

NEWS CASTER

Overmountain Chapter

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Visit our Web Site at omtu.org

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COMING EVENTS

BOD:	02-01-97
Regular Meeting:	02-08-07
BOD:	03-01-07
Regular Meeting:	03-08-07

The February 8, 2007 Meeting will be held at Sunny's Cafeteria, 601 Spring Street, Johnson City, TN. A buffet dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by a short business meeting. The program usually begins at 7:00 p.m. The speaker this month is OMTU member, Bob Viers. "Patagonia, Argentina: More Than Fishing" is the title. Bob will be speaking about the country, the people and the fishing. Should be very interesting so plan now to attend.

THE SOUTHEAST TU RALLY IS SET FOR HUNGRY MOTHER PARK, MARION, VA, APRIL 27-29, 2007. MORE DETAILS IN THE MARCH NEWSLETTER

Trout Unlimited is North America's leading Coldwater fisheries conservation organization, with more than 150,000 members dedicated to the protection and restoration of trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds.



It's a good time to sit close to the fire and tie up some new patterns for the coming season. See page 3 for details on the **CLOUSER CRICKET**, shown above.

Tennessee Cold Water Meeting Report

By Bill Beazell

Perry Rindfleisch and I represented OMTU at the semi-annual Coldwater meeting in Knoxville, TN on January 27, 2007. Approximately 30 persons attended with Wayne Poppe, TVA, and George Lane, TNTU chair, presiding. Here are some of the highlights:

- In May of 2006 the TVA Board adopted a draft policy that placed a moratorium on major TVA land actions and delegated minor land actions to the CEO. The policy is to (1) cease further sale of public lands for private, residential development; and (2) continue stewardship responsibilities for conservation and natural resources management. After public hearings and comments that overwhelmingly supported the new policy, the policy was adopted by the TVA Board on 11/30/06.
- Despite rumors to the contrary, TVA has no plans to change the water release at the South Holston Dam.
- TWRA reported that they want to stock 120,000 more trout annually. To attain this goal will require maintenance improvements in the existing hatcheries.

(COLDWATER MEETING CONTINUED)

- Due to environmental work and lack of funding, the planned Elizabethton hatchery will most likely take five years to complete.
- TWRA is willing to add more streams to their "delayed harvest" program (Currently certain sections of Paint Creek and Tellico River are on the list). They are open to suggestions from OMTU members. During the "delayed harvest" season (dates vary a little from stream to stream), only artificial lures are allowed, and all fish must be released.
- TWRA has found four new brook trout populations in the area, including tributaries of Beaverdam Creek and Sinking Creek.
- Unfortunately, TWRA does not have the funds to add more officers to enforce fishing regulations. (See **Cold Water Meeting Report** page 5)

FY 2006 OMTU Board and Officers

Officers:

- President: Perry Rindfleisch
- Vice President: T.A. Smith
- Treasurer: Randall Rogers
- Secretary: Bob Sherill
- Immediate Past President: Bob Viers

Board Members:

- Marcia Carter
- Bill Beazell
- Bob Fondry
- Charles Martin
- T. A. Smith
- Ron Harrington

Food for Thought

“Today, the Appalachian Mountains suffer from the worst air quality, the most unsustainable logging, and the most irresponsible mining in the nation. Every day, more of our streams, forests, and mountains are degraded and lost forever.”

Source: *Appalachian Voice*, Early Winter, 2006

WANT TO BUY OR SELL PROPERTY?

Call Dempsey Shell, Shell & Associates Real Estate, (423) 547-9377. 10% of net will be donated to OMTU.

The President's Corner

By Perry Rindfleisch

Greetings To All

I'm sure many of you are sitting inside looking out your windows wondering whether spring is ever going to come. I am with you in wishing for warmer weather however your chapter has not been idle in preparing for a busy spring of cleanups, conservation and fishing.

Bill Beazell and I attended two wonderful meetings a week ago Saturday in Knoxville and I'm thrilled to give you some highlights of our Tennessee Council meeting.

The TDOT promise to write letters to car owners who were observed littering is a great step forward. You can do this with anonymity simply by calling 877-8LITTER and reporting the make of car, license plate number, time, date, location and what was thrown from the car. TDOT will write a letter to the car's owner asking them not to litter. It's a small step but one that we can use effectively.

We are trying to get a Trout Unlimited license plate that can be sold in Tennessee. The bill will be introduced into the State Legislature this month then we can start taking \$35 deposits on the plate. It's beautiful and all of us would be proud to have it on our car. We need 1000 orders before the state will print the plates for us. More on this after the bill has passed.

All of our state chapters are financially sound and in good shape. Our new state chairman is George Lane and he is doing a wonderful job for all of us.

No word yet on our Embrace-A-Stream grant request, however, we have been promised an answer this month. If we are granted money we will have it in March in order to do the Hampton Cove fish barrier this summer. Keep your fingers crossed.

Hope to see you at some of our future meetings

TVA TO INSTALL WARNING SYSTEMS AT SOUTH HOLSTON AND LITTLE WILBUR DAMS

According to TVA spokesperson Gil Francis, automated warning systems are in the works for South Holston and Little Wilbur Dams. Once installed, sirens will sound and strobe lights will flash at the dam to warn people in the area of impending changes in conditions just upstream and downstream of the dam.

The system for South Holston should be ready for testing by late winter and operational by early spring this year. A warning system for Little Wilbur is planned for 2008.

These systems have limited range, so fishermen further down stream should continue to be alert at all times to possible signs of rising water:

- Birds and other wildlife activity may increase
- Sounds of rushing water may become louder
- Water may become cloudy or movement may increase.

Mr. Francis also pointed out that you can not always rely on the posted water release schedules because conditions may change without notice.

A warning system is already in place at the Norris Dam on the Clinch River.

Source: Gil Francis, TVA

TVA RESERVOIR PROPERTIES

TVA originally acquired approximately 1.3 million acres of land in the Tennessee Valley. The construction and operation of the reservoir system inundated approximately 470,000 acres with water. Since the 1940s TVA has transferred or sold approximately 508,000 acres, the majority of which was transferred to other federal and state agencies for public uses. TVA currently owns approximately 293,000 acres not inundated which continue to be managed for the public benefit in accordance with the TVA Act.

THE CLOUSER CRICKET By T.A. Smith

Last summer I had the pleasure of visiting with Bob Clouser while he was here enjoying the trout fishing on the South Holston River. Jim Davis, locally well known guide and casting instructor, introduced me to Bob and got us swapping fishing techniques for the local trout. While I have had the tendency to fish more standard dry flies and nymphs, Bob got my interest in his terrestrial imitations. He likes to sight-fish for trout on the low water stage of the river by slowly stalking and casting to a particular fish with crickets, hoppers, beetles, etc. While most of us cannot cast like Bob Clouser, his techniques are very workable and effective for summer trout here in east Tennessee. Bob gave me several of his hand-tied flies and described his tying of these flies as "simple." According to Bob, he was not as interested in spending long hours at the tying vise when he could be fishing. He described his terrestrial ties as "easy to tie and fun to fish." The black cricket recipe described below is one that Bob really put to work on the fish while he was here. The recipe works just as well as a grasshopper pattern if you change the colors to yellow thread, yellow dubbing, yellow foam, and natural deer hair. This pattern floats well, is very durable, and, as Bob Clouser designed it, is easy to tie in just a few minutes. Try some this summer.

The Clouser Cricket Recipe

Size 12 Dry Fly Hook
Black Thread Size 6/0

1. Attach thread to hook and wind to rear. Build a small under body with black dry fly dubbing on the rear half of the hook.
2. Create a small shaped foam body from black closed-cell fly foam. The body should be about one-half the length of the hook shank, oval or pear shaped, and about 1/8 inch long.
3. Spin a head of black deer hair in front of the foam body. Trim the deer hair flat on the bottom and round on top to give the cricket head the proper shape. Leave enough long hairs on top of the body to give the impression of wings and legs. Tie off and cement as usual.

TROUT UNLIMITED'S VISION

"By the next generation, Trout Unlimited will ensure that robust populations of native and wild coldwater fish once again thrive within their North American range, so that our children can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters."

TDOT ANNOUNCES NEW LITTER HOTLINE

As part of a new statewide anti-litter campaign, the Tennessee Department of Transportation has rolled out a new strategy in the ongoing effort to stop litter in Tennessee: citizens who witness someone littering along the state's roadways can report the incident by calling a new toll-free hotline at 1-877-854-8837 (1-877-8-LITTER). Callers, who will remain anonymous, will reach a recording that asks them to provide information about the vehicle. The information that will be requested includes:

- License plate number (Tennessee plates only)
- Type and make of the vehicle
- Day and time the incident occurred
- Location where the incident occurred
- The type of item(s) tossed or blown from the vehicle

TDOT will mail a letter to the registered owner of the vehicle along with a "Stoplitter" car trash bag or portable ash-tray and other anti-litter information. The letter is a gentle reprimand reminding the recipient that littering is against the law and punishable by a fine of up to \$1500.

OMTU members and friends are encouraged to join in this effort to improve the beauty of Tennessee's roads.

According to TDOT's Chief of Environment and Planning, Ed Cole, "Littering is not only an eyesore, it cost taxpayers money."

"Last year, more than \$11 million was spent on litter clean-up and prevention efforts in Tennessee."

Source: TDOT News Release 1/18/07

REPORT VIOLATORS!
Call TWRA Hotline at
800-332-0900

You can help TWRA game and fish officers with their role of enforcement of the Tennessee fishing regulations by reporting violations to the TWRA Hotline. They need "real-time" information such as nature of violation, date, location, vehicle description, license plate numbers and so forth.

Renew your Trout Unlimited membership today!

Become an active member by attending meetings and participating in OMTU activities such as stream cleanups and those aimed at promoting conservation of our wetlands and streams.

I FISH; THEREFORE, I AM

“Scholars have long known that fishing eventually turns men into philosophers. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to buy decent tackle on a philosopher’s salary. I have always thought it would be better if fishing turned men into Wall Street bankers, but that is not the case. It’s philosophers or nothing.”

“William James’s philosophy of pragmatism was more to my liking. Pragmatism is the philosophy of doing that which works, no matter what your mother might have told you. James, who had pretensions of being a dry-fly purist, developed pragmatism from a simple experiment he performed one fishless day on a trout stream. He discovered that by making a slight modification in a No. 18 Caddis, he was suddenly catching monstrous brook trout. The James Ploy, as the experiment came to be called, is still popular with some fishermen, even though the technical difficulty of attaching a night crawler to a No. 18 Caddis has never been solved.”

Source: Patrick F. McManus, *Never Sniff a Gift Fish*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1984

DON'T FLUSH THOSE DRUGS: THEY MAY HARM FISH

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is in the process of evaluating the environmental and health impact of pharmaceuticals in water. A U.S. Geologic Survey study in 2002 detected trace levels of chemicals commonly found in prescription drugs in 80% of the streams tested across the county. Researchers believe that hormones and antidepressants may be responsible for harming fish.

There are no government guidelines for disposal of prescription drugs, but pharmaceutical experts recommend the following:

- Find out if your local pharmacies take back medications. Some do.
- Check to see whether your area has a community household hazardous waste collection program. Go to www.epa.gov/epa-home/state.htm for local numbers.
- If you must dispose in the garbage, take extra precautions to hide your identity on the bottles, add a small amount of water to the pills, and place containers in a paper bag or a yogurt-like container to conceal them, then toss as close to trash pick up time as possible.

Source: *AARP Bulletin*, January 2007

STREAM CLEANUP SCHEDULE

Here are the dates for the stream cleanups that are planned for 2007:

Watauga River: 5/19/07
South Holston River: 8/11/07
Doe River: 9/29/07

Mark your calendars now and plan to participate in these important club projects. Details will be included in the *NewsCaster* edition just prior to the cleanup.

Bob Fondry, OMTU Cleanup Coordinator



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DID YOU KNOW? Facts about your Tennessee Tailwater Fishery

The following is probably “old hat” for many of our experienced members, but some of the “new kids” on the block might find this interesting.

Ron Harrington, Editor

The South Holston Tailwater use to be managed as a “put-and-take” and “put-and-grow” trout fishery. Both catch-size and fingerling rainbows and browns were stocked annually. However, the unique ability of the South Holston Tailwater (among Tennessee tailwaters) to support substantial natural reproduction, especially the brown trout, led the TWRA to emphasize management for wild fish.

All snagging was banned in 1999. And that same year, TWRA began closure of two major spawning areas to fishing from November 1-January 31. Subsequently, a 16-22-inch protected length range (PLR) was established for the entire tailwater in 2000. These measures were taken to protect vulnerable large brown trout during the spawning season and to potentially improve recruitment. Additionally, brown trout stocking was discontinued in 2004. “Put-and-take” and “put-and-grow” management with catch-size and fingerling rainbow trout have continued, with an annual stocking of around 92,000 rainbow trout.

Source: TWRA

Coldwater Meeting Report (From page 1)

- Apparently, they will continue to rely on calls from sports men, and “the squeaky wheel will get the attention.”
- TWRA has been receiving complaints from the Clinch River Chapter that the quality of fishing on the Norris Tailwater has been “poor” lately. Representatives from TVA and TWRA will attend a future meeting to look at the issues.
- The latest in boot treatment to prevent the spread of Didymo: Soak boots in a mixture of 2% bleach 98% water for 30 minutes.
- Steve Moore of GSMNP reported that six streams in the park are seriously impacted by acid rain. Twenty-seven miles of park streams have been restored to brook trout only (after removal of brown and rainbow). They are now using the chemical Antycin to remove the fish because stream life is essentially restored after one year.
- USFS representative Jim Herrig reported that culverts in the Cherokee National Forest are being examined and degraded ones replaced. Apparently leakage of a substance from the culverts results in higher stream acidity. They are continuing with the rhododendron pruning along streams because studies show that this results in an increase in stream life and healthier fish. Engineered stream crossings for off-road vehicles are being installed to reduce damaged to the streams where these vehicles cross.

GOD’S EARTH

By Bill Bezell

OMTU member Gary Barrigar, for many years the ecology teacher at Elizabethton High School, has shown us the way: He is a strong and effective leader and advocate for environmental causes through his church, community, and environmental organizations in the region such as the Boone Watershed Alliance.

Inspired by Gary’s work, the church where my wife and I attend has formed a committee which we named “God’s Earth.” The goal is to teach others in the church, including the children, how to become better stewards of God’s earth. For example, we are involved in church and home recycling, and every two weeks I write an environmental article for our church newsletter.

OMTU members need to focus more on environmental concerns, not only to protect our coldwater fisheries, but protect our overall health and quality of life as well.

I urge you to support organizations such as the Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife, Audubon, Environmental Defense Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, and other similar organizations in the fight to preserve and protect our earth. But most of all the Sierra Club and its legal arm, Earthjustice, stand on the front lines. Earthjustice strengthens, monitors and assures proper enforcement of environmental laws such as the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts. Please contact this group and offer your support at

www.earthjustice.org, or mail them at 426 17th St.—6th floor, Oakland, CA, 94612; or call 1-800-584-6460.

Threatened and Endangered

“Rivers and streams provide essential habitat for countless plant and animal species. Many of these species are threatened, endangered or at risk for extinction. Degraded and altered habitat is the most significant factor in the decline of threatened or endangered aquatic species and significant declines among many native recreational and non-game species. According to The Nature Conservancy, significant proportions of aquatic species are extinct or threatened with extinction in the United States:

- **69 % of the freshwater mussels**
- **51 % of crayfishes**
- **37 % of freshwater fishes**
- **36 % of amphibian species**

Freshwater animals are disappearing five times faster than terrestrial animals. Protecting and restoring aquatic resources will help these aquatic species populations improve and thrive.

Successful management of stream and river habitat requires cooperative partnerships among producers, landowners, as well as Federal and State agencies. Offering producers and private landowners incentives and opportunities to restore stream habitat will prevent the decline and listing of aquatic species.”

Source: TU National Web Site

Editor’s Note: This is an excerpt from Trout Unlimited’s comments about the 2007 Farm Bill released February 1, which is currently before Congress. TU is recommending that Congress include a fisheries program funded at \$60 million annually. More details about the 2007 Farm Bill will appear in the March issue.