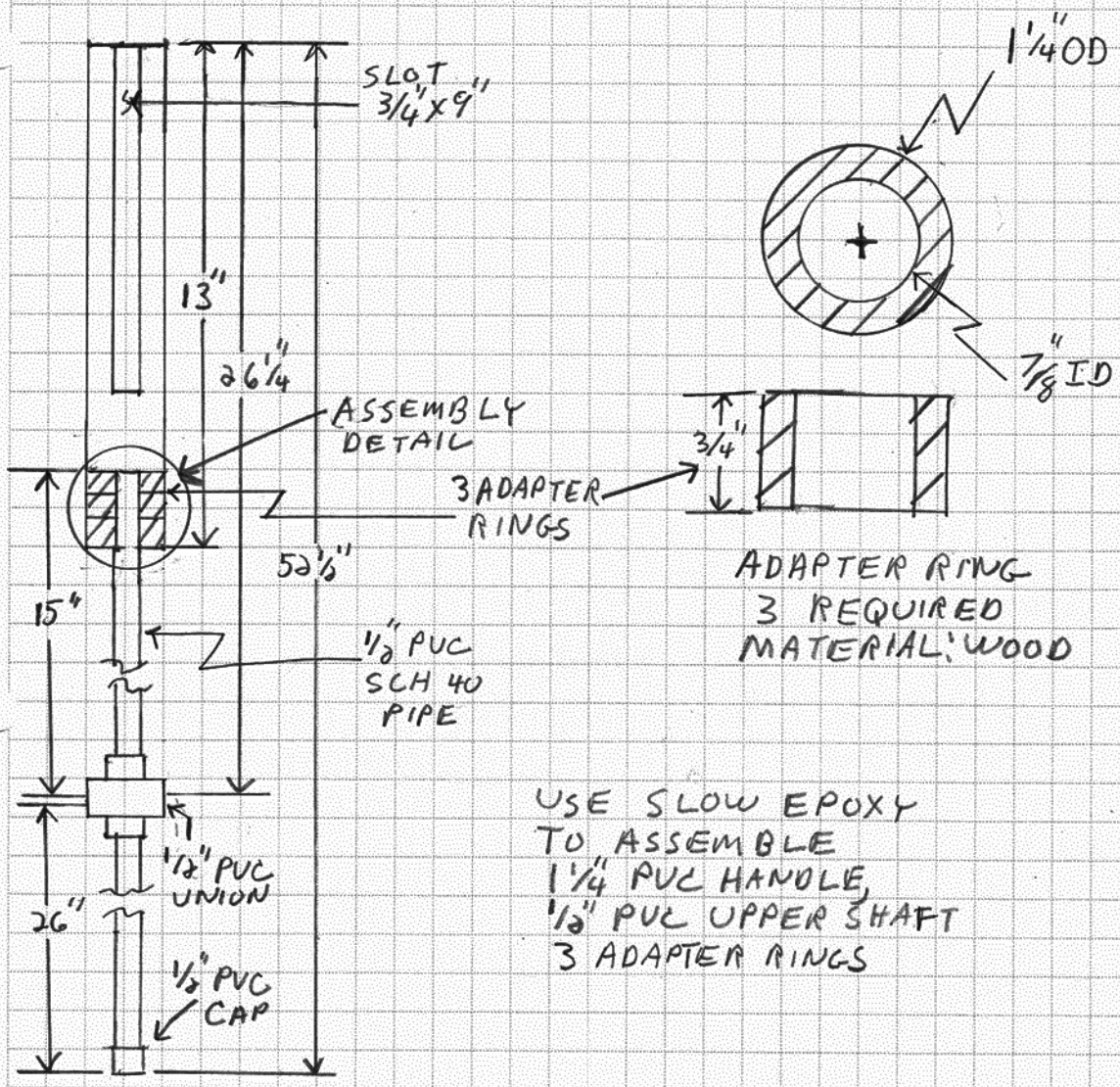
The next problem was connecting the large diameter rod holder to the smaller diameter wading staff. I was unable to find PVC connectors of the correct diameters to do this, so I made three washers out of wood using two hole saws. I used a 1-1/2" hole saw to make the rough shape from a piece of scrap 3/4" thick pine. A bit of filing with a rasp gave me a perfect fit in the 1-1/4" handle. I then cored the washer with a 7/8" hole saw and the opening was a perfect fit for the outer diameter of the staff.

I used slow drying epoxy to glue the handle to the washers and to the shaft. See the diagram for further details.



If you have any thoughts, suggestions, or ideas about this project, please feel free to email me at jjbirsa@yahoo.com. And if you'd like to try one out, let us know. We can make a few more if anyone is interested in trying it out.

Mary Ann & Joe Birsa



ROD HOLDING WADING
 STAFF
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