

Newscasts

May, 2003 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Come Learn About the Kickapoo

Roger Widner will be the speaker at our chapter meeting on May 13th. Those of you that have bought supplies at the general store in Avalanche, Wisconsin or camped at the *West Fork Sport's Club* have probably met Roger already. He is renown in the area, as the instigator behind the restoration of the West Fork of the Kickapoo River. His hard work and dedication are nothing short of legendary and the Kickapoo watershed has risen from the ashes as a premier fishery. Come to the meeting on the 13th to get the inside scoop, straight from the horses mouth.

We will once again meet at the fabulous Maple Tree Restaurant located at the stoplight on Highway 51 in the heart of metropolitan McFarland. The meeting will start at 7:00 PM, but please come out and join us for dinner at 6:00 PM.

Token Creek Update

by Henry Haugley

The Token Creek Watershed Association held its annual spring forum at the Sun Prairie library on April 29th. About thirty people attended the meeting, which featured a lot of information about the past - and proposed future, of Token Creek.

A millpond was formed on the creek following the installation of a damn in 1861. Sometime in the 1940's, a number of impoundments were made at the Culver Springs to create trout ponds. Thanks to the efforts of our *Trout Unlimited* chapter, and a number of likeminded individuals, the dam was removed a few years ago. Many people put a lot of time and effort into the possible restoration of this creek as a brook trout stream. At the spring forum, Vicki Gilbertson made an impassioned plea to reflood the lakebed that she grew up with. Mark Cornish (a biologist with the Army Corp of Engineers) later assured everyone that a lake restoration was not one of the options being considered for the creek.

Mark also gave a good presentation about the restoration planning process. The first priority is

to protect the springs and surrounding lakebed by creating a streambed and a flood plane. The restructured lakebed would also have a wide channel to contain water from a 100-year flood. Downstream vegetation would be introduced to establish a desirable marsh habitat.

Current plans call for the creation of brook trout spawning beds, installation of luncker structures for cover, and the creation of about eight riffles. The springs would serve as a spawning grounds and refuge area to protect the fish from heavy rain run-offs.

The lake will be temporarily reflooded in order to float a dredge that will be used to dig the channel. Sediment from this operation would be piped to a carp pond on the Pederson tributary. By filling in this pond, warmwater effluent into the Pederson tributary will be alleviated. The springhouse on the Pederson tributary may be removed, and spawning areas might be created there as well.

The Army Corp is in the process of choosing where best to start the project. Part of this involves discerning where the first-round of funding may be put to maximal benefit. Their draft proposal is due to be issued later this month. Construction could start in 2004-05, but local landowner concerns must be addressed before construction begins. The process has been slow, but steady.

At this meeting I was elected to the Token Creek board. I will keep the chapter informed as developments occur.

You Must Be Present to Win

The jackpot for our *You Must Be Present to Win Drawing* grew by another \$20 in April. That's because the person whose name was drawn at that meeting was not present, thereby violating the sole tenet of this attendance incentive program. Please join us at the May 13th meeting where all members present will be eligible to win a \$60 gift certificate from *Fontana Sports Specialties*.

Fish Tales From the President

by Bill Pielsticker

Opening day of the regular season was nearly perfect. I had to work, so I didn't get to fish. Of course, the streams were likely well populated with anglers young and old. Several chapter members who were also not fishing stopped by my booth at the Madison Audubon Society's art fair at Olbrich Gardens. To them and others who express some concern that I don't spend enough time on a stream, rest assured that by the time you read this, I will have been fishing at least once this season in Wisconsin. I promise. Really.

Actually, I've fished a great deal since I caught my first trout on a #1 Mepps spinner early in my teenage years. Since then, I've caught countless fish and released the vast majority of them. One summer on a stream in Colorado, I landed 95 trout in three days. Geez, I said, I think I've got this fly-fishing thing down pat! Naturally, I was skunked the next three days. On the same stretch of stream. Must have lost the knack. So it goes.

My favorite fishing memory is from a few years ago when several scruffy chapter members joined me for a week in Colorado. One morning we awoke before dawn and drove 40 miles to the tailwater below the Taylor reservoir. Colorado's record-breaking brown trout was caught there a few years earlier, and we thought we'd try our luck on the catch and release section below the dam.

Now, fishing for obese trout in a tailwater like this one is somewhat akin to fishing for muskies – it may take 10,000 casts to come up with a good fish. Add to that the fact we were literally up in the clouds with temperatures in the high 30's and a constant mist, and the exercise soon began to look like punishment. A few hours later, the only huge fish we'd seen was anchored in a pool above the bridge – a 3-foot rainbow from the looks of it.

One reason the fish in this stretch grow so large is the constant diet of tiny shrimp coming from the reservoir upstream. The shrimp were planted in to provide food for the salmon and other fished stocked in the lake. So the trick here was to bounce a tiny shrimp pattern along the bottom and hope that it passes inches from the maw of a giant that just happens to want to feed then.

After hours of casting, drifting, mending, and retrieving, this got a bit old. I caught a nice (14") brown, but mostly got hung up on the bottom. Finally, about ready to call it a day, I got hung up again. I tugged with the rod, swung it upstream, swung it downstream. Nothing. Wouldn't budge. I finally laid the rod down and tried to hand-haul the line in. That was when the rock began swimming upstream. That was also when, without the rod to take up the pressure, the tippet snapped.

I'll never know how large that "rock" was. In fact, it was unlikely I would have been able to land it. Yet it is memories of 30 fish days and rocks that swim that keep me excited about trout fishing. That's why I do what I do for trout.

BEC Stream Monitoring to Begin

With help from the Madison Fishing Expo, Badger Fly Fishers, and the DNR, our chapter has ordered 3 in-stream probes to collect continuous data on water temperature and dissolved oxygen concentrations in Black Earth Creek. Phil Emmling, who recently completed a multi-year study of Castle Rock Creek, has volunteered to supervise the placement and data collection for the probes.

One goal of this project is to collect more data on the low dissolved oxygen levels that annually plague this stream. After a while, we may try some limited experiments to see what changes might be made to improve the oxygen levels and thereby try to avoid a repeat of the 2001 fish kill. In future years, we expect to use the probes to examine other area streams for similar problems.

A second part of this project will find volunteers heading to specific points on the stream and collecting water samples following significant rainfalls, or those that cause runoff. These samples will be analyzed by the DNR as part of an early warning system for water quality problems. While according to Wisconsin law these samples cannot be used for enforcement purposes, they can alert the DNR to potential problems and trigger an investigation if needed.

This is the same project that was promised but did not get off the ground last year. If you live near the stream or have the time to help collect water samples or help with the probes, please contact Bill Pielsticker (Ph: 59204718; email: billpiel@merr.com).

**From the Projects Chair
by Tom Ehlert**

On Saturday, 12 April 2003, sixteen regulars of our Chapter's "Corps of Recovery" assembled in cool sunshine on a grassy plat of DNR land just west of Salmo Pond. The company's number was increased to nineteen with the addition of Bill Crelin of Milwaukee, my wife, Karen, who has at other times joined me on reconnaissance missions, and What is your name? I've seen you at Chapter meetings more than once. You're male, thirty-ish, not exactly a jar-head, but your hair is close-cropped and dark. You're expected to sign-in with the CO when reporting for duty! Doing so assures recognition of your contribution to resource restoration and your eligibility to win something wonderful in our periodic prize-drawings. (Does a BAUER large-arbor reel appeal to your sensibilities?) Not to mention an invitation to lunch after our labors are finished. Assuming you attend, please step forward at our next chapter meeting to identify yourself.

Better still, join us again at our next work-day! When shall that be?, you ask. Saturday, 17 May 2003, or May 17, for those of you who've had enough extended metaphor. We'll meet at 830am in the aforementioned DNR-owned parking area across from what used to be "The Ranch Tavern" on Hwy. 14, .3 miles west of Salmo Pond. I now have the key to the padlock securing the gate which bars vehicular travel down the lane to the stream. Which means, of course, there will be more room for more cars and therefore more hands to lay-on and remove impediments to the flow of cleaner, colder water in one of the state's best trout streams. We'll deal first with a few box-elders and impertinent cedars just downstream from the bridge at the end of the lane. Once they're dispatched, we'll move upstream to confront several eye-openers. Yeah, I know, you who've been party to so much mischief figure you've seen it all. You're probably right. I think you've seen worse!

We'll plan to work until noon, at which time we'll eat something. Whether that means char-grilled, chopped-sirloin sandwiches, like last time, I'm not sure yet. Variety adds spice. Now that the picnic season is upon us, feel free to bring a side-dish or dessert to share with your fellows. (Fellowship is central to these activities!) Just let me know in advance of your planned contribution.

Since late January, forty-four (44) SWTU Chapter-members and ten (10) non-members have generously dedicated themselves to ameliorating the BEC trout-fishery. To date, they've donated 158 hours at the wheel and 416 hours in the water or on the banks. Doing the math: 574 hours. (Our travels and labors associated with the Mt. Vernon Project last fall: 582 hours.) Before we call a halt to the work on BEC we can handle, we'll approach 800 hours, which total will probably include work on selected stretches of Garfoot Creek. (The DNR's heavy -equipment people will have to cope with one really-problematic stretch of BEC. Kurt Wielke and I are meeting May 5 to discuss \$-sensitive options/approaches. Stay tuned for details.) We've made exhilarating progress to date. There is more than strength in numbers, so consider joining us on May 17, for one hour or four. Come for the first time, or come again if it's been a while. Call me at 767-2413 so I that I can set a place for you. Those of you on my call-list, My thanks in advance.

And thanks to those named below for their contribution on April 12:

Bill Crelin	Ann O'nymous
Karen Ehlert	Mike Philipps
Dave Fowler	Bill Porter
Dan Geib	Dave Sanders
Karsten Geib	Terri Sanders
Roger Gilligan	Mark Shimasaki
John Gribb	Dick Tedesco
Mike Grimes	Ray Venn
Chuck Jacobson	and the author of this column
Jim O'Brien	

Thanks for the Casting Clinic

The *Casting Clinic* on April 19th was a raging success. About 25 students turned out for the event, and the student to teacher ratio approached unity. This has been an important event throughout the history of our chapter. Many of our members report that they were first attracted to the chapter as participants in either the fly tying classes, or the casting clinic. If you were one of the instructors – Thank you. If you were one of the students – Thank you. Craig Amacker deserves special thanks for organizing the event again this year.

Special Needs Fishing Day set for June 14th

Please join us for the *Special Need Fishing Day* on Saturday June 14, at Jim Kalscheur's Ponds. You have the opportunity to provide a great day of fishing for some very special people who are not ordinarily able to share in the pastime that we all love. Setup will commence at 7:30 AM. The fishing will begin around 9:00 AM. Over 50 special guests and caregivers have already registered to participate. Scott's Bakery has once again agreed to donate some tasty breakfast pastries and coffee. Oscar Mayer has donated the hot dogs that we will have for lunch. TU members are encouraged to bring their family members to share in this wonderfully rewarding volunteer opportunity. We will need fishing guides, greeters, servers and fish cleaners. All volunteers are welcome to fish the ponds after our guests leave around 3:00 PM.

Volunteers are also needed on Friday night to help setup the fishing tackle for our guests. Please meet at Kalscheur's Ponds at 5:30 PM, the project should be finished by 8:00 PM.

Contact John Schweiger at 238-8062 for more information or to volunteer for Friday night.

Special Meeting of the Board of Directors

The board of directors of *Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited* will hold their annual *on site* meeting on May 17th at the campground in Avalanche, Wisconsin. All board meetings are open to chapter members who wish to attend. However, the balance between work and play is particularly precarious at this meeting, and non-board members are hereby issued a warmer than usual invitation to attend. The meeting has a history of being angler-friendly. That is to say, it doesn't start until after it is too dark to fish. This meeting also tends to resemble something of a strategic planning session in that issues of long term importance to our chapter tend to supplant month-to-month issues. Please consider yourself invited.

Directions to Kalscheur's Ponds:

Take Mineral Point Road west towards Pine Bluff. Turn left on Old Military Road, and then left on Spring Valley Road. The Kalscheur property will be on your left. TU signs will be strategically placed at intersections to help provide direction.





Doug Wadsworth shares his wealth of flyfishing equipment knowledge at the Casting Clinic in April. Professor Wadsworth is renowned for his ability to quickly discern end of the rod should have a reel on it. (Photo by Jack Way.)

Important dates to remember:

- May 13 Chapter Meeting featuring Roger Widner of the West Fork Sports Club
- May 17 Board of Directors "Meeting" in Avalanche, WI
- May 17 Project Work Day. Contact Tom Ehlert at 767-2413 for details
- June 14 Special Needs Fishing Day

Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited Leadership:

- President Bill Pielsticker (608) 592-4718
 - Vice President Susan Fey (608) 442-5801
 - Secretary John Serunian (608) 277-4604
 - Treasurer John Schweiger (608) 238-8062
 - Past President Tom Ehlert (608) 767-2413
 - State Council Rep. Dave Westlake (920) 927-3820
 - Newscasts Editor Mark Maffitt (608) 273-2140
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