



Trout Tales

Rocky River Chapter Trout Unlimited

January 2011



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello everybody and Happy New Year! Tired of being cooped up due to all the snow and ice? Well I have two suggestions for you – (1) fly tying on Saturdays and (2) the RRTU monthly meeting. The fly tying sessions are a blast ... learning how to tie, a bit of lunch with friends and some “true” fish stories thrown in for good measure. And we have Chris Smith of Team Stonefly coming to talk about Czech nymphing at the January 20 meeting.

On February 19 we will celebrate the RRTU 30th anniversary at Bass Pro Shops (Concord Mills). This free event includes a dessert bar with your favorite warm beverages ... careful now as we're talking about hot coffee/tea (HA HA). Jim Dean, former editor of *Wildlife in North Carolina*, will discuss the evolution of trout fishing in North Carolina. Two large raffles are planned and we will give away door prizes throughout the evening. Please join us for this special event. (Read more about this event later in the newsletter).

What would 2011 be without a few work days and some fishing? So we are planning a South Mountain work day event and of course, our spring Appletree trip. We have plenty of room for the spring trip. I hope we have enough people sign up so we can roast another pig! Remember that? Mmmmmm good!

Please contact me if you are interested in a rod building class. And our Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program continues in 2011. Let me know if you would like to visit one of our six TIC schools and I will help arrange a tour. On February 1 football season will almost be over; but we will be busy with our “kick off” of the 2011 Friends of Rocky River (FORR) campaign! We have a special thank you section for the 2010 FORR donors and hope that you will give generously in 2011.

If you have ideas for meetings or projects, please contact any officer or board member. We have added a list of officers, board members with their phone

numbers to the newsletter. See you at the January meeting.

- Bill Thomas (bthomas999@bellsouth.net)

RRTU Calendar

Jan 15 ... Fly tying

Jan 20 ... RRTU meeting

Jan 29-30 ... Fly fishing show in Raleigh

Feb 12 ... Fly tying

Feb 19 ... RRTU meeting. 30th Anniversary at Bass Pro

Mar 12 ... Fly tying

Mar 17 ... RRTU meeting

Apr 7-10 ... Appletree trip

Apr 21 ... RRTU meeting

January 20th meeting

Czech Nymphing – Chris Smith

Covenant Presbyterian Church
1000 East Morehead Street
Room 205, Fellowship Hall
Charlotte, NC 28204

Social time: 6:30 pm

Meeting: 7:00 pm

Friends of Rocky River (FORR)

We plan to continue this program in 2011 with a campaign kick off beginning on February 1. We also want to recognize our 2010 donors for their generosity; this group raised almost \$4000 last year. Our 2010 donors were:

Dickson Foundation, Patrick Steed, Robert Rollins, William Anderson, Jim Brittain, Jonathan Miller, Joseph Beckert, William Wood, Rion Rutledge MD, Jim Mabrey, Greg Ingram, J. Lewis Sigmon MD, Tim

Wilhelm, Dr. Dan Hershey, Sue Hartsell, Marty Baker, David James, Joe Davant, Glenn Mease, Steve Craig, David Hartgen, Duncan Browder, Bill Wiktorek, David Radke, Terry Hill, Dean Heckle & Hill, Alen Baker, Mildred English, Melton Battle, Dave Wilson, David Hollifield, Tom Adams, Tim Mead, Bill Thomas.

We extend a hearty **THANK YOU** to all who gave generously last year! A few members have already contributed to the 2011 FORR fund. Watch for additional information about the 2011 campaign soon.

Mail donations to RRTU, C/O Terry Hill, PO Box 456, Matthews, NC 28106.

- **Steve Craig/Terry Hill**, FORR Committee

RRTU 30th Anniversary Celebration

RRTU has scheduled the RRTU 30th anniversary celebration for February 19 at Bass Pro Shops (Concord Mills). This will be a free event with a dessert and coffee/tea bar. Jim Dean, former editor of *Wildlife in North Carolina*, will discuss the evolution of trout fishing in North Carolina.

Door prizes will be awarded throughout the evening. And do NOT miss the raffles at this event; two are planned:

First raffle (A) items:

7 foot 4 WT 4 piece Payne bamboo rod with reel, spa certificate, several local gift cards, guided fishing trips, barware

Second raffle (B) items:

7 foot 4 WT 4 piece graphite rod with reel, spa certificate, several local gift cards, barware

Raffle ticket prices: \$20 for single ticket, \$50 for three and \$100 for ten. You MUST be present to win.

Evening schedule:

Social time 6:30 – 7:30 PM

Jim Dean 7:30 – 8:15 PM

Raffles 8:30 – 9:00 PM

Attendees will receive a gift card from Bass Pro worth 10% off purchases that evening. Bass Pro closes at 10:00 PM.

Do NOT miss this event. Looking forward to seeing you at the RRTU 30th anniversary celebration!

RRTU on Facebook

How's your social network doing? How about your fishing network? RRTU certainly wants to help with the second question. RRTU now has a Facebook page. Search for us on Facebook under Rocky River Trout Unlimited and sign up to join us. Also, please "like" the page as this will help us to be located more easily. You will be able to post and respond on this Facebook page. You can post pictures, invitations for fishing buddies or trip results, flies that work for you, etc. This page is for your use; we hope you use it often! RRTU on Facebook is a "closed" group meaning your name is public but your information is not.

- **Jim Mabrey**

Appletree spring and fall 2011 trips

We have the dates for the 2011 Appletree trips. The spring trip is scheduled for April 7, 8 and 9 on camp site B (50 campers). The fall trip is scheduled for October 6, 7 and 8 on camp site A (25 campers).

Bill Thomas and I will organize the April trip but we need to have a different crew for the October trip. We will be returning from a trip to Idaho the week before and will not be available to organize the October trip. The cost of the Appletree outing will remain the same as last year - \$50 for 3 nights and \$40 for 2 nights. You can sign up at anytime with **Bill** or me. Try the new PayPal link on our web site, www.rockyrivertrout.org, if you prefer to make an electronic payment. Please include a note/comment indicating this is payment for the Appletree trip.

- **Jim Mabrey**

Fly fishing show in Raleigh January 29-30

Many of you have attended the Fly Fishing Show event in years past. The 2011 show will be held in Raleigh on January 29-30 at the NC State Fairgrounds. Hours are from 09:00AM to 05:30PM on Saturday and 09:00AM to 05:00PM on Sunday. See www.flyfishingshow.com for more information.

Fly Tying continues in Jan, Feb and Mar

The next RRTU fly tying class will be at the same location (REI located in the North Lake Shopping Center at 9755 Northlake Centre Pkwy. Charlotte, NC 28216.)

The class will be Saturday, January 15th beginning at 10:00 AM and finishing at 2:00 PM. Two sessions remain in 2011 – February 12 and March 12.

Tom Adams and **Alen Baker** have provided excellent assistance so far this year. These two have many years of experience and can help both new and experienced individuals.

We will be tying some interesting flies, and we have some extra vices to handle a few more people. If you have not already contacted me about attending, please let me know so that we can have the necessary materials. Reach me at jmcneary@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you. Don't forget, if you just want to sit around and discuss fishing, we welcome all comers. Lunch will be \$5.00 if you would like us to pick it up for you. If not, those enrolled previously or to those there just for the jawing, there will be no charge. Any newbies will be charged \$5.00 for remainder of this seasons fly tying programs.

- **Jack McNeary**

Trout in the Classroom (TIC)

We have six Trout in the Classroom installations and one of those was recently recognized by the North Carolina Wildlife Federation. Here's the text of the NCWF news release:

News for Immediate Release January 6, 2011

Contact:

Tim Gestwicki
Executive Director
North Carolina Wildlife Federation
(704) 332-5696
tim@ncwf.org

Davidson Day School 6th Grade Science Class Wins Prestigious Conservation Award

Davidson, NC The North Carolina Wildlife Federation bestowed upon the Davidson Day School 6th grade science class a Governor's Conservation Achievement Award for Youth Conservationist of the Year at a school ceremony attended by representatives from the North Carolina Wildlife Federation and Rocky River Trout Unlimited, the nominating group that works with the school.

The students of Vicki Carbone's 6th grade science class at Davidson Day School were the first in the Charlotte area to participate in the Trout in the Classroom program. The Rocky River chapter of Trout Unlimited donated rainbow trout eggs and kicked off a program through which the students learned how to monitor water quality, assess egg and hatchling health, and following their baby fish all the way to a gala release into the wild at Stone Mountain State Park. Now these kids are mentoring other grades in the Trout in the Classroom program, handing down their own love of clean water and trout.

The North Carolina Wildlife Federation first presented its conservation awards in 1958. With the approval of the Governor of North Carolina, this annual program was designated as the Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards Program, and is now in its forty-seventh year.

Each year our awards committee puts out an all-points-bulletin for conservation heroes says Tim Gestwicki, executive director of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation. We seek to learn about those people, agencies, and businesses that go an extra ten miles in the cause of conserving North Carolina's natural treasures. And each year we are amazed at the commitment and creativity of North Carolina citizens in protecting wildlife and wild places. And many of our award winners tell us their Governor's Conservation Achievement Award represents the high point of their careers – whether they are full-time scientists or full-time volunteer conservationists.

Awards winners are nominated by the citizens of North Carolina and decided upon by a committee of scientists, environmental educators, and conservation activists. This awards program brings together a remarkably diverse group of conservationists to highlight the positive wildlife and habitat conservation efforts across North Carolina, states Gestwicki. Our primary focus is to applaud and honor these people who work so hard for wildlife and the air, water, land that they and all of us depend upon.

These prestigious awards honor those individuals, governmental bodies, associations and others who have exhibited an unwavering commitment to conservation in North Carolina. These are the highest honors given in the state. By recognizing, publicizing and honoring these conservation leaders – young and old, professional and volunteer – the North Carolina Wildlife Federation hopes to inspire all North Carolinians to take a more active role in protecting the natural resources of our state.

The statue award and Governor-signed certificate were presented by representatives from North Carolina Wildlife Federation and Rocky River Trout.

Detailed award winner information can be found [here](http://www.ncwf.org/awards/).
<http://www.ncwf.org/awards/>

The North Carolina Wildlife Federation is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to all North

Carolina wildlife and its habitat since 1945.
www.ncwf.org

Rivercourse 2011

RRTU will continue involvement with the Rivercourse program. The 2011 camp is scheduled for the week of June 19 - 24, 2011 at Lake Logan Center near Canton. <http://www.nctu.org/rivercourse.html> Contact Joyce Shepherd for more details on this program.

- **Joyce Shepherd**

Tip of the Month

Are you having trouble tying the improved clinch knot? Getting the end of the tippet through the loop at the hook eye with a small fly, large fingers and poor eye sight is a definite challenge. Instead learn to tie a Uni knot which is much easier, quicker and provides a comparable connection to the hook eye. The Uni knot may be used to replace the Arbor knot when connecting the backing to the fly reel. You may replace the Albright knot with a Uni knot when connecting the backing to the fly line. The Uni knot may also be used to replace the nail knot when connecting the fly line to the leader butt. One knot to know and use rather than three! Keeps it simple.

- **Alen Baker**

You will find instructions for the Uni knot here:
<http://www.fintalk.com/fishing-knots/uni-knot.html>
<http://www.animatedknots.com/uniknot/index.php>

Tails from the Creek

Been fishing? Who went with you? Where did you fish? What did you use? #18 pinkie? Stick bait?

We're anxious to hear about your fishing adventures; your stories may inspire others to try out a new place or technique. Please share!

- **Jonathan Miller**

Fly of the month

This "fly of the month" represents the latest in the **Tim Wilhelm/Tom Adams** series and one that I suspect most have used in North Carolina waters.

What can one say about a true Classic?

The Elk Hair Caddis dry fly achieved widespread fame at least 30 years ago. But, it's been fished for even longer than that. It is one of the dry flies that consistently makes "The 10 Flies You Must Have" list. It is probably the best known, most ubiquitously available, and uniquely adaptable caddis dry fly pattern on the market. There have been articles which have dubbed it the "ultimate" or the "perfect" dry fly.

Despite the occasional over-the-top descriptors, there is no question as to the fly's success and utility. And to think, the designer originally intended it, not as a dry fly, but as a wet fly.

Having been a schoolteacher in Pennsylvania, Al Troth became known as a guide, outfitter, and professional flytier after moving to Dillon, Montana. Although he produced a number of patterns which achieved a certain level of commercial recognition and success (e.g., Troth Bullhead, Terrible Troth Stone, and Troth Salmon Fly), it was the Elk Hair Caddis which secured his place in the annals of flyfishing.

In a 1978 article (Al Troth, "Elk Hair Caddis," Fly Tyer, November 1978), Troth stated that, years before, his desire had been to develop a wet fly for the Green Caddis hatch in Pennsylvania. (Troth does not mention how many years before in his article, but Randall Kaufmann, a famous fly designer/tier in his own right, claims in his book "Tying Dry Flies" (Revised Edition, 1995) that the year was 1957.) Experimenting on Pennsylvania's Loyalsock Creek, he discovered that his "wet fly" didn't sink, but "floated like a cork." Trying to force the fly under, he pulled the fly line, the fly sank, immediately popped back up, and seconds later a trout took the fly off the surface. A "dry fly" was born.

In the same article, Al Troth attributed the success of the fly, primarily, to four things: 1.) it represents an aquatic insect found throughout the U.S., (2.) the fly offers a small

silhouette for the hook size, (3.) the fly is easy to see and may be cast accurately, (4.) the floating properties and durability of elk hair.

True enough as far as it goes. In my opinion, there are also other factors which contribute to the fly's success. Even though it is an "attractor" fly, rather than an exact "imitation," it presents a lifelike impression of a fluttering caddis. It is readily adaptable in terms of body, hackle, and hair color which allow it to be "tied" to emulate the particular species in a given area. And, it is exceptionally easy to produce; being one of the first patterns aspiring tiers learn.

The Elk Hair Caddis dry fly is simply one of those "must have," "go to," "why don't you have one," type of flies. It's a fly that is nearly 50 years old and sells as well today as it did almost 30 years ago. It works from the Lower Sacramento River in California to the Yellowstone River in Montana and from the Guadalupe River in Texas to the Metolious River in Oregon. It has caught 107 brookies in a single day in Pennsylvania for its creator and it has served me well throughout the West.

Elk Hair Caddis

HOOK : Dry Fly, standard length. Tiemco 100 or equivalent. Size 12,**14,16,18**,20,22

Thread : 8/0 Uni or equivalent to match color

Body : Dry dubbing

Wing : Elk Hair, natural

Ribbing : Fine Gold Wire

Hackle : Dry Rooster in color to match

Directions:

1. Wrap tight beginning three eyelengths back from the eye to the bend above the barb and tie in the Fine Gold Wire. Tie on top and stop thread at the bend above the barb.
2. Dub sparingly with a fine dry dubbing. Color can be yellow, green, brown, tan, grey, or black. Thread should match the dub color. Stop the dub about four eyelengths back from the eye and let the bobbin hang.
3. Select appropriate rooster dry fly hackle (approx. 1 ½ times the hook gape) stripping a short section of barbs and tie in at the head side

of the dub. Secure with two or three wraps and trim any excess. The concave or dull side should be facing the hook bend. Let the bobbin hang.

4. Wrap the hackle to the hook bend (three or four wraps) and holding the hackle tip with your left hand, bind the hackle to the hook with the gold thread. After one wrap the hackle can be released (keeping pressure on the hackle with the wire) and the wire can be “wiggled” through the hackle wraps advancing to the tie in point of the hackle. The wire should be tied in with the thread and excess broken off after securing. Let the bobbin hang.
5. Trim the excess hackle at the rear of the fly.
6. Using scissors, trim the topmost portion of the hackle. This makes for a neater and more flush wing.
7. Collect a portion of Elk Hair by trimming as close to the hide as possible. This is the wing and the amount is dictated by the size desired for the wing. You will need a little extra in the cut, because some will fall away and some is not suitable.
8. Clean the hair of the fine under hair. You can use a cleaning rake or I hold the hair in between my left forefinger and thumb by the tips and keeping pressure use a bodkin to clean out the fibers. The cleaner the better. Once cleaned, put the hair in tip first into a hair stacker. Rap several times. I usually hold the aligning tube off of the receiver bottom by an eighth of an inch or so. By doing so, when I extract the tube with the aligned hair, the tips are protruding and can be grasped more easily.
9. Tie in the wing immediately in front of the dubbing. I usually make several wraps before tightening too much to check position and length. The wraps are tight and close together. Once secure, trim the excess hair with one cut at a forty five degree. Make sure there is sufficient access to tie the fly on.

Green Elk Hair Caddis



Orange Elk Hair Caddis



Tan Elk Hair Caddis



Yellow Elk Hair Caddis



- Tom Adams, Tim Wilhelm

The all electronic RRTU newsletter

The RRTU board made a decision to move to an electronic-only newsletter format starting in 2011. Our printing and postage costs for the paper newsletter were running over \$3000 annually; we plan to put all newsletter cost savings into RRTU programs. We use an electronic mail list server for sending the monthly RRTU newsletter. If you want to receive the monthly electronic newsletter, please provide your electronic mail address to **Tim Wilhelm** at your earliest convenience. You may reach **Tim** here: twilhelm@carolina.rr.com

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