

Snags @ Snarks

Pisgah Chapter Trout Unlimited **January 2010**



North Mills River looking down stream from the campground bridge. 12-24-09

PCTU January 2010 President's Letter

Happy New Year! I hope that each and every one of you has had a safe and happy holiday season. Once again, Mother Nature has dealt us an interesting "blow", only this time in the form of snow rather than rain. Needless to say, the fish are probably happy because it is keeping all of us away from the rivers and streams.

As we get ready to start a new year, a new decade, and the next 40 years of the chapter's existence, we can get excited about the opportunities which lie ahead. By now, each of you has received the PCTU Gift Campaign appeal. Our many accomplishments from the past year were highlighted as a direct result of our donation of time, various skills and hard work. But as the letter indicated, this may not be enough to continue all of our current initiatives, let alone entertain any new projects. I am happy to report that we have collected close to \$2,500 which should help tremendously; but please remember that a gift of any size will be a huge help. To all of you who have already donated, I would like to thank you on behalf of the entire Chapter.



The upcoming year should be a great one. We will continue to be heavily involved with delayed-harvest fish stockings; Adopt-a-Highway clean-up efforts; Trout-in-the-Classroom; Rivercourse; and many other programs. We are currently exploring various options to continue our involvement with the Davidson River Project and we will keep you posted on the progress of same. The Fly Fishing School is scheduled for April 24th at Harmon Field (Tyron) and it promises to be an excellent one.

With this new year, I would like to encourage everyone to be an active participant in the Chapter and all that it has to offer. Come enjoy the monthly Chapter meetings and the exciting speakers we have scheduled; volunteer for one of the many projects; or consider filling one of the open positions.....we always need your help!!

PCTU January 2010 President's Letter continued

Thanks again to everyone for making 2009 a truly terrific year! Best wishes to all of you and your families for a wonderful 2010!
See you soon...either at a meeting or on the water.

Tight Lines,
Kiki Matthews

At our November 12 Meeting Jim Casada talked about Fly Fishing in the Great Smoky Mountains and many of the characters he has known over the years. He even shared with us some of his "secret spots". 52 members and guests attended the meeting.



Jim Casada



Than Axtell

British Columbia Bound

Headwaters guides will host a trip to Fernie, B.C. on Aug. 15-21, 2010, fishing for giant bull trout, Westslope cutthroats and trophy rainbows. We'll float three days in drift boats, catching 30 or more cutties a day on dry flies, toss hoppers at 20-inch bows at a private ranch in Alberta, and chase 10-pound bull trout on the Wigwam River. Five days of fishing and six nights of lodging with three squares costs only **\$1,800** per person (excluding taxes, tips, licenses, and your flight into Kalispell, MT.) At \$360 a day per person, this is a deal not to be missed. A 50% deposit is due by Dec. 15 to ensure one of six remaining spots. Call Than at the shop for details.



Our speaker for the January 14th meeting is Bill Oyster, the owner and sole craftsman of Oyster Bamboo Fly Rods. (<http://www.oysterbamboo.com/index.html>). He will be talking about the building of bamboo rods, their use and how to maintain them. Bill has his shop in Blue Ridge, GA where he offers rods, reels, line, and classes on building your own fine bamboo rod. He believes that bamboo rods are made to be fished. Oyster Bamboo had a booth at the Asheville Fly Fishing Expo November 7th and 8th.



From the Editor

January and February are typically our most difficult months to catch fish - water temperatures are in the 30's and low 40's. Many choose to wait for the warmer weather of March and DH stockings. I have included three articles which I hope will help those who continue to fish.



Page 8 is an article from Tight Lines the newsletter for the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited.
www:/rabuntu.com

“Catchin’ Corner” - Winter Trouting Tips has by Jeff Durniak has some great advice for all of us - espe-

cially the beginners.

Page 9 - Sink Tip by John Berry. Some will remember an article in March 2009 Snags & Snarls by John Berry titled “Y2K Bug”. **Sinktip** tells us how to get the fly down deep where the big guys live. The big surprise for me was that he only uses 3 - 4 ft. of leader!

I recently went to eBay and purchased 6 ft. of TypeVI sinking line with a loop on both ends. The Buy it Now price was \$8.00 including shipping. John Berry is a guide on the White River. He publishes a very interesting weekly newsletter berrybrothers@infodash.com

Page 10 - Big Fish Eat Little Fish an article from the fly shack www.flyshack.com

James Hoskinson



North Mills River looking upstream from the campground bridge. 12-24-09

General Meeting Location and Directions

Our new meeting location is at the Pardee Health Education Center inside the Blue Ridge Mall. Anyone travelling I-26 use Exit is 49A.

The Blue Ridge Mall is located at 1800 Four Season's Blvd,(US 64) Hendersonville, NC 28759

Little River Stocking

November 4th, 2009

(By Jack Soyak: questions on the article or pictures please call at 692-5007 or E-mail at jsoyak@morrisbb.net)

The last stocking of the year for the Little River in DuPont State Forest took place on a crisp November day and the leaves were in their full fall colors. The Little River had an over abundance of water flowing over the falls.



We had a great volunteer turn out for the stocking and everything started as planned with plenty of buckets at the ready to transfer the trout. However, at the first stocking point near the Hooker Falls parking area, Mr. Ken Voltz slipped on a steep muddy bank and fell injuring his right shoulder. He was alert and walking but had serious pain with limited right arm mobility. He was immediately advised to go home and seek medical attention if the pain increased. Later in the day he informed me that he had been to the hospital and had broken his collarbone and bruised his leg. His right arm is now in a sling but he expects to be back to normal within 2 to 4 weeks. He says he will now have to practice casting using his left hand and arm and he

had to postpone several scheduled hikes.

We continued with the stocking but ran into difficulties due to a new dip net. Mr. Bill Wearmouth, also known as “The Big Dipper”, had problems with the new net and for the first time this year a number of trout escaped during the transfer from the holding tanks into our buckets. Needless to say, we scrambled in all directions picking up the escaped trout.

To add to the day’s confusion, The North Carolina Helo Aquatic Rescue Team coordinated by North Carolina Emergency Management in conjunction with the North Carolina National Guard was conducting wilderness rescue training in the DuPont State Forest. Three “volunteer survivors” were stranded on a rock near Triple Falls as a Black Hawk helicopter hovered overhead, spraying cold water from the waterfall in every direction. Much to the surprise of several of our volunteers, the prop wash from the helicopter’s rotors picked up two of our empty buckets and sent them airborne. They were last seen gracefully flying across the Little River into a heavy forested area. The buckets could have caused serious Foreign Object Damage (FOD) to the helicopter. I wonder what the helicopter crew was thinking as they watched the airborne buckets disappear into the forest!

Thankfully the stocking ended with no further difficulties. The following individuals took part in the stocking: Eric Folk, DuPont State Forest Ranger; Chase Mathis, DuPont State Forest Internist; Kevin Gabel, Pisgah Hatchery; and Bill Wearmouth, Ken Voltz, Don Lingard, Frank Forrester, Peter Greko, Jack Soyak and two new volunteers Ronald Roberts and Doug Manheim.

The Pisgah Hatchery delivered 263 pounds of trout equivalent to approximately 785 fish with an average weight of 0.3 pounds each. However, there were some real “whoppers” within the mix. Brooks made up 40 per cent of the total, 20 per cent were Browns and 40 per cent were Rainbows.

We invite Chapter Members to volunteer in stocking the Little River. If you wish to participate, please contact Jack Soyak at jsoyak@morrisbb.net or by telephone at 692-5007. Our next stocking will be in March, 2010. If I don't see you during the next Chapter Meetings, have a wonderful holiday season!



Green River Stocking

November 5th, 2009

Below are the names of those involved in the Green River Stocking as well as a short report.

Last thursday, November 5th was our last stocking of the year and it was a good one. As usual Mike Dennis furnished muffins purchased from the Dixie Diner located in Laurel Park, Hendersonville. These muffins are so huge that we cut each one in half and they fed our group nicely. Frank Forrester furnished the knife that did the slicing and that knife was so large that I kept looking over my shoulder to see if Home Land Security was going to descend upon us. But things turned out all right.

Normally the truck driver will fill our buckets with fish but this time things were a little different. Joe Moore and Charlie Dotson did the honors of diveyng up the fish and the truck driver got a well deserved rest. I will admit Joe and Charlie did a great job and I'm hoping that they'll help out next time. The fish count was still a little low at 800 pounds. But with certain changes at the hatchery the count will probably be higher next year.

Thanks to all that helped out this year and I'll see every one in the spring.

Ross Fox

The following are the people that helped: John Barsotti, John Spooner, Joe Moore, Ken Brady, Buddy Kimura, John Johnson, Shirley Johnson, Mike Hanesworth, Mike Dennis, David Maxwell, Bill Bartles (truck driver), Ross Fox



“Catchin’ Corner” - Winter Troutng Tips

By Jeff Durniak (a.k.a. Dredger), Georgia Wildlife Resources Division

What’s a “good day?” The definition of “a good day” may be three trout for a rookie, but it may be 20 fish including 3 whoppers for some of your veterans. To each, his own. We each have our own definition of a “good day fishing” and each person’s opinion is equally valid. For me, fishing is not competitive. It’s not how many I catch, it’s about fishing with friends in scenic locales and hopefully catching some fish, maybe even a big one if we’re lucky and have prepared well. And yesterday, it was not even wetting my line, but simply putting a friend in the right spot and watching the smiles on Mark’s face as the rod bent. Indeed, my day was good!

Many of you reading this are undoubtedly more gifted fly anglers than I. This note is simply aimed at the new folks among us who may benefit from some winter troutng tips. I met several of you streamside or in sporting goods stores this week. For the new folks, may I offer this winter recipe to help you through a fun but challenging season for Georgia trout, hopefully without breaking your dwindled, post-holiday bank account. There is not one “right way” of fishing. However, this way has worked for me and maybe it will work for you, too. And don’t worry, it gets a lot easier in the spring, when the water warms and the fish will chase your offering. Here we go:

Obtain at least 3 of each of these flies: #10 black woolly bugger; #14 peach egg fly; #14 prince nymph; #16 hare’s ear nymph; #18 pheasant tail nymph; #18 pheasant tail- soft hackle wet fly (No beads on the flies.)

Get a few 7.5 foot 3X trout leaders and two spools of tippet (5x and 6X). Get 2 or 3 sizes of split shot: 1) the tiny shot, like Dinsmores, 2) size B, 3) size BB. Buy a few strike indicators.

Arrive at stream at 10 AM and fish til 3 or 4. Tie 18 inches of 5X to your leader’s 3X end. Add enuf shot above that knot to let your fly tick-tick along the stream bottom. That may mean one tiny shot or 4 big ones, depending on the water depth and speed of each pool or run. Tie the bugger, egg, or prince to the 5X tippet end. Put your strike indicator way up your leader, toward your fly line. The length between the indicator and your fly should be at least 1.5 if not 2X or more the water depth of the spot you’re fishing. Adjust as needed for each pool or run.

Toss this combo upstream at a 30 degree angle 3-6 feet above where you think the fish are holding and let it drift, drag-free, back down toward you. If you bump the fly along the bottom in a spot where fish are (slower areas during winter), you may get some hits. The strike indicator will show you those bottom ticks and the strikes. With the bugger, after your fly drifts downstream, well past you, twitch your rod tip and strip the fly back upstream in 6-inch strips.

Now here’s the secret weapon. Many of our trout in these catch&release waters have, indeed, been caught and released. They smarten up and avoid big flies and beads, unless the water’s muddy. Smithgall is the most extreme example of all! You’ll have better success if you tie on 12-18 inches of 6X to the bend of the hook of the first fly and then tie on one of the small flies on the list, above. Start out “big” (size 14 or 16) and, if you don’t get strikes, substitute the smaller flies. Sometimes I’ll even go down to a #20 pheasant tail or soft hackle, but it’s hard to hook fish with such tiny hooks. Roll cast or water load. Try not to false cast or do it minimally, as the fish are not in the air or trees, the branches and tangles are.

As a resource manager and fellow angler, each year at this time I often hear anglers’ comments about their reduced catch rates. Their stated reasons often include “lack of stocking” and “poachers.” Based on my experience, the reasons are more often: 1) released fish “smartened up” from their earlier experiences with you, 2) lethargic fish due to cold water, and 3) the angler’s fly or lure not being down where the fish are, since those fish are not gonna come get it like they did in November, when the water was warmer and they were naive.

The “tiny fly off the back” technique works for me in these clear waters where the fish are now experienced and cold. Maybe it will work for you, too, if the water’s 40F or warmer. If it does, you’ll notice that you’ll catch some more colorful and harder fighting fish- the earliest stocked veterans or even the wild fish. The fresh stockers will still slam your gaudy bead fly, egg or Y2K.

“Catchin’ Corner” - Winter Trouting Tips continued

PS- there is no substitute for the experience of a “guide” or mentor. Offer to pay for his/her lunch or for the gas tank fill-up for the next fishing trip. Good luck! www.gofishgeorgia.com

This article appeared in The January issue of TIGHT LINES the newsletter of the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited. www:/rabuntu.com

SINK TIP

John Berry

If you only have one fly line it should be a weight forward floating line. If you buy a second line it should be a sink tip.

The sink tip is basically the combination of a floating line (on the rear of the line) and a sinking line (on the front of the line). The major advantage of the sink tip is that it will be easier to cast than a sinking line and still be able to deliver a fly deep into the depths of the body of water you are fishing. A sink tip will get a fly down deeper and faster than a floating line with weight on the leader.

The sinking section can be various lengths (from four to thirty feet). Generally the longer the sinking section the deeper it will sink. When you buy a sink tip the package will indicate the length of the sinking section. There are also a variety of sink rates, Type I to Type VI, (it is also assigned a sink rate in inches per second). The higher the sink rate the faster it will sink.

This all sounds great but what sink tip should you buy? The sink tip that I have found the most useful is the ten foot Type VI. This is the one I use when I dredge the deeper holes on the White River or the Spring River. In fact this is the only sink tip I buy. If I need a shorter sink tip to use on lower water, just cut down an old line to have a five or seven foot sinking section. This is what I do with old damaged sink tips.

When I buy a sink tip or other line I also buy a new spool for my reel. That way, when I want to change lines, I just change the spool. When I fish a sink tip, I always carry an additional spool with a floating line in the event that I happen upon a decent hatch and want to fish dry flies or soft hackles.

One of the things you will notice is that a sink tip will occupy less space on the reel than a weight forward line. The sinking section is a smaller diameter than the corresponding section of a floating line. As a result, you will be able to put more backing on your reel. This is a major advantage when that trophy brown hits your fly and heads downstream at a great rate of speed.

I always attach a loop to end of my line. **To rig a fly I take a section of 3X or 4X tippet about three and a half feet long, I tie a surgeon’s loop knot on one end and attach it to the fly line with a loop to loop connection. I tie the fly on and I am ready to fish. I rig this way because if I used a normal leader the fly would tend to rise and that would defeat the purpose of using a sink tip.**

I prefer a stiff rod to handle a sink tip; one that has plenty of back bone. My personal favorite is an old Sage RPL nine foot six weight. To cast a sink tip, the trick is to strip the line in till you only have twenty to twenty-five feet of line out. Put your rod tip down on the surface of the water. Execute your back cast with authority and make sure that you have a crisp stop on the back. Let your line straighten out and make a forward cast with a crisp stop on the front. Shoot as much line as you need. The heavily weighted section of the sink tip will cause it to cast like a bullet.

To fish the sink tip, I cast it downstream at a 45degree angle to the bank. I let the line swing in the current until it is directly below me. As it swings, I will mend the line up stream to allow the fly to sink better. I will mend any bow in the line up stream to allow the fly to sink deeper. At the end of the swing, I strip the fly back toward me. I generally use short strips (a couple of inches) and vary the speed of the retrieve until I figure out what the fish want. It is usually easy to detect a strike. In fact, a good trout can almost jerk the rod out of your hand. I generally use woolly buggers and other streamers (I especially like to fish sculpins or crayfish imitations). This is also a great tool to fish for small mouth bass when they are deep.

So the next time you are out on the river and you want to add some depth to your fishing, think sink tip.

John Berry (870) 435-2169 berrbrothers@infodash.com www.berrybrothersguides.com

Big Fish Eat Little Fish

Streamer flies are great fish-catchers throughout the trout season, but for some reason they're often associated with fall. Actually, there might be a couple of reasons. Trout may be especially willing to strike flies that look (or act) like smaller fish in defense - of their unborn young. Brown and brook trout spawn in the fall, and their instincts may tell them to kill intruding minnows before they get a chance to raid the eggs newly laid in the redds. Or it may be that trout are just plain hungry in the fall - aware that winter is coming and the food supply, in the form of insects, is dwindling. Not a good time to be a sculpin, a smelt or a dace. Whatever the reason, many anglers catch the best trout of their seasons as the last of the leaves are blowing off the trees in November. Fishing streamers is basically simple: find some deep water that looks fishy and swim your fly through it. But getting your streamer down deep may take some planning. The most effective way is with a sinking or sink-tip line. Sink tips meant to be loop-to-looped onto a floating line are also effective, and can be removed for an easy conversion back to a floating rig if you come upon rising fish and crave some late-season dry-fly fishing. Finally, a plain old floating line with a weighted streamer, and maybe a split shot or three, will get the job done, especially if you take the trouble to cast upstream of your target water so your fly has time sink. When using any kind of sink tip, remember to keep your leader short - four feet or less - so the fly stays down where the line is. There are a few broad categories of streamers, each with its own advantages and charms.

Traditional Streamers. Flies made of long, slender hackle feathers. In many cases, their tying instructions call the long feathers "wings" because they're tied in at the head of the fly, like wings on a wet fly, but make no mistake - the feather is an imitation of a bait fish's body, and it's a good one. When pulled through the water, the feathers pulse, sway and wiggle in a most lifelike fashion, and they're light and easy to cast, too. Disadvantages: they sometimes "foul" (feather gets wrapped around bend of hook), and they're not the most durable patterns. Classic examples are the Black and Gray Ghosts and the Dark Spruce.



Bucktails. The name says it all. They're made of the hair of a deer's tail. They're fairly durable, light and have nice movement in the water - not as wiggly as true streamers, but sort of trembly and shimmery. They lend themselves well to using dark colors on top and light on the bottom (classic fish coloration), and it's easy to add some flash along the sides or inside of the bucktail. The classic patterns include Black-Nose Dace and Mickey Finn. The Little Brook, Brown, and Rainbow Trout are great bucktail streamers that imitate the fry of these fish. Since trout will eat their own kind, they are effective in nearly all trout waters.



Bunnies. Strips of rabbit hide have been used in recent decades to make flies with extraordinary movement. The Bunny Leech, the Zonker and other flies in this category wiggle and squirm in a way that trout can seldom resist. They also come in big sizes, and it's often true that bigger flies means bigger fish. Patterns with weight at the nose, such as beads or cones, will hop like jigs and drive trout mad with desire. Disadvantage: the weight makes them cast like a wet sock.



The Buzzer family. Woolly Buzzers have been said to look like stoneflies, hellgrammites, crayfish, caterpillars and leeches. Actually, in the right colors they do look a little like all of them, and yet they swim and dart through the water like small fish. Whatever trout think they look like, the response is the same: Catch! Bite! Eat! Woolly Buzzers and cousins, like the Egg-Sucking Leech (a Buzzer with a Glo-Bug egg pattern on its nose) have tails of wavy marabou and soft, undulating hackle wound up the length of the body palmer-style. They are easily weighted, with lead on the hook, a bead on the nose or both, so you can get them down in the depths where the big hogs lie. You can swim them, crawl them, drift them or even zip them along just under the surface and have lots of fun with trout on a November afternoon.



You could fish nothing but streamers from ice out 'till the snow flies (and beyond) and catch lots of trout, including big ones. Most of us, however, like to fish dry flies when the trout are looking up, and enjoy high-stick nymphing to find out whether a fish is lying alongside a given rock or below a particular current seam. But if you're ever going to set aside some time to sling streamers, fall is the season.

This article appeared in the January issue of the Flyshack newsletter. To sign up for a free monthly email subscription go to flyshack.com

Au Sable waters still flies-only

BY ERIC SHARP
FREE PRESS SPORTS WRITER

Language in the last version of the new trout fishing regulations that went before the Natural Resources Commission would have allowed any artificial lures to be used on stretches of the Au Sable Main Stream and South Branch, which had been flies only.

When some of the state's more fanatical fly anglers saw this, they were more than a little upset by the idea of a mob of hardware flingers showing up with crankbaits.

Some of those people might even use bait-casting rods and spit tobacco juice into the holy waters. Not to worry, says Kelley Smith, chief of the Department of Natural Resources fisheries division. Regulations that DNR director Becky Humphries signs off on this week will continue the ban on anything but flies on those waters.

Smith says the version of the new regulations that were given to the NRC were correct when they were first presented in August, but due to a bureaucratic snafu, when they were reprinted after amendments, the bit about flies-only waters on the Au Sable system was changed inadvertently.

"We're changing it again right now," Smith said. "No one was trying to sneak in changes that would have allowed (spoons and crankbaits) on the holy waters. Even if it hadn't been noticed, the (flies-only) rule was already printed in the new fishing guides that go out in March.

"This wouldn't have got much attention at all except two guy (anglers) blasted us in e-mails to everyone they could think of. By the time they did that, we were already making the correction. Should it have happened? No. But we're fixing it, and we'll wait another month to allow public comment. (Humphries) won't sign the new regulations this week. Instead, she'll wait until January."

I was the recipient of some e-mails and telephone calls about this mistake, and I have to admit that the way it was presented, it sounded more serious than the reality proved to be. I was more concerned about the reasoning behind the change than that it was coming up for adoption.

The reason I wasn't worried — I know Humphries can fix mistakes or wrong-headed moves simply by issuing an amended director's order. So if the people who sent me the e-mails were right, the key seemed to be mobilizing fly fishermen to demand a fix.

Josh Greenberg, the manager of Gates Au Sable Lodge on the Au Sable River near Grayling, said the real damage was to the DNR's relationship with fly anglers.



Trout Unlimited Booth at the November 7th and 8th Asheville Fly Fishing Expo shared by Land O Sky and Pisgah Chapter. Dave Pierce, Betsy Craig - LOS, Jim Hoskinson, Frank Forrester



Thank You Al Rogers
November Fly Raffle -
PCTU collected \$110

Pisgah Chapter Directory

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EVENT CALENDAR

January 6	Board Meeting Kelsey's	6:30
January 14	General Meeting	7:00 Social, 7:30 Meeting
February 3	Board Meeting Kelsey's	6:30
February 11	General Meeting	7:00 Social, 7:30 Meeting
March 3	Board Meeting Kelsey's	6:30
March 11	General Meeting	7:00 Social, 7:30 Meeting

Mentors List

Chapter Members listed below are available to accompany one or two members who would like to learn more about fly fishing in our streams. If you are just beginning to fly fish, here's an opportunity to get help from some knowledgeable anglers.

Bob Daubert	693-6262
Steve Fromholtz	674-2450*
Dave Maxwell	894-0308
Steve Herring	749-9352
Dale Klug	243-6783

Legend: * weekends only

Reference Phone Numbers

NC Wildlife Violations	800-662-7137
NC Wildlife Resource Comm. - Doug Bessler	828-659-8684
Fish Biologist - Lorie Stroup	828-877-3265 ext 219
Silt Problems - Dennis Owenby	828-251-6208
Fish Hatchery Kiosk - Jim Medford	828-699-8593
Water discharges on the Green River	800-829-5253
Water discharges on the Nantahala River & Tuckasegee River	866-332-5253
National Trout Unlimited	www.tu.org
Pisgah Chapter Trout Unlimited	www.main.nc.us/PCTU



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