



Thames Valley Chapter Newsletter

Stream Lines

"The Voice for Eastern CT Trout and Salmon Anglers"

January Issue 2015

Dear Member,

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and have another Happy (fishy) New Year. I also hope you are visiting our website from time to time. I am trying my best to keep the site up-to-date and regularly add new information that you can use and enjoy. When you visit the Home page you'll see the latest news, information, and links to other pages. At a glance, you can see what is new or what you may have missed.

Our January 20th membership meeting will kick-off our fly tying instruction during our monthly meetings from 6-7pm. It's been difficult to properly plan since I haven't gotten much feedback from the many people who indicated they would participate... so contact me and let me know.

Starting on Saturday, January 24 at 9:30 till at least 11:00, we'll start our FREE weekly Fly Tying classes at the Fish Connection in Preston. We've planned for six weeks of classes, but can extend if there is more interest and demand. Based on sign-up at the last membership meeting we have about eight people interested, including novice and intermediate. The chapter will supply tying equipment and materials at the class and individuals can even sign-out the equipment to practice for the next class. So again, if you are interested please contact me so we can have enough equipment, supplies and seats for all who attend. What is taught will depend on what the class wants or needs. Novices can expect to learn the fundamentals required to tie most patterns... think Woolly Buggers, soft hackles, simple nymphs, streamers and even dries. Intermediates can expect to learn more intricate or new patterns and methods that they may not be familiar with or want to learn. Think emergers, midges, and other patterns you may not be familiar with. It's your class, so let us know what interests you. Personally, I like simple to tie, durable, and impressionistic patterns the best.

As for you experts, come down and share your knowledge and help someone learn the "Angler's Art". I still fondly remember learning how to tie from Rene Robinson at Bob Chamber's Orvis Fly Shop in Bozrah in the very early 70's. Lessons learned that keep on giving enjoyment over the years.

The February or March Membership meeting as of this writing is still in the planning stages but I envision an expo/clinic type event. Rod building & fly tying demonstrations, learn how to make furred leaders, breakout clinics on entomology, reading waters, rod, reels & lines, other stream side accessories, salt water opportunities, etc. And, how about some pizza, refreshments and some social time! Special door prizes and raffles! Information will be distributed via email and posted on the website. I know we have some very knowledgeable members and I'm hoping that some of you will be willing to participate... I will be providing more information at the meeting this month.

It would be nice to see more youths at some of our events because they are the future. They may have advantages we never dreamed of, but they seem to be missing some of the life's simple yet profound and enduring lessons we experienced growing up. I still remember vividly my first fish... a Gardner Lake Pumpkinseed caught on a stick (branch) with line, split shot, hook (that someone gave me because the kite string and safety pin I was using just wasn't working) and dangling a worm in front of its mouth at end of a girl's camp dock. Ran a couple of hundred yards with the fish in a coffee can full of water in a flash to show

my mom and she said; "Great but, what was I going to do with it?" My first catch and release... I was ahead of the times (smile)!!!

See you at the Moose!

P.S., A special "Thank You and Appreciation" to Sue and James F. Smith for their generous donation to the Thames Valley TU Chapter... we promise to put it to good use.

John Preston, *President*



Thames Valley TU, Chapter 282
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Calendar of Events

Tuesday, Jan 20th, 6:00

**Membership Meeting, Bozrah Moose Lodge
Doors open at 6:00, presentation starts at 7:00**

Speaker - Charles McCaughtry - "Fly Fishing Western North Carolina"

Saturday Jan 24th, 9:30 - 11:00, Free Fly Tying Classes Begin

Fish Connection, 127 Rte 12, Preston (860) 885-1739

(equipment and materials will be supplied)

Tuesday, Feb 10th, 6:00

Board of Directors Meeting, Bozrah Moose Lodge

(Open to the Public)

Tuesday, Feb 17th, 6:00

Membership Meeting

(Speaker TBD)

Winter is here! If weather and driving conditions are bad and we have to cancel or postpone a Membership meeting or event, it will be posted on the "Home" page of our website. In addition, storm cancellations will be notified on WFSB Channel 3.



Fly-fishing Northern New England's Seasons with Lou Zambello

by John Preston

December's featured speaker, Lou Zambello, used stills and videos in his presentation to cover the five seasons (as defined by Lou) in Northern New England... Spring, Late Spring/Early Summer, mid-Summer,

Autumn, and Winter. As an experienced guide for over 12 years, Lou provided many tips on tactics and methods, when and where to fish, patterns to use, and how to dress (i.e. layers in winter is key) for each season. Some of the highlights I picked-up on were;

Spring (ice-out) - Smelt have an iridescent colored bodies, therefore, depth and light have a great effect on how predatory fish see them. Hence, this is why there are so many different colored smelt patterns out there... Gray & Black Ghosts, Wood Special, Wardens Worry, etc. He recommended Gartside soft hackled streamers with 2X long shanks so that Landlocked Salmon can't throw them when they jump. This is a new pattern (for me) and one I am going to try out on Grand Lake Stream. Are you listening George? It looks like a killer pattern. I posted how to tie them on our website. His parachute smelt pattern for imitating drifting dead smelt was also very interesting.



Late Spring/mid-Summer - Or the "hatch" season. He concentrated on emergers and caddis flies. He likes Klinkhammer emergers and the Puterbaugh Caddis in #16/18 sizes. I have never had much luck with the Klinks but I will give the Puterbaugh a whirl. I like how it will sit in the water (low)... so I am sure it will be productive. The video of how he pops the fly off the water and then lets it drift back down the stream was great! A great method for emerging and diving caddis. For those of you who know me, you've heard me highly recommend this pattern... shhhh, Iris Caddis. Please DON'T try this fly because I don't want you to disturb anymore trout than I do.



"Dog Days" of Summer - The key is to find cool water. High gradient streams, high elevation ponds, bottom release dams, falls & rapids, and springs are your best bets for finding fish. Particular patterns weren't stressed by Lou during this time of the year but you might want to try midge pupas and Dips (Serendipities) in various colors.

Autumn - Time for fall spawning runs with streamers, attractors and nymphing. Some of the best fishing happens after a hard rain. He believes yellows, red and orange attractor patterns are very effective during this time. When nymphing use "sighters" and not "thingamabobbers" or floating indicators. Remember the "French Fisherman's" presentation a couple of months ago? This way you

can control the depth of the nymph much better because you want it down where the fish are and not suspended above them. BWO time!

Winter - Try to find warmer water such as bottom release dams, rivers draining large lakes and coastal streams & rivers. Fish "slow and low" with streamers and nymphs. My advice is that if you are going to fish in the winter dress warm, bring along hand warmers, and use fleece wading pants under your neoprene waders. Personally, I use to love going X-country skiing come winter but now is time for fly tying, bamboo rod building, planning next summer's trip to Yellowstone National Park and making sure there is plenty of fuel in the furnace tank.

It was another great turn out. Lou was very informative, answered a lot of questions, and, he sold a lot of his book... which was great for the chapter. He will donate \$5 to the chapter for every book he sold. Thank you Lou!



Free Fly Tying Classes!

- Sponsored by TVTU

Have you ever wanted to learn how to tie flies? Or... just sharpen your skills and learn new techniques? Now's your chance...

Thames Valley TU is hosting **FREE** fly tying classes on Saturday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00 at the Fish Connection in Preston. The first class will be held on Saturday Jan 24th and run for six consecutive weeks. You can join the group at any time.

Tying equipment and materials will be supplied by the chapter and can be borrowed between classes to practice. The Fish Connection is located at 127 Route 12 in Preston, (860) 885-1739.

To register for the classes, please email John Preston at jpreston44@yahoo.com.

Scientists puzzled by dead steelhead in the Salmon River and other Lake Ontario tributaries

Reprinted from Syracuse.com, author David Figura, Dec 13, 2014

Pulaski, N.Y. -- Scientists and the state Department of Environmental Conservation have been puzzled by dead steelhead turning up on the banks of the Salmon River in Oswego County in recent weeks. There's also been anecdotal reports of the same thing happening in other Lake Ontario tributaries. DEC received the first reports of steelhead swimming erratically during the third week of November. There were reports of only a few dead fish at that time, a DEC spokesperson said.

On Nov. 21, DEC staff submitted several dying fish for analysis by the Cornell Aquatic Animal Health Lab. Fish throughout the Salmon River are being affected, and there are anecdotal accounts that steelhead in other Lake Ontario tributaries are exhibiting the same behaviors, the DEC spokesperson said.

The spokesperson added that while the DEC cannot assign any numbers as to the magnitude of this event, the department considers it "significant." Steelhead come into the Salmon River each year on the tail end of the fall salmon run, feeding on the salmon eggs. They often remain in the waterway throughout the winter, spawn in the spring and then return to the lake.

Two distinct strains of steelhead (migratory rainbow trout) are stocked into Lake Ontario, according to the DEC. These are Washington (a winter run strain) and Skamania (a summer run strain). Both originally came from the State of Washington. All rainbow trout strains are native to Pacific coast watersheds of North America and Asia.

At this point, the only fish that seem to be affected are steelhead (the winter run strain). Garrett Brancy, manager at the privately run Douglaston Salmon Run at the lower part of the river, said that for the past month, anglers along his stretch have been reporting incidents of steelhead dying and unnaturally swirling y near the surface of the river. "One angler shared with me today that last Saturday he saw nine fish that were either dead or dying," he said. Brancy added that all the fish, either alive or dead, exhibited "more than usual amounts of (parasitic) gill lice." Read more about gill lice. "Don't know if there's a correlation. It's odd for sure," he added.

Ryan Miele, who works at Fat Nancy's Tackle Shop in Pulaski, said for the past month he's heard anglers talk about dead steelhead and witnessing them "swirling on the surface." He also noted he's hearing reports

of large amounts of gill lice in the fish.

The DEC send dead fish samples to the Cornell Aquatic Animal Health Lab. Results to date are "inconclusive," the DEC spokesperson said. Experts have speculated that a vitamin B deficiency is the cause, and that DEC has sent steelhead tissue samples to a U.S. Geological Survey lab in Pennsylvania for testing.

The spokesperson said DEC fisheries biologists have done work to inject several 'sick' fish with vitamin B, and another group with saline solution. If the fish that receive vitamin B live, and those that receive saline die, the DEC will be fairly confident of the cause.

The spokesperson said if a vitamin B deficiency is determined to be the cause, staff at the DEC hatchery along the Salmon River in Altmar should be able to inject enough fish captured outside Salmon River Hatchery, and then hold them in ponds for the annual spring egg-take.

There is nothing, the spokesperson said, that can be done to stop the ongoing mortality of wild fish on the Salmon River. Brooks Robinson, public relations and social media manager for the Cortland Line Company, is a regular on the Salmon River.

"I've heard of (the dead steelhead) and I have also witnessed it," he said. "In October, there were a ton of dead steelhead at the bottom of the Douglaston Salmon Run. You had spin and bait guys blaming fly fishermen, and fly fishermen blaming gear fishermen. It got ugly," Robinson said. "The bottom line is there were (fewer) salmon to catch this year and the steelhead took a beating. They need to do some testing, which will take a little time. Until then, everyone has their own theory, but there is 100 percent something going on with their immune system and being caught multiple times isn't helping it."



Fishing Buddies

by John Preston

Pulling into the driveway, I spot Radar running up to greet me. Sensing what he wants to say and do, I say "Want to go fishing tonight, Radar?" "You bet, let's go" he growls, while his body gyrates and prances with anticipation. "Okay, okay just give me a few minutes. I've got a feeling we are going to get the big one tonight, Boy." I say while slipping into waders. "Come on, let's not talk about it, let's go! Radar barks impatiently.

As we walk towards the stream, Radar runs ahead out of sight, and then dashes back to see if I'm coming.



He runs ahead again as I approach. When I finally catch up he's looking down from the bank, staring with excitement at a fish dimpling the glassy surface of the stream. "I wonder what they're feeding on tonight, Radar?" I ask as I try to catch a fluttering mayfly, and miss. "I believe they are Light Cahills." I exclaim while examining a specimen I finally snatch from its flight. "Don't you know your basic entomology yet? It's a *Stenomena lthaca*." He grunts, then growls in disgust.

Tying on a #14 Light Cahill, I hear Radar barking at the rising fish in front of us. False casting out the fly, I scold him, "All the racket you're making will put down the fish." He sharply responds, "Maybe so, but not as much as that sloppy cast you made." As my first cast slaps the water in my haste to get to the feeding fish.

Finally, after several casts, I hook a small one. I pull it in quickly, "Rats, a Pumpkinseed." I dislodge the hook and toss it onto the bank in front of Radar, saying; "You want a fish so bad, here's one." Radar barks and

paws at the flopping sunfish until it flips back into the water. "You call that a fish? It's trout we're after or did you forget?" he barks out.

I redress the fly and proceed to cast to a fish rising just to the side of a protruding rock. Just as I say, "Good cast, I'll get this tr..." a trout slashes the surface and my fly disappears. I set the hook and the trout leaps and splashes to rid itself of the fly. My reel purrs as the line is peeled off by the strong, running fish. "Ah, this is what it's all about" I think to myself as I apply pressure to turn the fish upstream. I hear Radar barking out orders as the large trout jumps again in vain to get free. "Easy, easy, you'll pull it out of its mouth. Drop your rod!" As the fish tires, I fumble for my net and raise the rod tip to lead the rainbow into the net. "Success!" I joyfully exclaim. Turning around to show off the fruits of my efforts to Radar, he growls and snorts, "Lucky, you almost blew it." I revive and release the pink striped beauty. "Not bad for an amateur" I proclaim proudly. Radar responds, "Amateur is right. If I could hold one of those contraptions, I'd show you how to really fish."



A couple of cast later, another strike and the trout breaks the surface. And before I can shout that I have another one, I hear the loud splash behind me. I turn to see Radar dog-paddling out after the thrashing trout. The fish panics, crisscrossing down the stream with Radar in hot pursuit. At first I start yelling at him, but soon I'm laughing at the hilarious, chaotic scene in front of me. Radar, intense and determined to catch the now frightened trout, snaps and whines in vain at the fleeing fish. Each time Radar gets close, the trout dashes away. One time they almost tangle up in the line, but I'm able to lead the trout away.

The trout is nearly exhausted, so I rapidly lead him into my hand. Struggling to free the hook, I repeatedly have to fend off Radar, who is trying to snatch it out of my hands. Finally after a few minutes of pumping the beleaguered trout back and forth underwater, it wiggles off dazed and bewildered. I wade ashore to sit on the bank alongside my drenched pooch and say, "Now what would you have done if I let you put that trout in your mouth?" As he tries to dry off by nuzzling his face on my vest and shirtsleeve, he growls and mumbled something that even I didn't understand.

I sat there with my soaking wet companion under my arm, looking at the now quiet pool, even though the hatch was still on. Reflecting on the sights and sounds of nature, we are one with the universe. But soon a female mosquito breaks us out of our Zen-like trance. "Well, I guess that's it for tonight." I say slapping the mosquito buzzing in my ear. We get up and walked back through the field. It was twilight; the fireflies flashed and twinkled in the cool evening air. Radar ran out of sight blazing the way as usual, but I could still hear the familiar jingle-jingle of his collar and tags fading in the distance.

My fishing buddy is gone now, but not from my thoughts. I can still hear him barking and growling when I fish "our" stream. As I walk back alone through the moonlit field, I swear sometimes hear that jingle-jingle echoing faintly in the shadowy evening mist.

"Good fishing Radar and Good Night little buddy. Maybe we'll go fishing again... tomorrow.



Pond-and-Release Flows return to the Shetucket River?

by Jim Smith

Recently, many TU members have reported the apparent return to intermittent pond-and-release flows on the Shetucket River below the Scotland Dam. I personally experienced a release event a few weeks ago while Salmon fishing upstream from the Sandy Beach area. The FERC order which relicensed the operation

of the hydro dam to FirstLight Power in Nov 2013 dictated run-of-river flows moving forward. Prior to late fall of this year, it seemed run-of-river operations were firmly in place and going to be the norm for decades to come. Needless to say, many of us are surprised and concerned to see the pond-and-release activity resume.

Both Thames Valley TU and CT Fly Fisherman's Association (CFFA) are investigating the issue and attempting to find out more information from both FirstLight Power and DEEP. As soon as we have information to share we will provide an update to the membership. Please stay tuned.



Fly of the Month

"Hi-Vis Coachman"

Video and Intro by Tim Flagler, Tight Line Productions

Phil Monahan, of Orvis News Fly Fishing blog fame, borrowed elements from a variety of patterns to come up with this highly visible fly, capable of staying afloat in the tumbling pocket water of Vermont's mountain streams. He calls it the Hi-Vis Coachman, for rather obvious reasons. This one is tied with chartreuse but yellow, orange, white and even hot pink work well. [Link to Tying Video](#).

Fly Tying Recipe

Hook: 1X-long dry-fly hook (here a Dai-Riki #300), size 14
Thread: Black, 6/0
Adhesive: Superglue (body) Head Cement (head)
Wing: Fluorescent chartreuse deer-body hair, cleaned and stacked
Tails: Fluorescent chartreuse deer-body hair, cleaned and stacked
Body: Peacock herl
Hackle: Grizzly rooster saddle hackle, clipped on the bottom
Head: Tying thread
Accent band: Red tying thread, 70-denier or 8/0



SPECIAL FUND RAISER

WIN a new Orvis travel fly Rod!



Orvis "Frequent Flyer" Fly Rod
8 -1/2 ft., 5 wt., 7pc
Only \$10 Per Raffle Ticket!

In addition to the regular raffle at our monthly meeting(s), we have a special fund raising raffle for a new Orvis 8-1/2', 5wt, 7pc "Frequent Flyer" fly rod and case, (\$250 MSRP).

Tickets are \$10 each and will be limited to 50 tickets. Much better odds than the casinos or CT lottery!! Tickets can be purchased at the monthly membership meeting or by calling Jim Clark at (860) 546-6924.

Travel-ready, the Frequent Flyer™ packs right into your backpack, saddlebag, even your briefcase. It carries onto any plane to forever end any and all worry about your fly rod making it to your final fishing destination. Keep it right in your vehicle, out of the way, for quick getaways at lunch, or pack it into the backcountry far easier than even a four- piece rod.

Once all 50 tickets are sold we will have the drawing at that meeting or the next scheduled meeting. You could be walking away with a very nice Orvis fly rod while also helping us raise the funds necessary to have great monthly meeting programs, undertake conservation efforts, and education programs like TIC and Fly Casting in our local schools.



Send Us Your Stuff...

Call for newsletter content

Are you a budding photographer or inspired writer? We would like to include your work in Stream Lines, the TVTU newsletter. Don't be bashful, any and all related content will be considered, including, poems, stories, gear reviews, photographs, paintings, conservation news, fishing tips, etc. Our goal is to get the membership involved in the newsletter and provide an outlet for creativity and sharing information. We have some very talented members in our chapter and Stream Lines is a great way to share your work. To submit content, please email Jim Smith at jsmiththamesvalleytu@gmail.com



Up The Chute, by Charley McCaughtry
[Visit Charley's Website](#)



Place an Advertisement in "Stream Lines"

Looking to reach a new and diverse audience? Presently we have over 470 members in Eastern CT and the newsletter is published September through May (9 issues). If you have a service or product and would like to reach out to our outdoor and conservation minded readership, consider placing an advertisement in the chapter's newsletter "Stream Lines". The cost is only \$50 for the entire year (9 Issues). For more information and to purchase an ad contact Jim Smith via email at, jsmiththamesvalleytu@gmail.com. Thanks for your support!

To join Thames Valley TU or for more information please visit our website www.thamesvalleytu.org
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