

Little River Chapter

Newsletter

NOV 2003

Editor Joe Hatton

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/Littlerivertu/index.html>



Next Meeting

Fishing Picks

The next meeting is on the **First Thursday** December, 4 at 7:00 pm. We are meeting 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 BiLo and the Co-op Gas station.

Program

Annual Business Meeting [Election of new Officers] - This meeting is instead of a November meeting due to the Thanksgiving holiday conflict.

Stream work

Little River TU expands our work Beginning in Jan. or Feb. work will begin with water sampling on Short Creek in Townsend. Short Creek is a major contributor of pathogens into the Little River and this study is to find out the sources. The next steps will be to work with property owners to correct the problems. But right now we need 2 to 4 individuals who can help with the sampling. It will involve one full day a month, on a Mon. or Tues. or Wed or Thursday, for six months. If you can get away for a day during the week and would like to help clean up the Little River please contact Tom Eustis by email (tqtom@icx.net) or call (865-681-2688).

By: Ian Rutter: We've had a great time fishing the Indian summer of the past month. Dry fly fishing has been excellent with some nymph fishing thrown in. Cooler weather is certainly on its way but you should still try to find some time to work in a little fishing. You shouldn't be on the water at daylight if frost is on the ground. Take your time and let the sun get on the water. You might even be able to draw a few strikes on dry flies if the weather is mild enough. Most of the action is over by 4 o'clock so don't take too long for a lunch break.

Water temperature is the most important factor when fishing mountain streams in the winter. You should avoid the high elevation streams for several reasons. Water is always cooler in the high country and these streams are usually wedged at the bottom of a steep gorge that remains shaded. Streams in the lower elevations will typically get a couple of hours of direct sunlight. That extra warmth will activate both fish and insects.

Expect to see small dun caddis, blue wing olives, midges, and small black stoneflies. None of these will be larger than a #18. A wide variety of nymph patterns will work at this time of year. Most beadhead nymphs #12-16 will produce in spite of the small bugs that are hatching. Large stonefly nymphs are also a staple in the cold months. A #8 Tellico or Prince Nymph [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]

Fishing picks [FROM PAGE 1] Keep an eye on TVA generation schedules. The Clinch and Hiwassee have both had near constant generation but usually scale back in December. The South Holston and Watauga have both had some good schedules for wading.



A recurring lesson

By: M. Gary Verholek

A lack of stream-time was getting to me. More out of habit than expectations, I went online Thursday evening to check the TVA generation schedule for Norris. What to my wondering eyes did appear, TVA was scheduling a shut-down at Norris Dam on a Friday during the winter draw down when they are normally running two generators continuously. This was totally unexpected, but hey...Carpe Diem!!! The opportunity was too much to pass up. I had promise my client to be at his plant on Friday, and I'd go, but I was also going to fish the Clinch, either before work or after work. Friday morning was cool, so I decided to wait until afternoon to fish. I achieved what I expected at the project, and headed for the Clinch tailwaters around 1pm. The parking lot was empty. Evidently, not many flyfishermen had checked the generation schedule, expecting as I did, that there was little chance for fishing during the week during draw down. I donned my waders, lined my rod and stepped into the shallowest water I'd ever seen on the Clinch. The generators had been off since midnight and the surge pool must have been near empty. Shallow water, steel gray overcast and a chilly NE wind made for tough fishing. Well folks, it went like this. I saw some fish dimpling and could only see small white blurs in flight, generally in the size 20-22 range (it

was too warm for snow). I didn't have any dry fly that size (if I did, I couldn't see one in my box, let alone tie it on). When in doubt, I figured I'd try the old EHC first. If they are rising, they'll rise to a generalized bug. It wasn't too long before I got a hit, but he took me under a rock and got off. That, as they say, was that. I wore out my arm for an hour throwing just above the dimples, only to be rejected. Then I began the fly hunt, trying about everything I had.

Thinking midge, I tried a size 20 midge emerger – pop, a light hit...my last. I tried my smallest BWO; no interest, but they kept on dimpling around it in the foam line. I figured I needed a Griffith gnat, about a 20 or 22, but I didn't have one. I usually stay at 18 and larger, because I can't see to tie them on. I figured that if they were taking flies on the surface or in the film, they'd go for an EHC or BWO. Wrong again.

I surmised that the fish were sipping what appeared to be white flies or midges in the foam lines, but they wouldn't take my fake offerings. Two bumps were all I could muster in two hours of casting. I tried almost everything I had – scuds, EHC, midge pupa, emergers, BWO, caddis larva, etc. I hadn't tied any Griffith Gnats or white fly spinners, but I vowed to do so, and soon. That is the most frustrating feeling, to have fish, not one but many, dimpling the water right next to each of your "hot" flies. (Next time I'm bringing Clousers and Woolly Buggers.) If that frustration wasn't enough, TVA began an unscheduled release, whereupon I had to scramble over mossy rocks for ¼ mile as the river rose from my ankles to my thighs before I reached shore. It was only a one-hour pulse, but it's not prudent to wait to find out. Hiking out against one generator is tough; two is impossible. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 3]

A recurring lesson [FROM PAGE 2]

Several fishermen have spent the night on the island making that mistake. Finicky fish and rising water required serious single-malt therapy, so I headed home. It's days like this that make you question your skills, at the bench and on the stream. I recently broke down and bought some "Hat Eyes", but I hadn't used them yet. Maybe I would have been better able to identify the flies the fish were taking. It's time to use them on some G-gnats and take them on the stream so I can tie on the 20-22 sized flies. As Arnold says..."I'll be back".

**Love clean mountain streams?**

I don't know a TU member who does not; but more importantly each of us has friends who also love our clean mountain streams. We now have a very special opportunity to ask our friends to help support our work in the GSMNP by becoming a member of Little River Chapter of TU.

The special opportunity is a special NEW member fee of just \$17.50 for the first year. Does it matter if they do not fish? NO! They just need to know the work that we do and want to support the acid deposition sampling, restoration of the southern Brookie, our only native trout, aquatic studies, stream clean-ups, and other conservation work in the cold water of the Little River Watershed.

It is easy to do and all of the \$17.50 will end up right back here in Tennessee. Send me an email (tqtom@icx.net) or call (865-681-2688) and I'll mail you a special application to give to them. The postage is already paid. If we all get just one new member we can add 100 people to our roster and have over \$1000 to put to work in the GSMNP. Go get 'em.

Road Trips

Designation West Virginia

Did you know that West Virginia is one of only a few states that you can catch a Golden Rainbow Trout ?



West Virginia Golden Rainbow Trout, not to be confused with the true golden trout which is found only in California, but still a beautiful fish. You can drive to some of West Virginia's best trout waters with in five hours making it a good Weekend designation and a nice change of pace. Of the best know streams Cranberry and the Milligan Creek are the closest, but there are a lot of less well know streams in the southern part the state, some with native brook trout. Here some good Web sites to start planning with <http://www.wvdnr.gov/Fishing/Fishing.shtm> and <http://www.flyfishingwv.com>

Note from editor

I would like to thank everyone who has helped make the Newsletter possible this year! Please keep up the good work and keep the articles coming. Thanks Joe

Fly of the Month**PT Emerger"**

Hook: TMC #18-24 Thread: Uni 8/0

Abdomen: Pheasant-tail

Collar: peacock

Ribbing: Red Wire

Wing: Z-lon, white

Antennae: Wood Duck fibers, (2)





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