

Catskill Mountains Trout Unlimited

To conserve, protect and restore New York's Trout and Salmon Fisheries and their watersheds



Chapter Meeting: Wednesday September 20th, 2017, Marriott Courtyard, Kingston NY, 6:30 PM

This month CMTU's conservation committee chairman and chapter Vice President, Ted Hoover, will give an update on ongoing Conservation projects within the Chapter. It is a good opportunity to see what the chapter has been doing in 2017 and provide input on 2018 priorities.

53rd Annual Conservation Banquet, Saturday, November 4th, 2017

The Catskill Mountains Chapter of Trout Unlimited invites you to our **53rd Annual Conservation Banquet**, 6:00 PM, **Saturday, November 4th**, at the **Stonehedge Restaurant** on Route 9w in West Park, NY. As many of you know, this is the major fund raising event for our chapter, and it enables us to do all the good work that we do each year to conserve, protect, and restore the coldwater fisheries in our region and beyond.

You can purchase tickets to the banquet and the raffle online through [Eventbrite](#) or by contacting Ron Urban (845-339-5938 or Rongonefishing@aol.com).

Calendar

- September** **Chapter Meeting** Wednesday September 20th, 2017, Marriott Courtyard, Kingston NY, 6:30 PM
- Speaker:** Ted Hoover, VP CMTU, Chapter Conservation Projects 2017
- October** **Chapter Meeting** Thursday October 19th, 2017, Marriott Courtyard, Kingston NY, 6:30 PM
- Note:** Chapter elections will be held at this meeting
- Speaker:** Jordan P. Ross, President JP Ross, Founder of Trout Power
- November** **Annual Conservation Banquet** Saturday November 4th, Stonehenge Restaurant, Esopus NY
- Chapter Meeting** Wednesday November 15th, 2017, Marriott Courtyard, Kingston NY, 6:30 PM
- Trout T'Ales Event @ Keegan Ales** Thursday November 30th: 6:30PM – 8:30PM

Fly Fishing Montana

by Ed Meyer

This past summer I had an opportunity to revisit some of my favorite rivers in Montana with Catskill Mountains Chapter Permanent Director Burt Darrow. Knowing that Bert is a dedicated dry fly enthusiast, I saw this trip as an opportunity to step up my dry fly fishing game with a guy who has been fishing dries exclusively for quite a few years. Over the course of the last two decades, I have fished Montana in July, and I knew how good the fishing could be. In past years, my most successful fishing days had been on the Madison using nymphs with an indicator. I have also enjoyed catching trout on dries but I have always been pragmatic and employed whatever technique worked best in the moment. On this trip, I would get to see what could be done with just dry flies.

Our basecamp for this trip was a condo in West Yellowstone just outside the Yellowstone National Park west entrance. This town is centrally located for day trips to the Gallatin, Madison, Henrys Fork and Yellowstone Rivers. On any given day, different hatches can be found on each of these rivers. Upon rising each morning, our toughest decision was to pick which river to fish. During this year's trip, the Madison was suffering from warm water flowing over the top of the dam at Hebgen Lake. Nine years into the construction project, the State of Montana still did not have the bottom- release valve working properly and the hatches and fish were languishing in seventy-degree water. That left the Henrys Fork and the Yellowstone as our best shots for larger trout.

On the Island Park stretch of the Henry's Fork, the river languidly slides between riffles and long slow pools. Thick weed beds carpet the gravel bottom and a random spattering of black volcanic



boulders spewed during Yellowstone's last eruption provide an abundance of cover for the wild rainbows. The Henry's Fork is a bug factory and on most days there are multiple hatches occurring simultaneously. Picking out which bug a particular fish is feeding on is the challenge. In the morning, an assortment of spinners covers the water. Midday, Pale Morning Duns are picked off by juvenile trout in the slicks. And in the evenings, caddis flies hatch, mate, or hop across the surface depositing their eggs. Our best fly patterns for catching the selective, wary trout on the Henrys Fork were quill bodied CDC spinners and duns. In most circumstances we were able to get away with 5X tippet, even with size 20 flies. This river is home to some very hefty wild rainbows that will take you into your backing. The Henry's Fork will haunt your memory after you have hooked and lost a few of her well-schooled denizens.

After spending a few days watching Bert catch one large trout after another, I made a few observations. While watching him prowl the riverbanks, I noticed that he doesn't waste his time with small trout. He searches for rise forms that reveal the nose, dorsal fin and tail of larger than average trout. He then positions himself upstream for a fly-first, drag-free drift. Fooling trout at long distances with dry flies is Bert's game.

In Yellowstone National Park the fishing season begins on July 15. Depending on the water level,

Fly Fishing Montana (cont.)

the fishing can be very good or next to impossible. Floating the Yellowstone in the park is not permitted, and anglers are confined to the banks, hoping that rising fish will stray within casting range. With this year's abundant snowmelt, the water was high and was receding slowly. At Bert's secret pool, we arrived to find yellow stoneflies popping out of the water with fat cutthroats leisurely dining on the day's fare. Most of the loud slurps were just beyond our best long-distance casts, but on a few occasions they came in closer. After emerging from their shucks the stoneflies run across the surface creating concentric pulsating rings that are beacons for the hungry trout. After I waded to the top of my waders and launched my best cast, the subtle twitch of a rubber legged Stimulator proved too enticing for a fat cutthroat. As the head broke the surface, I drew in the slack, and I was tight to a heavy fish. I was quite surprised as we finally netted the fish, at 22 inches and close to five pounds it was the largest trout that I have ever released and watched drift back into the current.

Later in the week we had a second opportunity to fish the Yellowstone River with Fly Fishing Hall of Fame member Bob Jacklin. Bert and Bob have been good friends for almost 40 years and as I sat in the backseat, I listened to a conversation that drifted back and forth between previous adventures and a variety of different conservation issues that they have both been involved with over the years. Through the common bond of angling, both of these guys have nurtured the next generation of fly fishers who will be the future stewards of our rivers. Recently, Bob has been working on a book that chronicles the early history of the fly shops and guides that have made West Yellowstone a fly fishing destination. Generous of spirit, Bob shared with us two of his signature fly patterns that produce well in Western waters. One was his version of the Platte River Special, a



streamer that has caught numerous browns and rainbows during the fall run in Yellowstone Park. The other fly was a spent wing spinner that floats like a top in fast water. On this particular day on the Yellowstone, Bert landed a beautiful cutthroat on Bob's spent wing spinner. Both flies can be purchased at Jacklin's Fly Shop in West Yellowstone.

Unfortunately, on our final two days on the Henrys Fork it seemed as if the fish were taking a hiatus. Where there had been trout rising consistently throughout the week, the surface remained unbroken. Many of the hard core dry fly purists who we encountered each day on this river stood staring at the river without even wetting their lines. As I looked through my fly box for something that might catch the attention of the dormant fish, I discovered two Grey Ghost streamers that I had tied twenty years ago and had never fished. As I considered going over to the dark side, I felt the stare of the regulars who frequent this river. After considering how far I had traveled I said, "The hell with it," tied on some 2X tippet, cranked down the drag, and attached the two flies in tandem. Much to my surprise, on my third cast, a large rainbow took the trailing fly. Throughout the course of the day, nine fish came to hand. On my way out that evening a regular told me that "I should not be fishing streamers here. This is a dry fly river."

Fly Fishing Montana (cont.)

On the tail end of our trip we spent our last day in Bozeman before flying home. During the last ten years Bozeman has transformed onto a very hip place to live. Trendy bistros and art galleries now fill every open space on Main Street and the locals complain about the traffic and high rents. Gallatin county is now the fastest growing county in the US and is the only blue county in Montana. When we were at the airport, what we first thought was unusually hazy weather, turned out to be smoke from a wildfire that was blazing in Canada. Unseasonably warm weather seems to be occurring earlier with each passing year and mid-day river closures have become commonplace for many rivers throughout Montana. If you are planning a fly fishing trip to Montana plan your visit closer to the spring runoff. As we were going through the TSA checkpoint in the airport, we met a friendly agent who told Bert that his passport was about to expire and that he needed to apply for a new one, 30 days prior to its expiration date. He told us that the regulation was created by the criminals - Bill and Hillary Clinton. When I asked him what was it that they had done wrong, he informed me that they were guilty of murder in the disappearance and murder of witnesses in the Whitewater investigation. When traveling in Montana it is always best to not discuss politics!

I am happy to report that it was a great trip and right now, there are quite a few trout in Montana and Idaho swimming around with sore lips.



Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

The [Catskill Conservation Corps](#) is organizing two trail/stream clean up events.

- [Take Back the Trail: Blue Hole Clean-up Friday September 15th, 2017](#)
- [Take Back the Trail: Blue Hole Clean-Up Saturday September 30th, 2017](#)

The NYC DEP is organizing:

- [Reservoir cleanup day on Sunday October 1st 2017](#)

Follow the links to their website more details and signups.

NYSDEC: Trout Stream Management Meeting Series - Fall 2017

A Series of Public meetings have been scheduled by the NYSDEC presenting how DEC currently manages trout streams. It will include a presentation of key findings of a [2015 statewide study \(PDF, 2.6 MB\)](#). This will be followed by a 90-minute discussion period aimed at identifying the measures of trout stream angling quality most important to this segment of New York's the angling public.

Region 3 meeting in New Paltz

Thursday October 5th, 2017 6:00 - 9:30PM
 NYSDEC Region 3 Office
 21 South Putt Corners
 New Paltz, NY 12561

See DEC website for more details.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/111015.html>

Chapter Fishing Trip to Connetquot River, Monday November 6th

Bill Shaw is leading another trip to the Connetquot River on Long Island. On Monday, November 6th, a group from CMTU will be heading down to Long Island to fish this famous spring creek. The Connetquot offers anglers a chance to catch some really big trout, as the brood fish are occasionally released from the hatchery just upstream. What's more, Bill has reserved stream access for our group, so you'll have the stream all to yourself. If you'd like to go, contact Bill at whshaw10@frontier.com.



Interested in becoming a Member of Catskill Mountain Trout Unlimited

Trout Unlimited is America's leading coldwater conservation organization. Our hope is that clean, cold, fishable water exists for generations to come, but we can't do it without the support of committed anglers and conservationists like you. Click here to [become a new TU member](#) and see all the great benefits of membership, or click here to [renew your existing membership](#).

Articles for CMTU Monthly Newsletter

We are always looking for articles, photos or stories for our monthly newsletter. If you have an article, photos, news for the Catskill Mountain TU community please contact Ted Hoover at the chapter email. catskillmountaintu@gmail.com



Looking Green

Site of our Earth Day tree planting on the upper Stony Clove. Everything looks green and vibrant. It's nice to see a verdant, well-covered hillside where just last year there had been bare earth and erosion. Looking forward to next year's planting!

From the President

Andrew Higgins

SPDES Permit Meeting Update

On August 29th New York City DEP held its biannual SPDES permit meeting in Tannersville. A cool wet summer makes for a congenial SPDES permit meeting. While last year's meetings were grim because the water in Esopus Creek was so low and hot (in part due to hot weather and a drought, but also due to DEP sending a lot of water through the portal in May). But this year, things are cool and wet, the reservoirs are in great shape. The Schoharie is at 73% as I write this, while the Ashokan is at 85%. This time last year the Schoharie was well on its way to being dry. And while the temperatures in Esopus Creek topped 80 degrees this time last year, they're in the upper 60s right now. All of this bodes well for some great fall fishing. The only disappointment is the marginal bug life on the stream. It seems the trout survived the drought alright, but the bugs got hit hard.

One good thing to come out of the drought is that DEP and DEC seem to be more actively planning for the summer water management earlier in the spring.

Currently, DEP has to submit a coldwater management plan for the Schoharie by June 20th. As we've learned, June 20th is too late. Summer has already started. This year, DEC and DEP consulted in May. Hopefully that practice will continue.

Renovations are continuing on the Gilboa Dam and the Schoharie Tunnel Intake. Expect construction to begin on the Intake in 2019, if all goes well. Once that project is done, DEP could have the ability to send a littler warmer water through the Portal in April, giving an early jolt to the spring hatches. What a difference a year makes!

TU Goes to School

Back in June, I met Tony Coccozza from the APW Chapter at Bennett Elementary in Boiceville to celebrate Earth Day by talking about trout and fly fishing to the kids. Bennett Elementary's Earth Day celebration involves several stations where kids get to learn about all kinds of



environmental issues. (They have it in June, rather than April, to take advantage of the nicer weather.) For several years now, Ted Hoover and I have been meeting Tony there to talk to the kids about trout. The kids are 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. We have a couple goals. We make sure they know what species of trout live nearby. (I'm glad to say nearly every class can identify all 3 species of local trout.) We talk about what trout eat, and their importance as an indicator species, telling them that a healthy wild trout population is a sign of a clean, healthy ecosystem. Then we give them a casting demonstration and let them try casting for Ted Hoover's famed "Velcro Trout." Ted attached Velcro strips to pictures of trout, and with Velcro fly on the line, they make for pretty good sport. It's a great day all around, and the kids come away learning a bit about their local environment. And who knows, maybe a few will grow up to join TU?

Chapter Information

President: Andrew Higgins
Vice President: Ted Hoover
Secretary: Ryan Williams
Treasurer: Ron Urban
Directors: Bert Darrow
Ron Urban
Russell Yess
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