



September 2005

# Snags and Snarls



**Committed To Coldwater Conservation**

## The Newsletter of the Pisgah Chapter of Trout Unlimited

### From the President

**D**ear Piscatorial Partners. Another program year is coming to an end. For the Pisgah Chapter is has been most challenging. We were faced with tragedy in the unexpected loss of our president but, on the other hand, we reaped the benefits of Craig's efforts and received an Embrace-a-Stream Grant from the national office of Trout Unlimited. The US Forest Service plans to honor Craig by dedicating one of their new informational kiosks in his honor.

The North Carolina State Council of Trout Unlimited has nominated the Pisgah Chapter for the prestigious "Gold Trout Award", an award reserved for the "best" chapter in TU. We have yet to hear whether or not we are to receive this award. If we do not receive the Gold recognition then we are automatically eligible for the "Silver Trout

**From the President**

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 *Snags and Snarls* is published eleven times a year by the Pisgah Chapter of Trout Unlimited, a nonprofit organization, for its members and supporters. Produced by Carol Ten Broek, Linda Campbell and Sam Davis. September 2005, Vol. 59, No. 9. Address comments to: *Snags & Snarls*, P.O. Box 841, Hendersonville, NC 28793-0841.

### MEETING NOTICES

DATE/TIME: **Thursday, September 15, 2005**  
**7:00 p.m. Social • 7:30 p.m. Meeting**  
PROGRAM: **Speaker:** Brent Martin  
**Topic:** Little Tennessee River Land Trust

**P**lease note that the next Board of Directors meeting will be held on **Wednesday, August 31, 2005** at 6:30 p.m. at the Log Cabin of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Nanuga Road. This is a change from the 1st Wednesday of the month. The October meeting will be held, as scheduled, on **Wednesday, October 5, 2005** at 6:30 p.m. All members are invited. ↘

### PCTU Board of Directors

**T**he Nominating Committee met and nominated the following individuals to serve as Officers and Board Members:

Dale Klug for President	For Board of Directors:
Norris McDowell for Vice President	Art Smith - 2006
Chris Ellis for Secretary	Woodley Murphy - 2006
Jim Heller for Treasurer	John Carney - 2008
	Richard Burns - 2008 ↘

### October Banquet

**T**he Pisgah Chapter of Trout Unlimited Annual Banquet and Auction will be held on Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church in Laurel Park. This event is always a Pisgah Chapter favorite and our main fundraiser for the year. Bring your family, favorite covered dish, and your checkbook, and plan on a great evening in October. We are currently collecting auction items so if you have a business or business contact that has an item or service that they would like to donate please let me know. Remember, we are collecting fishing and non-fishing items and services. This is our primary fundraiser and we hope to raise \$5,000 to help with our conservation and educational opportunities. Please call me, Terry Foxworth, at 828-691-1485 for more information. ↘

# Basic Nymphing

*Dale Klug*

**A**s summer reaches its apex many anglers are looking for other fly fishing challenges. One of the most readily available opportunities are the numerous rivers and streams that weave their way across Western North Carolina. While perhaps not as famous as other regions of North America, Western North Carolina still offers some fine river and stream fishing.

Many anglers I know seek out rivers and streams as a remedy for their dry fly cravings. Indeed, moving water is the dry fly fisher's paradise. But more often our visits to these little rivers indicates little or no hatch and, consequently, the dry fly action is tough at best. Early on in the summer season, rivers still tend to be swollen from spring run off, especially this year. As it is inefficient to rise up through deep swift water, trout prefer the security and calm of back eddies, sunken debris and boulders, waiting to ambush their dinner as the current drifts it by. The solution is simple; if the trout won't come up to eat, go down and get them by bouncing nymphs on, or near, the bottom.

My set up for fishing nymphs is simple and adaptable so if the hatch magically appears I can be working the surface in a matter of minutes. Usually it is just a matter of changing flies. I prefer fly rods in the 3 to 5 weight range, the smaller the stream and its residents, the lighter the rod. For just about my entire nymph fishing a floating line in conjunction with a 12-foot leader fits the bill. Beginning with a standard 9-foot leader tapered to 5x I knot on a three-foot tippet section of equal or smaller diameter. This method allows for a long thin tippet that cuts through the water, speeding up the sink rate of the fly, while putting it in the feeding zone quicker and longer. The double surgeons knot serves as a quick reminder for a tippet change while maintaining a consistent leader length.

Other aids to the nymph fisher's tackle bag include split shot or Loon's Deep Soft Weight and strike indicators. For the fly fisher who does not tie flies, weight becomes important to drag the pattern down in the water column in the absence of a weighted fly. Even if the fly is weighted some water conditions, such as pocket water or swift riffles, dictate a heavy setup. While controversial to some, strike indicators can be essential at times, especially

for the novice nymph fisher. Trout reject non-food items, including flies, in the blink of an eye. Strike indicators give the angler a visible clue signaling a take. If the indicator pulls under, slows, or moves upstream, set the hook. It might be a rock or a sunken log but it's surprising the number of times that it's a trout. This approach might seem costly on the fly budget but that's the price for successful nymph fishing. Indicators help control depth too, making sure the fly ticks naturally along the bottom. A good rule of thumb is to set the indicator at about twice the water's depth. This means constant indicator adjustment throughout the day, often from run to run. Some of my favorite indicator materials included corkies, yarn, and Bio Strike putty.

Flies for nymph fishing need not be complicated and that's a good thing as, by day's end, the nymph section of the fly box often suffers from a high casualty rate. Impressionistic buggy designs are prominent residents in my fly box. Famed American angler, the late Charlie Brooks, was a firm believer in tying nymph patterns in the round, meaning the pattern had no discernable top, bottom, or side. No matter how the fly tumbled in the water the fish always saw the same profile. The Brook's Montana Stone is a deadly example of this tying theory. The majority of my nymph patterns are weighted with either an underbody of non-toxic lead wire substitute, metal beads, or a combination of both. A tungsten or gold bead, coupled with a weighted underbody, is a great method to allow a fly to sink quickly and deep. The added flash of metal beads can be a deciding trigger for trout as well. Don't make long distance casts with these weighted concoctions or a concussion or new earring might be the result. Short, accurate casts, work best. Some of my favorite nymph patterns include Gold Bead Hare's Ear Nymphs, traditional Gold Ribbed Hare's Ears, Prince Nymphs and Montana Stones. Remember, use scruffy unkempt patterns, exact replicas are not as effective. For added animation try using patterns incorporating rubber legs. Flies with rubber legs bounce and tumble along the bottom as though they are struggling to regain a foothold on the bottom. Try to keep the pattern selection basic, but numerous, as going down after these trout results in some haz-

ardous drifts and lots of snags.

When approaching a promising piece of water look it over carefully prior to casting. Look for places where slow moving water meets fast water forming a distinct seam. Shady areas and the hydrodynamic cushions formed in front of and behind rocks and boulders are other prime trout locations. Think lazy. Look for trout in places where they feel secure. Seek out protected areas with adequate oxygen flow that allow the trout to hold efficiently in the current as their food is channeled to them by the current. Some sections of the river may only offer a couple of these requirements while others are home to all four. Locations housing all four criteria, oxygen, protection, food and cover, are considered prime lies and should be worked thoroughly; it is rare not to hook a fish in these locations. Other areas to consider include boulder strewn pocket water. Pocket water is well worth working during the high heat of summer. Most anglers tend to pass by pocket water due to the adventurous wading. I can recall spending all day by myself in a short stretch of pocket water and having some of my most memorable nymph fishing. Riffles are another excellent and productive nymph fishing locale and are the shoals of rivers and streams offering the most aquatic vegetation growth through photosynthesis. The largest populations of mayfly nymphs, stonefly nymphs and caddis larvae, are usually found in riffles. When nymphing a riffle break it down into manageable sections. Work each section methodically. Due to the broken water and current trout can't see as well to move to the fly. Riffles allow the angler to use short, accurate, casts as the risk of spooking a fish is reduced by the bubbles and refraction caused by the turbulent water.

Seasoned nymph fishers tend to catch more trout than devoted dry fly fisherman. This is not a slight on the abilities of the dry fly angler or using dry flies. The nymph fisher is simply putting their offering at the trout's level on or near the bottom where the trout spends the majority of it's time feeding. While exhausting on the fly box, the rewards of nymph fishing are well worth it. 🐟

Special thanks to Al Rogers for donating his tied flies for the August meeting raffle. \$68 was raised for the PCTU.

## From the President

*continued from page 1*

Award". Overall, I would say that we (PCTU) have much to be proud of.

Last month I found myself thrust back into the role of President. A position I did not seek nor was really looking forward to. However, duty called and I responded. I must say that this time around I am really looking forward to becoming the past president. We have an excellent slate of candidates for officers and board positions. I thank all those who agreed to serve and those who agreed to continue for another term. I am confident that the Chapter will be in good hands for the future. I expect that the new Officers and Board will build upon the foundation established by the past officers and board and take PCTU to new heights. Of course all of this is not possible without the general membership. Your willingness to volunteer and pitch in for the many worthy projects we are involved with makes PCTU one of the premier TU chapters in the nation.

This, I hope, is really my last rambling from the president. I have enjoyed working with the many different board members during my total of 16 months as president, albeit, not consecutively. I ask that all of you support the new leadership and help PCTU achieve its goals. We have our banquet and auction coming up on the 20th of October. The delayed harvest stocking season begins during the first week of October. Our quarterly highway cleanups will continue. Fishing outings will soon commence again. We will continue to be an active chapter with quality programs. Speaking of quality programs, Mike Adams provided us with an informative and entertaining look at the Tennessee tail waters at our August meeting.

Let me close with one of my usual quotes: James Baldwin wrote: "not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced".

*Jack A. Frisch* 🐟

## Highway Cleanup

Please note that the next highway cleanup will be on Tuesday, September 20th and, following recent tradition, you will be provided with a selection of coffees and delectable muffins. Contact Art Smith to let him know that you will be attending or sign up at the September general meeting. 🐟

## Fly of the Month

### Hares Ear

Hook: TMC 9300 6-18 (those with good eyesight may go smaller)

Thread: Tan, brown, black

Body: Rabbit, natural, brown, tan, olive, black

Tail: Hare's ear fur, short

Ribbing: Copper or gold wire, reversed wrapped forward

Thorax: Same as body, or darker

Wingcase: Turkey quill slip



Start by producing a thread base on the hook. Now, apply the Hares Ear tailing material. You will find the proper material at the base of the Ears of the Mask. Bind in short and firm. Gold ribbing can now be bound in as well. Wire or tinsel.

Apply the dubbing material to the thread. Push the leading edge of the dubbing up to the hook. Make one turn. This will lock the fibers in and allow you to spin the dubbing to tighten on the thread as well as on the hook.

After each wrap, turn or tighten the dubbing on the thread. Move up the hook with the dubbing. A well dubbed body is tight and the rib will sit on top of, not sink into, the material.

Once the ribbing material is tied in place, tie in a 'prepared'

slip of Turkey Tail feather, the width of which should be about half the hook gap. Wrap the wing case tie in area well. On larger sizes this may be the place for a single drop of head cement. (By 'prepared' I mean a "Flex-cement" treated or equal piece of feather cut to the proper size.) After the loop is formed keep the loop open with your finger tips of your left hand (assuming RH tier). Place an elongated 'semi-noodle' of dubbing in the loop. Try and align the dubbing with the long axis of the loop. If you do not have a dubbing loop tool one can be made from a paper clip. They are basically a wire formed in the shape of a shepherds 'hook'. You will find if you make your own that one of about eight inches long is better. One can wrap the dubbing without smacking the

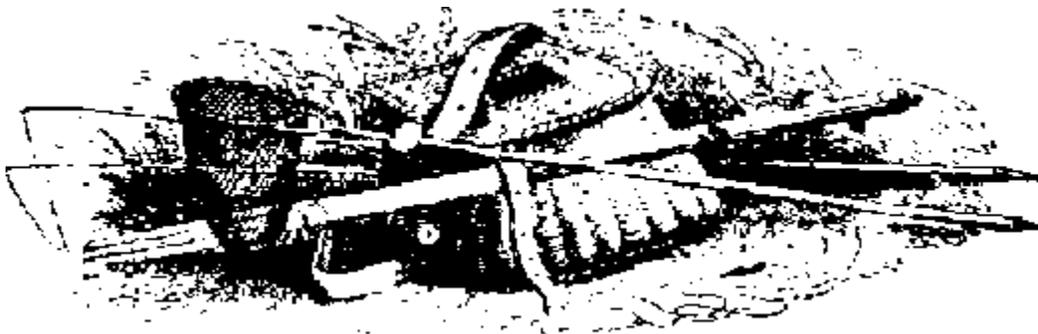
bobbing every turn.

Here you can see the outcome of the spun dubbing. This forms a rope like dubbing chenille that can be applied like chenille. Note the position of the bobbin, behind the eye. I should have cleaned the eye of the extra dubbing... oh well, hindsight.

This is a view of the dubbing loop applied to the thorax area. Note how shaggy it appears. This is preferred, if for no other reason to suggest legs of some fashion.

Do not crowd the eye! Hard to see here but there is at least two eye widths left open behind the eye. If you crowd the eye the wing case material will not cut clean behind the eye, the cut edge will extend out over the eye and you will want to bind the cut edge with thread and this, trust me, will close the eye hole to your leader.

Pull the wing case over the top of the thorax. Place your 'pointer' finger tip under the eye for support as well as keeping the thread back from the eye. Bind twice. Pull the wing case tag back and trim behind the eye. Whip finish, five wraps and you're done! 🐟



# Tributes to Craig Larson

## Craig, I Am Glad Our Paths Crossed

**D**ear Craig,  
I met you at the Pisgah Chapter's Annual Banquet and Auction in October 1999. My daughter worked with you and told me that you were moving to Hendersonville. We started fishing about twice a month and you were excited about living in Henderson County and having good fishing close by. Our last trip together was to the San Juan with Stu and Sogi. We had a great trip and one that we all will remember. Great company, excellent food and lodging, and the fishing was spectacular.

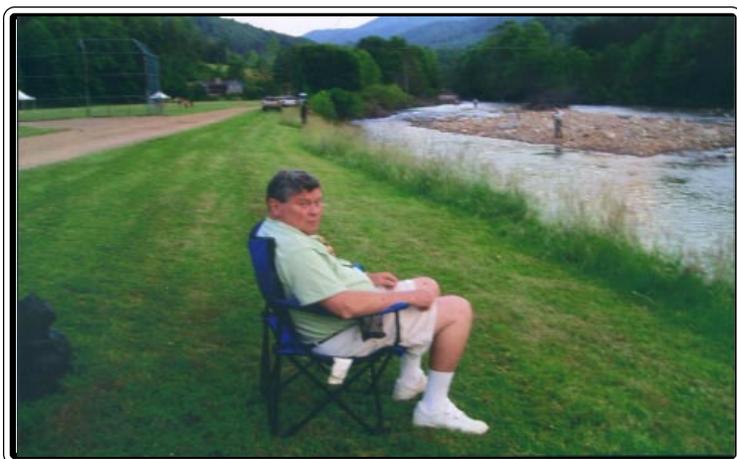
You soon became an active member of our Chapter and started to take on a real leadership role. You were a Director, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Davidson River Project Manager, and President. You participated in Highway Cleanups, Fish Stockings, Kids Fishing Days, and any other events that we held. You were our model of what a member of our Chapter should be.

In addition to working with our Chapter you became involved in NCTU Rivercourse and became its Administrative Director, along with being Co-Director of the Camp. This, like most things that you touched dealing with Trout Unlimited, became successful. Your dedication was astounding. You have left us a trail to follow but we will need an army to do it as well as you.

I was the last Chapter Member to see you and then, along with your family, friends and TU Family, watched you take your final fishing trip down the Davidson River. The river you loved so very much and worked so very hard to preserve. I hope that your last trip was the best ever and that someday we will meet again on that eternal trout stream. I, along with the other Trout Unlimited Members, am determined to continue the work we have started so that future generations can have streams teeming with trout and have a future generation also dedicated to do the same. Have a great trip.

Tight Lines— From a friend and coworker on many projects.

*Bob Daubert* ↘



## Rivercourse Scholarship

**S**tarr Nolan is proposing that Land O' Sky TU make a commitment to donating a yearly full scholarship to Rivercourse in memory of Craig Larson. Craig was President of the Pisgah TU Chapter, one of the leaders of Rivercourse, who devoted countless hours to the camp and to many other TU activities, and good friend to many of us. We will greatly miss Craig. His devotion to TU and to teaching kids fly fishing and conservation was an inspiration to many of us. ↘



## Land O' Sky

**L**and O' Sky Chapter is selling sponsorships for the Camp Hope/Pigeon River water. Individual sponsorships are \$65 and allow unlimited fishing on the entire stretch of the Pigeon River adjacent to Camp Hope. The river has been stocked once with some nice browns and will be restocked in the next few weeks with even larger browns.

The river is loaded with wild rainbows. It's a great alternative to the Davidson. Applications can be downloaded on the chapter website: [www.landoskytu.com](http://www.landoskytu.com). TU members can still fish by signing in and paying \$7 but the Chapter needs some ongoing support for the project and sponsorships. Guide sponsorships are \$120 and guides can bring up to two clients for no additional fee. There is still a 6 person limit on the river. ↘

## A Question of Weight?

I was recently asked what the ounce number printed on many rods signified. While I didn't know for a fact, I said it is the weight of the rod, as this is what I have always thought it represented. As a result, I began wondering if the ounce number on a rod was actually the rod weight. So I did a little experiment with a calibrated balance (+/- 0.01 gram accuracy) and weighed fifty rods of four different manufactures: St. Croix (on the rods they print this information), Scott, G-Loomis and Winston.

The results made me realize that I really don't know what the

ounce number represents and, further, what useful purpose that it serves. 85% of the rods I weighed were heavier than the printed information which, of course, leaves 15% lighter than the printed number. In one case, two "identical" rods: Winston IBIS 8' 4 wt. indicated a 17% difference between the two, with one over the printed weight and one under. After some discussion with some "experts", fellow TU members, and a few local guides, regarding this information I've come to the conclusion that nobody I spoke with knew the answer definitively. Some proclaimed it is their understand-

ing that it is the weight of the blank, before hardware. However, that doesn't explain rods that weigh less than the printed ounce number with hardware. Additionally, no-one seems to know the usefulness of this interesting little tidbit of information.

So, if anyone "really" knows the facts regarding the ounce number, and it's usefulness, please let me know as I'm beginning to think it may be the key to catching those elusive cut throat - steelhead that are so prolific in the Davidson River.

*Dale Klug*  
828-243-6783