



New River Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited

Volume 3, Issue 1

Fall, 2006

Dear TU member,

We have accomplished a lot since our last newsletter. Our Peak Creek restoration project went extremely well. On July 15th, we had 13 volunteers show up for the cleaning day where we pulled everything from kitchen sinks and toilets to grocery karts and motorcycles. Everyone was proud of their hard work. Installation of cover logs went as planned when 15 volunteers hammered 25 cover logs into the stream. Matter of fact, we even got into the Roanoke Times Outdoor section in a column by Mark Taylor (cont'd pg. 4). Joe Williams with some volunteers have stocked Peak Creek with rainbow trout. The stream delayed harvest section runs from the Rte. 99 crossing upstream to within the town of Pulaski. The delayed harvest regulation opened this October and ends in May.

June 19th and 20th, Jason Bowman, Zach Minter, and myself went to Grayson Highlands State Park to help in a population survey headed by fisheries biologist, George Palmer. Several fisheries biologist gathered to help in the survey of over 10 miles of the park's wild trout water.. The amount of wild brook trout in the park's waters were amazing especially in the beautiful surrounding of Grayson Highlands.

In our October meeting, we had guest speaker, Richard Formato, who gave a great presentation about his life as a flyfisherman but also as a conservationist. Richard conducted restoration work on Little Indian Creek, that runs through his land in Floyd Co. The presentation was excellent and everyone who came said it was our best meeting yet. (cont'd on pg. 5)

Angelo Biviano, our fundraising director, has worked very hard to design two raffles for our chapter's general fund. The first, was conducted this past weekend at the Virginia Tech Homecoming football game. Angelo was able to get a authentic VT football with Head Coach Frank Beamer's signature. We sold raffle tickets for \$2 a piece. Tom Brown from Orvis in Roanoke has donated a rod and reel outfit for our chapter to raffle off. Next meeting (Nov 1st), Angelo will discuss how the raffle will be set up and give everyone who wants to participate tickets to sell. I hope everyone can participate.

Sincerely,

Ryan McManamay

President New River Valley Chapter

RAFFLE: (Contact Angelo Biviano) — abiviano@vt.edu

Help generate funds for our chapter's budget. As you may know, we do not have a large amount of money in the bank account. Funds help us conduct activities that contribute to TU's mission: To conserve and protect wild trout and salmon fisheries. Projects like Peak Creek Restoration cannot continue without funds. Please come to the next meeting (Nov. 1st) to help with the raffle in any way that you can.

Special points of interest:

• Next Meetings:

Nov 1st

Dec 6th

Jan 3rd

• **When: 7pm**

• **Where: 1033**

Derring Hall

Upcoming Activities

CHAPTER COOKOUT

**At Cascades
Oct. 29th**

RAFFLE

**Orvis Clearwater
Rod/Reel Combo**

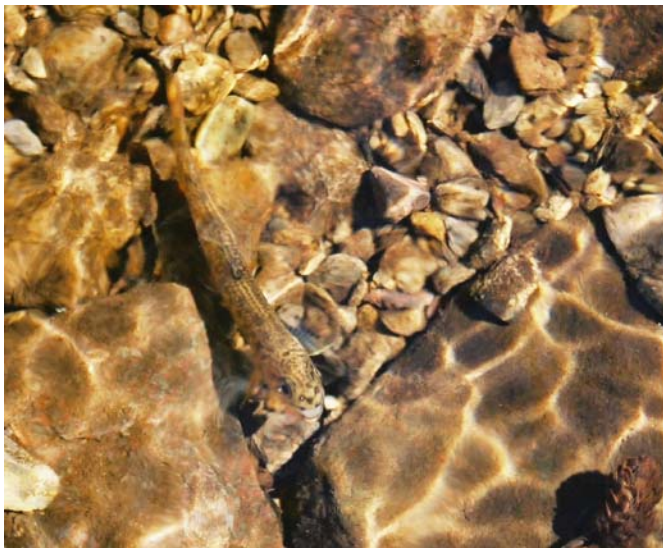
**-Come to next
Meeting to find out
how you can partici-
pate (NOV. 1st).**

- **contact Angelo Biviano if you're interested -**
- **abiviano@vt.edu**



Travis Patton, a great local fly-fishermen and guide at Tangent Outdoors gave these photos of fish that came out of streams in this area and said:

“First one is a holdover brown that had really good color caught on a woolly booger (left). Second fish (bottom) is a 10 plus wild rainbow caught on a size 16 parachute adams at 8:30 in the morning: this isn't a little stony fish either. Third fish is an 11.5 is a brook caught late one evening during a spring mayfly hatch, on a super long leader that I got to fight in 10 yards or so on an undisclosed stream.”



Can you spot the fish in this picture?

I took this photo on Cabin Creek in Grayson Highlands State Park. I had just released this little brookie and got to snap a photo of him.

It is amazing just how well camouflaged trout are on the bottom of a stream.

Of course, I too would be camouflaged, if 6 foot giants were always chasing me with sticks with large dental floss attached to them.

Contribute to the newsletter: If you'd like to send in some pictures and a fishing story please send them to rmcmanam@vt.edu so we can post it in the newsletter.

Next Meetings: Nov 1st, Dec 6th, and Jan 3rd 7pm @ 1033 Derring Hall

Announcements:

New River Valley Chapter cookout at Cascades (Oct. 29th)

We are hoping to have a grill-out at the Cascades parking area on Little Stony Creek. Families are welcome! Please bring something to grill and a side dish. If you have some outdoor chairs, it might be good to bring those as well. We hope to have some fun eating and enjoying the fall foliage. Also, you might want to bring the fly rod because a few dedicated fishermen might be going upstream to test their ability on some fall brookies.

Next Meeting (Nov. 1st)

Lynn Hayes and Jim Blakeney will be giving a presentation on their trip out West fishing the Madison, outskirts of Yellowstone, and other places. Also, Dr. Jack Webster will be giving a short presentation on his experience Salmon fishing in Oregon. Also Angelo Biviano will be talking about our upcoming **RAFFLE** of the donated Orvis Clearwater rod/reel combo which will strictly benefit our chapter's general fund.

Would you be interested in fly-tying lessons?

Some folks have shown interest in either receiving lessons or giving their time in instruction in the art of fly tying. We would like to give lessons to benefit people who want to learn to tie flies but also use proceeds from that to benefit our chapter's general fund. It could be a really fun activity to do besides our monthly chapter meetings. On a monthly basis, you could receive instruction on how to tie fly patterns that catch fish. Hopefully, then, you could gain instruction on how to fill your fly box with not only attractive patterns but ones that are useful as well. Most likely, we could hold 5 sessions at 1 1/2 hours each. Each session would cost \$20 per person. All proceeds would go to the New River Valley's general fund. I write this section simply to see how many people would be interested in attending these sessions. If anyone is interested, please contact Ryan McManamay, by email (rmcmanam@vt.edu) or by phone (540) 808-8695. Once enough people have shown interest in taking lessons, we would like to start holding classes.



Got this pattern off the web:
<http://flies.hipwader.com/2004/flash-back-pheasant-tail>

All the instructions are on the web. This is a great all round pattern especially for any time of year. Add a gold bead on the front and it's a killer pattern.

Get on the NRV Chapter Listserv. Keep updated on chapter involvements and projects. If you want to be on the listserv, send an email to Lynn Hayes, leh550@aol.com so that we can send you announcements of chapter meetings and activities.

ATTENTION:

If we do not have your email and you would like to save us postage costs, please send an email to Lynn Hayes, leh550@aol.com so that we can get you on the listserv and send newsletters to you via email.

Hook:Mustad 80050BR (size#14 here) or size/style to match what you're fishing for
Thread:8/0 Dark brown (or size/color to suit your fly)
Weight:Small lead wire
Tail:Pheasant tail fibers (8-10)
Rib:Medium copper wire
Abdomen:Pheasant tail fibers (12-18)
Legs:Pheasant Tail fibers (about 8-10)
Wingcase/flash-back:UNI-Mylar 1/16" "Pearl" color (with a drop of 5 minute epoxy)
Thorax:Peacock herl

Clearwater Revival in Outdoor Section of Roanoke Times - *Mark Taylor*

PULASKI -- Jason Steele was tired and sweaty, but he felt good. Along with a dozen other members of the New River Valley chapter of Trout Unlimited, Steele spent Saturday morning doing stream restoration work in Peak Creek, a small tributary of the New River that gets its start just outside this town.

In a few weeks, the stream -- a new addition to the state's delayed harvest trout program -- will be teaming with freshly stocked rainbows and browns.

But Steele said he might not return until it's time for more work. "I'll probably never fish this area," said Steele, a Virginia Tech graduate student. Steele said his concern was for the greater good, not himself. Chuck Harrell, another Tech graduate student and the treasurer of the TU chapter, nodded. "We joke about it and say the locals may come down here and fish it out," Harrell said. "But who cares?" "It's getting them out."

Saturday morning, the crew installed 23 cover logs in the section of the stream adjacent to Heritage Park. Installed at an angle atop spacer blocks, the logs will give the trout a place to hide, something missing in the natural streambed in this stretch. "In areas that are deeper, water acts as cover," Ryan McManamay, the chapter's president, said as he stood shin-deep in a long, flat stretch of stream. "You can see how shallow it is here, and that there is no cover." Stocked trout will gravitate to the cover, said Joe Williams, a Department of Game and Inland Fisheries biologist who works out of the agency's Blacksburg office. The cover logs were a good option for the project. "This is a real easy, cheap way of putting cover into the stream," Williams said.

This was the TU crew's second day of work on Peak Creek. Earlier this year members spent a day pulling trash from the stream and its banks. "We pulled out everything from a motorcycle to a shopping cart to tires," said Phil Taylor, the club's conservation director. Taylor was among the trout angler conservationists who helped revive the New River Valley chapter of TU this past winter. The club had been inactive in recent years. Many of the members are Tech students, and several are part of the school's Stream Team, a group interested in stream ecology. Shortly after their early meetings, the group's leaders approached Williams, seeking his input on potential conservation projects. Williams immediately thought of Peak Creek, which had already been designated to be added to the Delayed Harvest program.

Delayed harvest streams offer a compromise between year-round fishing and put-and-take waters. They are stocked three times between Oct. 1 and May 31. During that period, anglers are required to use artificial lures and must release all trout. The waters, most of which would be unable to support trout through the summer, open to harvest June 1. After the clean-up effort, Williams supplied the club with rough cut half-logs, spacer blocks, and rebar for anchoring the wood to the streambed. "They are really gung ho," Williams said of the TU volunteers.

Saturday morning, it took the 13 volunteers about three hours of serious effort to carry the logs to the stream, select good locations and anchor the logs. Twelve-year-old Natasha Cruise of Pembroke had a couple of jobs. "I took pictures, and also stood on the logs while they hammered them in," said a smiling Natasha, who was with her father, Allen Cruise. Allen Cruise said he prefers to fish for wild trout, but he planned to bring Natasha and her brother back for some fishing once the stream is stocked. "This will be great for the kids," Cruise said. Another section of Peak Creek has also been identified as requiring some stream improvements, Williams said.

Where the stream runs through the town, the banks are actually rock walls and the streambed is almost completely devoid of cover. The only areas even marginally suited for trout are under the several bridges that cross the stream, so those are the only areas that will be stocked. A game department stream restoration specialist is currently developing a plan for improving the habitat in that area. The project has the potential to be complex and costly, Williams said. Taylor said the TU chapter is already looking for another project, but that doesn't mean the volunteers will ignore Peak Creek. There will probably be a second round of installing cover logs, along with more clean-up days.

"The idea is," Taylor said, "that this is going to be an on-going project."

Richard Formato Presentation

Richard Formato, gave an excellent presentation at our last meeting (Oct. 4th) about his personal growth as a fly-fisherman and as a conservationist. Richard started out his presentation with something we all can relate to: The problem with the belief that fly fishermen are elite and should exclude other traditional spin fisherman. When first coming into an fly-fishing store, Richard was astonished at the price of a rod/reel combo and he felt out of place. As he progressed as a fisherman, he found that the sport should not be something just for the elite and that anyone and everyone could do it. That the sport should not exclude anyone. As Richard talked, it solidified in my mind, that as soon as fishermen start believing they are better than others then we fail to recognize the real reason that we are fishing: to catch fish like anyone else and to enjoy one of our natural wonders....running water.

Mark Taylor emphasizes the point in one of his columns in the Roanoke Time's Outdoor section:

“ There exists between fly fishermen and conventional fishermen a natural chasm, and too often it's a divisive one. In the eyes of plenty of fly anglers, conventional tackle anglers are a bunch of bait-chucking, worm-plunking, fish-killing, stream-littering, resource-abusing rednecks. Many conventional fishermen don't think much of fly-fishers, either, considering them a bunch of fancy pants, "River Runs Through It"-watching, influence-peddling, elitist poseurs who think that money can buy fishing bliss. The attitude is not good for anyone.

Trout anglers in this region learned this first hand about a decade ago during a battle over the Jackson River tailwater. A relatively small group of fly anglers had led an effort to change the rules on the river to disallow bait fishing. The game department's board narrowly approved the rule and the you-know-what hit the fan. Justifiably feeling slighted, many locals fought back. Land was posted. Fly anglers were intimidated. Fishing ground to a virtual standstill. The game department quickly backpedaled and revised the rules, but it was too late. Locals remained distrustful and uncooperative, and the agency no longer takes an active management role on what has potential to be one of the East's premier public trout streams. The lesson from the Jackson has hit home with some fly fishermen.

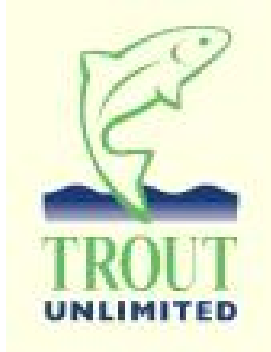
Last weekend, volunteers from the recently revived New River Valley chapter of Trout Unlimited spent a good part of the day working on habitat on Peak Creek in Pulaski. The stream is a new addition to the state's Delayed Harvest trout program. Most of the young men I talked with, several of whom were vaguely aware of the Jackson River debacle, said they prefer to fish for wild trout, and doubted they would actually spend much time fishing in Peak Creek. One, Virginia Tech graduate student Chuck Harrell, even said he wasn't worried about poachers, which can be a problem on Delayed Harvest waters. "Who cares?" he said. "It's getting them out." These guys get it. They realize that for all of our differences in tackle, techniques, even attire, fishermen are fishermen. Some certainly deserve the above-mentioned labels; most of us just want to catch more and/or bigger fish. It's nice to have a few designated spots managed under special regs. And it's nice to have lots of water where we're all welcome. There's room for all of us out there. “

Richard has been a part of US fly fishing championships that have competed nationally, such as the Muskegon River competition in Michigan and internationally. He has also fished with some legends like Lefty Kreh. However, you would be surprised that Richard would tell you to go out to Walmart and get yourself a Scientific Anglers combo and it will do the job just fine. To be such a great fisherman, he is surprisingly humble. Matter of fact, Richard commented that anyone can learn and grow as a fisherman. He indicated that when he first started fishing he was depressed about his lack of luck. But eventually he gained some concepts and then some more and now he's competing with some of the best out there. He said, "Fly fishing is not complex. Some of the best fisherman have only 6 different patterns in their fly box." Richard basically indicated the reason for being out there was to enjoy the world around us, which is why he has restored a section of Little Indian Creek that runs through his land in Floyd Co. "I talked to a few people and spent \$300 on rocks and fish moved back in," Richard said as he showed a picture of a 14" brookie that was resident in his stream.

I took a couple of things from Richard's talk: Everyone that wants to conserve and protect our coldwater habitats should be welcome at Trout Unlimited. It's what we're all about. And secondly, there's no reason to gloat about fishing talent. Like everything else, fly fishing is a learned skill and takes time, but everybody can do it, especially if someone is willing to show how.

New River Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited

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Phone: 540-808-8695
E-mail: rmcmanam@vt.edu

Directions to our meeting:

Take Price's Fork Rd. exit of 460 Bypass toward campus. Turn right onto West Campus Drive and then a left on Perry Street. Derring Hall is the 2nd building on the right. Our meetings are always on the first Wednesday of every month in 1033 Derring Hall.

Contact Info:

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