

Little River Chapter Newsletter

Editor
Joe Hatton



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www.lrctu.org

Next Meeting

The next meeting is on the fourth Thursday Jan. the 25th, 7:00 P.M. 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 old Bi-Lo and the Co-op Gas station.

Program

Steve Moore will be talking to the chapter about our upcoming Lynn Camp Prong Brooktrout project, plus Steve will talk about future Brooktrout projects and two new stream projects planned Cades Cove.

Plus

This month we have the annual swap meet where everybody can sell their extra fishing gear.

Stream work

January 20,21 Bi-Monthly Acid Deposition Sample.

February Acid Deposition training session.

Make sure to plan to come to the February Acid Deposition training meeting and sign up to help out on one of our Chapter's most important projects.

Board Meeting

There will be a Board Meeting Jan. the 25th 6 pm, one hour before the regular meeting. All chapter officers are encouraged to attend.

Fishing Report

Hello Little River Chapter members and friends and happy new year. My good friend Joe Hatton asked me to write a fishing report for the newsletter. I said "sure, great you want it in April or May"? January? There's nothing to write about in January. The fishing is terrible. But Joe is the hardest working Trout Unlimited member I've ever known and I would do anything he asks so here goes:

My guess is at this point that the water in the Smokies is cold. By cold, I mean 40 degrees or less. When that happens, most of you know, the metabolism of a trout slows down and they don't eat much. Walter Babb told me the other day that he read: "It takes 5 days for a trout to digest food when the water is 40 degrees or less".

Temperature drives trout fishing. When the water warms to 45 degrees, the fish become more active. When it reaches 50 they are more active. From 55 to 60 the feed bag is on. At 70 they stop. But, cold water doesn't mean you can't go fishing. Winter is a wonderful time to be on the Little River or any Smokies stream. We have warm days in the winter and even some hatches. But usually the best advice is to fish nymphs, heavily weighted on the bottom where the trout are hunkered down. Also, cold water loses its ability to hold suspended solids so it's clear. Using fine tippet can help your chances during these times. Another good idea is to →

concentrate your fishing on sunny areas where the water is warmer. I've always heard that and it seems to work but I've never tested by any form of scientific data collection if moving water is actually warmer in the sunny spots. It seems to me that by the time it warms up, it's moved on down the stream. I do like to fish sunny spots in the winter because it feels warmer to me and I'm more comfortable, so fish the sunny spots.

If you are a mountain stream angler, now is a good time to prepare for Spring. It's not far off and you will need to tie flies if that's what you do, get your gear ready or clean up the clutter in your fly boxes. The first big hatch we all get excited about in the mountains is the Quill Gordon. These big grey flies pop off and the trout become active and so do the anglers. They usually hatch in March in the lower elevations and later the further upstream you go. Spring comes later in the high elevation streams. I remember one year when the Quill Gordons started hatching in big numbers in February. The local rule of thumb seems to be, if the water reaches 50 degrees and stays there the Quill Gordon start hatching. Other grey flies start their adult life about the same time so your box should have lot's of grey flies around March 1st.

Another option for winter fishing is our vast selection of tailwaters. The water can be warmer there and the trout more active. I called my friend Hugh Hartsell for some help on this subject. He guides in the Smokies and on all the tailwaters in this area. He likes the South Holston in the Winter. He was fishing yesterday (December 29th) with his wife Carolyn. They started below the weir dam and there were small gray midges on the surface but the river was full of people. They moved down to Big Springs Road and fished there. They started catching nice rainbows in the 12 to 16 inch range. During the winter on

the South Holston the water temperature doesn't get much below 44 degrees according to Hugh. You will get hatches of Cream Midges, Black Flies and Blue Wing Olives. Even in late December Hugh and Carolyn saw some Sulphurs hatching. I'm looking forward to Spring. It's New Years Eve right now and I resolve to do more fishing in 2007.

Have a great month and thank you for supporting the Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited and our precious fishery in the Smokies.

Byron

Greetings fellow Chapter members!

I write this article as your incoming Chapter president, and I humbly accept the honor and privilege to serve in such a capacity. But I sure didn't join this Chapter with any designs on one day becoming president. I just wanted to learn to fly fish better! Now I find myself the president (darn that Joe Hatton). Nevertheless, I'll sure try to serve you well.

Recently, I read an article about the act of meditation coming in different forms. According to the article, one doesn't necessarily need to meditate in the traditional sense of sitting quietly and clearing one's mind to achieve the goal of focusing on the moment at hand. Indeed, forms of meditation can come in activities that truly consumes one in a task or activity. Lo and behold, one example included fishing. Here, I can relate. When I fly fish the Smokies, I've got a single-minded purpose...catch those trout! It sometimes nearly scares me on how focused on the stream I can become. This past summer, I remember at one point crawling on my hands and knees along the East Prong of Little River while fishing just below the campground at Elkmont. Snakes? What →

snakes? I'm trying to catch trout on a fly rod. Truly in the moment. So, now I can tell Lee Anne (my wife), that I'm not just fishing, I'm meditating as well. She always says I come back from my trips to the Smokies a changed man.

Opportunities to meditate in (fish) that beautiful place called the Smokies makes me want to "give something back." This Chapter, with its mission of "protecting and restoring cold water resources and watersheds in and around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park" offers me opportunities to do just that. And it offers you those same opportunities. Bi-monthly acid deposition samplings, brook trout restoration work with the Park's Fisheries department, stream population samplings (shockings), as well as planning and working for Troutfest, come readily to mind. I encourage those of you wanting to do a little more to step-up and volunteer. Perhaps you have a talent that you can offer this Chapter. For example, I know Joe Hatton would like for someone to take over as newsletter editor. My point is, the opportunities to help this Chapter exist (see the newsletter), and I invite you to take advantage of those opportunities.

Finally, I want to thank Steve Best for his service as president this past year. He did a great job, and I want to cite one event in particular. Steve played a critical role in coordinating the Carpenters Middle School visit to Metcalf Bottoms back in May, and I applaud him for his effort. Getting young people involved with fishing and conservation stands as a most important aspect for the long term protection of the Park and surrounding lands. Thanks Steve! And thanks for taking me fishing to the Tellico watershed in November (though you out-fished me).

Best Regards to All,
Jeff Hall

TroutFest

It is time we start gearing up for Troutfest. I can use some help with organizing the Arts and Craft vendors and Food vendors. Or help with sending out Sponsor letters. If you would like to give a hand call me at 558-8782 or send me a e-mail to jthatton @knology.net

Thanks
Joe

Editor Note

Over the next few months I will be working on the Newsletter's web page. Each month's newsletter will have a stand along webpage. Then it will be archive as the next month newsletter is published. I will also be working on making the Hatch chart more usable. As everybody knows I think its time for someone else to take over the Newsletter so I can put more focus on my other projects. The chapter needs someone who is excited about doing it. If you are interested in the Newsletter position please let me know.

Thanks Joe

Fly of the month

BH Rubber Legged Copper John (Black)

Hook: 12-18

Thread: Black 6/0

Head: Gold Tungsten bead

Tail: Black rubber

Abdomen: Ultra-Wire, color & size to match

Thorax: Peacock herl

Wingcase: Strip of Thin Skin, pearl flashabou, and epoxy

Legs: Black rubber



The Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited is a nonprofit volunteer organization that is committed to Protecting & Restoring Cold Water Resources and Watersheds in and around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

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