



Riffles

The Monthly Newsletter of the
East Jersey Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Volume 34

May 2004

Issue 5

President's Beat

Mark Twain once said: "Buy land, no one is making any more of it." Sometimes the simplest truths need to be pointed out. Presently our State Congress and Senate are attempting to pass legislation (bill S-1/A-2635) to protect the New Jersey Highlands and their watersheds from development. This is an area that supplies water to 50% of the State's population. Popular parlance calls the need for this kind of action a "no brainer".

However there is opposition to this vitally important legislation. It seems that homebuilders and the New Jersey Association of Realtors feel that they will lose their livelihoods. Somehow I fail to grasp their logic. Aren't there still tracts of land and buildings in need of refurbishing that exist in areas that are already established? Perhaps these groups need to redefine themselves rather than predicate their incomes on constantly erecting new homes in ever diminishing spaces.

It doesn't take a degree in hydrology to know that the more impervious surfaces with buildings and pavement you create, the more run-off, the more erosion and the less chance for water to work its way down into aquifers. Consequently the less potable water available.

Do the municipalities in these ecologically sensitive regions need to have more homes and families? Are they also willing to foot the bills for new schools, larger police and fire departments and all of the other services and infrastructures that come with an enlarged population? Many communities in our area are already regretting the impact of housing developments that have included as many as four hundred units (one unit x two children per dwelling, x approximately eight thousand dollars a year to

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Meeting Notice

When: May 12 at 7:30 PM
Where: American Legion Hall
33 West Passaic Street
Rochelle Park, New Jersey

May 12
Pete Jacques
Prime Time in the
Catskills

Mark Your Calendars!

June 9
Don Bastian &
Ray Bergman
The Dr. Spook of
Fly Fishing

July 14
Swap - Trade - Sell - Tie
See Page 2 for Details

August 11
Rich Kustich
Steelhead and Salmon
in New York State

September 8
Joe Petrella
Lost Art of
Wet Fly Fishing

All programs include a slide presentation

Thank You!

The following is a list of the merchants, manufacturers, individuals and companies who contributed to the success of our Annual Dinner. Please give them your patronage and be sure to mention that you are a member of East Jersey Trout Unlimited. Thanks,

*The Dinner Committee
and the Board of Directors*

Local merchants:

Britts Tackle
Orvis
Ramsey Outdoor
Scuttlebutts Pub
Streams of Dreams

Corporate Donors:

Angler Sport Group
Battenkill Lodge
Bauer Fly Reels
Cathy and Barry Beck
Cortland Line Co.
Creekside Custom Woodworks
Dr. Slick Co.
Fishy Fullum
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President's Beat (Continued from page 1)
educate each child = \$16,000 capital outlay for a ratable which will net the township \$8,000 in taxes).

These builders and realtors are the same groups that tell us we should want to live in spacious, airy homes with ceilings two stories high and have showers with multiple (five to seven) heads. Have any of these fine people realized the cost to heat such homes? Even students in the third grade will tell you that fossil fuels such as oil and natural gas are non-renewable resources. How much more water do these multihead showers consume per minute? Are we living in the North Temperate Zone or has New Jersey suddenly become part of a water-rich rain forest?

As an undergraduate, one of my majors was philosophy. I remember an idea called the Principle of the Greater Good. It states that there are times and situations in which individuals forego their needs and desires in order to promote the good of the many (e.g. a citizen leaving the comforts of home to go and perform some kind of community service or to defend the Country). This principle is still valid, even though it is contrary to the "Me First" school of thought (or is it better named "thoughtlessness"?).

I would urge all of our members to contact their legislators and urge them to support this bill. Be sure to contact them after it passes. Our representatives need to be made aware of our agreement with them. The associations of builders and realtors are very vocal; we need to follow that example.

Keep in mind the adage: "We don't inherit the earth from our parents, but rather, but keep it in trust for our children."

George Petersen

Fly of the Month

May – A glorious time to be alive and knee deep in a Trout stream. The first major hatches should be in full swing: Hendricksons, Blue Quills, Quill Gordons, Sulphurs.

These are the flies that made the Catskills famous, and defined the "Catskill Style" of dry fly. So as you prepare for the next day on the stream and tie up a few of your favorites, how about whipping up an extra dozen for the chapter. Tie up one of these, or any other pattern, and turn them in at the next meeting. You will receive 10 points and an entry into the monthly drawing for every dozen flies you turn in. More importantly, you will be helping your chapter raise funds for our various projects.

The chapter's fly inventory got wiped clean during the Suffern show and Basil could have sold a lot more if we had them. Now is the time to start rebuilding our inventory for next year. If you can't make the meeting, mail your flies to the chapter P.O. Box or turn them in to any director.

Bruce Seiden

Swap - Trade - Sell - Tie

The July general membership meeting will feature three special events.

Any member who brings fishing related or fly tying items will have the opportunity to swap, trade or sell the items at tables that will be available.

We will have members tying flies and answering your questions about tying. So, if you want to know how to tie a particular fly, come to the meeting and an experienced tyer will show you how it's done.

There will also be a special, one-night raffle of an Aurora Headlamp and a selection of flies tied by Fishy Fullum in a box signed by Fishy. The proceeds will be used to aid the chapter's general fund.

John Roetman

Quote of the Month

"Fishermen are people who spend so much time neglecting more important things that they eventually redefine importance, and who probably have more fun than they have a right to."

John Gierach

At the Grave of the Unknown Fisherman

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For Membership Information call Ed

Sikorski at: 201-337-6396 or email to: dored100@hotmail.com

For Information on trips and other Chapter Activities call our hotline: (201) 445-3902 (24 hrs.)

For East Jersey and National Trout Unlimited information, visit our website at <http://www.tu.org>. Go to chapter number 091 and you will get the latest information about our chapter. Riffles is your publication so we invite and encourage every member to contribute articles, tips, and stories. The articles may relate to trout, trout fishing, fishing in general or, conservation but, all articles are published at the discretion of the editors and should meet EJTU standards regarding protecting our environment and the merits of 'catch and release' techniques. Pseudonyms may be used but the editors must be informed of the name of the member who writes the article. Email to either:

tu@cataloguepublishers.com or raycapp@optonline.net. Each piece of material that is published earns you 10 points towards your next goal in the points program.

Monthly General Member Meeting: The East Jersey Chapter of Trout Unlimited meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30PM.

Location: The American Legion Hall, 33 West Passaic Street, Rochelle Park, NJ. 07662.

Monthly Board Meeting: The East Jersey Chapter of Trout Unlimited Board Members meet on the last Thursday of each month at 7:30PM.

Location: The Bergen County Community Center, 327 East Ridgewood Ave., Paramus, NJ 07652.

Fish Ways -The ABC's of Fly Fishing Waders

Most spin and bait fishers manage to fish from the stream bank but, as a fly angler you will need to follow the advice of the old spiritual and go "wadin' in the water." To accomplish this in comfort you will need a pair of waders (cleverly named by the industry).

All are waterproof, but configurations vary depending on the needs and wants of individual anglers. Waders come in various lengths: hip, waist and chest. Choose the one that is appropriate for where you will be fishing, but always opt for a length that is longer than you think will be necessary. (Chest waders may be rolled down but waist-highs cannot be rolled up.)

Manufacturers use a variety of materials in wader construction: rubber, canvas, neoprene and breathable fabrics. By their very nature, the first three are heavy and the last is considerably lighter. Purchase the best you can afford. (Be aware that rubber has a life of two to three years.) Neoprene waders are warm, very warm. They are suitable for

cold water. Most anglers prefer the breathable fabrics which are surprisingly resilient and tear resistant.

You may purchase waders with the boot attached or with neoprene stocking feet. Bootfoot waders are easier to don and remove, but stocking foot models, since they use separate boots, offer more ankle support and are more suitable for rivers and streams, especially when "hiking in." Whatever you choose, opt for boots with felt or some other way to grip the stream bottom. Algae growth and slow flows make some streams and areas worse than others. If you hike to your fishing spots, a good alternative is soles made from Aquastealth®. This synthetic is a good alternative to felt and very durable. I have used this product successfully for ten years.

Safety notes: Every manufacturer suggests that you wear a wader belt. This will help trap a bubble of air inside should you slip and fall while in the water. Waders cannot drown you (another urban myth, like alli-

gators in the sewers). The water inside your waders does not weigh any more than the water outside, but you will get cold. Should you take a fall, get your feet downstream and "go with the flow" until you can regain your footing.

A helpful accessory is a wading staff. This will transform you from an unsteady biped to a surefooted tripod. For years, I would pick up a stick somewhere by the streamside and then discard it when I'd finished for the day, hoping that the staff would serve the needs of other anglers. Today, I own a modern, hi-tech Folstaff® which collapses when not in use and secures to my wading belt by means of a lanyard. Either solution works.

One final note: always wear a layer of clothing between your legs and the wader material; shorts are not appropriate, even in the summer. In the cold water conditions of a trout stream, the breathable fabric will not be able to perform its magic.

George Petersen

Thaw

And still snow stays, some patches of it along the bankslopes of the Beaverkill, wet shreds of it going at a slow melt in the cold shade of juniper and spruce. This left-over, held-over snow: it sticks around like yesterday's news, as Robert Frost did tell, a late edition reminding us of another season spent:

*There's a patch of old snow in a corner,
That I should have guessed
Was a blown-away paper the rain
Had brought to rest.
It is speckled with grime as if
Small print overspread it,
The news of a day I've forgotten
If I ever read it.*

I poke my finger in a mound, scrape away the soot. This might be the last snow there is, what with the permafrost defrosting and a hole growing in the sky above the poles--what with the uncertainty of things--all things. Madwoman, fool--I dig past the grit and eat a piece: a molecule or two of it inside of me, and now it can't completely slip away. How hard it is to let a season go! Once, as a child, I had it in my mind to make the season's final sundae from the last of the snow--but not in the kitchen, not on the stoop. I decided that my bedroom upstairs would be best for such a venture. I remember nearly falling out the window onto the driveway while reaching for the last bit of snow in the eaves. I remember spilling an entire bottle of Bosco chocolate syrup on the rug. All is in readiness beneath the rags of snow, or so I hope. As Rachel Carson predicted the com-

ing of a Silent Spring, I wonder what degree of unnatural change will tip nature into oblivion, as it is being tipped, bit by bit. Will this be the year the field mice do not awaken? The spring the shrew sleeps on? Will this be the summer that cicadas stir after 17 years of sleep, start their ascent from under forests, fields and yards, dig their way up, and where they would break the surface, they find the world has been paved over in cement? no, not this year, I hope. Let there be places in the earth where the hay-scented fiddleheads wait, wound tight. And where the river baweed and Jack-in-the-pulpit, or, perhaps: a Jill.

Let there be skunk cabbage flowers waiting for the thaw in their strange dark-marbled cups. Let each acorn still keep the assemblage needed for whole oaks to hatch, and, as Frost said:

*The trees that have it in their pent-up buds
to darken nature and be summer woods*

It was one early spring--the brink of a spring--that I had been walking along the Beaverkill. The bankslopes were misty with witch hazel. Old snow stayed on the unlit side of the stream, and icicles clung to the little caverns made by the riverside shift and slide of shale. It was in such an overhang a little ways up river that I spied a fawn--asleep, she seemed. I kept my distance, and she was still. I stepped closer, and she slept with her legs folded, tucked under. Her neck was turned, so her head--her muzzle--rested upon her shoulder. I gave a little hoot. I threw a pebble in her direction. I threw a stone. Perhaps she is sleeping soundly. Perhaps she thinks she is safe in this sheltered spot of river-

bank, far from any path, where she doesn't have to listen for someone like me coming along. And too, I think deer browse at the end of the day, and here it is morning-only morning, so perhaps she just not yet up.

The final pebble I pitch hits her in the flank, and bounces off with a hollow sound. No, this deer is not sleeping out the day, waiting for the dusk. I see now that her eyes, behind the slits of lids, are dull and sunken--barely there. Her ears, laid back upon her head, are stiff.

I had never seen a deer like this--one dead in such a pose. Dead, yes, on the roadway--splay-legged and torn--or hung from a limb in a hunter's camp, blade-slit down the belly and emptied out. But not one like this, like sleep. No wonder I threw stones hoping to wake her. No wonder I did not know.

I run my hand along her back. The fur is soft. I feel each vertebrae and rib. The hide is slack. And she is faintly warm to touch on this cold morning!--warmed within by what Frost called the slow, smokeless burning of decay.

But I have touched enough, no--too much: a beetle scuttles out from under her, and then another. A stream of them. She would be full of the things that crawl and eat--the beetle and the worm--what Dylan Thomas described as the maggot of despair, as she has spent the winter on this spot and now begins to thaw--to rot from the inside out.

She did not die last spring or summer. If she had, she would have been taken apart by now, by bigger scavengers of sorts. No, she died when winter came upon her, creeping in. And when was she born? By her size, it must have been

(Continued on page 4)

Ramapo Ramblin'

Open the cabin doors and let the sun shine in - trout season is here! The Ramapo is looking good at this writing and the trout being stocked are the best ever! Many are in the 15 inch breeder class and some reach 20 inches!

Once again EJTU volunteers are helping the state by bucket stocking behind Britts tackle shop. This is an especially nice section because wading is easy and the water along the west bank is conducive to holding trout.

We are also once again float stocking the Glen Gray area from about a quarter mile upstream from the bridge to about a mile below. And, there is also a bucket brigade that stocks trout upstream from Halifax Road.

The first day of stocking, we had 25 volunteers, however the average turnout is about 16. Thanks to all the volunteers. The fish are there, so what will attract them? The Ramapo is a caddis fly river so be sure to be armed with them and with Griffiths gnats when it appears the trout are rising to tiny flies. Soon white Sulphur flies will appear in the evenings. Woolly buggers, hare's ears and princes have always been favorites - the key is to get these nymphs deep enough so they tick the bottom on occasion.

Invariably, I am asked, "How do I get there"? Here are some directions:

Take route 287 to exit 58 in Oakland from either direction. If you are traveling north from the Pompton Lakes area, take the 287 exit and turn right to go to Britts tackle shop or turn left from the exit 58 light, go to the end and turn left and you are on 202 - Ramapo Valley Road north. If you are coming from the Fair Lawn area, 208 becomes 287; take exit 58, turn left at the light, then right to fish the Britts section. Turn right (north) at the exit 58 light for other sections.

Traveling north on Ramapo Valley Road, you will see white, left turn arrows painted on the road at Navajo Way. Follow Navajo straight ahead and on the right is Lenape Lane where you can park and fish at the bridge or, continue ahead to the end of Lenape and then left on Roosevelt to the end and park at the soccer field; a path to the river is on the left. This section has some fast runs over a rocky bottom and it's a great piece of water to fish! Let's go back to Navajo Way. If you did not turn off at Lenape, you could have continued on Navajo,

which is now called Lakeside, and continued past the houses on the right, where you could stop. Or if you prefer you can continue to the Cul-De-Sac at the end, park there and find excellent fly fishing water.

Let's go back to 202 and travel north. The next place is Patriots Way where there is some nice water but parking is a problem. Continuing north we come to Glen Gray Road where there is parking on the right going in, courtesy of EJTU volunteers who cleared the area, or on the left over the bridge. **DO NOT PARK** on the road going up to the right unless you enjoy paying ticket fines! Continuing north on 202 you will see Bear Swamp bridge. There is virtually no parking and I advise you to keep going. You will come to the county reservation park with plenty of parking (no left turn, go past and turn around to enter). This is heavily stocked and has some nice pools and runs; I have always enjoyed upstream where the stream has three nice pools. You can also continue north to Halifax Road by Ramapo College and still further north to just past Route 17 to park behind the first office building.

Got to go now before this becomes a book!

Bend back the barbs and keep the line tight. When you release your trout he will be waiting to test you again next time! See you all downstream where we all live! God Bless America

Herm Drenth

Thaw (Continued from page 3)

sometime in summer, late in the season. And when, somehow--so terrible a somehow--her mother died in one of the ways deer will--she was left alone to wait the rest of summer out. She stayed along the stream she knew, browsed these banks. Each evening she would amble to the water's edge, stand in the shal-

lows, put her long mouth into the stream as she had done beside the mother doe. Summer brought new thorns to the catbriers. Fall brought hips on the rose. And when everything green was gone, she kept on as best she could. The first frost came, and she was thinner. Ice etched the shale, and she was losing strength. And on that weary evening when the first snow fell she did lie down beneath this stony overhang; when daylight came she saw that the world had somehow gone white and the stream now rang down on frozen stones. And she did not rise that day, but rested her muzzle on her shoulder, and slept on.

I backed away. I let her be. I remembered that my hands were cold and my fingers numb. There were patches of snow on the slope. Old snow in the fork of a hemlock, in the shade of a boulder. Old snow at the dark hole of a den. There were tracks there, too--new tracks in the snow at that opening, and pieces of shagbark hickory, broken nut and shell. There was witch-hazel blooming on the slopes. There were red buds ready on the maples, and leaves pent up. There were leaves enough to clothe a grove of hickories inside each nut.

Let me in the devil's groves

Cut my fingers on a rose, Let the maggot of despair

Drain the spring where promise goes.

There were beetles moving underfoot, in the litter, in the leaves--waiting for whomever would be the next to fall. There were pages of old snow flung along the banks, inked with faded elegies. The marbled cups were raised to our mouths and emptied. The river stones were etched with names. There were cold rooms of repose where blades were poised to make the final slit, and furnaces stoking for the final, smokeless burn. There were cicadas in the earth.

And far above the river, past the tops of trees, there was a buzzard tilting in the blue high overhead.

So early, so soon, it had picked up the scent.

*John Grisoni sent Riffles this article written by:
Pamela Ryder*



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