

TROUT UNLIMITED

Thames Valley Chapter Newsletter *Stream Lines*

The Voice of Eastern CT Trout and Salmon Anglers

February 2017

Dear Member,

Hello Everyone!

It was great to see a lot of TVTU & TU members at the CFFA Expo and talk to a few people who showed interest in becoming TU members. As usual the Expo was well attended and there was much to do and see... I believe it's the best little fly fishing show around. Our chapter was well represented and we were able to raise about \$675 for our efforts (see photos below).

Our fly tying classes at the Fish Connection Tackle Shop in Preston has started and is free and open to the public; and there is always room for more students. Phil Sands, "Doc" Katz, Bob Walsh and John Preston are the instructors.

Although the weather postponed it (new date TBD) I want to recognize and thank the 14 members who have volunteered for fly tying instruction for the Lisbon Boy Scout Troop 73. They are: Don Avery, Jack Balint, Michael Carl, George De Gray, Steve Gerling, Merrill Katz, Charley Mc Caughtry, Tim Pindell, John Preston, Paul Rice, Phil Sands, Irv Stanley, Ed Walsh, and especially, Ray Schaefer for heading up the event.

This year's "Flies and Pies" will spotlight the angler's art of fly tying. Members will be demonstrating their favorite patterns/techniques and offering instruction to those who want to learn. There will also be a fly fishing tag sale for anyone who wants to recycle some of their equipment that is gathering dust... please, let me know if you want to reserve a table for your goods. This year JT's Fly Shop and the Fish Connection will be offering material & equipment for sale. This event is also our opportunity to showcase what Thames Valley TU is all about and attract new members. There will be information and displays on our education and conservation efforts for protection and restoration of cold water fisheries in Eastern CT.

So bring the family, friends, co-worker for enjoyable evening of fly tying, food, fishing video, door prizes and more...



"Duke" Preston
President TVTU

[Email Address](#)

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Calendar

February 4 - March 25

"Free" Fly Tying Classes

The Fish Connection
127 Rt-12 Preston, CT

February 21st - Tuesday, 6pm

"Flies & Pies"

Chapter Membership Meeting,
Bozrah Firehouse
239 Fitchville Rd
Bozrah, CT

March 21st - Tuesday, 6pm

Dr. Kirsten Martin - "The Final Hurdle: Riverbanks, Rip-rap and Dragonflies"

Chapter Membership Meeting,
Bozrah Firehouse
239 Fitchville Rd
Bozrah, CT

April 18, Tue. Tuesday, 6pm

John Springer - "Vermont Trophy Trout Fishing"

Chapter Membership Meeting
Bozrah Firehouse
239 Fitchville Rd
Bozrah, CT

Thames Valley Chapter Monthly Meeting Tuesday, February 21st Thames Valley Trout Unlimited Annual



Spend a great evening with friends and members of the Thames Valley TU Chapter at our annual "Flies & Pies" Fly Tying Clinic, Tuesday, February 21st at the Bozrah Firehouse, 239 Fitchville Rd in Bozrah starting at 6 p.m.

Our skilled tiers will teach you how to tie their favorite local fresh & saltwater patterns. This event is perfect for kids and families; and, we'll have all the gear and tools you'll need to get started... bring your own vise and material if you like. Even if you've never tied a fly before, come for the camaraderie, refreshments, fishing information and more...

The fly tying clinic is great for kids and entire families - kid-friendly patterns and instruction will be available. Stop by for an hour or stay longer to learn... you're sure to have a great time. No matter what your skill level, there will be something for you at the Annual Thames Valley TU "Flies & Pies" Fly Tying and Fishing Tag Sale. Help support our chapter and win some great prizes. Free door prizes! Come in from the cold and join us for an informative, fun evening. As always, our events are open to the public. Pizza "Pie" and refreshments will be available.

- **Fly Tying Demonstrations and Instruction.** Learn how to tie a fly. Instructors & equipment will be available to show you the "Anglers Art"
- **Swap N' Shop** - Fishing & Fly Tying Equipment Tag Sale open to the public. Contact Duke Preston 860-917-7154 to reserve a table.
- **Fishing Video: "Sight Fishing Trout Rivers"**
- **The "Art of Charley McCaughtry"**
- **Raffle and Free Door Prizes**
- **JT's Fly Shop and The Fish Connection Tackle Shop** will be selling fly tying material & equipment
- **Learn about TVTU Education & Conservation events and accomplishments**
- **Join Thames Valley TU for Half Price!** New members receive a year's membership for half price (\$17.50) and get a FREE copy of our book "Trout Streams of Eastern Connecticut"

Door opens at 6pm: Our meeting is free and open to members, guests and the general public

Raffle Table: The raffle table will high light some interesting items this month including a new 7 pc-9ft-5wt .travel fly rod with a loaded reel including line-

We are now on Facebook!

When you visit our website there is now a link to our Facebook page. Also see our Quick Links below. Jenn Miner is our administrator and we are looking for an additional person assist her. Please contact

[Duke Preston.](#)

Quick Links

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Donations Wanted

As always we welcome your donation of any Fly Fishing items such as rods, reels, fly's, books, etc. We will put your donated items on the raffle table along with our assortment of items to be raffled off.

Donated Fly Fishing items are extremely important to us as a way for us to keep our raffle table expenses down enabling us to use those items to raise funds for our TU chapter. It is one way you can contribute to our fund raising effort.

For your donation we can, if you wish, give you a letter you can use to get a monitory credit with the filing of your federal tax return. If you have an item or items to donate bring them to one of our monthly membership meetings and give them to George, Jim, or Ray who are the guys manning the raffle table. If you can't make a meeting and have something to donate call Jim Clark at 860-546-6924. Thanks.

Walking the Banks - Part 2

©George Jacobi 2016

By George Jacobi



Half underground now, tumbling down a loose pyramid of rocks, the little brook releases its identity into a larger version of itself - a New England freestone trout river. We should wade across here at the head of a shallow riffle, so we don't disturb the local residents. Downstream where it widens out into a pool, any trout will be taking advantage of the brook water at this time of year, hanging along the one bank where it is a bit colder. This little river is not stocked - it's barely a half mile between the remains of two abandoned factory dams upstream and the estuary mudflat below where it opens into a cove on the main river. The short stream distance is vigorous, running down shale ledges most of the

backup-and leader plus carrying case. Also on the table will be a new 5/6 wt. reel with line and backup line. Twenty five or more other items will be on the table.

Win a Cabela's/Orvis Fly Fishing Outfit!



Thames Valley TU is continually working on our Mission of conserving, protecting and restoring our cold-water fisheries in the Eastern CT. This takes a lot of resources... man-hours and money. Please help us raise funds for current and future projects

The Cabela's/Orvis outfit consist of a highly rated 7' 4/5 wt., 3 pc. Cabela's CGR Fiberglass Fly Rod (MSRP \$130); an Orvis Battenkill II Fly Reel (MSRP \$109); and an Orvis Access WF4 Fly Line (MSRP \$59). This a terrific small stream trout outfit that you will enjoy time after time on your favorite trout stream.

Raffle tickets are only \$10 each. The drawing will be held once we meet our goal of \$600. You do not have to be present to win. Tickets are available at our monthly meetings and through the Chapter's Board of Directors. Or, send a check payable (with name, address & phone#) to: **Thames Valley TU Chapter 282, P.O. Box 211, Hanover, CT 06350.** A ticket will be mailed back to you and recorded.

Thank You for your Support

Meet Our New Members

Jon Erickson

Jon and his wife Sue have lived in East Haddam for the past 10 years. Previously they resided in Mystic for more than 20 years. They have two grown daughters. One lives in Stonington while the other lives in New Mexico. Jon works for the Navy at Electric Boat in the Supervision of Shipbuilding Office. A position he's held for the past 33 years. Previously to EB he was on active duty with the Navy. He graduated from the Naval Academy in 1979.

Jon started fly fishing when he moved to Connecticut in 1984. He noticed some folk's fly fishing on areas streams and thought it was something he might like to try. He purchased a beginner's outfit from LL Bean for around \$100 that included an instructional booklet, fiberglass rod and Martin reel. It has been a passion ever since.

Locally he spends his time on the Salmon, 8 Mile and Yantic Rivers and has fished the Moosehead Lake Region in Maine and the Connecticut Lakes Region in New Hampshire.

Jon suggests as he gets closer to retirement he will spend more time fly fishing and hopefully learning more about our great sport. He also wants to become a better fly tier and broaden his knowledge of patterns. With these expectations I am guessing we'll be seeing more and more of Jon in the

way. Above the dams the state plants some trout; above that a private club does as well, and some of those fish use spring floods to escape downstream. Here they compete with warm-water species moving up from the cove, and there are no gravel beds to spawn in, to lay eggs beneath. Mixed up biologically, this is not a self-sustaining system, but nevertheless it's rich.

Raccoons teach their young how to find crayfish. Otters leave tracks while staying invisible. Mink, possums, and the occasional deer can be found by a careful watcher as dusk approaches. As night falls the meadow alongside the creek lights up with a million blinking fireflies. Just a few baby Pickerel Frogs remain in the grass (and they can now jump quite far) but they have been replaced by new-born toads here in August. Be careful where you put your feet - they are everywhere, finding bugs and worms to eat. Noise picks up; crickets and katydids fill the field with song.

In the surface film, mayflies and caddis flies are hatching, and every fish chows down. If a waterway can be described as self-satisfied, this one is now. Splashes are constant. So are the mosquitoes - did you bring the bug dope? A pair of Barred Owls hoot to each other. Darkness falls, and the Milky Way stretches across the sky.

A nondescript sand bar borders the little stream as it abruptly broadens into the cove. You can stand on the bar and cast for 180 degrees, but all you'll catch is a selection of tiny panfish and largemouth bass. As always, the upper end of a cove or estuary is the nursery. The cove, though, is five or six acres, and if you can find the channel as it winds toward the main river, that's where the activity will be.

To the left is a stretch of fields and meadows, to the right is the hill we came down and on that shore sits a ramshackle marina - two long docks and a boat launch. Kids lie on the ends of the docks on many a summer day, worms wriggling on the ends of their cannibalized and homemade poles. This water is becalmed. Flat and slow, it has no intention of expending any effort. It is killing time, like most of the kids, who don't care if they catch anything - as long as the sun is warm and the view is pleasant, life is good.

A pair of swans glide around the cove, slurping up bugs from time to time. Don't go near them in your borrowed rowboat unless you want to get hissed at. Under the placid surface, huge brown carp, dinosaur fish, sneak by in water two to three feet deep, which stays remarkably clear unless the sand bottom gets stirred up by a storm, or an awkward oar. There are just a couple of stumps scattered along the channel, the remains of trees washed down in long-ago storms. They are your clues to the channel, and by each one sits a bass worth catching. But these guys are not stupid - everybody gives them a shot while passing by. Hula Poppers and Jitterbugs aren't going to cut it. If you want to catch something with a surface plug, try the upper reaches where weeds hide the pickerel. They'll come roaring out of cover, making a wake, and hit that lure like Mickey or Ted hits a ball left up in the strike zone.

There is a drop-off where the cove ends and the river begins. Here again the water visibly moves, although

coming years.

On behalf of the TVTU membership let us all welcome Jon Erickson to our group.

"Choices"

By Ed Walsh



I am asking members a few questions about their fly fishing experiences and will share their responses in this, and upcoming issues of Stream Lines. I have found their responses to be very interesting. Don't hesitate to ask them to elaborate when you see them at a meeting or on a stream somewhere. The questions are:

1. **What's your favorite fly?**
2. **What's your favorite hatch to fish?**
3. **What's your favorite river to fish?**

Robert Heitman



The Farmington River is my favorite river to fish as it's the most consistent to fish every season of the year. While I've always had a romance for the Housatonic River while growing up, I've found the flows, the hatches and the action far more consistent on the Farmington. And while the river can get a little crowded on weekends in the larger 'Grade A' pools, there are many "B sections" of the river that provide plenty of action for the spin or fly fisherman. Take

the time to explore the runs between the pools and you will be rewarded. I recall at one meeting that the CT DEEP noted from their electrofishing survey findings that there is estimated to be one fish for every seven feet of river!

As a fly fisherman, my favorite hatch to fish is the Sulphur hatch in June. Having very little experience at dry fly fishing, this hatch really opened my eyes to the art and has the fondest memories. Standing at the head of a pool in the upper Farmington TMA and seeing what seemed like a hundred trout rising everywhere gets your heart racing - so many targets! The hatch is typically an early evening hatch which works well for me leaving work in Hartford to head for the river. Like most hatches, it may be a little slow to get started (and when this happens you may want to try using a wet fly under the surface) but once it starts it has been outstanding for me.

My favorite fly to use for the hatch is the Pale Watery Wingless, a wet fly I dust up with Frog's Fanny fly treatment to get it to float right in the surface. I first learned about this fly from Steve Culton's blog (<http://currentseams.com>) and later learned to tie it in one of his fly tying courses. Steve refers to it in his blog as "The Magic fly". Like most, I said "yeah right" when I heard the claims of this being THE fly to have during the Sulphur hatch. Believe me - lesson learned; it works. I typically tie this fly in size 16 and 18. I find that during the Sulphur hatch I have much better luck with an emerger style fly, and the Pale Watery Wingless fits the bill perfectly.

Sal DeCarli

My favorite fly right now is a difficult questions, and I think it always depend on the situation. The two flies I would have difficulty choosing between are two of my own creations.

ponderously. It seems to know where it's going and accept the decision made for it. It's mature, dignified. This is big water - one hundred yards across - yet it is usually clear. There's another little dock right across the bridge and upstream. Because the hill is steep here, the bank drops off quickly to six or eight feet before the water becomes too dark to see through, even with your hands curled around your face. Schools of yellow perch come by like commuters. Big bass appear and disappear, eying the sunfish, rock bass, and pumpkinseeds that hang near shore. If you had ever seen a coral reef, you'd have said watching the aquatic life in here is not much different.

They call it the "Silver Bridge", the span that crosses the river here, a little way up from the old railroad trestles. We jump from the road, twelve feet down to the surface, and sink so deeply that the cold water is shocking. Big kids jump from the second layer of cross braces. Under the bridge, the river is shadowed, mysterious, still holding onto some secrets. There are a lot of fish down there, but you just can't figure it out, and maybe it's better that way.

One of those secrets is that it is now 60 years ago. You're a kid - you and I went back in time; all this stuff is still in your memory. But you know this place is not the same anymore. From the spring to the bridge, very little of the once prolific life is left, and in the many new homes full of people there are none who know what we know.

Hold that memory tight, son. It's all that remains.

"Most fishermen use the double haul to throw their casting mistakes further."
Lefty Kreh

January Membership Meeting Recap: An Evening with Steve Culton - "The Little Things"

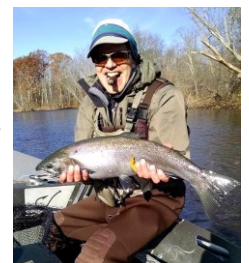
By John Preston



First, I was a little disappointed in the turnout (maybe it was the threat of icy weather) because I am a fan of Steve Culton's work. So I guess I might be a little bias when I say his presentation on "The Little Things" was just great. Now some might say he just talked about things we all know already and that would be a

mostly true statement, but as we all know, we might know about or learned certain things... but do we always put them into daily practice? I think if we are honest with ourselves, we would confess that we don't... well, at least I don't.

I could go on and on about each and every thing Steve covered





I haven't even named them yet because I have only within the last year or so discovered their success.

I am a Streamer junkie, and both these flies are best in the 4"-6" range. One is a foam back floating streamer in all white, which is similar to a salt water gurgler. My other fly is a sparse minnow pattern that is no thicker than a pencil when

wet.



As a Streamer fishermen, I usually don't fish the "hatch", and have caught some of my best fish (20"+ native wild Maine Brook Trout) on black leaches or my floating streamers during the middle of a hex or stonefly hatch.

Locally I try to jump around to whatever water is fishing the best as a Streamer Junkie; I don't mind throwing big meaty flies on any water is fishing well. I could fish one week for trout in the Merrick (I limit myself to a 4" fly here) and then go hit the Connecticut River for bass, pike and crappies.

Out of state I am heading up to North Western Maine and fishing the Rangeley area for Land Locked Salmon and Brook trout. The fishing in Maine never disappoints, and the aggressiveness of a salmon or brook trout slamming a dead floating minnow fly on the surface is savage, and addicting

TVTU at Somerset Fly Fishing Show



Phil Sands and Jeff Yates talk at the Somerset Fly Fishing Show in January.

Jeff Yates, Director of Volunteer Operations for Trout Unlimited, has been invited to our March Board of Director Meeting to discuss ideas for attracting new members to our chapter and other issues.



Editor's Desk

In my January Editor Desk I asked for suggestions and ideas on how to get more members to look at the meeting and newsletter sends they receive and hopefully participate in chapter activities. I receive some sincere and thoughtful recommendations. For those who spent the time to respond I thank you.

As much as I don't like admitting this I am a pessimist. Yup, a real tried and true pessimist. For a long time I've looked at what needs to be done versus what's been accomplished. I rarely took time to relish successes, always on to the next project or activity. But in my retirement years I am actually starting

but I believe (actually, I am sure) Steve could do a much, much better job of explaining "the concept behind "The Little Things"... "is as simple as it is effective: **sweat the small stuff, and you'll become a better angler...**" Therefore, here is a link to the original article that Steve did for the "[American Angler](#)" and is the basis of his presentation "The Little Things". For all those who missed his presentation....Enjoy!

PS: He has a great blog too!! - [Currentseams](#)

"Free" Fly Tying Classes



Thames Valley TU is conducting free Fly Tying classes from 9:00 to 11:00am at the Fish Connection, 127 Route 12 in Preston, CT starting Saturday, 4 February, 2017. The classes will run 8 Saturdays ending March 25th. We will supply materials and equipment, bring your own vise and equipment if you like. Course outline by Merril "Doc" Katz. Instructors are Phil Sands, Merril Katz, Bob Walsh & John Preston. **Classes are open to the public.**

Fly Tying Tips

By John Preston

Clip the Corner of Krystal Flash Package.



I learned this tip from Capt. Jack Balint of the "Fish Connection" Tackle Shop. Clip the corner of a package of Krystal Flash or similar material, and use a bodkin or scissor points to pick out strands of the material that you need to tie the fly. This way you don't need to remove all the material from the package and the rest of the material remains untouched and untangled.

to look at some of the good, some even great, accomplishments around me. And more importantly by the "DOERS" who get these things done.

One of the great things is the growth of Volunteer Hours recorded by TVTU members. In 2007 TVTU members provided just over 3000 volunteer hours. Four years later that number dropped to 2100 hours but in 2016 the chapter membership provided almost 5,000 volunteer hours with close to 20% of those hours credited to the Versailles Pond Fishway Rehabilitation project.

So to the folks whose professional, personal and family responsibilities don't allow time for participation in your Trout Unlimited Chapter we'll be here when time does become available. And hopefully we'll be even more active when get involved.

And to the members who make up those 5,000 volunteer hours, who attend chapter functions and get involved, Thank You. And a special thanks to the people who responded to my last Editors Desk. I will try to spend more time looking at the positives going forward.

Ed Walsh

TVTU at the CFFA Expo

Seven TVTU members participated in another great CFFA Expo and help promote & raise money for the chapter. The CFFA Expo has it all... seminars, vendors, fly tiers, great bargains and much more. See you next year!



Bargains galore with Jim Clark, Ray Schaefer & George DeGray .



Charley McCaughtry's Art and promoting TVTU

Farmington Valley TU Banquet - 19th Annual Banquet Friday, March 24th, 2017

Tickets may be ordered online at www.fvtu.org
You must reserve your seats no later than March 22nd. Questions? Contact Don LaChance
Dlachanc1@cox.net or (860) 666-3447

FARMINGTON VALLEY TROUT UNLIMITED

19th ANNUAL BANQUET

MARCH 24, 2017
USS Chowder Pot IV
165 Brainerd Road, Hartford, CT
6 to 9:30 p.m.

TICKETS: \$40 EACH
Hours of occorre, Buffet Dinner, & Dessert

FOR RESERVATIONS CONTACT:
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Tickets also available at www.fvtu.org

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Fly of the Month- "White Miller Razor Caddis"

By John Preston



Video by
Blue Ribbon Flies

This is a new fly for 2017 from Blue Ribbon Flies; the White Miller Razor Caddis, designed for the Firehole River in Yellowstone National Park. White Millers are notoriously difficult to imitate, since they flutter around constantly and almost never sit still on the water. They have been tinkering with highly buoyant patterns for a few seasons, trying to design a pattern that can be skated and twitched without sinking, and the Razor Caddis is the result. The body is tied by wrapping Razor Foam around the shank, hence the name, and the addition of Micro Zelon and deer hair adds excellent floatation as well. Try this in other colors (tan, olive, gray, green, etc.) to match the naturals where you are fishing. I believe this will be a killer for caddis hatches... YNP & home waters (think Tan & Green Caddis hatch on the Shetucket River).

Fly Tying Recipe: White Miller Razor Caddis

Hook: Tiemco 100 or Dai Riki 320 Size 14-16

Thread: Chartreuse 8/0 Uni-Thread

Body: Chartreuse Razor Foam

Underwing: Pearl Krystal Flash and White Improved Micro Zelon



The "Guys" and Duke Preston & Jenn Miner selling books, promoting TU membership and raffle.



Place an Advertisement in "Stream Lines"

Looking to reach a new and diverse audience? Presently we have over 450 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" and website. The cost is only \$50 for the entire year (9 Issues). For more information and to place an ad, contact [Jackie Preston](mailto:Jackie.Preston).

Thanks for your support!

About Us

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

Questions or comments on the Newsletter contact: walsh4613@cox.net | PO Box 211, Hanover, CT 06350 | Thames Valley Trout Unlimited | (401) 742-6536.

Wing: Bleached X Caddis Deer Hair

[Link to video - tied by Aaron Freed](#)

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