
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

REMINDER!

ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD at the November 21st Chapter Meeting

According to our by-laws, you must be a paid up member of TU in order to vote.
If you are not sure of your membership status contact Dick Riccio, Membership Chairman.

THE CREEK-KEEPERS' CAPERS

I wonder how different it would be to fix a top notch fishing stream that was ravaged by a couple of floods if we lived 75 years ago. I'll be willing to bet that the local farmers, landowners, community members, and interested parties would have gotten together and said something like "let's get our equipment together next weekend and fix this creek." I can visualize it as being similar to a barn raising. You can't fix a "broken creek" that way anymore. Bob Novak, however, with some assistance from John LaRocca, is untangling the spider web of rules and regulations of local, state and federal government agencies, landowners' rights, grant givers, studies, reports, abstracts, recommendations, opinions, plans, permits, environmental policies, bureaucracies of all sorts, and "in kind" assistance, that are now needed in order to relocate the disturbed rocks and remove the fallen trees and debris so that the Tenmile Creek will resemble its old self, and eliminate its current threat that's on an erosive path to personal property destruction.

At our meeting on September 19th in his report regarding this situation, Bob noted that getting information and sorting out the dead-end leads in order to accomplish a stream restoration goal is sort of like following a snake due to its twisting turns and unpredictable track. Bob and John collaborated on a PowerPoint presentation that was primarily a roundup of statistics and reports in place that have started the ball rolling toward getting the restoration project underway. The report was peppered nicely with photos of the Tenmile Creek showing its current destructed status.

Thank you gents for this timely production. For both Bob and John, this has been not only a labor, but also a "labor of love" since this stream is near and dear to their hearts. Hopefully, Bob and John, your detective work, effort, and frustration of dealing in the bureaucratic bowels of accomplishing this task, will result in the renewal of a stream that has been a prize catch for many, and will not be the "one that got away."

Dick

FROM THE EDITORS: Hank's Thought for the Month

...possibly a thought to ponder for the Tenmile Creek Project:

Opportunity is missed by most people
because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

THOMAS A. EDISON

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

It was the Sunday of Labor Day Weekend and I was in the midst of steaming a dozen lobsters for friends and family...a once active tradition that became dormant when the kids went off to college, now so many years ago. Family traditions are generally good things so we were pleased to try to rekindle this one. I did not hear the phone ring, but when dessert was on the buffet Nancy mentioned that brother Steve had called and had a “report.” I knew what that meant, but could not return his call until evening when the clean-up was complete.

EXPLORING WITH STEVE

Steve is a generally low key kind of guy, but as soon as he started his “report” I knew this one was a little different. It might even have been just the slightest of “*it took a long time for you to call me*” tone in his voice (certainly imagined by me), but it was clear that Steve had something to tell me! His tale came out in more excited fashion than I’d heard in years.

The same rain that soaked Medusa over that weekend also filled rain gauges in Westchester County and prompted Steve to fish a small local river for a couple of hours on Saturday morning. The water was up and mud-stained as he expected, and fast learner that he is, Steve decided to try a technique we’d employed on the Delaware River in late spring when we fished it in a raging flood. The guide instructed us to heave giant white Zonkers right to the banks and then strip them fiercely back to the boat. Steve’s river is really a tiny stream, so he cast to the opposite bank and retrieved as quickly as he could...and the fish, he reported, were literally jumping after the big fly.

“Wow,” I said, “Sounds great.” “Gets better,” replied my brother. He fished for a couple of hours and then headed off for lunch with his son Andrew. After lunch, on the way home, he decided to try a few casts in a spot, close to the road, that he missed in his morning efforts. The classic scenario: skip down to the hole, no vest, no net, no boots...just the rod, undersized length of stout leader, and the big white Zonker. On an early cast into a bathtub size pocket at the head of the deep hole Steve snagged the fly...and then the snag moved, just throbbed really. A moment later Steve knew he was into a big fish, a fish the likes of which he later reported, he hadn’t caught since we fished the Bighorn River in Montana.

It took a while, but the leader was strong, the hook was solid, and eventually the fish came in on the gravel bar. With no camera on his person, he entertained thoughts of slipping the fish back in the water while still hooked and running back to the car for the camera. Deciding against a return to the car, he estimated its length, removed the hook and turned the big fish back into the river. The brown was 20 to 21 inches long, and given that the creek runs between two New York City reservoirs, Steve believes it had come up from the lower lake in the start of the autumn spawning run. He wasn’t quite breathless at the end of the story – rarely does he get that way – but it was a fish and a story he’ll clearly remember.

And that could be the end of this tale, but it is not. A few days later I had work in Stamford, Connecticut and knew I’d finish the day by late afternoon. I called Steve to ask if he might be able to get away a little early and join me on the Farmington for a couple of hours. “Or.....” Steve suggested, “We could meet on a stream near me and I could share it with you. Just bring

your NYC DEP permit and the parking *do-hickey* for your truck mirror.” Simple as that, the plan was made.

We got our signals crossed on timing, and I made a wrong turn early in my trip, but through the miracle of cell phones – even when reception is bad – we got it together and arrived at the appointed parking spot at roughly the same time. Out of our ties and dress shoes and into waders and vests, in short order we were standing on the gravel where Steve pointed out the pocket water that held the big fish a few days earlier...and graciously allowed me to cast first. Nothing. The water was clear and the fish might very well have been there still; if so, he was not interested.

While we fished a DEC conservation officer crossed the bridge and parked near our vehicles. I watched over my shoulder as he checked our cars and then wandered down to the streamside. It was the first time in many, many years that I’ve encountered a “game warden” (what I used to call them) while hunting or fishing, and it was good to see. The three of us had a pleasant conversation about the creek, Steve’s big fish, and other small talk outdoor items, and he left...without asking for our licenses. “You guys look like you’re legal,” he said over his shoulder. “I’ve been doing this long enough to know.” That parting comment made me feel good, and added to the smile with which I fished for the next couple of hours.

Upstream we fished through a series of small pools and beautifully shaded runs that curved under a steep, heavily wooded bank. The water was very clear with a slightly green tint and in many locations pretty thin, but there were lots of pockets from which, if the water had been cloudy or I was more skillful, a brown trout might dart out or tip down to take my nymph. As I came around a bend that carried the stream back toward the road I saw Steve anchored at the tail of a deep curved run intently watching the water. As I came up from behind him he said simply, “They’re rising.” And I stood with him as he tied on a dry fly and began to cast. “The bugs are small and dark gray,” he said, which is about as technical as either of us gets! Neither Steve nor I are very good when the fish are on top; we just do not do it often enough. We gave it a shot though.

As Steve continued to cast I fumbled in my vest and came up with a black ant – neither dark gray nor as small as we thought the bugs were, but a fly that felt right in the early evening light and the slick water of the run. Two casts later I remarked, “I guess that’s not the right fly,” just as a nine-inch brown took it in a quiet swirl. It felt great, and Steve and I fairly basked in the warm, quiet, buggy air as trout continued to dimple and splash at the surface all up and down the run. Steve changed flies and continued to come up empty, and I found a small dark, full-winged caddis imitation and caught two more trout from the run. The last was about thirteen inches and came up in the middle of what looked to me like a perfect drift; interesting how you often know when you get it right! The twenty minutes we spent on that run, alternatively stepping to the bank and watching while the other cast to the fish, was about as enjoyable as it gets.

For the next ninety minutes or so Steve led the way, either along the stream or through old growth woods, to a series of classic runs, pools, waterfalls and pockets. We each caught one more fish, but I was more engaged in the river and the scenery than the fishing. The river twists and flows through tame country and is punctuated with man-made structures like laid-up stone bridge abutments and mill dams. Occasionally there are more modern channel diversions, also done in natural stone, from the days when the reservoir system was built seventy years ago. At the site of one crumbling dam, with an interesting and intact arched tunnel on one side of the structure, I caught my last fish of the day out of a chute of racing white water. I released the

trout, surveyed the scene and remarked, "What a perfect little river." Steve's response: "Even better, John, is that we've made the time to enjoy it!" He was absolutely right.

TROUT BROOKS & TROUT BOOKS:

A Look Into Justin's Bookcase

As the regular trout season draws to a close, it becomes time to take inventory to see what tackle needs to be repaired or replaced and decide which flies need to be tied over the winter. For some, it is also a time to develop a reading list – maybe this will be the year to muddle through Walton and his Angler.

On the other hand, a volume that was an enjoyable read was Fishing Moments of Truth (Winchester, 1973). Edited by Eric Peper and Jim Rikhoff, it features pieces by many leading authors. The chapter by Angus Cameron called "Reverie with an Old Fishing Vest" does a fantastic job of recounting the task of going through tackle after a long season of use. When you stop to think about your time on the water, there are many moments of truth. They could be finally hooking a trout after a number of drifts and fly changes or the discovery of a population of brook trout off the beaten path.

Fishing Moments of Truth also features a piece by Art Flick that takes place on his and our beloved Schoharie. For me, one of the greatest moments of truth of this sport is being able to wade the same runs and pools as the giants of the sport. So as you stop to sort through your fly boxes and vest later this fall, be sure to take a moment to recall all the memories of fish, friends and places this season held.

FROM THE EDITORS: Justin's Chuckle for the Month

FROM THE INTERNET...

One day while driving home from his fishing trip in the pouring rain, a man got a flat tire outside a monastery. A monk came out and invited him inside to have dinner and spend the night. The motorist accepted. That night he had a wonderful dinner of fish and chips. He decided to compliment the chef. Entering the kitchen, he asked the cook, "Are you the fish friar?" "No," the man replied, "I'm the chip monk."

THE CURRENT ON "LINE"

**IF YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS AND RECEIVED THIS NEWSLETTER BY MAIL
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:

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Email addresses can be found on the Web Page at <http://cgtu.org/> on the "Contact Us" page.

HANK'S FLY BOX – Trico Parachute Duns

Tricorythodes.....what????? Tricorythodes, more commonly known as Tricos, are small, sometimes minute, mayflies. Locally trico hatches start in late June and last into early November...so at this time of the year it is important to have a few imitations of the tiny dark brown or black slender male duns, as well as a few slightly larger lighter color female duns. In the East male tricos range from 3.5-5.5 mm in size while the females are a little bigger, 4-6.5 mm. That means, if we are going to tie them we need hook sizes 18-26. For aging eyes that gets pretty small to see and tie. As a result, I chose rather simple recipes for the Trico Parachute Duns.

TRICO PARACHUTE DUNS:

MALE

Hook: Mustad 94842, 18-26

Thread: Black 8/0

Wing: White poly-yarn post

Tail: 3 white microfibbets tied in
2 times the body length

Abdomen: Ultra fine dark brown
or black dubbing

Thorax: Dark brown or black dubbing

Hackle: Light blue dun

FEMALE

Hook: Mustad 94842, 16-24

Thread: Black 8/0

Wing: White poly-yarn post

Tail: 3 white microfibbets tied in
about the body length

Abdomen: Ultra fine light green dubbing

Thorax: Dark brown dubbing tied a little
heavier than male

Hackle: Light blue dun

NOTE: I like to use the Gary Borger method of putting on the poly-yarn wing post.

1. Start 8/0 thread with jam knot.
2. Fold the poly-yarn around the underside of the hook shank pulling opposite ends up to form the post.
3. Secure yarn to hook shank with a few wraps of thread in front and back of post.
4. Wrap the lower part of the post to make a solid base for the hackle.
5. When you totally finish the fly then trim the wing post to length.

AND THE SEPTEMBER WINNER WAS...

...Bobby Fisher who won flies hand-tied and donated by Wendy Neefus, as well as a miniature fishing net donated by John Taliencio that is just about the right size for Bobby's "typical catch."
(Those wishing to donate flies or other door prizes for the free monthly drawings should contact Dick Riccio.)

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.

MEETING THIS MONTH: Tuesday, October 17, 2006

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 21, 2006

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

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KEEP CURRENT...WITH THE CURRENT!

Dick Riccio, Hank Theiss & Justin Seeley (Editors)