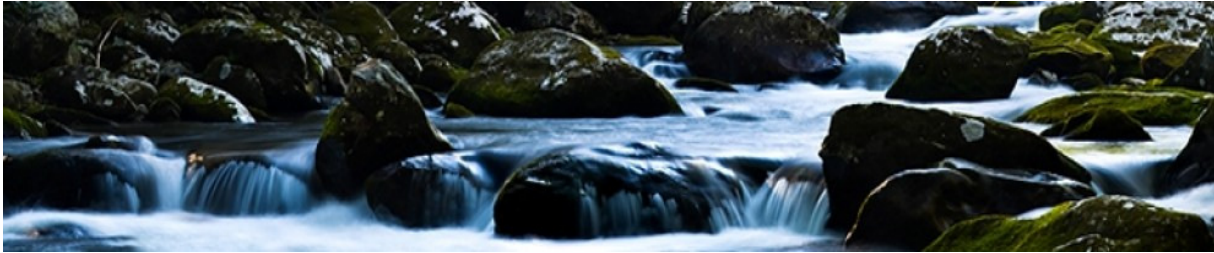


Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

May 2014 Newsletter



President's Corner

Mike Bryant (mjbryant1954@hotmail.com)

WOW!! I'm still totally blown away over how successful our 2014 Troutfest Banquet & Auction was on April 25. The food was great! The facility and services were great! The donated prizes were phenomenal! Everyone had a great time. We awarded the 2013 Eddie George Award to James Locke. We honored Steve Moore's long and successful service with the Park by establishing the Steve Moore Youth Education Fund. And, oh by the way, did I mention that we raised in total about \$20,000!!!! Wow, amazing! What a great time!

The Troutfest team, led by Chairman Joe McGroom, did an incredible job. Donation Chairman Chuck James and team did an outstanding job at soliciting donations. It never ceases to amaze me how giving and supportive folks are here in east Tennessee where we call home.



Thank you to everyone and every business that provided donations. Thank you to everyone who attended the banquet and participated in the auction. And thank you to all of the volunteers who gave their time and talents to making this a successful event.

If you were able to attend Troutfest this year, many thanks for coming and supporting our efforts. I hope everyone will consider attending next year.

On a personal note, as much as I enjoyed Troutfest this year, I'm happy it's behind us. It's time to focus on fishing. This is my favorite time of the year. Warmer weather makes for happy bugs making for happy trout. I've been fishing mostly the smaller mountain streams lately. Water flows for the most part have been good. Bugs are coming off the water. Seems early, but I've seen yellow sallies and yellow mayflies already.

Remember, the May 22 Chapter meeting will be at Calhoun's in Maryville. Social hour and dinner starts at 6:00 pm. You do not need to order dinner to attend. Our May program will be something a little different. Dr. Dave Unger will present a program on black bears. The program will interest anyone who spends time in the national parks or other wild areas, including hikers.

Our future will have its challenges, but I'm more confident than ever that we will continue to proactively work together to conserve, protect, and restore our natural resources. I hope to see you at the May meeting!!

Thanks,
Mike

Troutfest Fun

There was plenty of fun and frolic at Troutfest this year. Here's proof. Below are some photos taken by Joe Rentz. More photos can be viewed at the Troutfest facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Troutfest>



Auctioneer Steve Samples gets things going.



Checking out the Bucket Auction items



**Fast and
furious
auction
action**

May Program – “Black Bears”

Dr. Dave Unger will provide an informative and entertaining program on black bears. The black bear (*Ursus americanus*) is truly North America's bear, originally inhabiting areas from Florida to Mexico, across the central U.S. and north into nearly all of Canada and Alaska. They are a true symbol not only of North America in general, but of eastern Tennessee and the Smoky Mountains in particular! Come to **Calhouns's in Maryville** to learn about the black bear's history, ecology, behavior, and the role they play in our ecosystems as well as the research techniques used to study and understand them.

Dr. Unger came to east Tennessee and began his work at Maryville College in the fall of 2012. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky where he studied the ecology of a recolonizing black bear population. He received his Master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point where he investigated the reproductive ecology and homesite selection by grey wolves. His current research efforts span from the Caribbean to Tennessee to Michigan investigating coral reefs health and ecology, flying squirrels, aquatic insects, and meso carnivores including the American marten and River Otter.

Steve Moore Youth Education Fund

At Troutfest, the Little River Chapter bestowed a special honor on Steve Moore. Steve retired from the National Park Service after 30 plus years of stellar service. In recognition of Steve's leadership in developing our future conservation leaders, the Little River Chapter created the Steve Moore Youth Education Fund to honor Steve's legacy. The following statement reflects our appreciation and respect for Steve's leadership:

“In recognition and appreciation of Steve Moore's outstanding efforts throughout his career in the development of our future conservation leaders, the Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited has established the Steve Moore Youth Education Fund. The goal of the Fund will be to support TU youth education programs, including Great Smoky Mountains Trout Adventure Camp (Trout Camp) and Trout in the Classroom. We believe it is imperative that our youth have the opportunity to experience nature and develop a passion for our great natural resources. It is our honor to link Steve Moore's contributions with future opportunities to create tomorrow's conservation leaders.”

During the live auction, a “Paddle Call” was conducted to raise cash for the newly created fund. At the end of the paddle call, we were all blown away by the staggering generosity and support -- we raised over \$4400!! I couldn't be any more excited as we begin to focus on youth education opportunities. If you couldn't attend and still would like to make a donation in honor of Steve's service and leadership, please get in touch with me (mjbryant1954@hotmail.com).

2013 Eddie George Award

At Troutfest, Charlie Chmielewski, representing the Chapter Board, awarded the 2013 Eddie George Award to this year's winner - James Locke. The Eddie George award is given for direct volunteer work with the Park Service Fisheries Department. James is well deserving of the award. He seems to be at most of the stream volunteer activities, from water sampling to brook trout monitoring. James has endless energy. Despite work and raising a family, he somehow finds the effort to give back with his time and talents. In keeping with the tradition of the Eddie George Award, James will receive a custom made Sage fly rod built by and very generously donated again this year by Ken Henderson.

Congratulations James!!

Didymo Studies - Request for Help

Justin Murdock is a professor at Tennessee Tech University working to better understand the growth and spread of Didymo in Tennessee streams. Justin is beginning a 2 year study to determine what factors regulate Didymo growth and spread in Tennessee, and assess the Didymo impacts on the benthic macroinvertebrate abundance and composition. He is looking for help keeping up with Didymo growth in several Tennessee streams over the next several months. His goal is to do complete stream assessments during peak Didymo blooms if possible. Justin is asking our chapter members to report Didymo amounts (low, moderate, high) when out fishing streams in eastern Tennessee. The areas in most need of assessment are the Clinch River below Norris Dam to Hwy 61, Holston River below Cherokee Dam to Strawberry Plains, Watauga River below Wilbur Dam through Elizabethton, and South Holston River below the dam to Bluff City. However, any reports in any stream would be of use to get a better understanding of its current distribution.

In addition to the above mentioned streams, several streams in Great Smoky Mountains National Park will be assessed, as well as the Little Tennessee River watershed. Sampling last month found it to be abundant already this year in the South Holston and Watauga, and just starting to show signs in the Clinch.

If you want to participate, please feel free to contact Justin. His phone number is 931-372-3147 and email is jnmurdock@tnitech.edu.

Trout Camp Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to help the kids at this year's Trout Camp. The dates are Monday, June 16 through Friday, June 21. The team is looking for more volunteers to help with fly tying in the evenings and fishing during the day. The most important need is to have a few more experienced mountain anglers to fish 1:1 with the kids on Friday. There are still volunteer openings to help out on Norton Creek on Wednesday and a bluegill / bass pond on Wednesday afternoon. If you like working with kids and want to help develop the next generation of conservation leaders, please contact John Thurman at jthur727@bellsouth.net.

Great Offer!!! TU Women Recruitment Program

Trout Unlimited has an offer that women will find hard to refuse. In an effort to increase women membership, TU is offering free membership for a year. A current female member can renew at half-price for only \$17.50. This is a great opportunity for women to join or continue their membership in TU.

The recruiting chapter will receive \$15 (of the \$17.50) for any woman renewing her membership. Remember to include the Little River Chapter (#644) as your chapter number. **But this is a limited time offer that extends only to May 31, 2014.** New members can sign up at www.tu.org/womenjoin. The link for renewals is www.tu.org/womenrenew.

Opportunity to Fish Montana / Yellowstone

TU member Ken Wade is looking for a fishing partner to go with him to the Montana / Yellowstone area this July 17-25. Ken is flexible on the destination in that area, but his initial thoughts are to fly into Billings, MT, taking a guided trip on the Bighorn, driving through the Park fishing several good spots on the Yellowstone River, and ending with a guided trip on the Madison. If you are interested, please contact Ken at 865-388-0072 or kenwade@charter.net

Southeastern Fly Fishing Festival – May16 & 17

This Festival is sponsored by the Southeast Council of FFF. It will be held again at the Ramsey Center at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina. The Festival promises to be a great time and a great opportunity to learn as well. Admission is \$5 and \$10 per day for individuals and families, respectively. Scouts in uniform and disabled veterans are admitted for free. There will be over 40 vendors / exhibitors and 40 fly tiers at the event. There is a full schedule of mostly free

presentations and demonstrations. More information will be posted at www.southeastfff.org.

There will be a BBQ dinner on Friday night at 6:00pm at the Ramsey Center. Proceeds will benefit brook trout restoration in the GSMNP. BBQ tickets are available for sale separately on the Council Store on southeastfff.org, so you don't have to attend the Festival to go to the BBQ.

Fishing The Show-Me State

Although Missouri isn't often considered a "destination" location for trout fishing, there are some decent holes from which healthy brown and rainbow can be lured. On a recent tag-along with the spouse to St. Louis, it was a goal to excuse myself from the spousal duties for at least a day and get away to see what the Show Me state has to offer.

Wanting to make this outing a day trip from the downtown hotel where we were encamped limited my options. An on-line search yielded four possibilities, but without local knowledge, it was shooting in the dark, so I dropped in on a local outfitter. Yes, there is a fly-fishing outfitter in St. Louis. T. Hargrove Fly Fishing www.thargrove.com is worth the visit, even if you're just passing through. Don't let the exterior fool you. Although it looks like a small 1950's home surrounded by office park business buildings, this place is for real. It offers everything from Yetti coolers to orange buck tail. And the folks there are knowledgeable about Missouri fishing and willing to share.

My first choice, from a proximity standpoint, was Maramec Spring Park, about a 90 minute drive away from the city, but I was quickly dissuaded by Chris, a young sales guy at Hargrove, who told me to drive an hour farther and drop into the Current River. "Don't fish the trout park," he advised, (where the Current originates inside Montauk State Park) "unless you want to fish on top of 50 other guys. Drive through the park and fish the river below".



I had to pass up Chris' first choice which was the North Fork of the White River. The well known White, that many anglers boat or wade in Arkansas, also graces Missouri up stream with some fantastic trout waters. But that trip was four hours from the Arch, just off the radar for my day trip requirement.

Up early, I embarked on the two and a half hour drive down I-44 which heads southwest in a bee line from St. Louis to Tulsa, OK. A turn to warm temperatures forecast a day that would top 88 degrees. These tough Midwesterners had endured snow just three weeks earlier. The drive to the Current was about 90 minutes of interstate along with another hour of “country” roads. The two-lane roads through small towns and farms made for an enjoyable journey.



Driving through the park that surrounds the Current it didn't look good. You'd be hard pressed to throw a rock 30 feet and not get angry letters from anglers' attorneys. However, beyond where the gravel road exited the park on the other side, I found the suggested Tan Vat Access where only one other car was parked and no one was in sight in either direction on the river.

The Current is a spring fed river, no wider than 80 feet from bank to bank at this location. The bed is small granular stone with occasional grass and sand patches. There is some structure provided by fallen trees, but not much. If Bobby Jones had designed trout streams for 50-plus year-old anglers instead of golf courses, his name would have been on the

Current. It was easy access, and moderate flow which allowed easy crossing moving up or down the river. The river would narrow occasionally, providing some nice ripples with pools above and below. The water had a hint of color and was cool and clean.

I dropped in at Tan Vat at 8:30 a.m. and immediately wished I had gotten up at 4:00 a.m. instead of 5:00 in order to add an hour of morning fishing. Without seeing anyone else on the river I moved upstream to the first spot. The warm weather was agitating the hatch like a stick to a hornets nest. The air was filled with mayfly emergence. Seeing fish feeding on top, I went to a size 16 dirty green BWO. On the second drift, a hungry rainbow decided my fly was close enough and it was hammer time. Although meager in size, this fish fought surprisingly hard. Two casts later and a little farther up stream, my fly caught the eye of a hungry brown. Larger in size, this guy fought even harder clearing the water three times with jumps that left my jaw gaping wider than the fish.



Landing and releasing this fish was a real pleasure. By noon the hatch had become subdued and fish lost interest. I walked back to the car park, ate lunch and decided to give downstream a try. With nothing

happening on top of the water, I fished nymphs and then terrestrials -- a little early in the season perhaps, but it was 88 degrees. I was broken off twice fishing a variation of a green weenie with a prince nymph below. The day got hotter and I knew a stay into the coveted evening hours was going to put me very late getting back, so I packed up about 3:00 p.m. and headed back to the concrete and asphalt.

I returned to the city in time to fulfill attending spouse duties at the “fun” event planned that evening by the suits that organized our reason for the visit. My face said “fun” but only because I was reliving my day on the Current.

Tighter lines – Dave Ezell

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 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

Also, keep up with current events and find valuable information sources at our website www.lrctu.org