

NEWS CASTER



Overmountain Chapter

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Visit our Web site at omtu.org

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Coming Events

BOD:	05-08-08
Meeting:	05-15-08
BOD:	07-10-08
Meeting:	07-17-08

The May meeting, set for 05-15-08, will be held at the Golden Corral, 3104 Brown's Mill Road, Johnson City. A buffet dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by a short business meeting. Our speaker is Jim Habera, TWRA Fisheries Biologist, who will present TWRA's 2007 fish counts on the local tailwaters. Jim always does a great job and the numbers are "staggering." According to Jim, these are the highest fish counts of ANY stream in the U.S..

Jim's presentation, coupled with the Jeff Simmons presentation at the March meeting (see Page 5), should give our members the right combination.

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.



Some of the folks helping with the 20th Annual Watauga River Cleanup pose for a picture before heading out. The cleanup was held on April 26, 2008. Over 6 tons of litter was removed. After the cleanup, participants enjoyed a nice picnic and a prize drawing.

WORLD CLASS FISHING EXPERTS TO PRESENT FREE FISHING CLINIC AT RIVERS WAY

As a part of the Bristol Public Library's 2008 Discovery Series, a Fishing Clinic will be held on Saturday, May 24, 2008 at Rivers Way Outdoor Adventure Center.

The clinic, which will run from 9am to 4pm, will feature three world-class fishing personalities: Lefty Kreh, author, outdoor writer, and master angler; Doug Hannon, ESPN's "Bass Professor;" and Flip Pallot, author and host of ESPN's award-winning show, *Walker's Cay Chronicles*.

There will be casting demonstrations and individual instruction, and demonstrations in how to tie fishing knots, fish-fighting techniques, and the use of various types of tackle. The speakers will cover fresh water and salt water fishing with special emphasis on largemouth bass, trout and saltwater species.

All programs are free and open to the public. There will be door prizes and free hats to the first 130 people to show up. *The clinic will be held rain or shine, with all classes under tents.* (See World Class on page 4)

FY 2008 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
- Ron Harrington

Frequency of OMTU meetings changed for 2008

The OMTU Board has voted to change the frequency of the regular meetings from ten a year to six. The dates for 2008:

January 17
March 20
May 15
July 17
September 18
November 20

The new schedule is also posted on the OMTU website calendar.

WANT TO BUY OR SELL PROPERTY?

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

The President's Corner

By Perry Rindfleisch

Spring is upon us and many chapter members tell me the fishing on our tailwater streams is wonderful. I hope all of you will get some time to enjoy the bounty of our local rivers and streams.

We are all stewards of these precious streams and your chapter needs your help in protecting, conserving and restoring them for future generations. Some of you joined us for the Watauga cleanup described in a separate article in this newsletter. Please join me in offering our thanks to Gary Barrigar and Bob Fondry for being so active in setting this up in conjunction with the city of Elizabethton and for all of the volunteers who made it a part of their Saturday.

The South Holston Lake and river cleanup is coming up and gives you another opportunity to help beautify our area. I hope many of you will give a few hours to this effort.

We had a table at the Fly Shop of Tennessee expo last Saturday and I am pleased to tell you we signed up 18 new members plus had 10 people tell us they would buy a TU license plate in our effort to sell 1000 plates by June 30 of this year. If you have not purchased a plate yet please do so prior to the deadline by getting an application at one of our meetings or going online to tuplate.org. Of each plate we sell, \$17.50 comes back to our chapter the first year and in subsequent years that money goes into a statewide fund to be used by TU chapters for conservation projects. This is a marvelous way for you to add to the effectiveness of our chapter and other chapters in the state in our conservation efforts.

Jim Habera is speaking to the chapter this Thursday and present the results of the TWRA fish counts on our local tailwaters. In Jim's words the South Holston is the most prolific trout stream in the entire United States. We can be thankful and proud of all TWRA and your chapter have done to bring this beautiful river up to it's full potential.

Have a great summer fishing our local waters.

Perry

TU Specialty Plate Sales Report: May 6, 2008

By Richard Davis, Cumberland Chapter

With just under two months till the June 30, 2008 deadline for our goal of 1,000 TU specialty plates to be pre-sold, the time is now to make the contact with individual chapter members about purchasing the 100 % tax-deductible purchase of the TU specialty plate. Doing so will create a conservation annuity for improving Tennessee lakes, rivers and streams. So far 650 plates, representing 65% of our goal, have been pre-sold. Forty eight OMTU members (or 20% of our membership) have pre-ordered.



Now is the time for you to step up to the "plate" and order yours. And now is the time to make contact with other individual members and friends about this before it is too late.

With weather warming our hearts and minds turn to trout fishing. We are reminded of the scenic beauty where these wonderful creatures live and realized we all need to preserve and improve the watershed. What better way to accomplish this then to purchase the TU plate so money will available for future generations to share nature and improve our rivers and streams.

Remember, the purchase is 100% tax-deductible and your money will help to create a conservation annuity for improving Tennessee lakes, rivers and streams.

THE INDICATOR FLY

By T.A. Smith

Spring is here and summer is close behind so we'll all be thinking more about dry flies as the weather warms. Here is a pattern I have used successfully on the local tailwaters and mountain streams: the Indicator Fly.

Many times there are no hatches yet a nymph under a strike indicator just doesn't seem right. Tie on this highly visible dry fly, grease it up good, and drop off a small nymph under the dry. This system works well with light rods and is as effective as it is easy to cast. You'll be surprised how many fish will come up for "The Indicator." I had a 20" brown take this fly on April 17 on the South Holston Tailwater even though there were no flies hatching.

It's also easy to tie:

1. Use a size 12 or 14 dry fly hook and tie in a tail using white hackle fibers.
2. Tie in a tapered body from yellow polypropylene yarn or yellow dry fly dubbing.
3. Tie on the parachute post. I use polypropylene yarn and normally use orange but white or yellow works fine too.
4. Wind a white hackle feather around the post, tie off and whip finish the head.

That's it! It is easy to tie up several of these for your next outing. They float high and are big enough that even my 63-year-old eyes have no trouble seeing them. I think you'll enjoy fishing the Indicator Fly.

OMTU Historical Snippet: Stocking Trout Eggs

By Bill Bezell

In the early days of the Overmountain Chapter—chartered in 1986, some of us members stocked trout eggs in the South Holston Tailwater. Among those who did were Mike Adams, Ron Jones, Rod Stipe, Dewey Pendley, and yours truly.

After TWRA decided that greater efficiency was obtained by stocking fingerlings, most egg stocking in the area ended. According to Dave Lane at the State Fish Hatchery in Irwin, the last egg stocking was about ten years ago on Doe Creek. Some current members remember taking part. The results—as is the case with most egg stocking—were never known.

Egg box design varied from circular or rectangular wire mesh to solid, hinged aluminum boxes. The wire mesh units were put in plastic containers and weighted down with rocks on the streambed. The greatest difficulty with placement was finding an area that didn't silt.

Dewey Pendley, who owns a beautiful place on the South Holston Tailwater near Hickory Tree, stored the boxes for years before turning them over to me a few years back. I have now turned them over to Dave Lane for storage at the hatchery in Irwin.

REPORT LITTER-BUGS!

CALL TDOT AT 1-877-854-8837

- Tn License Plate #
- Type/make of Vehicle
- Date and time of incident
- Location of incident
- Type of litter

REPORT FISH AND GAME 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.

2008 Stream Cleanup Schedule

South Holston Tailwaters: August 9, 2008

Todd Burseson Memorial Cleanup: TBA

Make your plans now to participate in these important OMTU conservation projects. For more information contact Bob Fondry, OMTU Stream Cleanup Coordinator, at (423) 772-3236. Details will be announced via the OMTU NewsCaster preceding the cleanup, or via special "just in time" bulletins from OMTU communications.

(World Class, from page 1)

Plan now to attend and don't forget your fishing or spinning rod.

River's Way is located on Stoney Hollow Road, off Route 44 in Bristol, Tennessee. Take U.S. 421 out of Bristol and turn right on State 44. Drive about 2 miles to a crossroads. Turn right (still on 44) and go about a mile. Take a left on Stoney Hollow Rd which dead ends at Rivers Way. If you are coming from Johnson City or Kingsport, take 394 East, which ends at the 421 intersection. Take a right and follow the directions above.

For more information, call Bob Brien at 276-821-6134 or Helen McCoy at 276-821-6148.

PATRICK HENRY TAILWATER FISH

By Bill Beazell

Folks who fish the Patrick Henry Tailwater near Kingsport report that there seems to be a reduction in the number of trout being caught compared to the past. I have also observed fewer people fishing for the last several years.

In conversation with Dave Lane at the Erwin State Fish Hatchery, I have learned that the hatchery has not been stocking the Holston River below Patrick Henry Dam for several years. However, a crew from the Dale Hollow Hatchery stocks this stream, but only when they come to stock the Watauga River. (See **Patrick Henry Stocking**, page 6)

Dave also said that the National Hatchery near Irwin has higher priorities for its spent brood stock and thus no longer releases some of them in the Patrick Henry Tailwater as well.

We know there has been little water in the Little Pictolus and Kendrick's creeks, which empty into the river. These streams are the only known reproduction areas and this may be contributing to the reduction in the number of fish. Pollution may be another possibility.

Perhaps TWRA could shed some light on these observations in the near future. Meanwhile, if you have knowledge about this matter, please e-mail the NewsCaster editor, Ron Harrington at roneharrin@bvunet.net.

Take a Kid Fishing

More than 90 percent of today's anglers fish because they were introduced at a young age. Several studies show that a high percentage of children who participate in outdoor activities such as fishing, attending a TU youth camp or participating in Trout in the Classroom programs are much more likely to become conservationists. Pledge to take a child fishing by visiting www.anglerslegacy.org.

Source: Trout, Summer, 2007



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Bugs in the tailwaters

If you didn't attend the March regular meeting, you missed an excellent presentation by Jeff Simmons, Aquatic Zoologist, TVA. Jeff told us about the benthic organism sampling program on the TVA tailwaters. Here is a summary of his presentation:

- Densities of benthic organisms in TVA tailwaters during 2007 decreased from 2006 but are still within the normal range of variation that has been seen historically.
- 2006 appeared to be an exceptional year for benthic organisms in all tailwaters.
- Effects of the 2007 drought are unclear. The data collected over the next few years needs to be evaluated to determine any possible effects.
- Didymo, a non-native invasive alga, is present in South Holston, Wilbur, Cherokee, and Norris tailwaters. We have not seen any impacts to insect populations in these tailwaters. Because Didymo has only been established for a short time, it may take several more years of data to better understand the impacts that Didymo may have in these tailwaters.

2007 benthic aquatic organism composition in Norris, South Holston, and Wilbur tailwaters.

EPT= Mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies; Midges= Chironomids; Scuds= Amphipods;
Sow Bugs= Isopods; Worms= Oligochaetes; Corbicula= Asian clams; Black flies= Simuliidae

	Clinch	South Holston	Watauga
	% Composition	% Composition	%Composition
Midges	65.7	29.3	30
Black flies	6.3	15.7	1.7
EPT	2.7	15.7	24.7
Worms	6	11	22.7
Snails	0.7	1.3	2.7
Beetles	1	0.7	3.3
Scuds	3.3	19	1
Sowbugs	6.7	0.7	2
Flatworms	-	-	11.3
Other	7.7	6.7	0.7 (Corbicula)

Note: The significantly higher percentage of midges found on the Clinch is due to the lower water temperature on this tailwater compared to the South Holston and Watauga.

Effort to get a bottle bill passed in the Tennessee Legislature postponed until next year.

By Marge Davis

With just two other YES votes to count on besides his own (including a surprise YES from Sen. Finney), prime sponsor Sen. Doug Jackson thought it best not to push for a roll call on SB1408. He felt that, given the momentum the bill has gained these last few weeks and months, we have more to gain next year by not forcing the issue this year.

So the bill is done for now. However, this is really just a stop along the way. We've learned tons this year; we've amended the bill to correct some major weaknesses; we've got more sponsors than ever; and we now have the support of a major endorser (Assoc. of County Mayors).

Most important, there is a strong agreement that the legislature is prepared to do SOMETHING about litter and recycling in 2009. Part of our mission now is to make sure that this "something" is a container deposit.

Kid's Fishing Event scheduled for May 17, 2008

The annual Kid's Fishing Event in Unicoi County has been set for May 17, 2008. The event is held at Fishery Park Pond, and is open to kids under the age of 12.

Registration is from 7-9 a.m. with actual fishing from 9-12 noon.

Assistance is needed with registration, baiting hooks, unhooking fish, untangling lines, and so forth.

If you are interested, contact Dave Lane at 423-743-4842, or the Erwin National Hatchery at 423-743-4712. This is a great event that usually has 200-300 participants.

Source: Dave Lane, Erwin State Fish Hatchery

TVA announces Northeastern Tributary Reservoirs Land Management Plan

TVA is developing a land management plan for seven Northeastern Reservoirs: Beaver Creek, Boone, Clear Creek, Fort Patrick Henry, South Holston, Watauga, and Wilber. The planning process will determine the most suitable uses for TVA-managed public lands surrounding these areas. The goal is to identify and evaluate the most suitable use of land under TVA stewardship, consistent with comments and concerns expressed by public agencies, officials, private organizations, and individuals.

A public open house meeting on this plan will be held in Blountville, TN, at the campus of Central High School on May 20, 2008.

Information regarding proposed land use allocations for the reservoirs is available on TVA's website at www.tva.com/environment/reports/ntrimp and at www.tva.com/environment/reports/dnlmp. If you have questions contact Chris Cooper, TVA Project Manager, Holston-Cherokee-Douglas Tributary Reservoirs Land Management Plans, at 423-585-2138.

Source: Chris Cooper, TVA

Fishing Expo brings in eighteen news members!

Randall Rogers, T.A. Smith and Ron Harrington manned the OMTU booth at the Fly Fishing Expo held on Saturday, May 10, 2008. And as a result, 18 new members were added to our rolls. In addition, 10 individuals indicated that they would be pre-ordering the TN Trout Unlimited Specialty Plate! Sounds like a very successful day.

The Tennessee Fly Shop, Johnson City, TN, sponsored the event.

Fort Patrick Henry Stocking Schedule for 2008

According to Dave Lane, the Fort Patrick Henry tailwater was stocked with 5500 9-10 inch Rainbow trout in March, 5000 7-8 inch Brown trout in April, and 5000 more 9-10 inch Rainbow trout in April.

Staff from the Buffalo Springs Hatchery in Rutledge do most of the stocking, hauling the fish from the national hatchery at Dale Hollow. Annual trout reports can be found at www.tnwildlife.org. Go to fisheries, then Region 4 streams, stream management, then annual trout reports.

Source: Dave Lane, TWRA