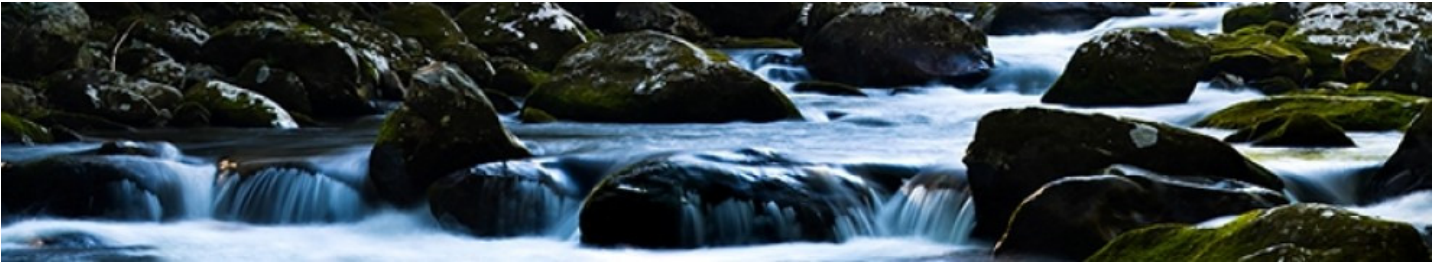


# Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

## May 2013 Newsletter



### President's Corner

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

Spring has taken its sweet time getting here! What difference a year makes. That's nature for you. My fishing has been inconsistent at best. I'm still learning how to effectively catch tight-lipped fish when conditions are not ideal (high and/or cold water). It's been a steep learning curve but thoroughly enjoyable.

I invited friends from Ohio down to fish in the Park in April. We had all built bamboo rods under the tutelage of Dr. Jerry Snider (Otter Creek Bamboo Rods). Even though the weather didn't cooperate everyone was able to get into fish. We had a great time.



Jan and I had the honor of participating in this year's East Tennessee Casting for Recovery Retreat. The folks who lead this event every year are fantastic. The ladies who attended this year's retreat as participants were equally great with unlimited enthusiasm and courage. All the ladies caught trout!! Volunteers from our Little River Chapter and the Clinch River Chapter were a part of the volunteer base of River Helpers that helped make this event such a success. Many thanks to everyone who helped!

Previously I reported on the opportunity that our very own Caleb Abramson was given to complete his graduate studies at Penn State University. Caleb took time out of his busy schedule to write to us. Check out his attached letter to our membership.

### May Membership Meeting

We have a really interesting program set for our May meeting. TU's Damon Hearne will discuss brook trout restoration efforts in the southeast. Many of us have had the opportunity to volunteer with the brook trout restoration efforts in the Park. So, it will be interesting to hear about other TU efforts in the region. Check out the article below.

### More Opportunities to Help (Volunteer)

In this newsletter, you'll see several opportunities to give your time. Please read Charlie Chmielewski's article about helping the Park's Fishery Department. Matt Kulp and Steve Moore have critically important projects and data collection plans this summer that need your help. Or if you like working with kids, note the article below requesting help at this year's Trout Camp. While our mission

is to help preserve our beautiful natural resources, it's equally important to invest in our youth. They are the next generation of conservation leaders.

Don't forget about the FFF-SEC Fly Fishing Festival on May 17-18. We will be there working joint fundraising effort with FFF-SEC on Friday, May 17 to raise funds for brook trout restoration in the Park. More information can be found on their website [www.southeastfff.org](http://www.southeastfff.org).

I'll see you out on the water and at the May meeting. Be safe.

Thanks,  
Mike Bryant

## Little River Cleanup Scours Park Roadsides

Despite a spring nip in the air, the chapter mustered a good turnout for our annual Little River Cleanup on April 20. Brightly adorned volunteers wearing the latest in roadside fashion spent the morning picking up litter and were then treated to a well-deserved, delicious picnic lunch prepared by Stan Smart and Mike McKinsey. Even if you could not join us, you still have the opportunity to help by picking up litter on the river throughout the year. GSMNP is our Park and our mission to protect and preserve its watersheds.



## May Meeting Presentation

TU's Southeast Conservation Project: The Future of Brook Trout Conservation in the Southern Appalachians Damon Hearne, TU's Southeast Conservation Coordinator, will talk about Trout Unlimited's work to protect native and wild trout in the southeast. He will talk about TU's project to protect critical watersheds in the southeast and will include updates on Rocky Fork and other land protection projects. He will also talk about critical advocacy efforts at the state and federal level, as well as restoration and planning initiatives that are underway. Damon has worked for TU since 2009 based in the Asheville TU field office.

Please note that we will meet at the Monte Vista Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. The meeting will start at 7:00pm.

Address: Monte Vista Baptist Church  
1735 Old Niles Ferry Rd  
Maryville, TN 37803-5505

## Change of Dates – Clinch River Trout Fishing Seminar

If you've been wanting to learn how to fish the tailwaters, here's your (second) chance: The annual Clinch River Trout Fishing Seminar has been rescheduled to Saturday, May 18, because of unusual generation schedules resulting from spring rains and from TVA's weir dam maintenance project. The expected high water would have made it impossible to wade and fish in the river on the original date, May 11.

The free, public on-river seminar (spin or fly casting) will start at 9 a.m. (group gathers at 8:30) -- probably behind Second Baptist Church, Clinton, but if the generation schedule requires it, the seminar will move to the River Road boat launch. Please watch the chapter website at [www.crctu.org](http://www.crctu.org) for updates on seminar plans.

Second Baptist Church is at the end of Public Safety Lane, which runs north from Highway 61 just west of the Clinch River bridge in Clinton; the River Road boat launch is on River Road just east of the intersection with Highway 441.

Seminar topics include the Clinch tailwater and its history, trout biology and diet, fishing sportsmanship and safety, and techniques of spin fishing and fly fishing. After the program, newcomers will be paired with experienced anglers and will disperse along the river to fish.

The group will picnic before heading home. Chapter membership is not required to attend and the seminar is free; participants are asked to provide their own fishing gear (rods, waders, boots, lures/flyies) plus lawn chairs, picnic lunches and beverages. For more information, please contact the organizer, Jerry Van Fossen, at [jerryvanfossen@comcast.net](mailto:jerryvanfossen@comcast.net) or 865/463-8999.



## **Trout Camp Approaching – Volunteers Needed**

Thirteen kids (eleven boys and two girls) will be attending this year's summer camp and once again are going to need your help as fishing and fly tying mentors. We have a number of people already signed up but need more, particularly experienced mountain stream fishers. The following shows days and time slots we need to fill and the number of people we need:

### **Tuesday, June 18 (12:30 – 4:00)**

We would like to have four more people to assist Paula Begley with the fly-casting lesson at LRO and fish with the kids for about two hours on Little River.

We also need one more volunteer to help with Tuesday night fly tying (6:45 – 9:00).

### **Wednesday, June 19 (12:45 – 4:00)**

We will fish all afternoon on Wednesday and need eight more fishing mentors.

We need two fly tying helpers for the evening tying session (6:45 – 9:00).

### **Thursday, June 20**

We need one more fly tying mentor (6:45 – 9:00).

### **Friday, June 21 (8:30 – 3:00)**

We will be fishing all day and need nine more fishing mentors. We will break the kids and mentors up into small groups and spread them out among several fishing venues – probably Sam's Branch, Thunderhead, Middle Prong, West Prong and Little River.

We will need two more folks to help with Friday night fly tying.

If you can help, please contact **John Thurman at 865-494-7771**; e-mail at [jthur727@bellsouth.net](mailto:jthur727@bellsouth.net).

## **Scholarship Recipient Grateful for LRCTU Help**

### **What The Little River Chapter Did For Me**

**By Caleb Abramson**

Hello, everyone. I wanted to drop you all a line to express my sincere thanks for the support from the positive community of Trout Unlimited members that the Little River Chapter cultivates. As many of you know, I worked for the Fisheries Division of Great Smoky Mountains National Park since 2010 and have made it a career goal to seek permanent employment as a fishery biologist working for either a state or federal agency. Although my work is really just beginning, the process of being offered and accepting a fully-funded graduate assistantship from Penn State University was a project four years in the making.

After earning a B.S. in Agriculture in the mid-2000s, I went to work for a local newspaper. While I didn't study communications in college, I could write well enough to be on the newspaper's payroll. One of the perks of writing for the paper was submitting the occasional outdoors piece that allowed me to share my love of fishing, horses, and the mountains with our readers. Plus, it was a welcome respite from the depressing coverage of murders, highway fatalities, and courtroom hearings.

In 2008 I used the paper as an excuse to interview Matt Kulp at Park Headquarters regarding future brook trout restoration projects. I remember telling Matt how I wished I had pursued a profession like his, rather than the one I was stuck in, quipping that it was too late to go back to school and my grades had been poor. However, the gears in my head kept grinding with the idea of becoming a biologist and I immediately registered for courses that would have been applicable had my major been in fisheries science. I quit my job at the paper and went back to the factory I had worked in during college, which gave me flexibility with my course loads. Long commutes and little sleep notwithstanding, I maintained a 4.0 GPA in everything from Stats, Organic Chemistry, to Ichthyology and so on.

During this time I also became more involved in Trout Unlimited, although like most folks, I was a member on paper only. Having utilized the Park in so many ways since I was old enough to stand, I thought it was time to start giving back. Through then-president Jeff Hall, and the omnipresent coordinator Charlie Chmielewski, I began participating in acid deposition collections and was eventually nominated as a board member. I also contacted Matt and Steve Moore regularly to keep them informed of my academic progress and desire to work for them. In 2010 I was hired using funds from the Fisheries Scholarship money donated from the Little River Chapter. In the seasons that followed, I was hired as a six-month seasonal employee and eventually crew leader.

I'm currently doing research at the National Fish Health Research Laboratory in Kearneysville, West Virginia, where I'll be until classes start at Penn State in late August. I'm forty minutes north of Shenandoah National Park, and about ten minutes away from the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers at Harper's Ferry. My project involves locating invasive fish in Lake Erie using molecular markers.

I'm excited to see the direction the Little River Chapter is taking toward strengthening its membership and, hopefully, attracting more youth members. If you don't want your children suffering from 'Nature Deficiency Disorder,' take them fishing.

I want to thank everyone for their support and encouragement over the past few years (you all know who you are). I'm also grateful that I've been fortunate enough to not only have Matt and Steve as mentors, but friends. We all talk often, and that mythical snook that broke Steve's line under the A1A bridge in Florida in the early 1980s continues to grow each time I hear about it (if you're not laughing, you don't know Steve).

## Upcoming Volunteer Work in the Smoky Mountains

June and July are going to be very busy months for on-stream work in the National Park. So a large number of volunteers are needed. If you want to help with any of the work shown below, please contact Charlie Chmielewski (charlieflyfish@gmail.com or 865-661-7325). He will prepare the volunteer lists and get out more information for those who sign up.

**June 17 – 19 - Lynn Camp Prong Evaluation:** Assist with the electro-fish evaluation to determine the success of the previous work to remove rainbow trout and restore native brook trout. Meet at end of Tremont Road at 8:30 AM each day. Expect to finish each day between 4 – 6 PM. Need 3 more helpers June 17, 2 more on June 18 & 19.

**June 20 - TN Kids Fly Fish and Ecology Adventure:** Assist with electro-fish demo and fish identification for students. Meet at Smoky Mountain Institute at 9:00 AM, finish at noon. Need 2 more helpers.

**June 24 – Large Stream Sample East Prong of Little River above Elkmont cabins:** Assist with the electrofish evaluation to monitor fish population. New technique should finish early afternoon. Need 5 – 7 helpers.

## Brook Trout Genetics general information –

Several years ago, it was discovered that the brook trout moved from one stream for some of the restoration work did not seem to breed with brook trout moved from a different stream. A Penn State University graduate student has been investigating the brook trout to see if there are genetic differences. The work continues again this year. Since the brook trout are found in remote high elevation areas, this work in July will require long hikes carrying some gear and camping at back country sites for 3 nights each trip. Work gear will be packed in on horses as will some of the cook gear and food. However, some gear will have to be carried in. It should be a great experience but obviously this work is not for everybody.

**July 8 – 11 – East Prong Little River Brook Trout Genetics Collections:** Assist with electro-fish collection of brook trout from remote areas in upper Little River. Camp three nights at back country site 30 (Three Forks ). Can use 2 – 3 helpers.

**July 22 – 25 – Goshen/Fish Camp Prong Brook Trout Genetics Collections:** Assist with electro-fish collection of brook trout from remote areas in upper Little River. Camp three nights at back country site 23 (Goshen/Fish Camp split) . Can use 2 – 3 helpers.

**July 30 – Large Stream Sample East Prong of Little River just above the Wye:** Assist with the electro-fish evaluation to monitor fish population. New technique should finish early afternoon. Need 5 – 7 helpers.

## Casting Away Your Cares on a Spring Day in Sevier County

Five TU volunteers gathered, along with about 250 Sevier County Sixth Graders, to spend the day outside pursuing new physical endeavors. The call to action was to provide casting instruction for 50 of these young achievers.



Kids, from schools all around Sevier County, who increase their physical activity and score at a qualifying level, get a day off from regular school and choose five activities to be instructed in.



Three volunteers from LRCTU along with two members of the Clinch River Chapter met at the Gatlinburg Community Center, May 9, and introduced these young scholars to fly casting.

**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.**

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