

Snags & Snarls

**Pisgah Chapter Trout Unlimited
September 2010**

September 2010 PCTU President's Letter

This is the time of year when fall is supposed to return, but this year has proven so unusual weather wise, who knows? In any case, it won't be long before delayed-harvest streams will be restocked and the leaves will be turning.



On behalf of the PCTU Board, I would like to extend my thanks to everyone for their interest and support of the recent North Mills River / Big Creek Lodge land conservancy grant opportunity. The Board made the decision to make a \$1000 contribution out of the 2009 Gift Campaign donations that had been earmarked for coldwater conservation projects. In addition, members have collectively donated another \$1000; between individual contributions and proceeds that were raised during the August chapter meeting raffle; bringing our total contribution to \$2100. As a result of not only our chapter's donation, but also the NCTU gift of \$10,000 and other chapter contributions from North and South Carolina, the goal of \$30,000 has been achieved. It appears that this goal will actually be exceeded. If so, it has been determined that the extra funds will "seed" the newly established NCTU Land Conservancy Trust Fund for future projects of this sort.

As many of you know, Bob Daubert and Skip Sheldon had “tendered their resignations” as Davidson River Project Leaders a number of months ago. After working many years and doing a terrific job, they were ready to turn the reins over to someone new. I am pleased to announce that Tim Schumbel has agreed to take on this position. Bob and Skip along with Dave Maxwell and our partners at the US Forest Service will be assisting in the training and support of Tim as he gets started. Please watch for future announcements of work project opportunities.

Speaking of volunteer opportunities, if you are interested in helping with either the Davidson River Road Cleanup, currently scheduled for Thursday, September 16th (9:00 am at Coontree Picnic Area) or the Green River Fish Stocking, currently scheduled for Wednesday, October 6th (10:00 am at Fish Top), please contact Ross Fox at rossmfox@hotmail.com or 859-9979.

Lastly, I would like to invite everyone to the September Chapter Meeting on Thursday, the 9th. This meeting will focus entirely on a Trout Unlimited update. We will have three short presentations on the status and future direction of TU from the state, Southeast Region, and national perspectives. The three speakers are: Dale Klug; Chair of NCTU / Damon Hearne; Southeastern Land Protection Coordinator – TU / Franklin Tate; TU National.

Reminder: The September meeting will also be the election of the Board of Directors for the upcoming year. Please plan on attending.

Tight Lines

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**William Allman
George Guenther
David Sprague**

OUR VISION

Pursue a future where healthy populations of native and wild coldwater fish thrive in the Western North Carolina region for following generations to enjoy.

OUR MISSION

Conserve, protect and restore coldwater fisheries and their watersheds in the Western North Carolina region.



General Meeting Location and Directions

Our 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

The speaker at the August 12 meeting was Jake Rash, the Coldwater Research Coordinator from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. He presented an update on the status of their 5 year strategic research plan and its impact on our local watersheds.



John Johnson (Right) wins raffle for Al Rogers tied fly box

HOW HAS FLY FISHING CHANGED?

BY JOHN BERRY

I was fishing with a client the other day, when he asked me an intriguing question. How has fly fishing changed since you started? I immediately started going through some of the changes in my head and quickly realized that there had been substantial change. Most of it was positive. I began fly fishing three decades ago and I must admit that I spend most of my time trying to manage change.

The most obvious change to me is that there are a lot more of us. There are more people fly fishing now than when I first started. Back then there were precious few fly fishers. Most of the anglers that you saw were bait fishing. Now it seems like there is parity in the numbers of fly fishers versus bait or lure anglers. A lot of the increase is due to technological advances in fly fishing gear. The advances in fly fishing gear have had a profound effect on the sport by making it easier to do and to make the anglers more comfortable. Another cause is the popularity of the movie, *A River Runs Through It*. I think that you could boost the popularity of *Tiddlywinks* if you made a movie about it featuring Brad Pitt.

Fly rods have undergone significant change. When I first started fly fishing, my first fly rod was made of fiber glass. It was heavy and had a very soft action. I remember casting a graphite rod for the first time. It was a Sage and it cast like a dream. It was lighter and had a much stiffer action than my fiberglass. I was so impressed that I went out and bought one (my daughter still fishes with it). The rods then were mostly eight footers. The rods now are much longer. Most are nine feet and several are ten feet. The actions are stiffer and they weigh less.

Fly lines have undergone some fundamental change. Years ago they were either level (no taper) or they were double taper with a distinct taper on each end. The level lines were inexpensive but cast poorly. The double tapers were popular because you could use one end until you wore it out and then turn it around and use the other side. Now the most popular lines are weight forward which have a distinct taper and are heavier on the tapered end. The other end is smaller and lighter. This allows the line to be cast further. There are also a variety of specialty lines that did not exist then. We now have sink tips, which have a front sinking section and a floating rear section, this allows us to fish deep and still cast the line easily. We also have bass bug lines designed to cast wind resistant bass flies and nymph lines designed to cast double fly rigs, weight and strike indicators. There are more.

The fly reels used when I first started were basically unchanged since the nineteenth century. They used a simple spring and pawl drag. The big change since then is that most fly reels sold today feature a disc drag system similar to that used in automobile brakes. Reels with disc drags weigh a bit more than spring and pawl drags. The current trend is toward larger arbors which allow you to reel in line more quickly. Larger arbors weigh more than smaller arbors. So, while rods are getting lighter, reels are getting heavier.

One change that we don't think about often has been the improvement in leaders and tippets. Back in the day we made our own leaders. We would take several sections of different sized tippet material and carefully join them with blood knots to produce a tapered shape. The knots had a tendency to grab algae or any trash in the water. We now buy knotless tapered leaders that perform flawlessly. Tippets have gotten much stronger over the years. When I began fishing 4X was four pound test. Now 4X is six or even seven pound test. Then there is fluorocarbon. This stuff is stronger, more abrasion resistant and has a specific gravity greater than water (it is heavier than water and it sinks).

The change in waders has possibly been the greatest change of all. When I began, I used a borrowed pair of rubberized cotton boot foot waders. They were clumsy, bulky and clammy. The first pair that I bought were neoprene. They were the hot new thing at the time and great during the cold months when their insulating properties were appreciated. They were stocking foots with separate boots that were much more comfortable and provided significant ankle support. However when the summer came, they were stifling. The new style breathable waders are the perfect waders for our area. They are lighter in weight and breathe making them much cooler in summer. In the winter we wear a pair of fleece pants and we are quite comfortable.

The last major change that I have seen has been in fishing ethics. Thirty years ago we kept everything we caught. A stringer was a regular part of our fishing gear. As I grew with the sport, I came to realize that the fish were too valuable to kill. I would rather release them so that I can return and catch them again. As our rivers get more crowded and fishing pressure increases, this is the only viable strategy to provide a quality fishing experience. I am not the only person with this opinion. Arkansas Game and Fish Commission creel studies prove that there are more anglers per mile fishing in Catch and Release waters than other sections. Years ago, I also fished over spawning trout. I caught some great fish but I came to realize that it was more important for the trout to naturally procreate than to provide me with a little recreation. Others have come to agree with me and the major spawning grounds are now closed during the spawn.

I have seen a lot of change in the last few years and it has been for the better. I have better gear that is much easier to cast, it keeps me more comfortable and I regularly catch quality fish that are the equal of good trout anywhere. Sometimes change is good!

John Berry

berrybrothers@infodash.com

www.berrybrothersguides.com

John Berry is a fly fishing guide in Cotter, Arkansas and has fished the area rivers for over twenty five years.

The river critter we're trying to avoid

Published: Tuesday, August 17, 2010, 4:07 AM



The Oregonian Editorial Board

Now some of the folks who love them most face a grim dilemma: Are fly fishers and others who would wear felt-soled waders posing an invasive species threat to the waterways?

Felt has long been the way to go. It grips slippery rocks like nothing else, offering sure footing in surging streams.

But felt is a porous mat and holds water like a sponge. If not cleaned properly, the soggy sole from last week's fishing venture in British Columbia may well store microorganisms that could live long enough to be transported to a favored fishing spot in the Umpqua, Willamette or Deschutes basins.

Once delivered, if the microorganism's name is didymo, large tissuelike mats on the river bottom could start to choke out native plants and invertebrates and limit the food chain.

That's what happened in New Zealand, which banned felt-soled waders, and more recently in Alaska and Vermont, whose legislatures passed felt-sole bans waiting to take effect in 2012 and 2011 respectively.

But Oregon has not yet seen the diatom didymo, whose blooms are more commonly known as rock snot. Didymo is so feared, however, that in 2006 it made it onto the **Oregon Invasive Species Council's** "hit list" of worst critters to be kept out of Oregon waters.

Trout Unlimited and the **Native Fish Society** have lobbied Salem legislators to enact, in the 2011 session, a ban on felt-soled wading boots. Fine. But the problem goes beyond felt soles to other parts of the boot that also offer unseen creatures a free ride to the next waterway: laces, tongues, uppers.

That makes improperly cleaned and dried gear the real culprit, though few disagree that felt is a prime offender.

Oregon already faces complication in the New Zealand mud snail, an invasive that has taken hold in waterways up and down the coast and in the Deschutes basin. The size of a grain of sand, the mud snail is suspected of arriving here via several sources, one of them the felt-soled waders of fishers.

Few people know didymo's threat, however, better than Bob Wiltshire of the **Center for Aquatic Nuisance Species** in Montana. Though he reviewed and verified the science indicting felt-soled waders as delivery vehicles for didymo, Wiltshire says the critter will stay on the move until fishing gear goes retro: to a one-piece rubber boot and wader combination that is easily cleaned and dried.

Such gear now is aimed at the lower end of the market, and its upgrade would require new rubber compounds and more fitting options. But to do so would also require a sensibility shift among Oregon fishers, not to mention an overhaul of a boot market tooled for comfort, custom fit and sure-footed security.

Nobody wants to slip on the rocks, we get that. But didymo could seriously affect our rivers. Measures to prevent its arrival, including a possible felt ban, should be seriously examined.

Boot makers are successfully trying out new sticky rubber treads as well as swappable soles, yet getting away from felt won't be the only challenge. Proper cleaning and storage of all submerged gear worn in the river — and the education needed to make that happen — are every bit as important.

Oregon Live.com

BACK TO THE FUTURE Bootfoot Waders



The Bivisible, Brown



HOOK: Mustad 94840 or equivalent (Standard Dry Fly Hook) 10-16
THREAD: Brown
TAIL: Brown Hackle Barbs
BODY: Several brown hackles tied in the rear and palmered forward tightly;
In front are two or three turns of white hackle.

Comment: This is an easy fly to tie. It is a high floating fly that is particularly good in fast high water. It was probably developed in the east many years ago. It can be found on plate 14 of Bergman's TROUT (1938 edition). It can be tied in many colors. Just change the hackle and the thread, but remember to keep the white hackle up front.

Jack Frisch (The Classic Fly Tier)



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Address comments to:
Snags & Snarls
PO Box 841
Hendersonville NC 28793-0841

Pisgah Chapter Directory

Officers and Board

President	Kiki Matthews	828-696-1599
	kikimatthews@bellsouth.net	
Vice President...	Open	
Secretary	Chris Ellis	864-458-6240
	chris.ellis@us.michelin.com	
Treasurer	Dick Millonzi	828-595-3905
	kmillonzi@morrisbb.net	
Past President..	Linda Campbell	828-817-2681
	linda.campbell188@gmail.com	
Director (2010)	John Kies	828-698-5207
	johnkies@bellsouth.net	
Director (2011)	David Pierce	828-891-8991
	piercefordp@yahoo.com	
Director (2011)	Mike Dennis	828-891-7219
	ffmd48@yahoo.com	
Director (2011)	Jim Hoskinson	828-891-8440
	ifish2xs@bellsouth.net	
Director (2012)	John Johnson	828-749-1370
	john.johnson153@gmail.com	
Director (2012)	Shirley Johnson	828-749-1370
Publishing	Jim Hoskinson	828-891-8440
	ifish2xs@bellsouth.net	
Webmaster	Frank Forrester	828-458-3137
	fforrester@hotmail.com	

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
Alan Frank	926-4737**
Steve Fromholtz	674-2450*
Dave Maxwell	894-0308
Steve Herring	749-9352
Dale Klug	243-6783

Legend: * weekends only
** Haywood County

EVENT CALENDAR

September 1 Board Meeting - Kelseys
September 9 General Meeting 7:00 Social, 7:30 Meeting
October 6 Board Meeting - Kelseys
October 14 General Meeting 7:00 Social, 7:30 Meeting
November 3 Board Meeting - Kelseys
November 6 & 7 Flyfishing Expo WNC Ag Center
November 11 General Meeting 7:00 Social, 7:30 Meeting
No December Board Meeting or General Meeting

DELAYED HARVEST STOCKING SCHEDULE

Little River

October 6th
November 2nd

Green River

October 6th
November 4th

North Mills River

October 4th
November 4th

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 828-702-7037
troutwisperer@gmail.com
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.pisgahchaptertu.org