



Thames Valley Chapter Newsletter

Stream Lines

"The Voice for Eastern CT Trout and Salmon Anglers"

February Issue 2015

Dear Member,

This February's Membership meeting will feature our annual, **Flies, Pies & More** event and should have something for everyone and I am hoping for a larger than normal turn out. In fact, I am requesting that if you plan to attend... bring a friend. And if you can't make it this month, tell someone about it. Although our meetings are always open to the public, the chapter is making a concerted effort to attract them to February's meeting via flyers and local newspaper. The reason is twofold; (1) To let the public know who we are and what the TU organization is about, and (2) To invite those who like what they see to join us in our efforts to Conserve, Protect, and Restore our cold-water fisheries and waterways.Hopefully, the "Flies, Pies & More" event will help us accomplish this, (see details below).

Most of us were anglers first and became concerned conservationist later. The love and pursuit of the "Quiet Sport" is something special and we want to pass it on to future generations to experience and enjoy. "Flies, Pies & More" is geared to appeal to anglers first and then turn them into conservationist... eventually. So join us by coming to the meeting and be an ambassador for the chapter and TU.

As usual there will tables available for you learn to tie flies or demonstrate your fly tying skills, and a chance to get together with your fellow members and swap information & tales about the one that got away. But in addition, there will be short presentations on fly fishing for trout, fly tying, entomology, and saltwater fishing. Also throughout the evening there will be demonstrations on knot tying, rod building, making furred leaders, plus artwork and more. In short, a mini-expo. In addition, there will be special door prizes & fund raising raffles, and of course, pizza and other refreshments will be available. And in your spare time maybe lend a hand to the people who are manning the tables and demonstrations. But most of all.... have fun and enjoy the night!

See you at the Moose...

John Preston, *President*



Thames Valley TU, Chapter 282
jpreston44@yahoo.com



Calendar of Events

Saturday, Feb 7th, 9:30

FREE Fly Tying Class continued...

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

Classes to be held each Saturday in February and possibly into March

(All are welcome, instruction, equipment and materials supplied)

Tuesday, Feb 10th, 6:00

Board of Directors Meeting, Bozrah Moose Lodge

(open to the public)

Tuesday, Feb 17th, 6:00

Special Event - *Flies, Pies, and More...*

Mini Expo, Fly Fishing Clinic & PIZZA!

Moose Lodge, Bozrah CT

(6-9pm, Details Below)

Tuesday, March 17th, 6:00

Membership Meeting

(Speaker TBA)

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.

Special Event

TVTU Annual Flies, Pies & More...

Fly Fishing Clinics

Tuesday Feb 17th, 6-9:00pm

Moose Lodge in Bozrah



Royal Wulff, Charley McCaughtry

SCHEDULE & TOPICS

- 6:00 pm - Welcome: Social Time & Pizza/Refreshments
- 6:30 pm - "Tying the Hand Whip Finish, the Bobbin Whip Finish & the Myth of the Half Hitch & More" with Merrill "Doc" Katz
- 6:55 pm - "Know Your Bugs: Helpful Basic Entomology" with Steve Babbitt
- 7:20 pm - Door Prize Drawings
- 7:30 pm - "A Systematic Approach for Fishing any Trout Stream" with Michael Carl
- 7:55 pm - "Saltwater: Fishing the Rips" with Jack Balaint
- 8:25 pm - Raffle Drawings

You are invited...

New to fly fishing or are you an experienced angler? Or... just thinking about taking up the quiet sport? No matter what your skill level, there will be something for you at the annual Thames Valley TU "[Flies, Pies & More](#)" mini expo and Fly Fishing Clinic. Take a look above at the topics being offered and come out of the cold and join us for a fun informative evening!

Every attendee will receive a door prize ticket for some great prizes. We will draw the winners during the break. Pizza and refreshments will be available so if you are coming right from work, you can grab a bite there.

As always, this event is free and open to the public. So bring a friend and feel free to pass the information on.

In addition to the presentations highlighted above our Thames Valley TU members will present the following topics throughout the evening;

- * Fly tying demonstrations - Want to learn how to tie a fly? Instructors & equipment will be available to show you the "Anglers Art"
- * The "Art of Charley McCaughtry" - Proceeds of the sale of a small fisherman lithograph go to the Thames Valley chapter
- * How to Make Furled Leaders with John "Duke" Preston & Jenn Miner
- * Rod Building & Bamboo Rod Making with Bob Walsh
- * Knot Tying - Learn basic and proven knots that anglers need to land the big one
- * Trout Unlimited Information table- Info on "Who we are and What we do" - Conserve, Protect and Restore North America's cold-water fisheries and their watersheds.
- * Sign-up for Stream Clean-ups & to help Stock our local rivers & streams (at TVTU table)

[Visit TVTU website](#)

January Membership Meeting Recap...



Fishing Southwestern North Carolina & Pisgah National Forest with Charley McCaughtry

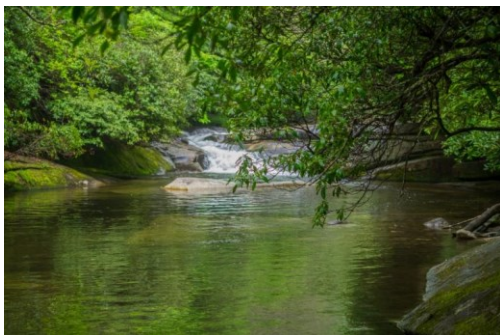
by John Preston

It was a very scenic slide show of fishing opportunities of southwestern North Carolina, Smokey Mountain National Park and the Pisgah National Forest. Charley started with an overview map of the area and more detailed maps as he guided us through some of his fishing experiences down south. We "northerners" don't normally think of trout fishing when it comes to the South, but we would be wrong. There some great cold-water fishing adventures available in the Appalachian mountains of NC, SC, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia.

Charley started his tour along the Pigeon River with rocks the size of cars and rough terrain in the Great Smokey N.P. Although road access is good, due to the steep gradient you are scrambling from pool to pool in search of wild brook trout. The next stop was Oconaluftee River (say that fast three times!) which is a major tributary that drains the eastern part of the GSMNP. There are abundant parking areas and numerous trails that provide access... just be prepared for some steep trekking out. As the Luftee leaves the park in enters the Cherokee Reservation. Here the river is under tribal regulations but it receives substantial stocking of trophy size trout... so if you want a "big" one this is the place to go. Other water nearby the NC and SC border were the Horse Pasture River and the Whitewater River. They have many feeder streams with wild brookies and numerous scenic falls to explore.



In the French Broad River system, Cathey's Creek and Courthouse Creek aren't for the faint of heart with very narrow roads and 1000 foot drops to navigate. But you will be rewarded with good fishing for wild rainbows. The French Broad River offers easy access for beautiful 16 -18" wild and hatchery trout.



Not far from the Blue Ridge Parkway the Davidson River near the Pisgah N. F. is listed in Trout Unlimited's "America's 100 Best Trout Streams" and provides miles of easy access, catch & release, fly fishing only angling. From its headwaters to Avery Creek (about 14 miles) it is managed for wild trout. From Avery Creek to the national forest the river is heavily stocked. There is about two miles of river within the forest and camping is available. It was also interesting to learn that in NC the river is closed for a while to give the fish a chance to acclimate and spread out. This is something that should be considered for our state.

Charley visited NC in July and his fly selection wasn't hard to determine... muddlers, Hornbergs, inch worms and some soft hackle patterns. He fished the muddler 90% of the time. He believes the fish took it for a hopper. So don't overlook the trout fishing opportunities in Dixie... there are some surprisingly good fishing

and gorgeous landscapes!

Suggested readings; "Trout Streams of Southern Appalachia" by Jimmy Jacobs, "Americas 100 Best Trout Streams" by TU, and Charley highly recommended books by Harry Middleton. Such as "Starlight Creek Angling Society", "On the Spine of Time", "The Earth is Enough", "Rivers of Memory", and "The Bright Country".



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 next class will be held Saturday February 14th at The Fish Connection (127 Route 12 in Preston, 860- 885-1739).

The classes will continue to be held each Saturday morning at 9:30 in February and run until beginning of March or later depending on interest. 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. To register for the classes, please email John Preston at jpreston44@yahoo.com.



Conservation Notes

The following information on projects in our local waters was taken from the "Inland Fisheries Division Program Notes & Updates - Fall 2014"

Sea-run Trout

- Stocked 17,700 sea-run brown trout parr in the lower sections of the Shunock and Farm rivers. These were smaller fish that had been graded-out from the population of future smolts being reared at Burlington State Trout Hatchery. It is not known how many will emigrate to salt water in the spring, 2015.



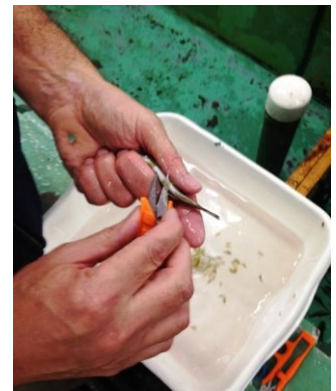
Using stocking equipment (canoe, oxygen and regulator, tubs and air stones (left) from the Fisheries Management program, Diadromous staff stocked the Farm and Shunock rivers. Seasonal Resource Assistant Patrick Vogt pulls the parr-laden canoe through a stretch of the lower Shunock River (right).

- Electrofished a section of Blackledge River (Marlborough) to assess the spring stocking of sea-run brown trout fry stocked earlier in the year (spring, 2014). It appears that either survival was low (due possibly to low stream flow and high stream temperatures; temperature data logger recorded ten consecutive days at or above 20 degrees Celsius) or the sea-trout fry moved out of the stocking section. Sea-run brown trout were found in an Atlantic salmon sampling site over one kilometer downstream, in an area that was not stocked with sea-run brown trout fry. *Diadromous staff measured many nice looking sea-run brown trout parr during the Blackledge River electrofishing sample.*



- Secured all the appropriate permits (USFWS Title 50 and State of Connecticut) to import 35,000 eyed Lijoki strain sea-run brown trout eggs from Finland the first week of January, 2015. As with the first group imported in January of 2014, the eggs will be incubated at the Burlington State Trout Hatchery.
- Fin clipped approximately 8,000 sea-run brown trout parr at the Burlington State Trout Hatchery. These fish are being held at the hatchery until next spring when they will be stocked into Latimer Brook as smolts. It is hoped that in 2015 the majority of these smolts will emigrate downstream to Long Island Sound, where they will reside for two years before returning to Latimer Brook to spawn. Since the smolt stocking site is upstream of the Latimer Brook Fishway, the returning spawners will pass upstream through the fishway, allowing staff to trap, assess, and then release each fish (upstream of the fishway).

A sea-run trout loses its right pelvic fin for science



CTDOT Culvert Projects, Fish Passage and Instream Habitat Enhancements

HCE staff review all Connecticut Department of Transportation bridge and culvert replacement projects as well as many locally regulated projects. Staff ensure that projects are designed to allow the unrestricted movement of fish upstream and downstream and do not degrade aquatic and riparian habitats. In addition, instream habitat structures are often recommended for installation to restore/enhance instream habitat features or to mitigate unavoidable habitat losses. Per permit conditions, staff are required to assist project contractors during construction to ensure the proper installation of fish passage and habitat structures. Onsite construction management services were provided for the following projects:



- Crowley Brook, Preston (Route 2) Installation of rock weir to create backwater and added water depth into newly sliplined culvert facilitating upstream fish passage for the resident fish community.
- Tributary to Meadow Brook, Colchester (Route 2) Installation of rock weir to create backwater and added water depth into newly sliplined culvert facilitating upstream fish passage.

- Turkey Hill Brook, Haddam (Route 9) Installation of ARMTEC baffle system within sliplined culvert to ensure upstream fish passage for native brook trout.



Beaver Meadow Brook, Haddam (Route 9)
Installation of prefabricated concrete weir to create backwater and added water depth into newly sliplined culvert. Weir is designed to facilitate upstream fish passage for wild brown trout and brook trout. Subsequently, a small work crew of HCE and Diadromous staff created a downstream rock weir to expedite passage over the concrete weir during low flow periods.



Further On Downstream

©George Jacobi

The little brook in my neighborhood, the one I crossed every day to get to the school bus stop, had wild trout in it. As a boy, I would see the brookies dart beneath the undercut banks, reach in from behind, and try to catch them bare-handed. I remember that first experience of feeling a wriggling, slippery fish in my hand. Only three feet wide, this rill began at a spring and ran for a mile or so steeply downhill, delayed only briefly at a swamp where frogs and turtles were the main attraction.

It then joined a modest but pretty stream just before it entered the Housatonic River impoundment, Lake Zoar. That little river came out of a steep hemlock-shaded glen and spread into a large cove on the Hous with a scruffy marina on our side. The cove swept into the river just up from where a bridge crossed, a silver span which as I remember, had the words "T-Birds" spray painted on the cement base by some car-loving teens. Long summer hours were spent peering off the docks of that marina into 3 feet of clear water, telepathically coaxing the sunnies and yellow perch to take our worms. I knew every inch of water from the spring to that dock and beyond.

The sale of my childhood home just went through this fall, fifty eight years after we moved into it, an event which brings to a close my regular trips across the bridge, along the cove, and then left uphill alongside the brook. Alas, the flow is in one direction only. You can't go back; you can't go upstream.

Truth is, the waterways of my childhood have been gone for a long time. They have ceased to be the ecosystems they were due to relentless home construction. If there was a dock there now (there isn't, it's a private dwelling), you couldn't see the bottom or the fish off it anymore, if they were even there. Of course the native trout are history, victims of lawns and yards that reach the trickle of warmer water. But like most kids who spent a lot of life outside, I took the memories with me as I grew, as I went on downstream.

Some time after college, I ended up back home due to an abruptly ended relationship. I got a surprise call from a close college friend who had just had a similar experience. We fished that little stream in the hemlock glen a few times, he with the fly rod that was the single souvenir of his broken marriage. I went and got one myself. That summer directed the course of my life since, most of it spent on rivers and the fishing tackle sales jobs that enabled my time on rivers.

Frozen moment in time - It's evening. I'm sitting on the bank there, monkeying with my pitiful box of flies, a bright field behind me, dark woods to my right, and a steep riprap bank overgrown in shrubbery across the creek. A mother raccoon and her four cubs come ambling along the other bank. Unnoticed, I sit still as a stump as Mama teaches the kids how to flip over rocks in a few inches of water and catch crayfish for dinner. They appear to be laughing and talking, enjoying life together. Never once seeing me, they stay there for ten minutes before moving nonchalantly around the bend out of sight.

I took that memory with me downstream, and I have it still. It reminds me of both the thrills of river life and the life-long friendships men can forge from sharing the outdoors.

Frozen moment in time - Early 80s, late April, Opening Day on the upper Housatonic River in northwestern Connecticut. (It would have surprised that kid on the dock if you told him he'd fish the river from way up north for trout, down to the estuary for stripers, in his future). This spring has been dry enough so that even when they release the water from Falls Village Dam, it's not so high that you can't wade some of the river during the Hendrickson hatch. The bugs start in the early afternoon, and there are millions of them. The state DEP has been enthusiastic about this new no-kill area, stocked it heavily, and the trout have prospered for a couple of years, growing long and fat on the limestone richness of the Housie. It's worth the 2 hour drive to get there, and I do it many many times a year.

Trout snouts poke right out of the water all over the pool, gorging themselves on the Subvarias. There's an adult fly or two floating on every square foot of surface. A bunch of my pals, the regulars on this stretch, are scattered about waist deep, all catching and releasing fish. So am I. It's paradise. A lot of laughing and talking, switching spots, goes on. "Hey, you try this fish here. I just missed him." It becomes apparent that you can determine the size of the Bitterroot Brown Trout by seeing their heads. Well, why catch little ones when you can try for the bigger ones? I end up with about 15 trout for the afternoon, most ranging from 14 inches to 18 inches. It's great fishing for Connecticut, fishing that makes the Housatonic into a famous destination.

But that's not the whole story. It's just as much about sharing the miracle of that kind of a day with friends. We still talk about it, and other days like it, thirty years later. I took the story of that afternoon with me and I still have it, though I am now far downstream from there.

Frozen moment in time - Late on a gloomy morning in 1987 on the Matapedia, at Fosse Alice. That blessed sound of rain falling on the water fades, and the sun shows signs of breaking through. The pool Alice is quite high and fast. There are several Atlantic Salmon, as usual, hanging just below the big rock halfway down on the road side - you can lean off it and see them - but they are not playing. I fish the powerful riffle as it enters the pool with a Silver Rat, as my brother-in-law Paul fishes below and his pal Rusty takes a break. Two other guys hang around by their truck up on the road looking down.

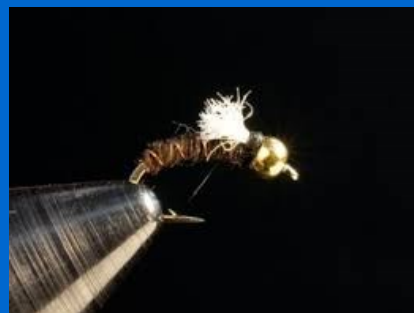
The Salmon is an 11 lb. female. As a Connecticut trout angler, I have never caught a salmon. All three of us are on our first trip to Canada for the "King of Sport Fishes". It feels as if a block of cement, a great weight, has been dropped instantly on my swinging fly and leader, and then is flung across the river. There is no missing the strike on this one. The fish tears around the pool, leaping over and over, and I just give line and hang on. Unbeknownst to me, the fellows in the truck have a video camera and have started filming. On the tape, which I still have, you can hear one saying, "That guy's never going to land that salmon". LOL, as we say now. I am learning how to catch a big fish the hard way, working her, turning her, tricking her into giving up the fight. And at last she comes to the shore, and to the surface, and Paul tails her and I have caught my first Atlantic Salmon. Between the photos and the video copy they were kind enough to send me, it's more than just a vivid memory.

Paul and I spend many weekends in his trailer at Twin Islands on the Beaverkill when he isn't gone somewhere to the north. We fish Cairns and Wagon Tracks and run to the West Branch of the Delaware. We fish the Mirimichi and we fish in Labrador. Just a few years later, after a great deal of salmon fishing, from Nova Scotia to Alaska, Paul dies of a second heart attack at 63. His ashes are driven up to the Matapedia and are gently dropped into the river off the Heppel Bridge. A little later, they will drift through the pool named after Alice, and continue downstream, slipping into crevasses in the gravel where they will nourish the mayfly larvae that will feed the next years salmon parr.

I take that memory with me, that one morning at Fosse Alice, along with all, the others, and I have it still. Rather than being all separate moments, lost upstream in time, these are part of the same river, and it's still mine.

I close with this, a thought from now instead of the past. I hang around with one of my old art Professors, who though twenty years or so older than me, still creates art. He goes into his studio every day, semi-recovered from cancer and several other serious ailments, with a sore shoulder and one eye. That's right, with one eye, he makes exquisite little 3D collages that knock you out when you see them. And he closes every conversation and every email with the salutation, "Make Art, be Happy".

I bring that with me, apply it to everything I love to do, and I hope and expect to have it with me further on downstream, until I get to the sea.



Fly of the Month

"The Shop Vac"

Video by Arrick's Fly Shop

Originally The Shop Vac was developed in West Yellowstone and used mainly out west on rivers such as the Madison. Word spread and this simple little pattern has gained popularity throughout the country. It's a cross between a serendipity and pheasant tail and can be customized easily. It works almost all of the time, impersonating a caddis larva, midge, and even mayflies during a hatch. It might be the rusty color of the pheasant tail that matches so many different insects. Regardless, it's a must have for your nymph box!

[Link to Tying Video.](#)

Fly Tying Recipe

Hook: TMC 2457 #14 to #18
Thread: 8/0 Uni black
Bead: gold
Weight: lead wire
Body: pheasant tail
Rib: gold wire
Wing tuft: white para post
Hook: 1X-long dry-fly hook (here a Dai-Riki #300), size 14

Help Raise Funds for Thames Valley TU

Jim Clark



Dear Chapter Members...

Here is a way you can help us raise funds to support our various projects. Donate your no longer used Fly Fishing equipment and books. We will raffle them off and use the money raised to support the chapter's various projects. As a non-profit chapter we can give you a letter for the value of your items which you can

use for tax filing purposes.

For more information and to make a donation call Jim Clark at 860-546-6924.

Thanks for your support!



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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