

We conserve, Protect and Sustain our Coldwater Natural Resources

# July 2019 Newsletter

## Happy Independence Day

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### Upcoming Events & Calendar

Brews and Brookies - July 18th

Citizen Scientist Training - August 9-10th

Little Sugar Creek Cleanup - August 17th

Chapter Program - No Meeting in August

Chapter Program - Business Review - September 19th

South Mountain Nature Days - September 28th

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### July 18th - Brews and Brookies



Join us at the Olde Mecklenburg Brewery, Thursday, July 18th for a Summer

get together.

There will be no formal program, just a chance to catch up with some friends and share your latest fishing stories.

**When: July 18th 5:30- 8 pm**  
**Where: Olde Mecklenburg Brewery**  
**4150 Yancy Road**  
**Charlotte, NC 28217**

Look for the folks with RRTU shirts. Wear one if you have one!

## Volunteers Needed - Little Sugar Creek Cleanup - August 17th!



Here is a conservation opportunity in our own backyard! We will be cleaning up a portion of the Little Sugar Creek Greenway, near the Wendy's/Target in Uptown on August 17th. It's a light effort, from 10am until noon, so it won't be too hot!

The City will be providing gloves, vests, and bags along with pick-up of collected trash. RRTU will be providing volunteers and water.

[Register to Volunteer!](#)

Lunch is on your own, and many of us plan to have a bite and a beer afterwards. A great chance to catch up!



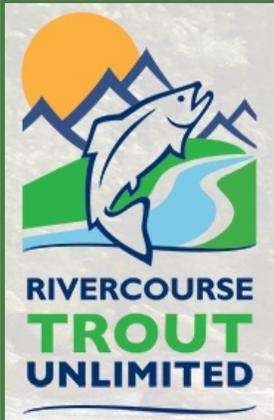
## Citizen Scientist Training August 9-10th

There is an opportunity to be involved in the USFS Community Science program through the aquatic organism passage (AOP) surveys, where stream crossings are assessed to identify whether culverts, fords or bridges are barriers to fish passage. Data collected from

this program will lead directly to on-the-ground land management and conservation plans.

This is a great way to spend a bit of time improving the quality of streams, and learn some new water.

Email Jake Hansen, [jake.hansen@tu.org](mailto:jake.hansen@tu.org), for more information. There is also more info [here](#).



## RiverCourse 2019 Update

RiverCourse was June 16-21 this year, and by all accounts it was a good year. There were young people from all over the area in attendance, who were able to enjoy learning about stream ecology, fly tying, fly fishing, hatchery science, falconry, and much more in the beautiful setting at Lake Logan.

RRTU donated \$1200 to Rivercourse this year, and more importantly, we provided volunteers. Joyce Shepherd, Susan Hinson, Jim Smalley, Tom Adams, among others provided camper guidance, Fly Tying Instruction, amazing AV support, and Ghillie services.

If you have never volunteered at [RiverCourse](#), I highly recommend you put it on your calendar for next year!

See video below for pictures and video of the experience. Thanks to Jim Smalley, for his excellent video work!



## RRTU Website Events and Calendar

Back by popular the demand, the Calendar has reappeared on the website, as it's own [page](#). We have also added a list of the next 5 upcoming events to

the [home page](#). Now you don't have to wait on the newsletter to know what's coming up!

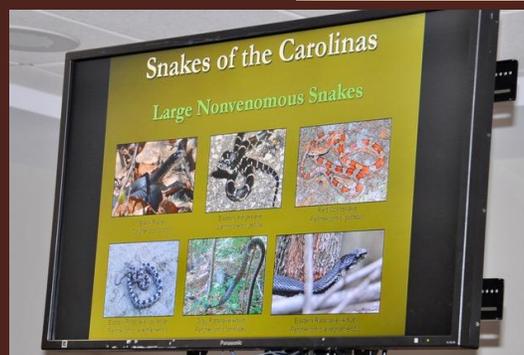
Tip: If you can't find the homepage while you are on the site, just click the RRTU logo at the top of the page.



## June Program - Herpetology (SNAKES)



Thanks to Grover Barfield, RRTU was treated to an informative and fun lesson about snakes! Often misunderstood, and mis-identified, these creatures are a necessary part of our world.



Fall Alarka - 3 Months and Counting

Fall Alarka is October 10-13 this year (Check the [calendar](#).) It's not too early to start planning. This year we are hoping for more member engagement through volunteers. We have opportunities for:

- Grocery Shopping (1-2 people, an hour or two Wednesday before, preset Costco list)
- Cold Item Shopping Thursday Night (1 person, 30 min, set list, after Pizza)
- Thursday Pizza Round-up (2 people, 5-8 pm, pre-order at noon.)
- Friday Dinner Crew (3 people, 5-8pm)
- Friday Breakfast Crew (1-2 people, 6:30-7:30 am)
- Saturday Dinner Crew (3 People, 5-8pm)
- Saturday Breakfast Crew (1-2 people, 6:30-7:30 am)

Dinners are catered with a set menu, the team is responsible for pickup, setup, and teardown at camp pavilion.

Breakfast will be continental, the team is responsible for setup and teardown in as cabin.

Pizza Dinner involves set orders and pickup of pizza.

All costs paid with RRTU credit card/check or re-imbursed.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Brian Esque, [bcesque@gmail.com](mailto:bcesque@gmail.com)



### **Fly of The Month 07.19**

Contrary to the superstition that Eskimos might have been the first to use Polar bear hair on hooks to catch “hewluk-powak,” meaning “fish with wing like fin” or the arctic grayling, or any other fish, they did not, for they never used anything but bait. The first known use of Polar bear hair for fly tying was in 1923 when T. V. Sandys-Wunsch of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and F. A. Ashton of Vancouver, Canada used Polar bear flies made from a skin brought out of the North by Wunsch. By 1925, Polar bear hair flies were sold commercially by Harkley & Hayward of Vancouver, Canada.

Ken Cooper of Detroit, Michigan who brought polar bear hair flies to the attention of fly fishers in the States. Ken, making no claim as the originator said,

“I was working for Lou J. Eppinger in 1932 and used to prowl around the taxidermy shop, looking for fur or feathers to make flies. They had a mounted Polar bear that had outlived its usefulness. It was a sorry sight and I said to the taxidermist, ‘Why don’t you throw it out?’ and he said, ‘I would like to, but the boss thinks we should save it.’ So, I asked Lou how much he thought it was worth. He smiled and said, ‘Do you want it for fly tying material? Well, help yourself.’ I walked into the taxidermy shop and cut about a yard of hide off that bear, told the taxidermist to wash it, cut it up in small pieces, put it in the tumbling barrel with some hard wood sawdust and do a good job, and we would soon be rid of that bear. I tied up some Polar bear flies for the store and sold the balance of the bear hide for fly tying. It did not last long.”

Ken Cooper who created the Cooper Bug later became well known for his Polar bear flies. Cato Holler who lived on Armstrong Creek near Marion, North Carolina shot his

Polar bear in the early 1970s prior to the time it became illegal to harvest a polar bear. Cato develop numerous Southern Appalachian variations of flies using dyed Polar bear hair. A few of his flies are on display at the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians. Although Polar bear hair was already popular in Canada, it had not been used in the States before Ken Cooper blazed the trail.

## Cooper Bug

There is a trout fly called the Cooper wet fly that was originated by George T. Cooper who was appointed on the New York Fish Commission in 1869 in Seth Green's place, when Mr. Green resigned to take charge of the Caledonia Hatchery. The Cooper wet fly has an orange body; black hackle and brown turkey wing. This article is not to be confused with and not about the Cooper wet fly pattern.

The originator of the Cooper Bug, Ken Cooper said, "This fly just happened. Bass fishing and bass flies do not intrigue me very greatly, but when I cannot fish for trout I do not scorn the bass or bluegill. They are an excuse to get out in the open, which always seems to give me a new lease on life."

"In 1936, while preparing for a bass fishing trip, I put a hook in my fly-tying vise and tried to figure out what to tie on it to try out on this trip. A red tail seemed to be a good start, so I put on a red deer hair tail, then a red wool body with a gold rib, next a bunch of deer hair. I divided it to make wings at right angles to the hook. This gave me a fly that would look reasonably large but be light in weight, also lift and handle nicely with a bass fly rod. The butt of the deer hair blossomed out into quite a topknot but instead of cutting it off, it was tied to stand upright and was cut flat across the top leaving a V-shaped topknot about five-eighths of an inch high. The finished fly was tossed into the air a few times to see how it would land and much to my surprise it always landed right side up, the V top acting as a parachute."

"This was something different. I selected Pine Lake, a hard-fished body of water, for the try-out. It was a beautiful moonlight night and I fished alone and fished all night. The bass seemed to like this bug and so did I, as the topknot gave it good visibility."

"I gave one of these bugs to Al Hilde, a brother-in-law of Paul Young of Detroit, Michigan, to try out and asked him to suggest a name. He said it looked like a French poodle that had been sheared and suggested the name Poodle Bug and thus was it born and named."

"In 1938 Ray Bergman came out with a book called Trout. While he was gathering materials for his book. Phil Armstrong thought he should have one of my flies and I gave Phil a Poodle Bug, which he personally delivered to Bergman. Phil thought he could improve on the name of the fly, so he told Bergman the name was the Cooper Bug. On color plate number 15 in Bergman's book there is a picture of this fly and it is called a Cooper Bug."

Credits: Quotes and drawing from Fly Pattern and Their Origins (1950), by Harold Hinsdill Smedley, published by Westshore Publications, Muskegon, Michigan. Colored photo from Ray Bergman's Trout.

## Cooper Bug

### Fly of the Month 07.19

Tom Adams and Alen Baker

References:

Smedley, Harold Hinsdill. *Fly Patterns and Their Origins*, 1944

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[Visit our website](#)

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