

Trout Unlimited

Thames Valley Chapter Newsletter

Stream Lines

The Voice of Eastern CT Trout and Salmon Anglers

April 2019



President's Message...

For those of us who might actually wait for opening day, fishing season is right around the corner. Finally!! I actually got out about a week ago for the first time in way too long. The water was still a cold 42 degrees, the air just below 50, but it was a nice sunny day and I saw some stoneflies, midges and BWO's on the water. It was a spectacular day to just to be out on the water and get a little head start on the season.

With opening day upon us, that means our stocking season is soon to start. The last I heard, DEEP doesn't think they'll be needing TU until after opening day, but we have done it ahead of opening day in past years, so who knows. If anybody is interested in helping to stock, let me know and I'll add you to my stockers team list. We usually float stock, wading down the rivers with carts and distributing the fish along the way. We normally meet around 9:00 and are finished by about 12:00. Donuts and coffee are thrown in for a little enticement. It's usually a fun day with good friends and a great way to learn the rivers and help make everyone's fishing just a little better. If you're not part of team yet and would like to help out, contact me and I'll add you to the list. And here's a good time to remind everyone that I am looking for someone to take over the role of stocking coordinator. This will be my last year doing this so that I can focus on other activities.

At last month's meeting, I talked a little about volunteering for activities and board roles, but for those that weren't at the meeting, I'll revisit briefly here. We are always looking to the general membership to volunteer for any activities that we participate in. We also welcome anyone to attend board meetings or to join the board as a general member or for a specific role. We would really like to broaden the depth of the board to 1) share some of the workload, 2) expand our capacity for additional projects and 3) provide backup to the primary function chairs. On that last note, we would like to specifically find members to be co-chairs to our primary functions (TIC, stocking coordinator, river cleanup coordinator, conservation chair, Veteran Services chair etc.). The co-chair role is a great way to phase in slowly without feeling like you're being thrown in over your head – although none of these are complicated. We have a great board that are easy to work with and welcome any new members who want to jump in with us and help make this club as good as it can be.

We have applied for a grant from the Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF). If awarded, this grant will fund us to hire a project manager for 18 months who will be looking for, applying to and managing additional grants and projects during that period. We will also be doing some work on Latimer brook and Merrick Brook with this grant where we are looking to identify potential projects that would be funded by additional grants pursued by the project manager. In summary, this grant enables us to begin building a list of conservation projects that we can execute on. We should know if we are awarded sometime this month.

Gary Lussier
President TVTU
Gelconn@yahoo.com

Chapter Meeting Tues., April 16th, 6 to 9pm

Featured Presentation by: Abbie Schuster

"Striper Fishing Martha's Vineyard"



This is Abbie's bio from her [website](#):

Fly fishing is something I have done my entire life that is why the word Kismet spoke to me when naming this business. Owning and running an outfitter is my destiny. My passion and where my knowledge lies is fly fishing. I have always been in the fly fishing industry.

I was born and raised in New England and grew up fishing these waters, which provided me the opportunity to gain knowledge and passion

for this sport. I learned to fish on Martha's Vineyard when I was young and also spent many years fishing the rivers and small creeks of Maine, Connecticut and New Hampshire.

I attended University of Montana, which only fueled my fly fishing addiction, so it was a natural choice for me to become a fly fishing guide. In 2011 after completing Sweetwater Guide School I started guiding in Montana and since then have not looked back. I have guided in Washington and Alaska and have fished waters abroad.

To me there is nothing better than giving the gift of fly fishing to a client. Every trip will be an opportunity to not only catch fish, but expand and grow your knowledge. My goal is to have every client leave with life long memories, a stronger passion for fly fishing and conservation and a greater understanding about this sport. I am a certified Maine guide. Other certifications included CPR, first aid, swift water rescue.

See more about Abbie on her [Video](#)

Door Opens at 6 pm

Special Women Members "Meet & Greet" April 16th, 6-7pm, (prior to the regular membership meeting)

Thames Valley TU would like to extend a special invite to all our fellow women TVTU members. Come join us for coffee and cupcakes and meet other members of Thames Valley TU and learn more about our great chapter and what we do. Non-members, family, and friends are all welcome. Stay for our feature presentation with Abbie Schuster and enjoy a fun night out!

- Special Women's Only Door Prize drawing
- All women (member & non-member) will receive a one free regular raffle ticket & have a chance to win some great prizes
- All attending TVTU women members will receive a TVTU Fly Box with Flies
- Receive a TU "Embrace-A-Stream" hat for signing up a friend or family member as new TVTU member. A new membership is half price (\$17.50)

Don't worry men... there will be goodies for you too!

Our meetings are free and open to members, guests and the general public. Social time, fly tying demonstrations, refreshments, raffle, door prize & more... Featured presentation starts shortly after short chapter business meeting at 7pm.

See You at the Moose!

Chapter Events

**April 16th, Tue, 6pm
Chapter Meeting**
Moose Lodge
115 Fitchville Rd
Bozrah, CT
**Abbie Schuster -
"Striper Fishing
Martha's Vineyard"
and TVTU Women
"Meet & Greet"**

**April 16th, Tue, 11
am to 2 pm, Earth
Day "Spring Fling"**
UCONN Storrs

**April 20th Sat. 9am
Natchaug River
Clean-up**

**April 28th, Sat & Sun,
JT's Fly Shop
Annual "Spring Fling"
Open House**

**May 11th Sat. TBD
Quinebaug River
Clean-up**
Putnam, CT

**May 17-18, TBD
Annual Breakfast &
Camp-out**
Shetucket River

**May 21st Tue. 6-9pm
Chapter Meeting**
Moose Lodge
115 Fitchville Rd
Bozrah, CT
TBD

June 8th Sat. TBD
Yantic or Moosup
River Clean-up

**June 14th, Fri The
Last Green Valley
Floating Lab, Yantic
River, Bozrah**

**Event/Meeting
Cancellations
Due to
Inclement
Weather**

In the event that we need to cancel a scheduled meeting due to inclement weather, an

Stocking Coordinator Volunteer Needed

The chapter still needs a volunteer for the position of Stocking Coordinator. The position entails working with the hatchery management to schedule the stocking times and locations and sending an email to the stocking volunteers to establish a rendezvous for the stocking. We are getting close to stocking season and we could use the help. If you are interested, please contact Gary Lussier [email](#)

announcement will be published on our [website](#) by 4:00 PM on the day of the scheduled meeting or event.



by George Jacobi

"Slow Start"

There are some good reasons why my fishing season usually gets off to a slow start. For one, I'm spoiled. I like lively dry fly fishing. I've been around long enough to make choices, one choice being that if my educated guess says I'll have to drag a nymph along the bottom for an hour to catch one trout, I pass. Believe me, this is not a value judgement. If anything, it means you're a better and more dedicated angler than I am. Don't get me wrong – sometimes I nymph fish with enthusiasm. But it's usually my second choice. Early season insect activity can lag, so the truth is, I'm not in a big hurry.

And don't get me going on the hatchery truck. One morning I accidentally found myself with my fellow TU members as they helped the state dump trout in a local river (Yes, I know; I should have volunteered to help anyway). When that stretch of sunlit water was full of fat and excited trout, faced with freedom for the first time, I drove away so I didn't have to watch what happened next. Seen it all before. I've been on the bank while new and unsophisticated fly fishers nailed new and unsophisticated trout on every second or third cast with a nymph or streamer. As for me, I can wait until the fish act like they are supposed to, like a wild creature – or a reasonable facsimile anyway. In fact, many times I swing by a particular spot on a little local stream that gets stocked regularly, and I just watch surface-feeding fish for a while, even if I have my rod in the car. Somebody will catch and kill these trout in a few days, guaranteed. Who am I to ruin a rare peaceful time for them? Just can't do it. Call me spoiled.



One year John Preston and I went to the Willimantic River looking for trout rising to an expected Hendrickson hatch. Not hopeful. April had remained cold and slow. We got there after lunch; these mayflies are typically on a 2PM

You know the rest; Springer and I looked at each other and both said at the same time, "Only three more to go!" Yes, and then there were two to go. Then one. Time went by. Very sloooowly.

"Bird must have got the other one", said Ron. We agreed, packed up and headed home.

Later, I headed out back to fire up the grill for dinner. A hundred Hendricksons were dancing up and down over my patio, mistaking its cement brightness for a river reflecting the sky. Stupid bugs.

Last year John and I went out for real. My first cast went into a willow bush on the other bank; kiss THAT perfectly proportioned mayfly imitation goodbye. The honorable Preston-san did even better. He dropped the fly he had chosen at his feet, and it simply disappeared into the bunch of twigs and branches down there. Evaporated. He's calmed down with age, though. He wasn't nearly as angry as when he dropped his truck keys into the deep snow in Pulaski, New York, and our eagle-eyed guide Fran Verdoliva was the only one who could find them. It took an hour for John's face to turn from red back to white. But we didn't need the heat on in the truck the whole time.

I'd spent what seemed like hours pulling bike tire rubber over the same leader left on from November in order to straighten it out. My two-weight fly line too was a quarter-sized corkscrew, but that got better when I stretched out the first fifty feet or so. I don't know how, but I somehow neglected to fish the Farmington over the winter. Forgot all the enjoyment I could have had chipping ice out of the guides, casting over the shelf ice on the shore of the Church Pool, with that breeze from Saskatchewan blowing right down my neck. Must have slipped my mind. Did I say there are good reasons why fly fishing should get off to a slow start?

By skipping going out during snow season, I lose my edge. When spring finally comes, I'm no longer in a predator state of mind. I've been feeding chickadees out of my hand, protecting my bushes from hungry deer while feeling guilty about it – when it comes to nature, I'm usually happy to just look. That goes for the fish, too.

schedule. John Springer and his pal Ron were on either side of the pool already, so we sat down to watch for a while. One dragged a nymph, the other had a streamer. What a surprise! Ron finally caught a rainbow. There were no flies in the air or on the surface, so they both ended up with us after a while, all sitting on our asses and complaining. Finally one Hendrickson flew up past us, then another. We talked about hatches. We talked about Ron Whitely, how he was a fish magnet. He's now in Florida and there aren't many magnets left around here. Springer too used to go with him, bringing the necessary coffee and Boston Cream donuts. Boston Creams – that's what you need to be a fish magnet. Back then when Quist and I used to pull out of the Bayberry Lane Boat Launch into Fisher's Island Sound, never mind the splashes or the bird activity or the nervous water; the first thing we'd look for was Whitely's pea-green boat.

An hour went by; counted from our vantage point on the Abutment a grand total of 5 Hendrickson mayflies hatched. No rises. Route 84 hummed and the Willimantic gurgled. We talked about trains. We got so lethargic even Springer calmed down. Imagine. And then, very late in the day – one splash.

I knew to use the little comedic timing I had, so I waited two beats before suggesting, "Well, I guess the spinner fall started." Chuckles and snorts. About ten minutes later, one more rise.

Standing on a bridge admiring feeding trout induces no guilt. On the other hand, interacting with them is one of the most cherished parts of my life, and it involves a hook. So I do get fishing.



In actuality wild and even stream-habituated trout are a ways from here. Warm evenings in May are also still a ways from here. So let's get right to the truth, shall we? I have to confess – this "slow start" stuff has all been fiction. Made up for the sake of literature. We couldn't wait. We got off to an early start. There was a wonderful Olive hatch even before Opening Day; we each caught 12 or 15 speckled beauties on tiny #20 Blue Winged Olive dry flies. Murdered 'em. One rainbow was about four and a half pounds. Great start to the season. You believe me, don'tcha?



"March Meeting Recap"

by Bruce Danielson



Our March 19th meeting featured Neal Hagstrom, CT DEEP Fisheries Biologist, who presented new information out of Vermont and New Hampshire showing that

adding more wood structure to streams can promote greater fish populations.

Neal showed the data from the Vermont study and although the results were quite encouraging, Neal felt he would like to see more data before making any conclusions or recommendations for Connecticut.

The following video produced by Vermont PBS showing the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and Trout Unlimited since 2012 have been strategically adding wood to waterways to improve stream and brook trout habitat. The program was called Chop and Drop... is now called Strategic Wood Addition.

would appear this might be something the chapter could help identify waters where "chop & drop" might be viable and possible construct in Eastern CT.



Prior to the meeting's presentation, John Preston drew a nice audience demonstrating his technique for making dubbing brushes for fresh and saltwater flies. Info and plans were provided on how to make a dubbing brush machine.



This [LINK](#) is an article written in DEC 2018 by Jud Kratzer, VT Fisheries Biologist... "Wood is Good for Brook Trout".

Based on Neal's presentation, the above video, VT report, and questions & feedback from the audience it



Check out our [website](#) for the full photo slideshow.



"Love Truck Stop Update"

by Bruce Danielson

The issue of the Waste Water Treatment System for the Love's Truck continues to be the focus of the Willington Inland Watershed and Waterways Commission (IWWC)

The past meeting on March 23rd was well attended by CFFA and TVTU members as well as concerned residents of Willington.

The engineering firm contracted by Love's presented a slide show of the proposed changes to the Waste Water Treatment System in an effort to get reapproval to the expired existing proposal.

At the conclusion of this presentation, the meeting was opened for comments from the public.

A member of the CFFA read a letter written by the president of CFFA that expressed real world concerns related to the potential impact of, not only the waste system, but the overall project, that could be inflicted on the Broad Brook watershed.

TVTU members Charlie McCaughtry and Mike Carl both spoke out regarding the long term reliability of the system and the results of the close proximity of the system to the watershed.

The Willington Conservation Commission representative presented a very detailed description of the potential impacts and faults that are created by this proposal.

The meeting concluded with the declaration of the IWWC that many questions remain open and that the engineering firm will have to address these issues at the next meeting before any decisions can be made.

The number of attendees at these meetings has an influence on the decisions of the IWWC and it is important that we try to support our conservation initiatives by attending these meetings.

The next meeting is on April 29th at 7:30 PM at the Willington Town Hall.

The Willington Town Offices are located at 40 Old Farms Road - enter building through the lower level in back of building).

If you have any questions regarding this issue, contact Mike Carl email or Charlie McCaughtry email for more info.

Hope to see you there!

"April 20th Natchaug River Cleanup, Cookout and Fishing"

Note the meeting place location change!



Come join us for a fun day of fishing and river stewardship at the Natchaug River Trout park on the Natchaug River. **We will be meeting at the entrance to the Natchaug State Forest in Eastford at 9 AM on Sunday morning.** Wear waders or boots and gloves. All other supplies will be provided.

The day will start off with a few hours of stream cleanup then we will return to the Natchaug State Park for a Thames Valley TU sponsored cookout. After lunch, grab your rod, throw on your waders, and join us for some fishing!

For questions or to discuss other river stewardship opportunities, please contact Jim Valuckas, River Cleanup Coordinator, Tel: (215) 208-3873, Email: jfvret@gmail.com

Directions to Natchaug State Forest [directions](#)

TVTU 2019 Fund Raiser Drive

Its that time again... Help Thames Valley TU raise funds for our Education and Conservation efforts.

Not only does it take volunteers to execute our educational and conservation programs but it takes some financial resources too. We hope to expand our Trout in the Classroom program to other local schools; We have recently lent a hand to starting the Nathan Hale MS (Coventry) Fishing Club this winter; and expanding Fly Tying and Fly Casting to some of our local schools for example. In the conservation arena we continue to conduct stream cleanups; in the planning stages of conducting stream bio-assessments, obtaining grants and other conservation efforts with area schools and organizations.

So consider making a donation via our 2019 Fundraiser Raffle (see below) to make these efforts possible and win a guided trip for two and a complete Fly Fishing outfit too. And enjoy some time on one of our beautiful Eastern CT cold-water fisheries we all care about.

Tickets are only \$15 each and available at our monthly meetings and through the Chapter's Board of Directors members. Or, send a check payable (with name, address & phone#) to: Thames Valley TU Chapter 282, P.O. Box 2181 Columbia, CT 06237. A ticket will be mailed back to you and recorded.

Thank You for your support....



Thames Valley TU 2019 Fundraiser Raffle

TU "Embrace-A-Stream" Fly Rod & Orvis Reel Outfit plus an Eastern CT Guided Half Day Trip (1- 2 Anglers) w/ Steve Babbitt



Package Value \$764- Only 60 tickets are to be sold.

Donation: Only \$15 per ticket

(All proceeds will be earmarked for our [Education and Conservation efforts only](#))

TU "Embrace-A-Stream" (St Croix Legend Ultra 8'6") Fly Rod 5 wt, 4 pc, 3.4oz: This rod includes the following features: High-modulus / high-strain SCIV graphite, slim profile ferrules, Fuji Alconite stripper guides with chrome frames, REC nickel silver reel seat with a stabilized bird's eye maple insert, Super-grade cork handle, includes a rugged rod case with a handle strap and a divided polypropylene liner. Made in the USA. Original MSRP \$330.00

Orvis Battenkill Disc III for line weights 5-7, 4.9 oz., 3 1/4" dia: Underneath that mid arbor is the same sealed drag system found in the Hydros SL incorporating six interacting carbon and stainless drag surfaces. Positive click drag is simple and easy to adjust. The reel is built of 6061-T6 aircraft aluminum with an ergonomic Delrin handle and changing from left to right hand retrieve is simple. Finish is black nickel. MSRP \$169.00

Sage Performance Taper II WF5F: Sage's Balanced Loading System to create a smooth-handling, high-floating line that provides enhanced line feel through your cast for greater distance, accuracy and consistency. Original MSRP \$65.00

Guided Half Day Trip for 1 or 2 Anglers (Eastern CT Waters) with Steve Babbitt: Please schedule trip ahead of time with Steve any time from April to June- September to December 1st. Value \$200.



Steve Babbitt is JT's Fly Shop in Union, CT resident guide and available for individual or group fly fishing trips and instruction. Steve has over 35 years of fly fishing experience and started guiding in the 90's and hasn't stopped. Steve has been tying for 30 years and many of those years were spent as a commercial tier.

If you are looking to get started or already have experience and looking to learn new techniques, Steve, will have the experience and knowledge necessary to make the most out of your time on the water.

**Don't Forget JT's Open House
April 27th and 28th**

664 Buckley Highway Union, Ct

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RAFFLES



Fly of the Month "Sawyer Pheasant Tail Nymph"

by John Preston



This Fly of the Month comes from TVTU Beginner's Fly Tying class... Bob Walsh tied the American Pheasant Tail version for the class that uses Peacock herl for the thorax, has legs, and it is the most common version available in fly shops in the USA. The versatile Pheasant tail nymph has a reputation of mimicking many Mayfly swimming nymphs... an essential fly for your fly box.

When looking for a video for the students to view/prepare before the class I came across the Sawyer Pheasant Tail nymph that originated in the 50's by Frank Sawyer in the UK. Sawyer's PT is a fly that I learned long ago from Renee Robinson at a flytying class at Bob Chamber's Orvis Fly shop in the 70's... but never really used because I was dry fly addict at the time (I guess I still am much of the time). I don't think we tied it exactly as Frank Sawyer did (using copper wire and no thread to tie it) but I do remember using Pheasant Tail fibers only.

Although there is a video (poor quality) of Mr. Sawyer tying his creation, I chose a 30 minute video by [Oliver Edwards](#) that not only provides some history of the fly and detailed instructions but he demonstrates using it sight fishing on a stream in the UK.



Below is a video by Hans Weilenmann on the Sawyer PT that is less than seven minutes... note how much slimmer this is when compared to the common version in the USA and has no legs... according to Sawyer Baetis nymphs tuck in their legs when swimming. Hope you enjoy the videos and suggest you add this fly to your arsenal of killer and essential flies...

After viewing why and how Mr. Sawyer tied it...his version is slimmer and weighted (but not heavily because of copper) to represent a Baetis (BWO) nymph. It slips onto water nicely and by using the "induces take" method (similar to the Liesenring Lift in the USA) it is a deadly combo... a light in my head finally went off. When using a American PT prior to a PMD hatch (in an not to be name river in the THE park) I have experienced many times Cutthroats darting from the depths of a pool chasing my PT at the end of a drift as the fly rose a foot or so... only to miss it or roll away when exposed at the surface in the gin clear water. I tried a beadhead version but the Cutts wouldn't touch it with a ten foot pole! Now, I believe, if I only had a Sawyer PT the result may have been a couple of nice 16-18" Yellowstone Cutthroats in my net. I also think the Sawyer PT profile would be more effective than an American PT (never had much luck with it in the past) during a Housatonic tiny BWO hatch in the fall... I'll let you know come Fall.



Sawyer Pheasant Tail Nymph Recipe:

Hook: Partridge Ideal Nymph hook #10-18, or a 2XL equivalent (regular shank hooks for #22-#28)

Thread/weight: Fine dark colored (enameled) copper wire

Tail/abdomen/thorax/wing case: red/brown fibers from a European cock pheasant tail feather, matching the copper wire in color (brownish not bright copper colored)

Items for For Sale

Cabela's Bootfoot Neoprene Wader - No leaks, felt sole, size 11, mint cond. **-\$40 Special Price** (retail price over \$150)

Korkers Wading Boot (NOS) - Size 11 w/ walking/hiking sole - \$40

LL Bean Travel Fly Rod - 9' - 7wt, 6pc w/ tube & bag, near mint condition - \$75

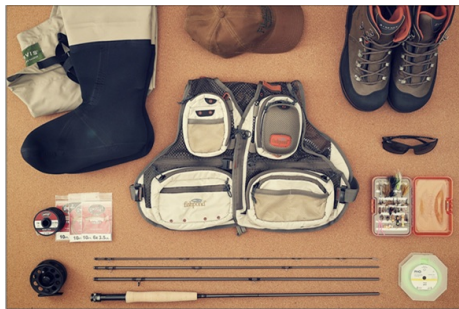
Cortland CL Fly Rod - 9' - 8/9 wt, 6 pc w/bag & tube, excellent condition - \$65

Umpqua Toketee Vest - New, never used, gray, one size fits all - \$65 (MSRP \$159)

Bamboo Rod Oven (homemade) - The heat gun (not included) oven is **FREE** for the cane rod maker who will pass it on **FREE** to the next rod maker.

For the above items or to place items for sale, contact [John Preston](mailto:John.Preston@860-917-4485) 860-917-4485

Donations Wanted



You can help our TU chapter by donating your unused fly fishing and fishing equipment including rods, reels, flies, books, fly tying and other reusable items. We will auction or raffle the items off and used the money raised to support our chapter's programs including conservation projects, stream clean up, stocking, TIC, speaker fees, and other operating expenses. Email [John Preston](mailto:John.Preston@860-546-6690) or call 860-546-6690 if you have something to donate or bring the item(s) to the next chapter meeting.

Thank You... for your generosity and support.

Thames Valley TU Chapter 282 - PO Box 2181, Columbia, CT 06237

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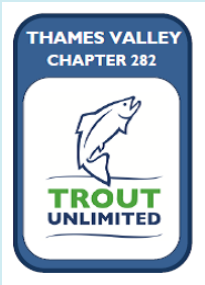
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About Us

TVTU Chapter's Mission

To conserve, protect and restore Eastern Connecticut's trout and salmon and their watersheds.

Our Vision

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

Questions or comments on the Newsletter contact Editor [Bruce Danielson](#)



Place an Advertisement in "Stream Lines"

Looking to reach a new and diverse audience? Presently we have over 450 members in Eastern CT and the newsletter is published September through May (9 issues). If you have a service or product and would like to reach out to our outdoor and conservation minded readership, consider placing an advertisement in the chapter's newsletter "Stream Lines" and [website](#). The cost is only \$50 for the entire year (9 Issues).

For more information and to place an ad, contact [Daniel King](#).

Thanks for your support!

Visit our Website

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