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CLEARWATER GAZETTE

A Publication of Neshannock Trout Unlimited Chapter 216



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Are announced in the newsletter and on the website.

Board Meeting:

Board Meetings are held at VFW Post 6166 in Hermitage. See the web site for dates.

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December 2004

Editors Notes

If you remember the fall 2003 newsletter where I described a rainy summer that kept everyone from the creeks then skip down a paragraph. What have we done to make Mother Nature throw a hissy fit for the second year in a row? Once again the exceptionally cool and wet spring and summer put a damper on the trout season. I have tried to look for the silver lining in this cloud full of moisture. Just when these conditions would prove beneficial to the steelhead run the cloud has rung itself out. As of mid October the Creeks were low and choked with leaves following two, "fifty year", rain events a week apart in September.

You know things aren't quite normal when the Boson Red Sox win 8 straight games to beat the Yankees and take the World Series. They cap that feat on a night when there is a total lunar eclipse. Scary, what next?

cont. from pg. 2

***Working to conserve, protect, and restore
North America's coldwater fisheries, and their watersheds.***

Editors Notes cont.

cont. from pg. 1

We did hold a work day in late summer to improve conditions at the Glory hole (just before the big rains). The spring rains took what little "glory" was left and filled it in. We stopped the rock sliding from the east bank and widened that area. That was promptly followed by a storm. Good news...no further rock slides. We still don't have much of a hole there but with luck the spring may dig out some of the loose rock. Thanks to all those who helped and for those that didn't, remember our web site or send an e-mail and we will contact you about such events.

Deer season is in full swing and by the time you get this the gun season will be in effect. Let's be smart and safe out there. Make sure of your target and good luck.

If you have any stories or articles from your summer adventures please submit via email to tjochman@sbcglobal.net or steelhd789@aol.com and we will let our readers in on your adventures. Lost your copy of the last newsletter, interested in helping at the next workday, want to find out about fishing in a certain area or creek, then check out our website www.neshannock-tu.org. There is a wealth of information and links to the state, national TU, and other interesting sites.

Coming Events-2005

N. Loprire

It's never too early to plan, so here are some dates to mark on next year's calendar. First we will be holding our third annual Cabin Fever Symposium on January 29, 2005 at the Hermitage VFW. No set agenda is available but I'm sure the fly shops will be there to help with the necessary items to get you ready for late winter and spring fishing. We will have interesting demonstrations and programs. It's **YOUR** chapter so let us know what type of programs or speakers you might like and we will try to accommodate you. Drop us a line. The date is a Saturday and the program will run from 11-3pm with a free lunch provided. There will also be some interesting raffles so plan to shake off the cold and attend.

The next big event of course, will be our 27th annual (I'm getting old) spring banquet. The banquet will also be held at the Hermitage VFW on Saturday March 19, 2005. More details to follow, but one thing is for sure, the food will be great, the beverages cold and there will be many prizes. If anyone has a suggestion for a guest tier please let me know. There are many good ones out there and one our readers may know someone special to suggest. We hope to have some varied and different prizes to offer this year so make sure to mark that calendar you get from the dry cleaner, or the party store and plan to attend. Our goal is to break 200 in attendance. We have come close the last two years and this year we are going to do it. Come out and the support cold water conservation.

Way to Go, Joe

Congratulations are in order for WCO Joe Morris. Joe was recognized by Pa Trout as the coldwater conservationist (professional) of the year for 2004. Presenting the plaque to Joe is chapter president Aaron Monroe. Joe was instrumental in planning and coordination of the "Kids fishing area" that was installed in 2003 on Wolf Creek in Grove City, Pennsylvania.



Mother Nature-Nasty Girl

N. Lopprire

Can you believe the rain events in September? The two huge deluges were described as “50 year events” spaced a week apart. I can’t imagine what the odds were that this would occur but it happened to our area and it wasn’t without significant changes in the local stream conditions.

Close to home, Coolspring Creek was redefined in some areas. The glory hole is still just a shallow run with not much potential for glory, but the upper section below the cable was changed somewhat for the better. The bridge near the Beagle Club was so damaged that it had to be removed. One good thing is that Lake Latonka above Route 62 helped to prevent a scouring of the bottom. Overall, I would say that Mother Nature did more harm than good on our creek.

I know that rivers and creeks are dynamic by nature but the changes that occurred from these

rains were the most severe I have witnessed. Many streams from Erie County to State College were literally scoured. It will be interesting to see how the insect hatches are affected next spring. My guess is that they will not be good on a majority of our better trout streams. Elk Creek (Erie Co.) was scrubbed down to the slate bottom, in most areas, from Sterretania to the mouth in Girard Pa. The high water even took out the road at Rt 5 where the “tubes” couldn’t handle the flow. Essentially the creek is so changed that good holding lies will have to be learned over again. One place that was formerly a six-foot deep plunge pool has become an island. There appears to be less good lies and pair that with more fishermen and well, a bad situation just got worse.

A normal winter (milder would be nice) with a normal spring with normal rain and summer with sun and less rain would be abnormal if you only compared that with the last 3 years. Two compartments of my dry fly box are stuffed with caddis imitations. That alone is a sign that fish looking up didn’t happen this past season.



Munnell Run Trout Nursery

(Sponsor: Neshannock Chapter TU)



Approximately 1,785 brown & golden rainbow trout were raised this past 2003-2204 trout-raising year. The trout were released in the following Fish Commission approved trout streams located in Mercer & Lawrence counties:

Coolspring Creek, Deer Creek, Pine Run, Yellow Creek, Neshannock Creek, & the Wolf

Creek ages 12 & under project. In addition to the nursery raised trout, approximately 275 rainbow, brook, & brown trout donated by the 3CU of Erie were stocked in the delayed-harvest section of the Neshannock Creek. To make it all possible, nursery operations personnel contributed over 1,100 hours to the Fish Commission’s ‘Cooperative Trout Nursery **ALL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**’.

Nursery operations personnel are currently raising approximately 1,700 rainbow trout for the trout-raising year 2004-2005. First stocking, the annual Cabin Fever Stocking at Volant, is scheduled for the first nice day in February. Anyone interested in joining the team or helping with the stocking program, please contact Pete Anthony at 724.662.2271, or email GPANTHONY@PATHWAY.NET , or Ken Tarczy at 724.662.5765.

Leaf Me Alone

N. Loprire

Here it comes, the outdoorsman's favorite time of the year. Yes, we are talking about fall in Pennsylvania. It just doesn't get any better than crisp, bright mornings followed by warm gentle breezes in the afternoon. The available activities are endless. There is hunting, fishing, biking, hiking, canoeing, golfing, camping, and more. This is my personal, favorite time of the year. It truly would be perfect except for one nasty, lousy, persistent, won't go away chore that looms over us all and that would be...taking care of the leaves. Yes, the stately maples, and oaks decide to let out one gigantic gasp of spectacular color and then they shut down and their leaves drop like mosquitoes to a fogger. They pollute every nook and notch in that carefully landscaped yard until it looks like he...well you know!

The leaves play games with us outdoor types. The leaves pretend to have a mind of their own and the ability to read our thoughts. You plan to delay a special trip till next weekend so you can get the leaves done. Some how the leaves know and just won't fall. Those dry, shriveled, carbon dioxide eating monsters will hang on those branches like a fly on your windshield until **THEY** decide it's time to drop. Three days prior to your big trip they will fall like propaganda leaflets in Iraq. To make it worse, the forecast will be rain for the next three days.

It's time to attack. You pull out your arsenal of anti-leaf equipment and begin to wage war on the crispy brown menace. Many will fall to the rake and mower, but they keep coming. They dance on the wind and pack under the hemlocks and the azaleas. They bury like a parasite into the ground cover and even the tornado of a gas powered vacuum can't get them to release their powerful grip. Those captured and waiting their fate on the painter's drop cloth try to escape with the most gentle of breezes. Many dart from the direct path of the swirling blade of the mulching mower and yet others continue their



defiance from the dark recesses of the shrubs and bushes. Can anything save us from this leafy scourge?

In time the exertion causes us to succumb to "Miller Time" and a temporary truce is called but it's not over. Noooo you think, as that cold one quenches your thirst, it's far from over and you plot your final, massive assault. There will be no mercy. All the invaders will be sent to leaf heaven in the dark, compressed confines of the black, 39 gallon Hefty sacks. And when the job is done the victims of this war will be stacked like cord wood at the end of the drive way to await their final fate.

The plan is laid. The single minded purpose of this mission is about to unfold when a rumble is heard, and then, a breeze that steadily builds and the leaves begin to stir and with unexpected fanfare a major cold front approaches. The breeze is now a wind and it blows harder, then the gusts begin to build until yes, it is a big blow and we all know what that means. Yes, yes, can it be? The leaves are turning from the fight and rushing away like the cowards that they are. They are retreating to the neighbor's yard to escape the wrath that was to be loosened upon them. You think "let the Jones' wage this war and as for me...**I will go fishing!!!**"

When in the area...



When in the area, please stop by and support the local fly shops. They have what you need before heading to the Erie tributaries.

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