

TROUT TALK

The Official Newsletter of Western New York Trout Unlimited (www.wnytroutunlimited.org) September, 2012

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Next WNY TU Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, September 25, 2012, 7:30 pm at the Donovan American Legion Post, 3210 Genesee Street, Cheektowaga, New York. Fly tying starts at 6 p.m. Please bring black thread, because we will be tying Woolly Buggers.

Our speaker, for the “entertainment” portion of the meeting, will be Mr. James Markham, DEC biologist with the Lake Erie Fisheries Unit. Mr. Markham’s presentations are always comprehensive and informative, so please join us.

President’s Report

Greetings Fellow Anglers and Conservationists,

“Thank you” to all who attended the picnic at the Donovan Post which was our June chapter meeting. Our projector has turned out to be a valuable investment for “multimedia” presentations.

Len's report on the successes we experienced at the Erie County Fair will be included in this issue. "Thank you" to all who volunteered at the fair. Though the Erie County Fair certainly is a fund raiser for us, it also serves as an important "public relations" and recruitment vehicle. With the volunteers' staffing the booth, fly casting demonstrations are possible, bringing attention to some of the work TU does and ending some of the mystique surrounding our art form. "Thank you" to Len and his family for decorating the booth. We always do well in the competitions, and this year was no different.

Our September meeting's guest speaker will be Jim Markham, biologist from the Lake Erie Fisheries Unit. Those who attended past presentations know what a great job Jim does and how informative he is.

The agenda for the September meeting is nominations of chapter officers and members of the Board of Directors. Your input is both welcome and very important.

I'd like to remind our membership that we are in need of volunteers for the many areas covered by our conservation work as well as for our fund raising (e.g., the banquet), public relations, and humanitarian activities. Effectiveness in these efforts depends on the active participation of you, our members.

We ALL live downstream. Please come out and support YOUR local chapter, become involved.

See you at the meeting.

Gary Coons, WNYTU Chapter President.

Announcements

- **A Report from Mr. Len Bigaj:**

Shows: This year's Erie County Fair was another success. I want to thank the following members for staffing our booth: Bill Kelman, Bill Koerner, Gary Coons, Jim Stachowski, Dave Bollman, Jeff Kohler, Tom Dewyer, Dave Unitech, and Bill Jedlicka. Most of them worked multiple shifts. Without the help of these volunteers, we would not have been able to have such an effective presence at the Fair. A special thanks is due to Dave Bollman and Bill Koerner for tying and donating hundreds of flies which we sold at the show. And, too, I need to thank our fly tyers who show up before the meetings to tie for our club. Of the \$1331 which we earned at the Fair, \$1064.50 was from fly sales. Again, thanks to all.

Project healing waters: Our last outing at the Elma Conservation Club will be on September 27 at 10:30 a.m. Last month, on August 24, we had our 5th Anniversary at Pauly's. A great time was had by our vets.

National Hunting and Fishing Day: On September 22, the Elma Conservation Club will host a National Hunting and Fishing Day. We will have a table there. If you would like to help, please let me know. Len.

- **Fund Raising: Mr. Bill Jedlicka**, who has spent the summer diligently prospecting for banquet contributors, would like to acknowledge the sponsors and supporters to date. They include:
 - “Trophy Level (\$1000 and up) Sponsor”: **Praxair.**
 - “Brookie Level (\$250 - \$499) Sponsor”: **Simms.**
 - “Emerger Level (\$50 - \$99) Sponsor”: **Niagara Gun Range, Patagonia, Delta Sonic.**
- **And From Stream Projects Chairman, Mr. Chuck Godfrey:** I was skimming through the summer edition of *Trout Magazine*, when I noticed that, in one of the “grassroots” news articles, they were mentioning that two NY schools had again completed successful “Trout in the Classroom” programs. I went to page 53 of the magazine just to see which schools it might have been. Imagine my surprise when they turned out to be two of our schools. They mentioned Jason Ersing at Frontier Middle School and Rosemary Catlin at Brockport, by name, and that the fish had been released in March. They also mentioned that the Nichols and Gowanda fish would be released in May. Nice to see us mentioned in the national magazine for the second time in six months.

The Erie County Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs is holding a free raffle to award lifetime sporting licenses to young people who reside in Erie County. The Federation will award a minimum of four lifetime licenses to kids who are under the age of 16 as of March 31, 2013. The drawing will be held at the Federation’s regularly scheduled monthly meeting on December 6 at Bison City Rod and Gun. The Federation is running several fundraisers to support this and will award more licenses if the ages of the kids drawn and the amount of money raised allow, but there will be a minimum of four awarded. Entrants will have a choice of lifetime licenses. Entry forms may be obtained from the Federation’s website at eriectyfsc.org. Entries need to be mailed by the end of November in order to be put into this year’s group. Any received after that will go into the entries for next year. Entry forms will also be available at the Federation’s National Hunting and Fishing Day experience at Elma Conservation Club on Sept. 22. Chuck. (Ed. Note: An announcement with a map is attached to this newsletter for those who have not declined to receive such flyers.)

- **Editor’s Note:** Our “Trout Talk” newsletter is published in electronic format each month except for July, August, and December. In order to contain costs, the print version is only available twice a year (September and January). Unfortunately, even on this schedule, the financial burden, to WNY TU, of the print newsletter remains considerable. Many of our members have agreed to forgo the print edition and to accept only the electronic version (which is sent to them via email). It would help our organization considerably (and perhaps save some trees!) if more of our members agreed to this arrangement. There is a further advantage to the subscriber. Specifically, the electronic version usually has more items than does the print version, often has pictures, etc., all because its length is not as constrained as is the paper form. Won’t you please consider adding your name to the list of those who receive, via e-mail, only the electronic newsletter? Just send me your e-mail and surface mail addresses so that I can add you to the electronic mailing list and remove your name from the paper mailing list. Please give this matter some serious consideration. I can be reached at AdkRuss@roadrunner.com.

• **Treasurer’s Report for the Period Ending August 31, 2012. This is a three month report and covers June 1, 2012 through August 31, 2012. (Submitted by Mr. Anthony Messina):**

		prior period thru 05/31/12	this period thru 8/31/12
(CHECKING ACCT)			
BALANCE AT	MAY 1, 2012	\$630.33	
BALANCE AT	JUNE 1, 2012		\$129.80
INFLOWS:	50/50 DRAWING	\$76.00	
	TRANS FROM MONEY MARKET ACCOUNT		\$500.00
TOTAL INFLOWS:		\$76.00	\$500.00
OUTFLOWS:	MONTHLY MEETING	\$70.00	\$70.00
	TRAVEL		\$191.50
	50/50 DRAWING PRIZE	\$38.00	
	SUMMER PICNIC		\$65.25
	STREAM PROJECTS	\$468.53	\$83.60
TOTAL OUTFLOWS:		\$576.53	\$410.35
BALANCE AT	MAY 31, 2012	\$129.80	
BALANCE AT	AUGUST 31, 2012		\$219.45
*****	*****	*****	*****
(MONEY MKT ACCT)			
BALANCE AT	MAY 1, 2012	\$20,501.02	
BALANCE AT	JUNE 1, 2012		\$20,502.41
INFLOWS:	INTEREST	\$1.39	
	TRANSFER FROM BANQUET ACCOUNT		\$6,000.00
	INTEREST - JUNE		\$1.40
	INTEREST - JULY		\$1.76
	INTEREST - AUGUST		\$1.76
OUTFLOWS:	TRANSFER TO CHECKING ACCOUNT		\$500.00
BALANCE AT	MAY 31, 2012	\$20,502.41	
BALANCE AT	AUGUST 31, 2012		\$26,007.33



Articles:

Perspectives By Russell Shefrin

As regular readers of this newsletter (or at least the electronic edition) know, the annual banquet torch has been passed from Mr. Len Bigaj to Mr. Bill Jedlicka. For years, Len and his enthusiastic assistants have ably coordinated this event, which is essential to raising the money needed for our chapter activities. Now, as can be seen elsewhere in the current issue, Bill has brought his own brand of fundraising to the process, and with excellent results.

Reflecting on the different ways our respective banquet chairs have approached their tasks, I am reminded of how each of us typically brings a unique perspective to our endeavors. Sometimes the differences among these individual perspectives are small, nearly imperceptible; sometimes they are dramatic.

Science has demonstrated that our perceptions of the world around us really are our own. Each person's "take" on things, and even how the environment is sensed, is not formed in the brain like a simple photograph. Both perceptions and memories are actively constructed in the brain – formed, that is, from a myriad collection of data bits, some of which we are aware, while others are buried deep in the sub-conscious. Given the complexity and the idiosyncratic nature of these syntheses, it is amazing that we agree as much as we do about what is "out there". But the fact remains that the process undoubtedly gives each of our outlooks a unique "color", subtle as it may be at times.

So, what has all this got to do with Trout Unlimited? Well, what would happen if all the seven hundred or so unique perspectives of our local chapter members were involved in our chapter efforts? Yes, that's right; our chapter's enrollment is around seven hundred. This number may come as a surprise to the two dozen members who regularly attend our meetings. While the hard work and input of the "regulars" is extremely important and deeply appreciated, how much more vital, exciting, and innovative could we be as an organization if more of our nominal members became active. Potentially, each one could bring different points of view, subjective experiences, and/or expertise which might create a positive feedback loop of increasing positive energy and power to accomplish our mission.

Not that our chapter isn't pretty darn effective the way it is. Have you ever noticed how many articles in national TU's "Trout" magazine have been written by or been about our WNY chapter? But imagine how much greater could be our impact if a larger proportion of our membership contributed their on-stream experiences, outdoor philosophies, ideas, expertise, and physical energy in the pursuit of our goals. There is much work to be done in educating the public about the multi-dimensional value of our cold water resource and in protecting, conserving, and restoring our area streams and aquatic habitat. "Synergy" refers to the process of developing particularly fruitful results when several entities work together. Think of the synergy that could develop if seven hundred unique perspectives could be harnessed in the direction of common goals. Sure, the process could be a bit messy and inefficient at times, but the end result could be magnificent. Maybe we ought to give it a try.

P.S. After I composed this article, and the print version of the newsletter, I received the following piece by veteran Cattaraugus Creek steelhead fisherman, Mr. Kent Clulow. It strikes me as a fine example of how each of us has a personal vista to share.

Steelhead and the Swinging Fly on the Cattaraugus

By Kent Clulow

I recently returned from Alaska where I spent some time fishing for rainbows on the Kenai River. I was struck by the fact that all fisherman utilized strike indicators, even when fishing smolt patterns. I witnessed hundreds of fisherman, none of whom employed a “swinging” fly.

Although it may be more effective to fish for rainbow and steelhead trout utilizing the “dead drift” method with an egg pattern or nymph, the classic West Coast technique is to swing a streamer pattern across and down with a floating line. I find this method to be ethically pleasing and sometimes a more efficient technique.

Tools of the Trade

The most important “tool” is your fly, followed, in descending order, by leader, fly line, rod, and, lastly, the fly reel. I use cone-head and lead-eyed buggers or tube flies. In dark, heavy water (one foot visibility), I prefer lead-eyed black or purple bunny leaches on sizes 2-4. As the water clears, I will go to olive tubes or olive speys, sizes 4-8. In extremely clear conditions, I utilize sparsely tied marabou tubes or speys in sizes 6-8. White or pink are good color choices.

I carry at least a dozen leaders, from a 10 ft. floating to 5, 8, 10, and 15 ft. sinking types. In extreme flows, I will use short lead-core sink tips. Attached to the leader is a 1X fluorocarbon tippet, usually 20-30 inches in length. Your fly must just lightly “tick” the bottom.

I prefer a weight-forward rocket tapper floating line, size 6-9, whose weight depends upon water flow. Ideal water flow would be 300 CFS. Higher flows and higher water would require heavier fly line.

Any 10 ft. rod suitable for 6 to 10 weight line is sufficient. An old steelheader once told me that he could catch steelhead on a broomstick!

The least important tool here would be your reel. You require just enough drag to prevent overrun. I fished the Pere Marquette River in Michigan for many years; and, on that river, I successfully landed 30 lb. kings and 15 lb. steelhead on an old Pfluger Medalist reel. These days, I prefer my old Hardy Perfect with a double pawl click drag. The reel is “stuffed” with ball bearings and is silky smooth. Besides, there is nothing like the sound of a Hardy reel.

Technique

To swing a fly correctly, cast slightly up and across stream and then quickly mend upstream. Your fly must swing with the current but without drag. Most strikes occur as the fly swings down on a tight line at 45 degrees. However, it is crucial to finish the “drift.” As the fly hangs straight down stream, wait for a few seconds. Some fish will pick up the fly at the end of the drift. You must then drop your rod tip to hook these fish. These techniques are described in Jock Scott’s book, Greased Line Fly Fishing for Salmon and Steelhead.

The Creek

I have fished steelhead now on the “Catt” for forty years. I have been blessed to have fished all 37 miles of water, from the mouth to the dam. I fish the ledges, which I find to be the most fascinating, productive, and challenging water. Much of the “Catt” is characterized by undercut shale ledges. In fact, historical accounts of early settlers in Zoar Valley indicate that they forbade their children to swim in the creek because of the danger of being trapped in undercut ledges.

I am a “ledger,” I study them; I sometimes swim through them in the summer and scout them again each fall.

To fish a ledge, you must carefully drop your fly upon the lip of the ledge and then quickly mend or stack-mend upstream, allowing the fly to swing down under the ledge. A steelhead may take the fly immediately as it swings under the ledge, or a fish may follow the fly out and strike at the classic three-quarter downstream drift.

Water Temperature

The ideal water temperatures for fishing the swinging fly are between 45-60 degrees. The temperature of the air should be slightly warmer than that of the water. In recent years, the ideal times to fish would be from mid-October to the end of November. The first thing I do upon reaching the creek is to take a water temperature. I am constantly searching for spring seeps. Steelhead will often seek temperatures a few degrees lower than the surrounding water.

Ethics

Use the heaviest tippet possible, because these fish are not leader shy. Play and release your fish quickly to increase its chance of survival. Release a fish in 1-2 feet of water without touching it. Do not drag a fish up onto the beach. If I cannot keep the fish in the water and release it with my pliers, I will break the fish off. I no longer need a photograph, as a view of that fish is forever etched in my mind. If you wish to kill a fish, kill a hatchery fish—one that is fin-clipped or has a deformed dorsal fin.

These days, I prefer to fish alone. It is crucial for me to feel and to listen to the water, the wind, and the land. To me, steelhead fishing is a spiritual endeavor that connects me to a higher power.

Photos:

Mr. Don Kwiatkowski forwards this shot of the Chautauqua Creek Fish Passage Project. (The picture was sent to him by the speaker at our upcoming chapter meeting, DEC biologist, Mr. Jim Markham.)



Next, Mr. Chuck Godfrey provides these images of activities, and a denizen, of the new “Lunker” section of the North Branch of the Wiscoy Creek.



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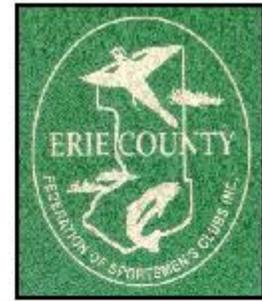
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September 22, 2012
Elma Conservation Club
600 Creek Road, Elma

10AM – 4PM
Admission FREE



For more info visit www.eriectyfsc.org