



# *Trout Tales*

## Rocky River Chapter Trout Unlimited

November 2010



### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Hello fellow members. October has proven to be a great month and my favorite. The weather was moderate with little rain and the leaf colors were awesome. One of the best I have seen. The DH streams were heavily stocked with very nice Browns and Brookies. It was a great start to the fall fishing season.

Thanks to **Jim Mabry** and **Ralph Harlin** for the installation of Trout in the Classroom (TIC) tanks 5 and 6! And thanks to **Billy Cooper** (and son) for traveling with me to the Marion hatchery for eggs. If you have a chance, please stop by one of our schools and see the tanks. Remember school visits require visitors to sign in/sign out at the school office. Also you might plan to attend one of the stockings in April.

The October Appletree trip will go down in history! No rain or snow. No other anglers on the DH. Other highlights were our new cook tent, newbies, **Brian Miller's** new movie camera, **Don Webb** always has a good story, **Paul Issacs** "Low Country Boil" (eat with your hands), **Jim Mabrey's** outstanding menu, too quiet to sleep, dry firewood, good lunches at "The Lakeside" ... a great time was had by all. And lest I forget **Tom Adams** donated 120 flies for our raffle. AWESOME! Even our Land O' Sky brothers came back. They now move up to being regulars.

This month starts our fly tying program. This was well attended last year; even those who do not tie can come talk about fishing. I hope to have a rod building class going by late January with openings for only 4-5. So if you are interested, please contact me with the type of rod you are interested in building. I want to build a American Tackle black matrix, 9Ft 4 WT 4 Pc.

Also working to finalize the date and location for the RRTU 30<sup>th</sup> birthday party. This information should be posted at our Yahoo Groups site in the next few weeks. My special THANK YOU to those who volunteered their time over the past few months.

- **Bill Thomas** ( [bthomas999@bellsouth.net](mailto:bthomas999@bellsouth.net) )

### **RRTU Calendar of Events**

Nov 13 ... Fly tying at REI Northlake  
Nov 18 ... RRTU meeting. Topic: South Mountains State Park  
Nov 26 ... Wilson Creek Streamside. Hosted by RRTU member Nick Mermigas

Dec 11 ... Fly tying  
There will be no Regular meeting in December

Jan 15 ... Fly tying  
Jan 20 ... RRTU meeting

### **Friends of Rocky River (FORR) update**

In January 2010 RRTU launched a new fundraising initiative designed to eventually become the primary source of chapter income. With over 700 members, we feel confident that modest, annual pledges from members and business affiliates can raise the capital necessary to operate the chapter and sponsor our projects. Under the FORR program, we are challenging our members, friends and affiliates to make an annual donation to fund our activities.

If you have not yet sent a donation, please do so. Mail donations to RRTU, C/O Terry Hill, PO Box 456, Matthews, NC 28106.

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

### **Wilson Creek Streamside on November 26**

Once again this year RRTU member **Nick Mermigas** will host a streamside event on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Since being designated as a Delayed Harvest (DH) stream, Wilson Creek has turned into a prime destination for area anglers. Nick sent this update on the event:

At the DH waters there is an old mill-factory located on the right side of the road. Go in and park in the large parking lot. That is where we will have our lunch at around 12:00PM. Your lunch donation will cost you some trash that you will pick up during your fishing

adventure and \$5. Back by popular demand - this year's streamside cooked lunch will be Brunswick Stew, corn bread, pumpkin pie or sweet potato pie, coffee and water. If you are into enjoying the beauty of our NC Mountains think about coming to this one. Bring your rods, waders, and flies. In the fall I recommend wet nymph fishing versus dry fly. With all the leaves falling I find it hard to dry fly fish. However, I am sure there are some purists who will tie on an Adams or Elk Hare Caddis and catch fish between the leaves. My point - it is challenging to have a good surface drift with all the leaves floating on top. With hatchery fish all the regular nymph fly patterns should work well. My favorites are the Hare's Ear, Pheasant Tail and Copper Johns.

### **Directions: Morganton Route**

Take I 85 South to Exit 17 US 321. Turn left (North) into US 321 going 37 miles and merge onto I 40 West. From Interstate 40, take Exit 103 (Morganton) / US 64 exit. Turn right on to Burkemont Ave/ US 64. Take a left onto Fleming Dr/US-64 Bypass W (continue to follow US 64 Bypass W). Turn left at N Carolina 181 N/N Green St, Continue to follow N Carolina 181 N for about 11 miles. Turn right at Brown Mountain Beach Rd/State Rd 1405 which continues onto Adako Rd/State Rd 1335 for about 5 miles. Turn left at Brown Mountain Beach Rd and proceed for about 8 miles to the Delayed Harvest waters.

### **Fly Tying starts in November**

The fly tying class earlier this year was so well received that we plan to restart those in November. This information came from RRTU member **Jack McNeary**:

### **Rocky River Trout Unlimited Fly Tying Class for 2010**

#### **Schedule**

Our first class this year will be held at REI, 9755 Northlake Centre Pkwy off of Harris Road. We will be meeting in the Community Room at REI at 10:00 AM in the morning until 2:00 PM in the afternoon. The dates for the meetings will be November 13, December 11 2010, January 15 2011, February 12 2011, and March 12 2011. The location for the meetings after November 13<sup>th</sup>, might be a different location. Lunch

will be picked up by RRTU and will cost \$4.00 if you want to be included.

### **Background information:**

Last year when we decided to have these classes we expected a pretty small number at the first class. Much to our pleasant surprise, there was terrific participation and remarkable enthusiasm.

We had several new fly tiers and quite a few tiers who just came, brought their own equipment and tying materials and just spent the time tying and talking. We encourage the same thing this year. RRTU purchased six rotating fly tying vices and associated supplies. The remainder of the tying equipment was generously donated by Jesse Brown Outdoors!

### **Class Structure**

**Tom Adams** and **Jack McNeary** are the two instructors for the class, and we decided to break it up a little differently this season. We expect we will have tiers who have skills from beginner to very good.

**Tom Adams** will work with the more experienced tiers who want to start tying more difficult flies. The first fly that Tom will teach you to tie is a **Soft Hackle**.

**Jack McNeary** will work with the beginners and the first class demonstrating the use of the vice, whip finisher, hand whipping, hook sizes, tying thread etc. For the beginners we will follow a popular program which is on the Internet, Al Campbell's excellent website :

<http://www.flyangleronline.com/flytying/beginners/archive.php> .

The first pattern for beginners will be the marvelous **Pheasant Tail Nymph**.

### **Charges**

For those participating in the tying classes there will be a fee of \$5.00 which includes all four sessions. If you desire lunch the charge for that will be \$4.00 each session. Any lunch money left over will go to RRTU.

If you are just coming to BS or tie on your own there will be no charge (except for lunch !)

### **Pre-Registration**

Since we do not know how many people will show up, please take the time to let us know if you think you want to attend the fly tying class. Having that information will give us a chance to make sure we have the necessary materials available. Send an email to Jack McNeary at [jmcneary@gmail.com](mailto:jmcneary@gmail.com), and just let him know if you think you will participate. We will collect the money at the first class.

You do not have to be a member of TU to attend our class, but we would encourage anyone attending join TU. When you join Trout Unlimited, you can get gifts from TU, plus the knowledge you are contributing to the protection of our cold water resources !

We look forward to seeing you on November 13<sup>th</sup> 2010

**- Jack McNeary**

### **Conservation success!**

Some of you may have written letters to Martin Lewis regarding the East Fork headwaters. **Jim Mabrey** sent this regarding the recent NC Wildlife Resources Commission pledge of support for the East Fork headwaters project:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wildlife Commission Pledges Support for East Fork Headwaters

RALEIGH, N.C. (Nov. 4) – The Commissioners of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission unanimously passed a resolution Thursday, pledging the agency’s support for the management and stewardship of the East Fork Headwaters, an 8,000 acre tract of biologically diverse land in Transylvania County.

During meetings on Wednesday and Thursday, the Commission agreed to manage the land if the Conservation Fund raises the money to purchase it. The Conservation Fund, a nonprofit land protection

organization, is under contract to purchase the East Fork Headwaters Tract for \$33 million.

“This land is highly desirable for protection and public use, and is truly multipurpose,” said Gordon Myers, executive director of the Commission. “The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission supports The Conservation Fund’s effort to effectuate long-term conservation of this valuable resource.”

The East Fork Headwaters tract is the largest privately owned tract remaining in far western North Carolina and is home to several waterfalls, 50 miles of trout streams and nearly 10 miles of the Foothills Trail where it enters North Carolina. The site contains exceptional recreational opportunities for public hunting, fishing, hiking and other outdoor pursuits. The land is also biologically valuable, containing habitats for a number of species listed in the Wildlife Action Plan.

The Commission cooperatively manages nearly 2 million acres through its game land program, providing valuable conservation stewardship and public access.

A copy of the resolution is available upon request.

### **Tip of the Month (a new feature)**

When walking a trail less used to access a stream, the thickets can be a challenging series of low branches to dodge and maneuver the rod through.

**Do you break down your rod, carry the rod with the tip running ahead of you or do you carry the rod with the tip trailing you?** Breaking down the rod completely will make the trek through the thicket much easier, but the down side is the risk of breaking the rod tip section as it is held with the other components and can readily twist away and get hung on a branch with little springing action available. Keeping the rod set up allows for the needed springing action that allows the rod to recover from impacts. Holding the rod in a leading position allows you to keep an eye on the rod tip and where it is placed. Holding the rod in the trailing position allows you to mostly ignore the rod as you move ahead. This sounds ideal until the line snags on a branch and you have to back track to untangle. Therefore, my choice is to hold the rod in the leading position, the second choice is the trailing position and

the last choice is breaking the rod down. All of these methods work as long as you understand the side-effects of each one.

- **Alen Baker**

## TAILS FROM THE CREEK

This one from RRTU member **Bill Miller** ... thanks Bill!

In late July of this year, I fulfilled a promise I had made to myself about 40 years ago: "This year," I had vowed, "I'm going to fish Henry's Fork!"

And each year, my job, the kids and a never-ending "honey-do" list forced me to modify my vow to, "NEXT year..." Until March of this year when -- after a 45 year hiatus -- I renewed contact with my best friend in college, only to learn Barry has inoperable cancer.

For the second time in my life, Barry changed my life. This time, I realized that "next year" just might not come. (The first time he changed my life has nothing to do with fishing, so I'll leave that for another time.) Shortly after we talked, I began planning for my "trek."

Initially, I considered simply showing up, rod in hand, to start flailing away at the water. But a little thought convinced me to do something I had never done before: engage a professional guide. After a little research, I settled on "Henry's Fork Anglers." They are in Last Chance, ID, and within a short drive of several different prime trout waters.

I signed up for two full days at just under \$500 a day, plus guide gratuity (20%). That included drift boat, put-in, take-out and lunch along the way. My son, Jeff lives in Boise -- on the other side of the state. But I "convinced" him to take off a couple of days and be my "buddy" in the two-fisherman drift boat.

The guides, both days, were great! Although, I consider myself a fairly accomplished trout angler, both fellows taught me more than I had learned from anyone except my Dad! Tapered leader? Not always. Single fly? How

about two different ways to rig a tandem fly? Strike indicator? How about a balloon!

We showed up at about 8 AM, got our gear on board and were on the water by around 9:30. We fished the section of Henry's Fork known as the Box Canyon, or just, "The Box." The best way to describe this section is: "Tailwater with an attitude." It is fed from a relatively small dam. The canyon walls are steep-to-precipitous. The water volume is tremendous. It is cold, wide (50 yards in many places), deep (3 to 6 feet with few "holes") and FAST. Even at my fittest, I doubt if I could have successfully crossed it without -- at least once -- assuming the famous "horizontal casting position."

Because the water is so swift, the guide climbed out and, for most of the productive sections (yes, he knew where they were!) he walked the boat through the canyon.

This section of Henry's Fork contains about 2,000 trout per mile. It is all catch-and-release. They are all brightly colored Rainbows from -- it is said -- the Hat Creek strain. Sizes range from eight to about twenty inches. Average is in the fifteen to seventeen inch range.

How was fishing? After the guide taught us how to cast so that we didn't get each other tangled, we had a ball! My son and I each hooked about two dozen. We each landed about half that amount. The rest we magnanimously granted "early release."

What was it like to hook and play a Henry's Fork 'Bow'? Two stories may help illustrate it. My first fish came about 5 minutes into the day. I set the hook and gleefully shouted "fish on" as my rod bent and the reel began to sing. A couple of minutes later, we netted and released a NINE INCH 'Bow'!

The second story needs a prelude. My personal best trout ever was a 28" spawning German Brown from the Feather River. From hook-to-net the Brownie took me about five minutes. My best Henry's Fork 'Bow' was just a hair over 20" (large for The Box.) It took me FIFTEEN MINUTES from hookup to net. During that time, it ran at least 10 times. More spectacularly, it

jumped SIX TIMES. The last jump occurred just a minute or so before the net came out. Kinda reminded me of the trout in "A River Runs Through it."

The second day, we fished the South Fork of the Snake River. This was an entirely different experience. Like Henry's Fork, this is tailwater. But the river is HUGE; averaging 100 yards across and MANY feet deep. The fish are mostly Cutthroats, with a few Rainbows and some hybrids. To reduce hybridization, anglers are REQUIRED to keep all 'bows and hybrids!

Again, we fished via drift boat, but the guide (wisely) stayed INSIDE the boat. In the main river, the trout hold near the banks, and it takes not only a good cast and mend, but also substantial luck to hook a nice trout. We got a couple of mid-size Mountain Whitefish, but only a trout or two.

Until . . .

The South Fork contains multiple side "channels" that are about the same size as a typical NC trout creek. We stopped at one such channel for lunch. "Ah Hah!" I thought, as I watched splashes and dimples from several nice trout. "I know how to fish THIS water." With our guide, we searched the streamside foliage and concluded that the hatch was composed of #16 Golden Stoneflies. On went the "Stones" and we spent a half-hour of utter frustration. Not even ONE strike!

Until . . .

The guide's puzzled look cleared. He grabbed my leader and with a few deftly tied knots, incorporated a #18 bead-head black nymph as a dropper about 18" below the dry fly. He gestured to the water. "See all that splashing?" I nodded. "I THINK they're taking emergers just below the surface. The splashing is their dorsal fins and tails breaking through."

I had HEARD of this, but never (knowingly) experienced it. Within minutes, my son and I hooked and landed several nice 'bows and hybrids. But my FIRST EVER Cutthroat still eluded me.

Until...

Jeff and I had been alternately "working" an actively feeding fish near the riffle at the top of a run. Time after time the fish had moved to our presentations before turning away. Apparently something wasn't quite right. Maybe there was "drag" in the main channel? On a "hunch" I cast into the shallow water about 5 feet to the right of where he was holding.

I stripped in line to keep the float as drag free as possible as the presentation drifted immediately over the fish. I saw the Stonefly "indicator" twitch and set the hook just as the fish "flashed." "Set," the guide yelled, but my line was already tight! Now what? I had a pile of line at my feet and a nice fish on!

No problem! I raised the rod high and stepped backward to pull the line off the ground. As I did, I forgot what my Daddy told me 60+ years ago: "Whenever you step backward, be sure you know what's behind you!" And what was behind ME was a knee-high log.

Over I went.

But years of gymnastics were in my past. I knew just what to do. Drop the rod. Turn into the fall. Tuck and roll.

And LOSE THE FISH!

Straight backwards over the log I went, rod held high. As the back of my head broke my fall, I shouted "Grab the rod!"

I DID NOT lose consciousness. I clearly saw Jeff snatch the rod, struggling to keep the line tight while deciding whether he should be concerned at his father's plight or whether he should laugh uproariously at the ridiculous sight. A few moments later, I solved the problem by wallowing to my feet and retrieving my rod.

Within a couple of minutes, a 17 inch, brilliantly colored Cutthroat – my first ever -- was in the net.

- **Bill**

## FLY OF THE MONTH

This past weekend after we had finished our evening planning session and as we sat in front of a roaring fire, I turned to **Tom Adams** and asked him what fly we were doing for this month's fly of the month. Tom replied that it was the **Parachute Adams** and I quietly asked why he had chosen that fly. Before Tom had a chance to reply a voice on the other side of the room responded "Because he likes the name!" Not only was it a tough crowd this weekend but I am thankful it wasn't named the Parachute Wilhelm.

Dry flies tied "parachute-style" have been around for almost 80 years, however, I really can't tell you when my first introduction to a parachute tied fly occurred. I don't remember much discussion of them prior to the late eighties; although I do remember a fish I caught about that time on a Parachute Adams. There are those that fish 200 days a year and tell you not only every fish they catch but what fly they were using and what kind of cast they employed to either slip it under a laurel or how many currents it crossed. I can't do that but there are 5 or 6 fish that I have remembered through the years. One of them was a 9 inch rainbow caught on a Parachute Adams.

I had taken my wife and our two children, who were still pretty small at the time, to South Mountain State Park. This was back before Jacobs Fork was Delayed Harvest but I had gone above the Hatchery Supported waters and was trying to hop around some boulders below the falls. There was one pool with a small falls coming into it that pretty much halted my progress upstream. I pretty much had to stand on one boulder, lean on another and cast off of my left shoulder. I threw what was probably a size 14 Parachute Adams up into the deep pool located at the base of some large boulders. I let it set for a moment and was about ready to cast again when the rainbow took it. That rainbow is made even more memorable because I think it was the only fish I caught that day.

The Adams itself is a great fly as Paul Schullery states: *"The great thing about the Adams is that it can still pretty much be whatever we want it to be. Charles Adams himself thought it imitated an ant. Biologist-*

*angler Sid Gordon, writing in 1955, spoke for generations of anglers before and since when he said that if you slanted the wings back a little you could "go any place in the country and have a common-place, staple imitation of the caddis in just this one pattern." The Adam fills in for everything. At need, I've used it as a midge, a PMD, a Hendrickson, and a dozen other things I didn't know what to call. We all recognize an Adams hatch when we see one."*

Tying the Adams as a parachute pattern, gives it a lower silhouette and makes it a good fly for rougher water. The white wing is easily visible, but it can also be tied with wings in yellow, orange or any fluorescent color giving it even higher visibility. It is certainly a fly you want to have in your fly box.

PARACHUTE ADAMS



HOOK: Standard Dry Fly – Tiemco 100 or equivalent.  
Sizes: 12,14,16,18,20  
Thread: Uni 8/0 Black  
Tail: Grizzly and Brown rooster, about ten fibers (some recipes call for moose hair)  
Body: Muskrat or equivalent dubbing in Adams gray  
Hackle: Grizzly and Brown rooster hackle  
Wing Post: Turkey flat, poly fiber or parachute post material – white or hi-vis colors

## Directions:

1. Start thread two or three eye lengths back from the eye and wrap tightly to about one third the distance to the bend. Tie in wing post. Add two or three wraps around the base of the post after securing to strengthen the vertical.
2. Continue the wrap to the bend above the barb and return the wrap to the thorax. Gather several grizzly and brown hackle fibers and “blend” together for the tailing. Tie in.
3. Dub thread with muskrat (remove the guard hairs) or equivalent dubbing and wrap forward from the tail to two eye lengths from the eye. The wraps forward of the post should be very thin.
4. Select a grizzly and a brown hackle, stripping an quarter inch from each. Put the two on top of another and tie in forward of the post leaving the stripped stem as long as possible. This will be wrapped around the wing post to make the hackle.
5. Grasp the bottom feather and wrap two or three turns around the post, starting up and bring each turn down to finish at the base of the post. Hold the feather at an angle and down at the eye and wrap two or three turns to secure. Weaving the thread through the hackle barbs to avoid bunching.
6. Repeat with the top feather.
7. To finish the tie in of the hackle, lift the barbs gently and tie the knot under the lifted section. Cement the head. Some tiers will put a drop at the post to cement the hackle, avoiding slippage.

## SUMMARY OF BOARD MEETING

The board held a retreat this past weekend to discuss planning for this coming year. IN general here are some of the actions taken:

Discussion was held on an action plan to achieve the goals and objectives that the board established for the coming year:

1. A committee (Jim Mabrey, Paul Isaacs & Tim Wilhelm) was created to identify long and short range projects for membership

participation. Suggestions from the board included:

- a. A cleanup day on Upper Wilson Creek;
  - b. Continued support of Muddy Creek;
  - c. National River Day Cleanup;
  - d. Cleanup day with River Girl Outfitters, and;
  - e. South Mountain State Park Projects (“*Dam Busting*”).
2. Continued and increased support of Trout in the Classroom.
    - a. Bill Thomas is to head the effort and will recruit other members.
    - b. Encourage more membership involvement with releases.
    - c. Explore the possibility of additional TIC events.
  3. Determine current status of TU trout tank at Discovery Place (Tom Adams)
  4. Explore opportunities to raise money by using the website, email and newsletter to sell donated services and products (Joyce Shepherd)
  5. Increase revenue from the Friends of Rocky River program including increased corporate sponsorship (Terry Hill, Steve Craig, Paul Isaacs)
  6. Establish a committee to arrange for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary meeting (David Hollifield)
  7. Increase emphasis will be given to the raffle held a the monthly meeting (Erin Purves)

## A Final Note

I was recently reminded by a long time member that not all of our members have email and with that reminder came a suggestion that we include phone numbers so that if questions arise a phone call can be made. Makes a lot of sense to me, but for this newsletter, we’re still a little slow to react.

If there are any questions about anything mentioned in this newsletter, please feel free to call me at (704) 442-1253. I don’t have all the answers but I know people that do.

Thanks, Tim Wilhelm

**November Meeting Program:  
South Mountains State Park**

**Covenant Presbyterian Church  
1000 East Morehead Street  
Room 205, Fellowship Hall  
Charlotte, NC 28204  
Thursday November 18th  
Social Time: 6:30 pm  
Meeting Starts: 7:00 pm**