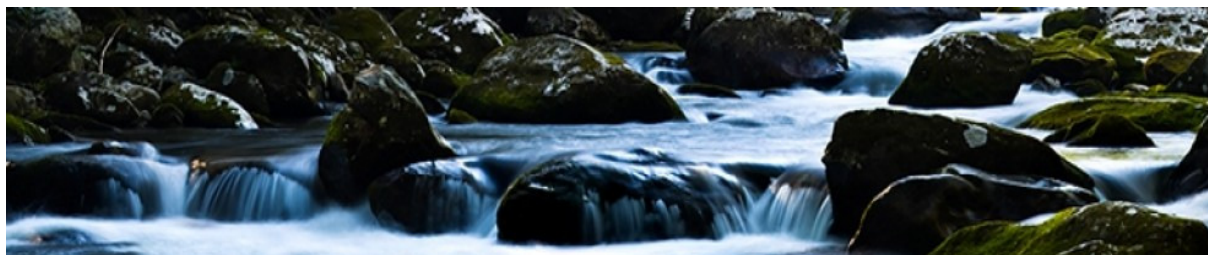


# Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

June 2014 Newsletter



## President's Corner

Mike Bryant ([mjbryant1954@hotmail.com](mailto:mjbryant1954@hotmail.com))

As the lack of rainfall continues into early June, low water levels are starting to impact the trout in the Park. Only a few short weeks ago, despite lower than average water levels, the trout were eagerly taking dry flies, including the larger than average size trout. But as the water dropped, normal lies became too shallow and the fish seem to be hunkered down and less willing to take a dry fly during the day. I'll be spending more time nymph fishing early and late in the day and praying for rain. Hopefully we won't have a repeat of the droughts of recent past.

Pat Tully and I did manage a trip up to Greenbrier to chase brookies back in May. The weather was good and the brookies were happy to take dry flies. I think we both cut off our nymph flies and fished with only dries for most of the day. It's a beautiful stream, but not a stream you want to fish alone.

Ernie Frey and I reviewed the Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program with the curriculum board at the Clayton Bradley Academy. The school has agreed to the program. We hope that this will be one of many TIC programs to establish in the area. Funds from the Steve Moore Youth Education Program will be used to procure the equipment. Ernie will be the TIC coordinator working closely with the teachers in equipment set-up, egg procurement, and troubleshooting as needed.

Have a great summer and be safe!

Mike

## Upcoming Activities

- Clinch River Clean-up - The Clinch River Chapter has scheduled their annual river cleanup on July 12. See the article below for additional sign-up details. I hope to see you there.
- July Outdoor Meeting - Our Little River Chapter monthly meeting in **July** will again be held at River John's. So mark your calendars for Thursday, July 24.
- September Trip - We are planning a fishing trip at Smokemont on September 19-21. This was a great trip last year. More details to come, but mark your calendars.

### **“It’s A Small World After All” Aquatic Entomology – Presented by Bill McConkey**

The presenter at our June, 26th meeting will be Bill McConkey. Bill is a native of Englewood, TN moved to Etowah, TN when he married. Bill has been teaching in McMinn County for a total of 35 years. Eighteen years as an Earth and Life Sciences teacher at Mountain View Elementary School (8<sup>th</sup> Grade). For the past 17 years he has taught at McMinn Central High School, teaching Biology 1 and upper division Biology and Physics.

Bill is a member of the Hiwassee Chapter of Trout Unlimited and a life-long fisherman. About 12 years ago, Bill became involved in aquatic biology through the local Boy Scout Troop as an Assistant Scout Master. Bill has also taught First Cast at High School level for the past 8 years along with fly tying.

Bill and his wife have two sons Cody and Kevin. Bill is a rabid Lady Vols Basketball and Softball fan and also enjoys outdoor photography. Fly-fishing is more than a hobby with Bill, it is a passion.

Bill's presentation will be on aquatic entomology of East Tennessee. He will show the diversified aquatic life in our streams and rivers and the importance of realizing what our fish are feeding on, as well as the importance of knowing the details of some of the more notable bugs for our fly tying bench. He uses an artist approach to knowledge of our aquatic life making better flies.

## Bears And More At May Meeting

Many thanks to Dr. Dave Unger for a great presentation on black bears at last month's meeting. It was very interesting to see how the formation of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park played such a key role in the restoration of black bears. Bears need lots of space and a healthy forest to live and thrive. The National Park provided that natural habitat and protection. A healthy forest directly impacts healthy streams providing a beautiful habitat for our trout to live in. So, directly and indirectly we all benefit from the resurgence of bears in our area.



## Clinch River Clean-up

Love The Clinch River? Help Keep It Beautiful! The big Clinch River Clean-up is set for Saturday, July 12. Enjoy a great breakfast at the Museum of Appalachia before setting up to spiff up the river. Breakfast starts at 8 a.m.; volunteers will set out from there to clean the Clinch in teams of walkers, waders, paddlers and powerboaters. Online registration will be available soon at [www.crctu.org](http://www.crctu.org) -- participation is limited to the first 100 volunteers.

## New Hire At GSMNP

New GSMNP Fisheries Member  
Matt Kulp

We are happy to report we were able to hire Alan Beach as our new permanent fisheries technician here at GRSM. Alan spent time in the Air Force and comes to us via fisheries positions with Idaho Fish and Game, US Forest Service in Idaho, Great Smoky Mountains, and most recently Grand Canyon NP. Alan has a wealth of experience and is very happy to be back near home, which for him is near Galax, VA. Alan's wife Sadina is a nurse practitioner and Lt. Col. in the US Air Force who has one more year until she can retire.

She is staying in Phoenix, AZ at her current duty station with their 4 year old son until she can retire and move here to be with Alan. I am so excited to have Alan on board and he

has already hit the ground running. Please help me welcome Alan to our team when you are able to come out and work with us.

Trout Unlimited volunteers helped the fisheries crew collect and move 412 brook trout from Toms Creek to Lynn Camp prong as well as collect 50 fin clips from across the range of collection. The fish were successfully placed into the lower 1.5 miles of Lynn Camp Prong with the help of TWRA's small stocking truck and TU volunteers. We collected all sizes of fish, including you-of-year (YOY), which were very abundant. The fish arrived at the trailhead in excellent condition with only about ten YOY mortalities. The abundance of YOY brook trout was a good sign and something I hope to see parkwide, especially in places like Lynn Camp Prong.

## Smoky Mountain Brook Trout And the Next Generation

Ian & Charity Rutter

Anyone who's known us or followed us for very long knows we have a soft spot for wild, native brook trout here in the Smoky Mountains. These fish have persisted for thousands of years against everything Mother Nature and mankind has thrown at them. Even as their numbers have diminished significantly over the last century they have made somewhat of a comeback over the last decade. Most of that has been because of restoration efforts by biologists and Trout Unlimited volunteers inside Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

We've been big supporters of these projects and volunteered whenever possible. In one instance this included carrying a five gallon container full of natives seven miles down a trail to a state stocking truck where they were then transported to another stream for re-introduction. As fly fishing guides we rely on trout to make a living, and we guide because we have a love for trout and the waters where they live. We try to instill our values into our children as any parent would and now they have also helped with native brook trout restoration in the Smokies. Last week Charity took our kids to help collect brook trout from Tom's Creek near Cosby for relocation to Lynn Camp Prong.



The Lynn Camp Prong restoration in the Tremont section of the Smokies is the most ambitious one by far in the park and happens to practically be in our back yard. It's about 10 minutes to the park line from our house plus another 15 minutes of driving up a gravel road to get there. The view from our house includes the peaks and ridges drained by this stream and we spend plenty of time hiking and picnicking there. We used to fish this stream frequently when it had rainbow trout in it and were understandably concerned when we heard it would be closed to fishing for a brook trout restoration.

This has been going on for several years and to be honest, we really expected this project to be complete by now. Things rarely go as planned and the cold hard facts are that this is a relatively large stream to remove rainbow trout from and reintroduce natives back into. The project has taken longer than even the biologists who spearheaded the effort expected.



The brookies don't come from a hatchery, they come from neighboring streams in the Smokies since our natives are genetically distinct. This makes for some complications since you just can't wipe out the population of one stream and move it somewhere else. Also, two consecutive seasons of late fall and early winter flooding have severely limited spawning so reproduction has been limited not only on Lynn Camp Prong, but all brook trout streams in the region.

Fisheries biologists say that the higher elevations of Lynn Camp Prong have good populations of brook trout now, but the lowest and most accessible sections of the stream are still lightly populated. This is pretty big water as far as brook trout water is concerned and as a result, high water probably did more scouring of redds where eggs were laid. More fish were collected from Tom's Creek near Cosby, TN last week and brought to Lynn Camp Prong. Charity checked with the biologists to see if it would be all right for our children to come along and they were excited at the idea of their participation.

Our kids have literally grown up on trout streams and rivers so while the scenery was all too familiar the method of using electrofishing equipment to catch fish was not. (Quick aside about the children of fly fishing guides: About a month ago Boone saw a sign for nightcrawlers in a local gas station and corner market and wondered why anyone would

buy worms. I told them that people use worms to catch fish. His puzzled response was "Fish eat WORMS???? I thought they ate mayflies and stoneflies!")

If you're not aware of the method biologists wear backpack generators and an electrical current passes between two probes they place in the water. The electricity stuns the fish and makes it relatively easy to net them.

The fish are then placed in a bucket of water then kept in mesh cages before they are moved. In this case the fish were placed in five gallon containers that can be carried on a backpack.

The fish are then carried down the trail where a trout stocking truck provided by TWRA (Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency) can transport them on the further trip to the trailhead at Tremont. From there the fish were placed in a number of water filled plastic bags and transported via an ATV up the relatively wide and level trail to predetermined locations to place them in the stream.

## Send Pictures

Those who were able to attend last month's meeting at Calhoun's saw the scrolling slide show displayed on the multiple monitors during social hour and dinner. We thought it would be fun to display pictures from our members with memorable fish, beautiful places and family / friends. We hope to continue to add and update the slide show for each meeting. But we need your pictures pertaining to fishing, TU volunteer work, conservation efforts or nature. You can send your pic's to my email address: [mjbryant1954@hotmail.com](mailto:mjbryant1954@hotmail.com)

**The Little River Chapter Trout Unlimited Newsletter is produced for current members. Please ensure that you have a viable email address on file with your membership information at Trout Unlimited. You can add an email address or update your current email at [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org) or call 1-800-834-2419.**

**Note: Anyone with news, such as an event or account of a fishing trip, etc., please send it along to newsletter editor, Dave Ezell [ezop@charter.net](mailto:ezop@charter.net)**

**Also, keep up with current events and find valuable information sources at our website [www.lrctu.org](http://www.lrctu.org)**