
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

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2005!

**MONTHLY C-G TU CHAPTER MEETINGS
WILL BE HELD AT THE
CAIRO COOPERATIVE EXTENSION BUILDING
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

THE LATE ART FLICK “INTERVIEWED”

Before WW II, Art Flick had seldom heard of anyone *dry* fly fishing in the Catskills, so when a Kingston court judge offered to teach him in return for rides to mountain streams, Art became an enthusiastic dry fly devotee and seldom fished anything else afterward. So begins the taped interview by Jim Bashline, author of *Night Fishing for Trout*, some time prior to Art's death in 1979. Wendy Neefus provided the tape and some of us were able to view his map of the Schoharie as Art remarked on various fishing spots along that water. Art said he almost exclusively fished the Schoharie and it was New York Times Field and Stream columnist, Ray Camp, who always named the Westkill in his articles about Art in order to keep the crowds from the good fishing spots.

Sometime during WW II Art began to work with Preston Jennings who was preparing a scientific tome on flies of the Catskills. Art spent 3 years catching dries and sending them to Jennings for identification and inclusion in the latter's massive book. After Art was invited to present his experiences to the famous Angler's Club in New York City, the membership encouraged him to write his own book that would be short, to the point, and able to be carried in one's pocket on the stream. So Art teamed up with one of his hotel's guests who was a professional photographer and he sat down and wrote "Art Flick's Streamside Guide" with the idea in mind to produce a practical guide for the dry fly fisherman. Waiting for the photographer to show up on weekends, Art kept the flies in the freezer in the bar of his Westkill Tavern.

Our thanks to Wendy for providing the tape and sharing his very precious photos of Art Flick!
It was a special time at the meeting.

Dave Griffin

FLY-TYING COURSE STARTS JANUARY 13, 2005 **AT COLUMBIA-GREENE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

FLY-TYING CLASS TO COMMENCE

The announcement for the fly-tying class that begins in January has been distributed to the media as a public service announcement. For those who are unaware of the program the description below is the way it will appear in the Columbia-Greene Community College brochure, which gets published about the end of December and announces the new classes starting in January. It should also appear in the following media outlets: Catskill Daily Mail, Windham Journal, Mountain Eagle, The Independent, Hudson Register-Star, Chatham Courier, Greenville Press, Albany Times Union, Mid Hudson Cable, Berkshire Cable, Valstar Cable, and Clear Channel Broadcasting. It also went to the following sportswriters/columnists: Dick Nelson, Harold Palmer, Robert Streeter, and Fred LeBrun. I hope you will look for it in your local area.

With this much advance publicity, it is possible that a fairly large class could be starting on Thursday, 1-13-05. If there is a sizeable group, we may need additional volunteers to help with the class, so please keep that in mind. If you would like to help with the classes in any way please contact Lynn Lee at 828-5402 to indicate your interest.

The education committee for the chapter has been diligently meeting to update the instruction booklet used for the course. Members of our chapter wrote it several years ago but it needed some updates, corrections, and changes. Many thanks go to George Goth, who, despite a series of unexpected obstacles, has been doing the computer work and putting it all together after compiling information submitted by members of the committee. The following folks deserve our thanks as well for their contributions: Lynn Lee, Dave Rudloff, Wendy Neefus, Joe Reina, Dave Griffin, Hank Theiss and Dick Riccio. Dick

FLY TYING

This course will teach participants the basics of fly tying. Participants will learn this skill by practicing. Topics to be covered include: a complete stream entomology (local mayflies, caddis flies, and stoneflies, and their life cycles)...types of hooks, threads, fly-tying tools, furs, feathers...and how to tie streamers, nymphs, wet flies, dry flies, terrestrials. Written materials and all tying materials including hooks, threads, feathers, etc. are included in the course fee. Tool kits for this class are on loan, courtesy of the Columbia-Greene Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Tool kits will be available for purchase in class from the instructors.

Instructors: Members of the Columbia-Greene Trout Unlimited Rip Van Winkle Chapter.

C-GCC - Room 404 - 6 Thursdays

Begins: January 13, 2005 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Materials Category: Fee: \$75.00

FROM THE EDITORS: THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Some of the best fishing is done

not in water

but in print.

SPARSE GREY HACKLE

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 newsletter@cgtu.org

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

La ROCCA'S CORNER – "Fish Tails & Fish Tales"

"There is always the pond." That is a thought that has been with me for a long, long time, and it lingers for good reason; the pond **is** always there! And there are fish in it. I often think of far away (or even not-so-far away) places where the fish are many and big and always feeding, but the pond is my "back up."

LAST FISH

Back in Dumont, New Jersey, the ponds were not "back up". Cooper's Pond in Bergenfield and Bogart's Mill Pond in Harrington Park were familiar haunts for many very young, very ardent and very inexperienced local anglers. And why not? They were nearby, accessible, safe and full of fish. A parent could run a kid up there in a couple of minutes, pull open a lawn chair, bait a hook or two if need be for the youngest, and read the Sunday New York Times. Later on young anglers could reach the water themselves by pedal power. Cooper's was most interesting. We never fished the main pond but always the concrete mill race with its "holding tank" pool that was home to a population of goldfish. Most were three inchers, but on occasion a five or six-inch trophy would be hauled (not reeled) in. Bogart's Mill was even better. The Hackensack River fed the pond which was just upstream from the beginning of the Oradell Reservoir, and a concrete and stone wall (from which all could easily cast or flip a line) bordered the entire southern end of the pond. Bogart's was full of yellow perch; small, stickly, and voracious fish, they would bite on anything from dough balls to the eyes of their brethren. One year a small stocked trout that had migrated downstream from the upper pools of the river was jerked up on the stone wall. Nobody knew what it was.

Some years later Haradock's Pond in Sussex County became not just "back up" but a destination. I remember it as a classic three quarter acre farm pond with a huge willow tree at one end and grassy bank that dropped off quickly into a couple of feet of water. I imagine that it was eight or

ten feet deep at most...there were a few aquatic weeds (nothing, however, to get caught up in), and sunfish and bass and chain pickerel. Our friend, mentor, and guide, Fred Notaro, had done plumbing work for the Haradock's and had an open invitation. On our first trip to Haradock's, Fred demonstrated just how wonderful a pond it really was and at the same time introduced me to one of the most novel fishing techniques I've yet encountered. He unveiled a twelve foot bamboo pole from a stash in the tangled branches of the willow tree, unwound another twelve feet of stout monofilament, and affixed a big – really big – red and white Daredevil spoon. He then proceeded to march around the pond with the pole held out over the water and the Daredevil wobbling a few inches below the surface. Up out of the not-so-deep came toothy pickerel, one after another – many little skinny snakes and a few fierce looking two foot long fish with bulging bellies. It was impressive!

Thirty plus years ago when Dad was buying the farm property in Medusa my brothers and I walked the land with the real estate agent a number of times. We were delighted with the fact that there were five different ponds on the old farm. Three were very small stock water ponds way out in old pastures, but even those showed signs of shiners and minnows. The previous owner was (still is I think) an ice fisherman, and was always in need of winter bait. The other two ponds were slightly larger and were home to bullheads and sunfish, and maybe a bass or two. As we renovated the old farmhouse and built the new place for Dad, my buddy Tom and I would swim in the “upper pond,” diving off the bucket of the old John Deere tractor. The “fish” we “caught” came too frequently in the form of leeches affixed to our ankles and calves. My young nephews later named the pond Leech Lake! Within a couple of years we had hired excavators, and both the “lower” and “upper” ponds were breached, drained and rebuilt, and much cleaner. My kids learned to swim in the lower pond, which always seemed to have fewer leeches!

It seemed like the day after the lower pond was full again following its reconstruction, my friend, neighbor, and Soil and Water Conservation Service Director, Gene Kellam, was standing on the still raw bank scratching his chin. “John, you ought to put some real fish in this thing.” And so the standard bass and bluegill mix was bucketed into the pond's still muddy depths...and the creatures thrived. Two years later my brother-in-law, Bill (still in his rock band desperado days), hauled in a twenty-inch largemouth which I wished he had returned to the pond; it might have kept the bluegills in check...probably not. The photograph of him and that fish is a classic that we still joke about when we get together. The bluegills soon took over, were incredibly stunted, and prompted a poisoning. Once sterile, we stocked trout and learned that they basically lasted three years. We fed that first stocking of rainbows, and they got big fast. In the third year they were fourteen to sixteen inches. By that time the pond vegetation was getting out of control; it lay in what was the old barnyard, and with each rain the nutrient-laden runoff added fertilizer to the water and the weeds and algae took off. It was time to focus on the upper pond.

I decided we would stock only trout and fathead minnows, and over the last twenty years or so we have stocked four or five times. Once we put in brook trout, and every other time we stocked rainbows. In all but one stocking the fish were fingerlings, and again, they thrived for at least a couple of years. We had a winter kill one particularly long, cold, snowy winter and lost them all, and we have always lost a fair share to the great blue heron who has a summer evening residence on the swimming raft. The fish are fun, especially the second year when they are ten or eleven

inches long and will take a nymph twitched just below the surface. If one rises or swirls and you cast anywhere near the circle the fish will almost automatically turn back and hit.

It has been at least four years since the last stocking. I thought the fish were all gone, but once this past summer as I strolled past the pond's edge on one of my "rehab walks" I thought I saw a shadow shoot away from the gravel beach from which we swim. But all through the summer and fall I saw no rises or any other indication of fish. I began to think that it was time to stock again, and I even mentioned to a few friends that I was planning to switch to bass because they would be "lifers" in the pond. Then two weeks before deer season opened that changed.

I had done some minor concrete work around the new house and was washing out the bucket on my tractor at the pond's edge. My new neighbor, Lee, stopped to chat, and midway through the conversation there was a swirl, a large one, in the water beyond the beach behind him. No doubt about it, a trout, and a very good one. Together we watched as the fish rose systematically to something tiny all along the cattails on the south bank of the pond. "The last fish in the pond," I said, "I think I'll get him."

The day was warm and slightly rainy...I should have tried for the fish right then. Instead I headed for the Esopus for a couple of hours and got skunked. When I did try for him the next weekend the pond was half frozen and I had to cast my Woolly Bugger up on the ice and pull it off the edge to drop into the deep water out beyond the gravel. Nothing. As I fished a muskrat cruised by with a long cattail stalk in its mouth and peered up at me for a moment as if to say, "Forget about it!" Eventually I did. As I turned my back on the pond I was thinking, "Last fish in the pond, I hope you make it till the spring when I can add some more to keep you company. For now you are home free; good luck."

HANK'S FLY BOX – New Flies for Fly-Tying Course

We are excited to begin teaching the 2005 **Fly-Tying Class** at Columbia-Greene Community College on January 13th. The class will run 6 Thursday nights from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Anyone interested in taking the course can call C-GCC at (518) 828-4181 ext 3342 to register. Anyone wanting more information about the course or anyone willing to help teach can call Lynn Lee at (518) 828-5402.

The following is an outline of the patterns to be taught in this revised course:

January 13	Woolly Worm, Black Nose Dace
20	Caddis Larva, Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear
27	Leadwing Coachman, Partridge and Yellow
February 3	Brown Bi-visible, March Brown
10	Comparadun, Chernobyl Ant
17	Muddler Minnow, Pheasant Tail (if time permits)

The **Fly-Fishing Class** will also be taught on Thursdays beginning March 3rd and ending April 14th. This course will be held at Hudson High School from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

AND THE WINNER IS...

Fran Martino won the December Meeting door prize of 13 Catskill dry flies hand-tied in the style of Art Flick, graciously prepared and donated by Wendy Neefus. It was a **free** door prize.

A second free door prize, a “Pink Lady” dry fly Christmas ornament tied and donated by “The Reel Cowboy”, Bill Newcomb, **was won by Dick Riccio**.

Our thanks to Wendy and Bill for their generous donations. Others wishing to donate flies or other door prizes for the free monthly drawings should contact Dick Riccio.

FLY FISHING SHOWS - www.flyfishingshow.com

January 7- 9, 2005	Friday, Saturday, Sunday	Danbury, CT
January 21-23, 2005	Friday, Saturday, Sunday	Marlboro, MA
January 28-30, 2005	Friday, Saturday, Sunday	Somerset, NJ

C-GTU MEETINGS

EVERY MONTH: Our regularly scheduled meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. **at the Cornell Cooperative Extension Building on Mountain Road in Cairo, NY**, the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except July and August) unless otherwise indicated.

THIS MONTH: Tuesday, January 18, 2005 – **FREE “FLY” DOOR PRIZE DRAWING. FLY-TYING DEMONSTRATION** by Tom Emerick, new president of the Catskill Mountain Chapter of TU, and very well respected fisherman and fly tyer in this region.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, February 15, 2005 – **FREE “FLY” DOOR PRIZE DRAWING.**

COLUMBIA-GREENE RIP VAN WINKLE CHAPTER #569 OF TROUT UNLIMITED

Chapter Officers

President	Lynn Lee	(518) 828-5402	president@cgtu.org
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Keep current...with The Current! Dick & Hank (CO-EDITORS)

