

Little River Chapter

Newsletter

JAN 2002

Editor Joe Hatton



Next Meeting

The next meeting is on the **Fourth** Thursday January 24 at 7:00 pm. We are meeting at Monte Vista Baptist Church at 1735 Old Niles Ferry Rd. in Maryville. The church has an entrance on the opposite side of Hwy 129 between the BiLo and the Co-op Gas station

Program : Annual swap meet so bring all your not being used Fly Fishing gear and buy, sell or trade with other members of the Chapter.

Embrace A Stream Grant.

An Embrace-a-Stream grant was completed and submitted last month through the hard work of Mark Spangler and Steve Moore. This year's grant application preparation was greatly helped by the experience and expertise of Mark Sollenberger out of the Knoxville Chapter . It will be several months before we hear back about this grant. If we get the grant then we must go to work raising matching funds and we need to involve other TU Chapters in that effort when the time comes.

Announcements

There will be a Board meeting at 6:00 p.m. prior to the January Chapter Meeting. It would be good to have the past Presidents join the board for this meeting.

Fishing Picks

By: Ian Rutter

Well, here we are at the bottom of the fishing year barrel. A productive day on the stream will probably require some travel as well as some tenacity. If you plan to head to the mountain streams, schedule your time for the middle of the day. Eat your lunch early or late because midday will probably be your best time to hook a trout. Focusing your efforts on the sunniest riffles and pools will pay the best dividends. Nymphs would be the smart way to go. However, if you're fishing on a cold day in January some wouldn't label you as smart. You might as well fling a bushy dry if the urge grabs you.

The tailwaters will be your best bet for consistency during these cold times. Midge pupa and scuds have always been good winter flies on the Clinch. Sometimes a Griffith's Gnat can stimulate a strike on top. If dry fly fishing is what you're itching for, you might log a few extra miles and head for the Hiwassee or South Holston. The run just behind the Webb store in Reliance always seems to have a few trout rising to midges or blue wing olives. A quick drive up the river may prove that there are better places, though. Be sure to check just below the power house all the way to the boat ramp and just below Fox's Hole where the big stone wall is against the road. (continued on page two)

Fishing pick (continued from page one)

The South Holston always seems to have most consistent surface activity out of our East Tennessee rivers and streams. Blue wing olives and sulphurs hatch consistently throughout the winter. These trout are among the most selective you'll find though, so have more than one of each type of fly. The fly that has produced the best for me has been a #18 Sparkle Dun in either olive or sulphur according to which was hatching. Nymphs or emergers are often more successful than dry flies for these rising fish so be flexible.

Wherever you fish this month, stay warm! If it's too cold for you, don't let your vise sit idle because spring hatches are only about eight or ten weeks away

Down But Not Out:**Drought Effects on Tennessee's Wild Trout Populations**

By: Jim Habera TWRA

Those who regularly fish our east Tennessee mountain streams have probably noticed that the quantity and quality of their catch has declined lately compared with a few years ago. If you're one of these anglers, you may legitimately use an excuse that I've employed on occasion and "blame it on the weather". According to the U.S. Drought Monitor and TVA, east Tennessee experienced drought conditions from the summer of 1998 through the spring and early summer of 2001. During July 1998 through February 2001, the Tennessee Valley above Chattanooga received only about 75% of its normal precipitation, and some areas probably got even less. This extended dry period reduced stream flows by about 40% on average and impacted wild trout abundance across the region.

During the past 11 years, wild trout abundance at TWRA's monitoring stations has

fluctuated but peaked in 1997. Since then, and in synchrony with the drought, wild trout abundance has steadily decreased in many streams. For example, total wild trout biomass at monitoring stations on North and Bald rivers (Monroe County), Rocky Fork (Unicoi County), and Doe Creek (Johnson County) decreased 43-66% by the fall of 2000. Biomass refers to the total weight of trout per unit of stream surface area (kilograms/hectare or pounds/acre) and I consider it a more informative measure of abundance than density, which is simply the number of fish per unit of surface area.

The production of relatively strong trout year classes during the recent drought, concurrent with a general decline in the abundance of larger fish, suggests that these conditions tend to impact larger trout more severely than young-of-the-year fish (YOY). Late winter and early spring floods can be devastating to YOY and may substantially reduce or nearly eliminate a year class. This happened with brown trout in several streams following the big February and March 1994 floods. The lack of torrential flows during droughts may actually improve conditions for producing young trout, but if the drought persists, recruitment of these fish (i.e., their survival to the sizes that anglers like to catch) is curtailed. Most of our larger wild trout, such as those \$8 inches, are living on the edge during the summer even under normal conditions. Higher water temperatures increase their need for very limited food supplies and droughts exacerbate this problem while decreasing available habitat for these fish at the same time. Although the relative numeric abundance of larger trout is typically low (often <20%) they can represent a substantial portion of biomass. (continued on page three)

Down But Not Out (continued from page two) A three-year drought, therefore, can have a large impact on the size structure and biomass of a trout population, as well as your fishing success.

Fortunately, the drought seems to have broken this year with the return of more normal levels of rainfall. Stream flows appeared much closer to normal during the summer and fall of 2001 and I actually had a few sampling trips rained out for the first time in a while. Preliminary results from our monitoring samples this fall indicate that wild trout abundances continued to decrease at some stations, stabilized at others, and even increased a bit at a few. So, the forecast for our wild trout populations is finally improving in general, but abundance in several remains at or near the lowest level observed since monitoring began in 1991. One characteristic of our wild trout populations that has surprised me a great deal is their resilience. They recovered from the 1994 floods in two to three years (as I mentioned previously, the highest abundances we've measured were in 1997). Therefore, given a return to relatively normal conditions, I would expect a similar time frame for recovery from the current drought-related reductions.



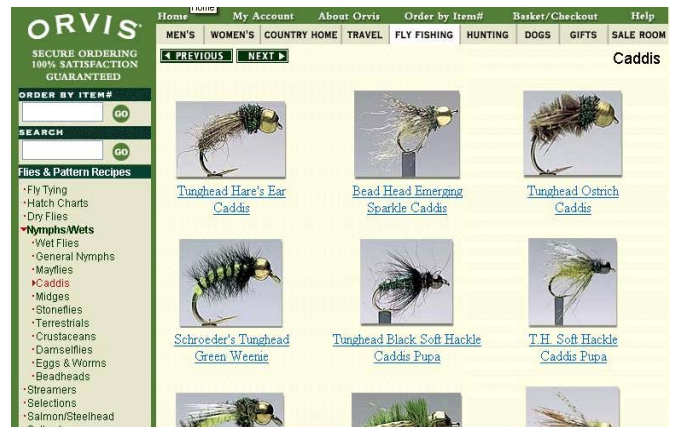
As seen on TV

The next time you need to wash your fishing vest or any of your outdoor gear, I have found a product that works great on hard to get out spots and stains. OxiClean don't laugh I had a fishing vest that dry fly had floated leaked on it. I tried several times washing it to get it clean. I stopped at the as seen on TV store in Sevierville and picked up some and it cleaned my fishing vest the first time. It also got out all

the grass stains too. If it didn't have several years of fishing on it, the vest would almost look new. So the next time your up on Highway 66 stop in and pick up some. I promise I won't tell.

Fly of the Month

This month instead one fly of themonth this article is about web resources for the winter fly tryer. The Orvis company has added a new feature to their Web site <http://www.orvis.com> It has a online fly catalog with defronted category of flies. When you click on each fly you get a picture of the fly with



the Fly Pattern Recipe witch is handy for tying flies and to see what the fly should look like. The Web site also has a Western US and Eastern & Mid-Western Hatch Charts The next time you are in a fly shop and see a standard fly you want to tie and would like to know what it takes finish it. This is one of many web site you can use as a resource.



Strategic Planning

A Strategic Planning session was attended by nine Board members and past presidents on 12/1/01. Four members who could not attend provided input for discussion prior to the meeting. In the meeting we reviewed successes of, opportunities for, weaknesses of, and threats to the Little River Chapter. It was a lively discussion on all points. We then focused on what our chapter should be and could become. The result was the following revised Mission Statement and three core goals for the chapter:

Mission Statement

Through hard work, dollars and the collection of scientific data, the Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited exist to protect and restore the aquatic resources of the GSMNP for use and enjoyment of present and future generations

Goals for 2002

- Strengthen the LR chapter by increasing the number of members and participation by everyone, recruiting and training new leaders, raising funds and holding fund raising events, and involving youth or students in projects.
- Increase public relations and awareness internally by re-involving past members and inviting back old leaders as well as a formal external public relations campaign to become known in the area for what we do.
- Continue our support of fisheries, monitoring, and restoration activities in GSMNP.

These goals are interdependent and working together this year will help us fulfill our mission. The Board will meet again this month or early next to compile detailed action steps for each of the goals.

Before that meeting we need the feedback from each and every member on the proposed Mission Statement and core goals. Then we will need your participation** and hard work to make it happen. So let us hear from you. We will discuss the mission and goals and share an idea list for specific actions at the January meeting; but whether you are at the meeting or not talk to one or more of the Board members. Tell us if you agree with the mission and goals and make suggestions for improvements and/or additions. We will use your input at the next planning meeting.

** Participation: We must fill several important director positions including Resource, Meetings, Publicity, and Fund Raising. If you have ever had any interest in any of these areas let us hear from you. We can only win the game with a full team of players on the field. Let us hear from you on the mission, goals and director spots:

Tom Eustis 681-2866, Jim Parks 423-932-2511, Roy Hawk 690-4795 Joe Hatton 558-8782, Lynn Hayes 379-0280, Jack Gregory 984-0078, Mike Stiehl 681-1605, Gary Ramsey 970-4900, Byron Begley 448-9459, Wayne Everbach 984-1131, David Ray 436-5083, Walter Babb 423-337-6772, Dave Maxey 546-7967, Ken Henderson 310-4959, Randall Barnes 977-8108



Joseph T Hatton
4809 Ridgedale Rd
Knoxville, Tn 37921

President - Tom Eustis

Vice President - Jim Parks

Secretary/Treasurer - Roy Hawk

Newsletter Editor - Joe Hatton

Resource Director -

Web Page Editor - Roy Hawk

Board Members

Lynn Hayes

Jack Gregory

Gary Ramsey

Mike Stiehl

Joe Hatton

David Ray

Byron Begley

Wayne Everback

Walter Babb

Dave Maxey

Ken Henderson

Randall Barnes

Little River Outfitters



P.O. Box 505 Townsend, Tennessee 37882
Toll Free 877-448-3474 Local 865-448-9459

- Fly Shop
- Fly Fishing School
- Guide Service

• SAGE • WINSTON • ORVIS •

UMPAUA • OUTCAST • SIMMS • GIFTS

SCOTT • ABEL • TIBOR • ART



- Fly Tying Instruction
- Fly Fishing Classes
- Over 700 patterns

6907 Kingston Pike
Knoxville, TN 37919

588-6159

• FLY TYING • GUIDE TRIPS •