

# Little River Chapter

Newsletter

MARCH 2004

Chapter President / Editor Joe Hatton

<http://www.lrectu.org>

## Next Meeting



## Fishing Picks

The next meeting is on the **Fourth Thursday** March 25th, 7:00PM 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 Bi-Lo and the Co-op Gas station.

### Program

Steve Moore, Matt Kulp and Dr. Robinson will present the whys and wheres behind the new acid deposition routes. PLUS our own Jim Parks will give a slide show presentation on how to prepare for a do-it-yourself "Alaska" fly fishing trip.

### Stream work

We had a great turnout for the Acid Deposition Training at Park HQ, Gatlinburg. We will be involved in some new routes and some that have changes from years pass. Steve Moore, Matt Kulp and Dr. Robinson will explain at this months meeting.

### Upcoming events

**March 20-21** Bi-Monthly Acid Deposition Sample

**March 27-TN** Little River Clean-Up Day meet at Metcalf Bottoms picnic area (9:00AM)

**April 3** NC-Oconaluftee River Clean-Up Day Medium 10 - 15 TU, NPS

- meet at Collins Creek picnic area (9:00AM)

By: Ian Rutter What a difference a few weeks can make. It wasn't that long ago when snow was falling. Snow was on the Smokies and the tailwaters had been so full of water for so long we had almost forgotten about them as a good place to fish. Now the sun is shining, mayflies are hatching on the mountain streams, and all the tailwaters have great schedules to wade. Last month we were hard pressed for a place to fish. Now we have more choices than we can take advantage of.

Quill Gordons have already made their first appearances, both in the Tellico watershed and the Smokies. These large mayflies range in size from #10-12 and get attention from trout and fly fishermen. The best hatches occur from about noon to 2 PM. Also keep a few small flies in your box to match Blue Quills which also hatch during this time frame. These are much smaller, #18-20, but sometimes the fish will prefer them since they can be more numerous. Pheasant Tail and Hare's Ear Nymphs are always good at this time of year. You might fish a dry fly with an unweighted nymph during a hatch.

The Clinch has undergone a drastic face lift in the past month. Water levels have been extremely low and great for wading.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

**Fishing Pick** [FROM PAGE 1] However, recent rains have turned the generators back on. Hopefully we'll get back to that wading schedule. The best patterns are your old, reliable midge larva and pupa. Fish are usually eating emergent midges just under the surface, but I've talked to a few guys that are hooking some fish on top. Griffith's Gnats or tiny parachutes are the best dries, but subsurface patterns are always more consistent. Don't forget to bring a few scuds and sowbugs along as well.

The South Holston and Watauga have also suffered some setbacks from recent rains but still have some time for waders. The South Holston has been on fire all winter with unbelievable hatches of BWO's. Sunny days have seen plenty of midge action, but his is substantially more frustrating than fishing olive hatches. The Watauga has fished somewhat tougher, although locals are still drumming up a few fish. It may be wise to wait another month for the Watauga to get better and hit the South Holston if you're going to make the drive.

The Hiwassee is in the middle of turbine work and Apalachia Dam will be running only one generator for some time. This can make for some great fishing and there are plenty of places to wade. Watch for a real blend of bugs to hatch down there, but come equipped with BWO's, caddis, and small stoneflies. Generic beadhead patterns always catch fish but you should find plenty of risers.

### ***Finally, a few hours of Flyfishing on the Clinch River Tailwater***

By M. Gary Verholek

Cabin fever takes on new meaning by early March, especially after the greatest tailwater trout stream in the east has been unavailable

for 4-5 months. Ever since the draw-down began last fall, TVA has been dumping water (~ 8,000 cfs) almost daily from Norris Dam into the Clinch River, rendering the deservedly-famous tailwater trout fishery nearly unfishable, except for the most intrepid drift boaters chucking big streamers. The few days when the generation schedule subsided for brief periods, an escape to the river wasn't possible for me.

Yesterday, as I prepared to embark on several business appointments that morning, I realized my travels would involve a meeting in the vicinity of the Clinch. My normal optimism made me check the discharge schedule on the TVA web site. I was surprised to learn that the river would be at minimum flow (200 cfs) for most of the day, perfect for wade fishing. So, along with my business paperwork, I loaded the trunk with waders, rod and fly boxes. Perhaps, there would be time to visit the river, if only for a few hours.

Dispatching my duties with all reasonable haste, I arrived at the Miller's Island parking lot around 11am. I found only a few cars and could not see any fishermen in the immediate vicinity. I strung my 3-wt Fly-Logic rod and SA Mastery 23 reel, and donned my Simms breathable waders and old wading boots with the flapping felt soles I forgot my new Simms wading boots purchased the past weekend at the Atlanta Shallow Water Fly Fishing Show. I added my Hodgman breathable rain jacket to the chest pack and off to the river I went. There was room in the pack now, because my digital camera was stolen during my trip to Islamorada in mid-February, and I hadn't replaced it yet. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 3]

*Finally, a few hours* [FROM PAGE 2] The low flow was only ankle deep as I waded the 100 yards across the near channel, and it deepened only slightly as I rounded the top of Miller's Island and entered the north channel. About another 100 yards down stream begins a series of runs, chutes and deeper holes, which constituted my favorite fishing grounds on the Clinch. I watched the glassy pool above the island, but detected no rising fish. A lone fisherman was abandoning my "favorite rock" and reported a slow morning. I took up station in mid-stream, so I could alternate fishing left and right to cover both runs that split around the rock. I tied on a bead head midge nymph and a wad of polypropylene indicator yarn, and I began working the likely holes.

After more than an hour of lifeless water, dimples began to appear. A sparse midge hatch had taken on new proportion, and the fish started to take emergers in the film and flies on top. I reached into my chest pack only to find I didn't have my dry fly box. Without a size 20 Griffith Gnat or a even a size 18 Blue Winged Olive, I was stuck with a left-over size 16 Elk Hair Caddis as my only dry fly offering. I debated about making the long trek upstream to the car to retrieve the box of dry flies, but these old legs have only one return trip in them, and I wasn't ready to abandon "my rock".

So, I fished with what I had, and suffered for it. No matter how many ways I offered chicken, the trout seemed to want steak. Several trout were rising in the edge of the lane across from me. One particularly large trout would repeatedly rise and take a midge immediately after my EHC drifted over his lair. There were numerous midges on the water, black bodies and dark gray wings. I

had nothing to imitate that. I put a black, size 20, midge emerger under the EHC and finally got a hit, only to loose it. That was to be the only hook-up that morning.

"Match the hatch" is not some worthless flyfishing mantra; it is the law of the trout. Their tiny brains have them keying on the prevalent food source, and that's all they'll take as long as the supply lasts. When the supply changes, they'll key on the next batch of bugs that comes drifting by their holding spot, but until then, you have to give them what they want. I guess that's why a flyfisherman carries so many boxes of flies, and still sometimes doesn't have "the fly of the moment". I find that trout are not as much picky eaters, as they are habitual.

To some extent, that is the draw of trout fishing – to try to fool a BB-brained creature of pure instinct into taking one of your feathered creations. It's against all reason, but I guess it is the curse of the trout fisherman...that they are eternal optimists. Yup, that's me...I'll be back, and I'll have the "right" fly, next time.

## Townsend Trout Fest 2004

The Trout Fest is starting to take shape. We had our second meeting March 9, we have several Sponsors and a good number of the booths already committed. Food vendors are still needed, let me know if you know of anyone so we can get a letter out to them. There is lots of work still needing to be done. Committee leaders will be asking members to join their committees at the March meeting. We need everybody to help. We also need auction items if you know somebody that can donate a item please take it upon yourself to ask them. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 4]

**Trout Fest** [FROM PAGE 3] We also need a variety of items. We need bucket items, silent auctions items and large dollar items to be used for the live auction with a professional Auctioneer. Remember to let them know it is tax deductible and going to a good cause. Let us know when you receive item so we send a thank you letter out as soon as possible. Tickets for the Trout Fest Banquet will be 20 dollars for a single person and 35 dollars for a couple, seating will be limited. If you are planning on staying in Townsend during the Trout Fest weekend you need to book reservations soon.

These are some of our Sponsors please try to give them your business.

Maple Leaf Lodge

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Little River Village Campground

1-800-261-6370 -or- Local: (865)-448-2241

[www.littlerivervillage.com](http://www.littlerivervillage.com)

Restaurants

Mountain View Grill

With all the budget cuts this year the Park Service was hit hard. In turn Steve and Matt's budget was cut heavy and to top that off the Embrace-A-Stream Grant for Brook Trout restoration is half of what it has been in previous years.

Its more important than every that the Trout Fest is a success and can become a source of funds that we can use to help support Park Fisheries projects in the future.

## TU Volunteer Hours Needed

Each member is asked to track all volunteer hours and report them to the chapter. This greatly assist the chapter in quatifying the hours donated annually, which goes toward matching grants received by our TU chapter. Any time you perform volunteer work such as acid deposition, trash pick-up, or any other chapter related function, please send the number of hours to me. Even if you pick up trash in the park while on a hike on your own time as some members do, these hours count. You can also count your travel time to and from the volunteer work event. You may forward any volunteer hours to Jim via e-mail at [trenajim@comcast.net](mailto:trenajim@comcast.net). If you do not have e-mail, my home phone number is 865-932-2511.

Thanks,

Jim Parks

## Limited Edition" Drift Boat

How would you like a **2004 LH Signature Series "Limited Edition" Drift Boat complete with a deluxe trailer and boat cover.**

This terrific package, a \$11,875 value, is being raffled off by the Snake River Cutthroats TU Chapter at the Annual Fly Fishing & Fly Tying Expo this April 16th. & 17th. and you do not need to be present to win. Raffle tickets for \$10 can be purchased at the LRTU March meeting. We only have 12 tickets, but can get more, and LRTU gets to keep \$3.50 from every ticket sold. What a great deal that benefits both our conservation and conservation on the Snake River. See you at the meeting.

## OFFER NEW MEMBERS HALF PRICED MEMBERSHIPS AND RECEIVE \$15

With the advent of our \$17.50 membership acquisition/rebate program in October, chapters and councils are already reaping the benefits both financially and organizationally. At 50% off the \$35 rate, these memberships are providing chapters the fuel they need for growth and support in their coldwater conservation efforts. If you are not currently taking advantage of this program the time to get started is now. Chapter-acquired members renew at a higher rate than other members and are more likely to become active members attending chapter meetings, coming to workdays and even serving as chapter officers. To help you recruit these more dedicated members, we are pleased to give the special introductory rate of \$17.50 for you to offer prospective TU members. To encourage you to recruit new members for your chapter, we will return the entire first year's dues as a rebate \$15 directly to the chapter (rebates are calculated bi-annually in April and October) Just think about we could accomplish if all of us just brought one person into the organization! Imagine the projects you could accomplish by doubling the amount of volunteers available and boosting your finances with \$15 per new member! You can direct potential members to [www.tu.org/intro](http://www.tu.org/intro) where they can fill in your chapter or council code when they join. This makes it easier than ever to recruit new faces and increase the opportunities for developing new projects and increasing your financial resources. You can get the new Brochure at our Chapter meeting.

## Blount Beautiful Little River Clean up

The Blount Beautiful Little River Clean up will be held on April 24th. The LRTU chapter will man the Townsend Registration desk for this clean-up and will work in Townsend to clean up the river. Registration will be at either Little River Outfitters or the Visitors Center beginning about 8:00 am. Be sure to mark your calendar and come out to help with this event.

## Fly of the month

### Elk Wing Caddis

Fly Pattern Recipe

**Sizes:** 16,18

**Colors:** Gray

**Hook:** Type Extra-fine or Bigeye dry fly

**Thread:** Same as body 6/0 or 8/0

**Body:** Gray Dubbed fur

Ribbing Copper wire

**Wing:** Light elk hair tied on top of the hook allowing some fibers to extend along sides. The wing butts should extend forward to form head

**Hackle:** gray, palmered over body







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