
The Newsletter of the Columbia-Greene Rip Van Winkle Chapter #569 of Trout Unlimited

TU...TO CONSERVE, PROTECT & RESTORE NORTH AMERICA'S COLD WATER FISHERIES & THEIR WATERSHEDS

THE "REEL COWBOY" RIDES AGAIN!

The "Reel Cowboy," Bill Newcomb, will ride over to Leeds to tie flies at our April 20th meeting. Bill is a local fly fisherman who lives in Copake and has been fly fishing for at least 30 years and tying for about 12 years.

Bill is a professional tier who travels all over demonstrating the art of fly tying. He has worked at fly fishing shows in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Canada...and even has a trip to England in the works for next November. Bill has his own flies on display at the UCLA Davis Campus and also has flies included in Eric Newman's book Fly Fisher's Guide to New York.

The most famous fly that Bill ties is Victoria's Dragonfly, named after his granddaughter. Along with his dragonfly he expects to also tie two of George LaBranch's creations: the Pink Lady, and the Whirling Blue Dun which is an imitation of the Blue Wing Olive. Ride on down to O'Brien's April 20th...even if you don't tie you'll enjoy meeting a "Reel Cowboy"! Hank

WELCOME NEW, TRANSFERRED and RENEWED MEMBERS

Whatever your membership status, it is a pleasure to welcome you to the Columbia-Greene Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Chapter #569. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at O'Brien's Restaurant on Route 23B in Leeds, NY, September through June...we do not have meetings in July and August.

We are a small informal group. Many of us gather at O'Brien's about 7:00 P.M. for a social gathering of drinks and conversation before we start our meeting. We have upgraded our meetings within the past year by having a speaker or other entertainment for each occasion. Last spring we had the pleasure of the following presentations:

John Libruk and Bobby Fisher showed and explained about bamboo rods.

Joe Stemke, a world class fly tier who has won 3rd and 5th place in world salmon fly tying competitions, demonstrated how to tie some flies that should work in our area.

Ron Urban, the TU State Council Chairman, helped guide us to a refreshing rejuvenation of our chapter.

Rene Van Schaack gave us a power point demonstration of work done to restore several creeks badly damaged by flooding several years ago in Greene County.

During the fall and early months of 2004 we had the following folks also enlighten us:

Wendy Neefus, a well-known Columbia County fly fisher and fly tier, gave us an animated fly tying demonstration.

Sal Cozzolino, a 41-year employee of the NYSDEC (now retired), presented us with an intriguing evening about deer.

Fran Martino, the Environmental Educator for the Columbia Land Conservancy, Inc., told us about some of their interesting programs.

Everett Nack, “the man” who knows the Hudson River by being involved with it for most of his life as a commercial and pleasure fisherman, gave us a vivid and poignant tour of it.

Kevin Henebry, owner of the Ausable River Sport Shop in upstate NY, guided us through the Ausable River, arguably one of New York’s finest trout streams.

Dan Zielinski, an aquatic biologist, gave us an interesting presentation of a long-term research program continuing on the Catskill Creek.

Either a power point presentation or a slide projector show accompanied many of these programs. They were really terrific nights and we’re glad that we did not miss a single one of them. We expect to continue these quality presentations and our next speaker, in April, will be Bill Newcomb, “the Reel Cowboy,” a well-known fly tier whose specialty is tying dragonflies. Also on the agenda this spring is Walt Bennett, the Stocking Chairman for the Greene County Federation Of Sportsmen. He will tell us about some plans to improve the 10-Mile Creek in Greene County.

The efforts for providing you with entertainment and education are a continuing process and new speakers are being lined up for the fall. If you have any ideas for folks who can provide the chapter with presentations, they would be most welcome. Maybe you or a friend or relative or neighbor has stories, adventures, movies, slides or special interests that could be presented to our group. If so, please contact Hank or me so that a program can be scheduled for a chapter meeting night.

We encourage you to attend the meetings, get acquainted with other members, socialize and exchange stories of “the big one that got away”. No matter what your level of fishing expertise is, you are welcome to attend and participate in any of the meetings that you can. The meetings are open to the public so, if you are feeling a little shy, bring a friend. It is not necessary to be a TU member to attend a meeting.

Our chapter writes and distributes this newsletter, The Current, from September to June. As a member of C-GTU, you are entitled to receive a copy. Since we are a small chapter, we attempt to save money in various ways. One way is for us to send you the newsletter by e-mail, so, if we do not already have an e-mail address for you, please send it to Hank Theiss president@cgtu.org, or Dick Riccio newsletter@cgtu.org for future mailings. We will try to protect your privacy as much as we can by sending it to you without revealing the other recipients who get it. We accomplish that by sending it as a “bcc” in Outlook Express.

This chapter is your group. We hope that you will attend as many meetings (which usually are short) as you feel you can. Even if you do not like meetings, we think you will enjoy the guest presenters and hopefully develop new friends with similar interests in fishing and environmental concerns.

Dick and Hank

PLEASE RETURN RAFFLE MONEY, STUBS AND UNSOLD TICKETS!

THANK YOU to all who are selling raffle tickets for our fundraiser. We've exhausted our supply of tickets and ask that you **please return your unsold tickets**, (along with your checks and stubs), so we can get them to members who can sell them. Thanks to **Dale Becker** for selling **60 tickets**. The drawing is May 18, our regular meeting date. Four hundred dollars has been raised to date!

Tim

Please mail unsold tickets, checks and stubs to:

Tim Lippert 4903 Potter Mountain Road, Preston Hollow, NY 12469

The prizes are as follows:

1st - Orvis graphite 4pc. 5wt. rod, reel and case.

2nd - A selection of "Dette Flies" tied by the Dette family of the Catskills, \$50.00 worth of tying materials from "Blue River Anglers", and a custom wader hanger.

3rd - A beautifully framed trout print and a signed copy of "My Side of the River," by Roger Menard.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SPONSORS of our TU CHAPTER FUNDRAISER:

Blue River Anglers, Middleburgh 827-8000

Black Dome Press, Hensonville 734-6357

Catskill Paint Co., Rensselaerville 239-8490

Rudloff Construction, Medusa 239-8397

THE CURRENT ON"LINE"

IF YOU RECEIVED THIS NEWSLETTER BY MAIL AND HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF THE CO-EDITORS SO OUR TU CHAPTER CAN SAVE MONEY ON MAILINGS.

Also, if anyone doesn't want to receive the newsletter any longer please notify one of us:

Dick Riccio (518) 851-7002

Hank Theiss (518) 851-9442 newsletter@cgtu.org

FROM THE EDITORS: THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

There is no use in your driving 200 miles to fish when you can be just as unsuccessful near home.

MARK TWAIN

La ROCCA'S CORNER – “Fish Tails & Fish Tales”

Brother Steve is an architect working with my wife and me on a new house. He called a couple of weeks ago saying, “Let’s meet with your builder, John, before the weather changes and it is time to fish.” You see, he is a fly fisherman first, an architect second. The signs that it is time to fish are all present now and they trigger both anticipation and memories.

ON REDWING BLACKBIRDS, THE FLATBROOK, AND LEE WULFF

It was warm enough this morning that the shower would steam up the bathroom even with the exhaust fan running, so I slid open the casement window. I heard him immediately. “Right on schedule,” I said to myself, “and better than a robin any day!” Just like every other year, he perched on the topmost branch of the small maple behind the house. Thirty seconds later he puffed up and trilled. There is no surer sign that the trout are beginning to stir than the sight and sound of a **redwing blackbird**.

The redwing began this morning’s thought chain: Opening day in New Jersey, forty plus years ago, found the La Rocca brothers on **The Flatbrook** in Sussex County. Paul was under the Route 206 bridge with a throng of folks; Steve had headed downstream into what is called the Wharton Tract, and I had walked upstream where the brook got very small very quickly. Two hours without a fish on opening day was troubling then, and I was about to turn around and head for the bridge when I came on a tiny pool with the lowest of low-hanging hemlocks shielding the water from above. The cast would be all but impossible but I tried, and amazingly my CP Swing slipped under the branches and into the pool. Two turns of the reel handle later, a foot-long rainbow smacked the spinner, hooked himself, and came dancing out. I thought the Flatbrook was the best trout stream on the East Coast!

A few months later I was on the Flatbrook again. The day was warm, the water was crystal clear, and I could see lots of trout. None would move for my spinner...or anything else for that matter. After hours of frustration I walked back toward the car. At the point where the stone foundation walls of an ancient bridge formed high, vertical banks on a large open pool, I was surprised to see what appeared to be a casting class. The “instructor” was a tall, wavy-haired fellow who looked like he had just stepped out of a catalogue – waders, a vest bulging with flies and equipment, and a sleek fly rod. Four or five others stood back and watched him; I joined the gallery. Our “instructor” would unroll a beautiful cast – almost straight down from where he stood on the edge of the wall - and lecture. “Watch for a little flash of white,” he said. “It is the trout opening his mouth to take my tiny (so small I could not see it, and, obviously, nor could he) nymph.” Then he would give just a little jerk and set the hook in another trout. “Who is that?” I whispered to a “classmate”. “That’s **Lee Wulff**,” he said, “the famous salmon angler!” I did not know who Lee Wulff was, but he started my serious consideration of fly fishing.

By the time I’d shaved and showered the redwing had found another perch. One more thought crossed my mind as I closed the window, “I wonder if that really was Lee Wulff?”

HANK'S FLY BOX – Al's Hendrickson Nymph

I want to get back to learning more Latin names for flies so this month the Ephemerella Subvaria will be highlighted. The fly that I chose is more commonly known as a Hendrickson Nymph, which falls into the crawler nymph classification. Hendricksons, Blue-winged Olives and Tricos are all mayflies that begin their underwater existence as crawler nymphs. The Hendrickson Nymphs hatch between mid April and early June in our area. Several days before the hatch Ephemerella Subvaria Nymphs migrate from fast stretches of the river to slower areas. On their downstream drift the nymphs commence their metamorphoses to the dun stage.

Below you will find a recipe I adapted a little, (sorry Al!), from my good friend Al Galante, a dentist in Bergen Heights, NJ and member of the Central Jersey TU. Thanks for letting me use your Hendrickson Nymph recipe. Maybe with the money from the copyright proceeds you can retire earlier and we can fish together more often. Al says the nymphs work best when fished going from the bottom of the stream up to the top. He said he might even fish it as a true emerger in the surface film.

AL'S HENDRICKSON NYMPH

Hook: Nymph 1X or 2X long, size 12 or 14

Thread: Brown

Tail: Well marked wood duck flank feathers

Abdomen: Reddish-brown blended dubbing

Rib: Brown or rust colored ostrich herl

Wing Case: Turkey tail feather segment

Thorax: Mixed dubbing – ½ amber or gray, and ½ Hare's Mask

Legs: Dark Hungarian partridge or grouse

MEETINGS

EVERY MONTH: Our regularly scheduled meetings are the **3rd Tuesday of each month (except July and August)** unless otherwise indicated. We meet at 7:30 p.m. at O'Brien's Restaurant on Route 23B in Leeds, NY.

LAST MONTH: The March meeting was cancelled because of the snow storm. Walt Bennett has been rescheduled to speak on the 10-Mile Creek at the May meeting. *

THIS MONTH: Tuesday, April 20, 2004

NEXT MONTH: Tuesday, May 18, 2004 *

IMPORTANT DATE TO NOTE: Saturday, May 15, 2004 is the date for the Catskill Watershed Stream Clean-Up. (Rain date is May 22, 2004.)

COLUMBIA-GREENE RIP VAN WINKLE CHAPTER #569 OF TROUT UNLIMITED
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Keep current...with The Current! Dick & Hank (CO-EDITORS)