



THE BACKCAST

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Trout Unlimited, SE Mass Chapter 241

April 2018

Next Meeting: April 10th at the Mitchell Club (29 Elm St.) Middleborough MA, Doors open at 6:00PM for fly tying, General Meeting begins at 7:30 PM and, as always, admission is free.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jim Augenti

Greetings,

I need to give a big thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Annual Banquet. Despite a run of terrible weather causing us to cancel our last meeting, Chapter members, officers, donors and attendees rallied to make this event the most profitable banquet in several years, exceeding last years net proceeds by \$1,000.00! I don't like to linger on money issues, but as a non profit organization, this is a huge boost to the programs we have undertaken.

Success is measured in more than dollars with about 125 folks getting together, having a great time in the name of coldwater conservation. We had about a dozen youngsters adding to the fun as well as a great mix of regulars and first time attendees. If it weren't for some notable scheduling conflicts, I believe we would have packed the room. This event was dedicated to Tom Magee, who while on the mend managed to advise and support us, as usual!

Ernie Foster stepped up to run the voice auction, giving Joe Danubio a break so he could concentrate on the many bucket raffles. Their enthusiasm, humor and generosity made for laughs and smiles all night long.

Looking forward, Larry Cook will be doing a presentation on the Rangeley lakes region of Maine on April 10th, with lots of great pics of wild brookies and beautiful country. Fly fishing classes resume on Wednesday evenings, Kids Day on the 14th (stocking on the 12th) and Opening Day Cookout and Fishing Derby on the 28th at Little Pond, Plymouth. The deadline for Mass Jr. Conservation Camp applications will be the April 10th meeting.

We will continue doing pizza nights and the door prize for April is a \$50.00 Dicks Sporting Goods gift card. Get to a meeting, join us, and reenergize yourself for the upcoming season!

Thanks Again,
Jim Augenti



VETERAN'S FLY TYING

BROCKTON V.A. HOSPITAL

Members of our chapter and Project Healing Waters meet with the veterans the third Wed. of every month for fly tying at 5:30p.m. Building #4, Brockton V.A. Hospital. All are welcome. The address for the Brockton V.A. Hospital is 940 Belmont St. Brockton. That is route 123 just off route 24.

April 10th

APRIL MEETING

Speaker: **Larry Cook**

Subject: How to create a fishing trip on a budget

This talk will be about a trip to Rangeley, ME. It will cover how we picked the location, Places to fish and pictures of some of the fish we caught. It will also cover the cost of the trip.

Upcoming Events

April 12th

Stocking day at Meadow Brook at approximately 3:30 – 4:30 PM

April 14th

Kids Fishing Derby 9:00 – 11:00 AM

May 8th

Tick Talk by Blake Dinius a State Entomologist

Synopsis:

With a reported Lyme disease incidence rate 14x the national average and climbing, Plymouth County is at the heart of the tick-borne disease epidemic. As anglers, we are at increased risk for encountering tick populations due to our time spent outside. Therefore, it is critical that we employ the correct methods to protect our bodies. In his talk, Blake will relay the facts on ticks, the diseases that they carry, and proven methods of protection. These methods will effectively reduce the risk of contracting ticks and tick-borne diseases to minimal levels. After all, we live in one of the most beautiful parts of the country. Why shouldn't we be able to safely enjoy the outdoors?

Bio:

Blake Dinius works as the entomologist educator for the Plymouth county extension program. He comes into this position with nearly 7 years of experience working with insects. Blake's current focus is on educating people on how to fight against ticks and tick-borne diseases. As a fisher, Blake understands the impact that ticks can have on our capacity to enjoy the outdoors. His goal is to get people outside safely enjoying the activities that they love.

Note: There will be pizza for all at the April meeting

Fly Box

by Tom Magee

Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear

- Hook:** Mustad 3906B size 6 to 16 or equal.
Thread: Black 6/0.
Weight: 8 to 12 turns of none lead wire on hook shank (optional).
Tail: Tuft of hare's ear hair form between the ears.
Rib: Medium gold tinsel.
Abdomen: Tan hair from the cheek of the hairs mask dubbed on to hook.
Wingcase: Brown mottled turkey from wing feather.
Thorax: Darker fur from the hares mask with guard hairs left in.



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acquire a Bamboo Fly Rod
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A TROUT STREAM FOR CHRISTMAS*Part 3***One Dam Down**

Mill Pond Dam, what remained of it, was removed with help from Mass. Div. of Ecological Restoration, Hanover YMCA, NOAA, American Rivers and others. This was a project that North and South Rivers had first attempted 10 years earlier, only to be stymied by the Town of Norwell's refusal to issue a permit. This time, the permits were issued for the purpose of creating a new stream channel through a breach in the dam that had opened during a flood.

With Mill Pond gone, NSRWA now focused on the first dam on Third Herring, Tack Factory Dam, also known as the Tiffany Pond Dam. The owners of the dam, Cardinal Cushing Center, wanted the dam removed, but being a nonprofit school serving children with special needs, they lacked the funds to pay for the dam's removal. Abutters of the pond, meanwhile, argued that the dam should stay, but none of them wanted to pay for the repairs and upkeep that the dam needed.

As resistance to removing Tack Factory Dam was cresting, Trout Unlimited threw its support behind the North and South Rivers Watershed Association and its effort to remove Tack Factory Dam. TU members attended public hearings in support of removal, and also advocated for the dam's removal at town conservation commission hearings. Significant early funding for design came from TU's partnership with NOAA. Other funds came from Greater Boston Trout Unlimited, and more came from the Sea Run Brook Trout Coalition. Facing overwhelming support for the dam's removal, the pro dam resistance eventually dissipated.

The summer after I'd first met him, Nik got a temporary job working at NOAA's office on the North Shore of Massachusetts, and not surprisingly, it would be a \$100,000 grant from NOAA that would fill out the funding needed to complete the removal of Tack Factory Dam. By the time work began on Tack Factory, \$450,000 had been raised for dam removal.

In June of that year, Nik took time off from work to paddle the Wampanoag Canoe Passage and once again raise money for NSRWA. The journey began at The Spit, a massive sand bar at the mouth of the North River. A large crowd of mostly young people joined Nik for the first leg of the Passage. This first day would be a short paddle up river to Third Herring Brook. The paddlers would enter Third Herring Brook and disembark at Nik's house, where his family had prepared a celebration with cold beer and grilled burgers. A thunderstorm broke out over the marsh just as canoes and kayaks entered Third Herring. On the hill above the stream, Nik's dad grilled burgers amidst claps of thunder, while wet paddlers drank beer and mingled in the house.

Environmentalist and river advocate, Tim Watts would join Nik to do the most arduous part of the Passage, that section that crosses the height of land between the North River watershed, and the Taunton River. Here the headwater streams are broken by numerous dams and cranberry bogs, and there are carries and drags over roads, dams, and between the cluster of ponds that give birth to both of the rivers.

A few days later I'd join Nik and his sister to paddle through a section of the Satucket River, the Matfield River, and then into the Taunton. It was a cold, rain swept day, and Nik and I spent much of the Satucket part of the paddle in the water as we lined the canoe through the open flume of the Cotton Gin Dam and then hauled it over the numerous downed trees in that river. We pulled the canoe out as night descended, where Nik had parked a car on the shoulder of a road that crosses the Taunton. Nik cranked the heat of the SUV to high as he drove me back to where my car was parked at a friend's house in East Bridgewater. From our pull out point, Nik would have an easy day of paddling down the Taunton to tidewater and the end of the Passage.

A Trout Stream for Christmas

It's a few days before Christmas and more than 7 years after my meeting with Nik at the trendy coffee shop in Norwell – and it's also one year after Third Herring Brook was finally relieved of Tack Factory Dam, ending 300 years of obstruction of its flow. I'm carrying a solar panel while following Geof Day in the growing darkness at the end of the short December day. Geof is going to swap out a smaller panel for the larger one that I'm carrying. The panel will charge the deep cycle batteries that power a PIT tag receiver operating where Tack Factory Dam once held back the water of Third Herring Brook. Geof heads the Sea Run Brook Trout Coalition and he is helping Sara Grady, a marine biologist who works with NSRWA, with a brook trout tagging project.

At the end of the summer, Southeast District fisheries biologist, Steve Hurley, placed PIT tags in 30 trout that were captured

in Nik's tributary. Actually, one of the brook trout that Hurley tagged that day was captured while finning in Third Herring Brook in front of where the tributary enters, and where a year before there was a shallow, summer heated Tack Factory Pond. During the fall, Geof had helped Sara build 3 PIT (passive integrated transponder) receivers along Third Herring Brook. The plan is to track the movements of the tagged brook trout. They hope to discover whether or not these, long isolated, brook trout will begin to use the new habitat now opened for them. Before the dams were built, it is very likely that the ancestors of the tagged trout moved down to the food rich North River during part of the year. Recently, Marine Fisheries found the brook trout of a small tributary of the South River using the tidal section of that river during the cooler months of the year. There's good reason to believe that Third Herring's brook trout will adopt the same behavior.

As Geof attaches the solar panel to its brackets, I watch the night's shadows descend on the stream flowing past us and think about the events that brought us to this place. We have a long winter ahead of us, but as the stream fades into the winter night, my thoughts turn to mayflies and rising trout, and Nik Tyak, who the last that I heard is somewhere in Europe.

It turned out that I knew of the stream that Nik wanted me to see. MassWildlife's Southeast District regional fisheries biologist, Steve Hurley, had found numerous brook trout when he had sampled the lower part of Nik's unnamed creek a few years prior. Steve hadn't been to the stream's upper reach however, so I was curious to see what Nik was excited about.

We parked on the shoulder of a narrow road where the now tiny headwater stream flowed from dense woods to pass through a culvert. It had been a hot, dry summer, but the little creek was cold to the touch. And we'd only walked a few yards when we saw fish streaking upstream ahead of us. I knew instantly that they were brook trout.

There aren't many freshwater fish that can match the speed of a brook trout bent on finding cover, and I doubt that there are any fish as wary as a wild brook trout in skinny water, and this was skinny water. And that was the other thing that gave them away. Brook trout are the only fish that can occupy such a desolate looking little rill in numbers, their only requirement being that the water - whatever there is of it - be cold.

While we never got close enough to clearly see the numerous blue streaks waking through the stream ahead of us, I told Nik that I was confident that they were brook trout. A year later I'd accompany a MassWildlife survey crew as they confirmed my identification. Just as it had been when Nik led me to it, the little spring seep was full of brook trout that ranged from young of the year to fully mature fish.

Not long after we had explored the unnamed brook trout stream, Nik paid a visit to Red Brook where we discussed the changes that were taking place at that salter brook trout stream. The removal of four dams obstructing Red Brook had been completed the year prior to Nik's visit, and I was able to show him pictures of the dams and their impoundments to give him an idea of the changes that were taking place at Red Brook as a result of the removal of the dams. Nik would use Red Brook in his report to illustrate what changes one might expect to see in Third Herring Brook if its dams were to be removed.

Meanwhile, my curiosity about the history of Third Herring Brook had been piqued. Reading Samuel Deane's "History of Scituate", published in 1829, I learned that colonists had described smelt as running the length of the stream to its headwater where a large spring bubbled up in Valley Swamp. During August of the summer following my meeting with Nik, with the smelt in mind, I put my canoe in at Jacobs Pond and paddled across the pond and as far as I could into Valley Swamp by following the old stream channel that was now a weed choked, slack water creek backed up by the millpond that it flows into.

My intention had been to see if there were any of Third Herring's indigenous brook trout clinging to existence in the wilds of Valley Swamp. But after pushing the canoe up the flooded channel as far as I could, I gave up on finding brook trout. At that point I put my thermometer in the water and was surprised to see that it read a cold 58 degrees on a sultry 85-degree August day. After paddling back to Jacobs Pond, I dropped the thermometer in at the north end of the pond. The water was 80-degrees. These findings further confirmed what the temperature data in Nik's study illustrated - until the dams, and later the well fields had been placed along Third Herring Brook, it had been a coldwater stream. Brook trout had retreated to the stream's tributaries as dams had fragmented their habitat and heated the water beyond their tolerance during summer.

And unfortunately, the uppermost millpond on the system inundates the cold springs that give birth to Third Herring Brook.

Environmental News

Westport River Stream Team Update and Work Party Schedule
Work party are scheduled for:

April 7
May 5
June 2

All of these dates are Saturdays.

Call John Kokoszka to confirm.

We meet at the Brookside Conservation Area on Rt. 177 in Westport at 9 AM. Everyone is welcome. For the up to date information of Westport visit the Chapter website www.southeastmasstu.com.

Spring Classes

Free Introduction to Fly Casting and Fishing Classes SE MA TU will have 4 evenings of the basics of fly casting and Fishing. Learn the basics of Fly Casting, learn the habitat of fish what they eat when and how to fish for them, learn the proper gear to use and how to use it. All the required Fly Casting equipment will be provided along with handouts and instruction in Fly Casting and Fishing. If you have your own Fly Rod outfit and would like to bring it feel free to do so. This is a great time of year to get your casting into shape for some Spring Fishing. This TU Chapter will have some Spring Fishing trips and class members are welcome to join us on the trips.

Classes will be held on Wednesday evenings April 4, 11, 18, 25, 2018 at East Bridgewater Council on Aging 355 Plymouth St, East Bridgewater, MA 02333.

To sign up or for information call Tom Magee at 1- 781-767-1543

SPEAKERS WANTED

Each month the chapter invites a speaker to do a presentation at the monthly meeting. We are always looking for new speakers and new ideas. If you would like to recommend a speaker that would be appropriate for a chapter meeting, or if you as a member have something to present at a monthly meeting, please contact

Rick Robinson at 508-992-7024 or extractor27@aol.com

PHOTOS WANTED

We are looking for photos or videos of any and all TU gatherings over the past year or so. We would like to create a presentation of "A Year in Review" of all of our events. If you have any photos that you would be willing to share please email them to me at: larry.cook205@gmail.com
The Board of Directors have discussed this as a good idea for a May meeting in the future.

MASS TU TEAM

Send all mail to Trout Unlimited SE MA Chapter
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Thanks to the following businesses for distributing the Backcast to the general public:

North Country Angler, North Conway, NH	603-356-6000
Red Top Sporting Goods in Buzzards Bay	508-759-3371
Bear's Den Fly Fishing Company in Taunton	508-977-0700
Fisherman's Outfitter on Union St in Plymouth	508-747-7440

South East Massachusetts
PO Box 121
Bridgewater, MA 02324

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Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month September to May; 6 PM Fly Tying 7:30 PM Meeting Admission is free and visitors are always welcome. We meet at the Mitchell Memorial Club is near the intersection of routes 28 and 105 in Middleboro. It is also near exit 4 on route 495. From Route 495, head toward Middleboro. Take a left at the lights. If you are coming from Middleboro center, take a right at the lights. The Mitchell Club is a white building that is 1/8 of a mile on the right (29 Elm Street) from that intersection. If you cross the RR tracks, you have passed it.