
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

**WE ARE HAPPY TO HAVE JUSTIN SEELEY
JOIN US AS A CO-EDITOR
FOR THE CURRENT**

LEARNIN' ABOUT LEAF PACKS

Join us at the September meeting for an encore presentation by Abbe Martin of Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Jenn Grieser of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection's Stream Management Program, as they give a presentation on the Leaf Pack Network. For those who may have missed it, Abbe and Jenn gave an interesting presentation on Japanese Knotweed, an invasive species that is detrimental to many of the streams in our area.

The Leaf Pack Program is used throughout the state by schools and organizations such as ours to learn about the diversity of aquatic life in streams. This indicator of overall health of a stream is not only important to us as concerned members of TU, but also as far as what flies to have in our fly boxes!

Come learn more about our local streams.

Justin

ELECTIONS!! NOMINATIONS!! COMMITTEES!!

As the heat of summer wanes and temperatures in the streams come back to sustainable levels for trout, it is time to begin thinking of how we can assist our club in sustaining its current level of presence in Columbia and Greene counties.

Every fall is the time for our annual elections/nominations. We are preparing a slate of officers, board members (2) and committee members for the coming year. If you would like to volunteer for any of these, or nominate someone for a position, please cast your opinion in the direction of Dick Riccio (851-7002) membership@cgtu.org or Tim Lippert (239-8490) membership@cgtu.org by the September 20th TU meeting night. Dick and Tim will compile a slate for the club to vote on.

Some of the committees are Education, Special Projects, Membership, Entertainment, Special Events (fundraising), Outreach and Environmental. Please consider volunteering for one of these vital positions in our club.

Tim Lippert

SUMMER EVENTS 2005

The Columbia-Greene Chapter of Trout Unlimited, your club, has been very busy with events this summer. Members participated in the following activities to help make them a success and to have TU become better known in the community.

Traditionally, we invited both the 2005 fly-tying class and the fly-fishing class to participate in a day on the stream in May. Traditionally, no one caught a trout as we fished the Schoharie Creek, (although Ed Malone did catch a brown trout in 2004).

Fly-tying demonstrations and fly-casting demonstrations/instructions took place at the following festivals and venues: the Greene County Shad Festival, the Columbia County Shad Festival, Olana, the Canaan, NY Recreation Program, and Lake Taghkanic State Park. Fran Martino's Father's Day Fishing Program was attended by TU members...as a bonus and special treat, she did an environmental education program for her own event, as well as the Olana and Canaan events. Some of these programs were all day affairs and others were shorter.

The volunteers at these events did a great job! Many thanks to the following TU members who devoted lots of time, energy and expertise to help our local communities: Bobby Fisher, George Goth, Tim Lippert, Ed Malone, Wendy Neefus, Fran Martino, Bill Newcomb, Pam Price, Joe Reina, Dick Riccio, Dave Rudloff, Justin Seeley and Hank Theiss. I apologize to anyone who participated but did not get his or her name added to this list. Dick

FROM THE EDITORS: Chuckle for the Month

A man walks into a fly shop and says, "*Can I have a fly rod and reel for my son?*"
The fly shop owner responds, "*Sorry sir, we don't do trades.*"

FROM THE INTERNET

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

My Labrador Retrievers are not real bright, "elevators don't go all the way to the top floor," as my brother-in-law says. Mary Lenox, the yellow one is an eight-year-old puppy who is, and always has been, a classic dingbat...maybe because she was the only pup in her mother's penultimate litter. Her mother, Bernice, is black, going on fourteen, deaf as a post, and losing whatever intellect she once possessed. Both of them, however, know it is summer! They would just as soon lie around in their pen as wander off to investigate the dead garter snakes in the recently mowed hay fields. I've learned where the expression comes from...

ON THE DOG DAYS AND THE PROMISE OF SEPTEMBER

The Tenmile and Catskill Creeks are skeletal remains of the trout streams we waded a few months ago. Down the Thruway, halfway between Harriman and Catskill, Moodna Creek, which normally looks deep and cold in a shaded tunnel as it passes under the roadway, reveals

itself to be shallow and lazy and likely not capable of supporting all the trout that I always think are quietly finning in that stretch when I drive over it most other times of the year. (Less than a mile from that spot the Moodna passes through the property of a local rod and gun club, and I know there are trout in that stretch all year long!) About three weeks ago I ran into a friend who fishes our local trout streams with some frequency and asked, "Have you been out?" "Hell no," came the reply. "I pack it up for the summer and don't go out again till the fall!" This time of year sort of sneaks up on me and my trout fishing, and despite yearly promises to "do it differently this summer," it just does not seem to happen that way. And how might I "do it differently" anyway?

Well, one way would be to get on an airplane and head for some fabled water in the West or one of those prolific tail waters now sprinkled around the country...including a few pretty close to home. The airplane thing was not in the cards this year, but the summer started out on a fine note on a "local" tail water, the Farmington. Brother Steve and I both blocked a midweek day of vacation, the first day of summer in fact, and spent a few hours on the river along with Steve's friend, Phil, a relative newcomer to trout fishing. It was wonderful. The day was bright and sunny (which I figured did not bode well for trout activity), but the shady spots and the deep runs produced plenty of active trout for all of us. Most of the fish were good size, both browns and rainbows, and Phil hooked and landed the largest trout of his new fly-fishing career. Toward the end of the day I landed a sixteen inch rainbow that made the reel sing, at least a little, and jumped two or three times like, as Steve noted, the fish on some of those fabled rivers of the West which we had fished together. The scale and setting are very different, but it is hard not to make the comparison when it comes to the quality of the fishing.

And unfortunately, that day has been the extent of my trout fishing to date for the summer, but two more notes on the Farmington made me smile a bit: 1.) My buddy Tom did not join us this year on our annual Cape Cod vacation; he has a new grandson in Maine so he and his wife spent a month there with family and old friends. We talked by phone once over that time frame, and Tom told me he had traveled to the northern end of the state to fish for landlocked salmon at Grand Lake Stream, a premier location for anglers seeking landlocks. Tom got a few fish, but during the trip had occasion to talk with someone known locally as an expert. When queried on the subject, the expert said the fishing on Grand Lake Stream was good, but he actually preferred to fish the Farmington in Connecticut for trout! There's testimony if anyone needs it. 2.) After the June trip recounted above, Steve had a birthday so I called the local sport shop in New Hartford and had them send Steve some flies and leaders as a birthday gift. I called again just the other day to do the same for my friend Will's birthday and the salesman/owner said, "Sure, we can do that again...and by the way, your brother was in here the other day." And that, of course, prompted a call to Steve who reported that the trout were still hitting in the deep runs of the Farmington as late as two weeks ago.

The only other trout fishing I got close to this summer was not mine but was real close to home. In late May, despite all intentions not to do it again, I stocked a few trout in my pond...thirty fish to be precise, fifteen rainbows and fifteen brookies. Both were billed as fingerlings, but the rainbows were mostly seven and eight inches long...nice. Our new home has a delightful deck and a large kitchen window that looks down on the pond and I keep a set of good binoculars handy to regularly scan the pond and surrounding marsh and fields. Early one July morning,

during my coffee brewing chores, I spied a great blue heron knee deep in the water of our pea gravel swimming beach and I grabbed the glasses for a closer look. I watched the big skinny bird slowly wade the edge of the beach, hunch over like a nymph fisherman whose fly is swimming through the prime lie, and then strike like lightning. His head emerged from the water with one of my fifteen rainbows, which he instinctively carried up to dry land before he flipped and swallowed it. I've only seen him back on the pond a few times since then, but I regularly watch a green heron, a least bittern, and a pair of kingfishers, and every time I see them I hope – against hope – that their only prey are frogs and fathead minnows! Under my breath I find myself whispering, “Please leave me a few for the fall.” Then I turn my attention to the eight or ten ruby throated hummingbirds that constantly buzz the deck on the way to the feeder and jousts with their brothers.

I'm long past the age of wishing time would speed by to get to some preferred season or situation, but even my Labs appear to know that these dog days seem longer than in years past. Bernie is on the deck behind me right now...panting, “Why can't I come in and get in front of that fan with you?” Reality is that September is only a few weeks away. While I am hoping for at least one late season surfing getaway in September, the rains – if they come as usual – will get me out on the local creeks, and October's chill will definitely lead to the Farmington, the Housatonic, the Neversink, and maybe the Delaware. When it's ninety-four degrees in the sun and the humidity is about ninety percent, there needs to be a promise.

FROM THE EDITORS: Thought for the Month

“Some people's idea of heaven may be streets paved with gold, but for me, if those streets aren't lined with books, there is something missing.”

GARY LaFONTAINE

TROUT BROOKS & TROUT BOOKS:

A Look Into Justin's Bookcase

The noteworthy fly fishing author Sparse Grey Hackle is often quoted as having said, “Some of the best fishing is done not in water but in print.” Judging by some of the fishless days I've spent astream, I would tend to agree. In the first of what I hope to be a regular addition to “The Current,” I would like to introduce and discuss a book that is truly befitting its title of The Joys of Trout, which was penned by the one time publisher of *Esquire* magazine, Arnold Gingrich.

Not only does Gingrich extol the many joys that accompany the sport of trout fishing, but he also reveals a fondness for the regional history of the Catskills and the characters who helped to shape our sport. In the section entitled “The Companionships of Angling,” Gingrich writes of the time Preston Jennings gave him some of his isonychia nymphs after meeting along the Esopus after Gingrich had a frustrating time below the Five Arches Bridge. The two grew to become close friends.

Gingrich does not put on airs of being the fisherman of all fishermen. He readily admits that he gets frustrated by fishless days. The recipe for his “Balm for Fishlessness” includes a company

of angling companions and the prolific literature of the sport. After a long session of casting and not catching, it's reassuring to be able to pick up a book and read that people can, and often do succeed in catching fish. Perhaps this is the reason I am consumed with collecting angling books.

Having saved the best for last, the jewel of this book is the section devoted to, you guessed it, books. Angling bibliophiles like myself will revisit these pages time and time again searching for further reading suggestions. As a man who treasured fine violins and pipes as much as fly rods, Gingrich clearly appreciated the finer things in life.

This book and the many others that I hope to share with you are just a few of "the joys of trout."

HANK'S FLY BOX – San Juan Midge Emerger

At the beginning of June, I had the opportunity to fish with an "old" friend at his "new" camp on the West Branch of the Delaware River. By the term "old friend" I don't mean to insinuate that Al is old...just that I have known him for many years and have enjoyed fishing with him when he could get some time free from his dental practice in Berkeley Heights, NJ.

The second day we fished Al was having real good luck taking fish on an emerger and suggested I put on a big bushy dry fly and tie a small dark green nymph on as a dropper. I chose a March Brown as the indicator fly, because I did see some *Stenonema Vicariums* coming off the water, and then tied a San Juan Midge Emerger (it was the only tiny dark thing I had in my nymph box then) on an 18" dropper of 6X tippet material which was tied on the back of the hook indicator fly. On the second cast at the seam of this nice run I hooked onto a football-shaped 16" brown and worked hard to get him in so I could tell what fly he chose; that big dry or the tiny emerger. After I released him I realized we both used a lot of energy seeing who would get to keep the little emerger.

When I left that evening Al asked, "By the way, do you have any more of those little emergers left?" Needless to say, after all the flies he has shared with me over the years, the least I could do was give him the few San Juan Midge Emergers I still had in my fly box.

For more information about the San Juan Midge Emerger refer to Ed Engle's article on page 14 of Fly Tye magazine, Volume 4 Number 2, Summer 1998.

SAN JUAN MIDGE EMERGER

Hook: 18-24 caddis pupa or shrimp hook

Thread: Black 8/0

Rib: Fine gold wire

Body: Black tying thread

Wing: Light green krystal flash (4 strands - trim to midpoint of the hook)

Thorax: Peacock herl

Keep current...with The Current! Dick, Hank & Justin (Editors)

THE CURRENT ON"LINE"

IF YOU RECEIVED THIS NEWSLETTER BY MAIL AND HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS PLEASE CONTACT US SO OUR TU CHAPTER CAN SAVE MONEY ON MAILINGS. Also, please notify us **if you have changed your email address or no longer want to receive the newsletter:** Dick Riccio (518) 851-7002 newsletter@cgtu.org
or Hank Theiss (518) 851-9442 newsletter@cgtu.org

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, September 20, 2005 – **FREE DOOR PRIZE DRAWING**

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 18, 2005 – **FREE DOOR PRIZE DRAWING**

