



# Troutlines

### Special Points of Interest

- Remote Pond Fishing
- Wild Brook Trout Study
- 25th Conservation Banquet
- North Country Angler to Speak in February

### Chapter Meetings and Events Calendar

**February Chapter Meeting**  
Thursday, February 21

**25th Annual Conservation Banquet**  
Saturday, March 9

**Youth Fishing Day**  
Saturday, April 20

**Trout Pond Opening Day**  
Saturday, April 27

*See Calendar on page 6 for more information.*

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## 25th Annual Conservation Banquet March 9

March 9th marks the 25th Anniversary of our chapter's annual conservation banquet. Registration and information packets will be in the mail on February 12th so watch your mailbox.

The Banquet Committee has been hard at work putting together another fine evening of good food, entertainment, raffles, games, and our famous silent and live auctions.

The 25th Anniversary banquet will be held at Concord's Grappone Center which has hosted our event the last four years. Plenty of parking, lots of old and new friends, and a fun evening are in store.

We have invited singer/writer/Maine Fishing Guide Randy Spencer back following last year's well-received banquet debut.

Chapter member and NH licensed auctioneer George Foster, III will once more encourage fun, competitive bidding for wildlife art, fishing gear, hand-crafted goods, flies by some of the region's best tiers, and the famous, well-travelled case of Coke.

The annual banquet is the chapter's primary fundraiser which is poised at the beginning of the new fishing season and is always a chance to enjoy fishing just before it gets going again. Plan to come.



*Last year's famous Trout Lamp at the Live Auction brought top dollar for the chapter. James Denoncourt worked the crowd.*

## Remote Pond Fishing

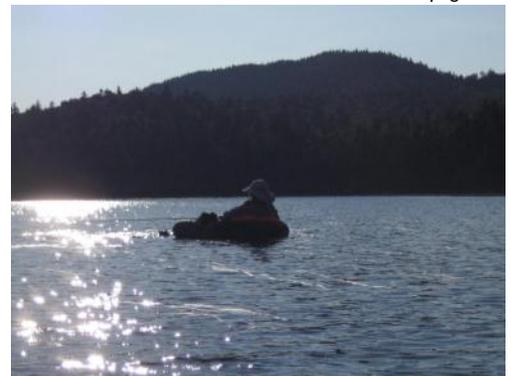
Brad Towle

Mid-July is not the best trout fishing time - but anytime fishing is better than not. This past July my wife and I ventured into the semi-north country to try our hand at tubing on some back wood ponds. We checked in at the Stark Inn Bed and Breakfast, unpacked, and then fished until dark under the covered bridge that connects North Road to Rt. 110. We saw a few rises, our dries and nymphs brought little interest. Guess we were a little rusty. Work, school, work, home projects and all the other things you have to do had kept our fly rods safely in their cases. But we were determined on our escape north to catch some remotely stocked or even better, native trout.

After a longer sleep than normal, we were served a great breakfast to start our remote pond adventure. We packed a lunch and pointed our SUV to the Trio Pond area. We headed up North Road to Nash Stream Road, veered east on Philips Brook Road to Trio pond. Our SUV got a work out that day!

We passed Little Bog Pond and then the trail to Whitcomb Pond, all the while creeping over washouts and rocks

*Remote Ponds, continued on page 4*



## Presidential Commentary - Dan Stickney

“What's this *Case of Coke* business?”, you ask. Let me explain, as I understand it.

The *Case of Coke* is a perennial item at the live auction portion of our Chapter's Conservation Banquet. It's been there for nearly as long as the banquet has, and it has raised quite a few dollars over the years. It's also been the source of a few laughs, a little guilt, and some pretty interesting stories.

I've been the lucky winner of it at the last two banquets (the guilt and laughs), and my uncle from Pennsylvania was a winner before me and provided the stories. We're the most recent in a long list of nefarious characters who have paid for the privilege of toting it around for a year. In times past, the "winner" often left it in a place of honor in Angus' former print shop on Main Street, where it could be seen and appreciated by all and sundry who wandered past. It's been in my cellar or garage for most of the past two years – safely wrapped in a trash bag to protect it, of course – awaiting a chance to do something interesting. I hauled it to Ball's Eddy on the Upper Delaware in Hancock, New York and took a picture of it, and it may have made a stop or two at other fishing holes along the way, but its stay with me has been largely uninteresting, I'm embarrassed to say.

Uncle Jeff took it all the way to Pennsylvania, gave it a nickname – Charlie – and carted it around to some of his favorite fishing holes; he then took the time to

write about those excursions and send the reports and photos to me to include in the newsletter. Some of you may remember those stories; I know I got a kick out of reading them.

That leads me to the meat of this note: I'd love it if someone else would pay dearly for the chance to haul twenty-four breakable, nearly antique coke bottles and a wooden crate – now graced with a fancy leather label, thanks to our resident bookbinder – along on some of their fishing adventures and write about them for us.

You needn't be a published author, Rhodes scholar, or even a college professor to do this; a sense of humor and slight command of the language will suffice for the stories, an old digital camera for a picture or two might add some spice, and a fat wallet will make it all happen at the banquet. Our newsletter editor is a whiz at proofreading, thank goodness, and we all enjoy living someone else's fishing story. Don't be shy – give it a shot and see how much fun it is... and again, pay up – it IS a fundraiser, after all.

See you at the meetings, and maybe I'll run you up just a little bit at the banquet.

All best~

Dan

## Editor's Soapbox - Gordon Riedesel

Chip Walter's new article in *Slate* “Why Are We the Last Apes Standing: How childhood let modern humans conquer the planet.” got me to thinking about who we are as anglers and conservationists. Walter refers to the fact that humans enjoy a retention or extension of youth - known as neoteny. Unlike other species, modern humans continue to develop substantially after we are born. Our extended youth promotes our flexible brains to absorb and learn about the world around us as we slowly mature. We are not as constrained as are other species that are pretty much hard wired at birth.

Many of us prefer to think of ourselves as kids in grown-up bodies. And when we think about the wonder and exploration of our youth we can ask, why not continue?

I see a connection between angling, conservation, and neoteny. Doesn't that first fish of the day remind you of your first fish ever? Do you sometimes look around you while knee deep in a beautiful trout stream and look at the sheer beauty around you? If this is an extension of my youth, I'm all for it.

You can see first hand the excitement and smiles of those early life

experiences at Youth Fishing Day, TU Kids' Trout Camp, or taking a child fishing. Long childhoods make us who we are according to Walter. It sure makes sense - and it's more fun being a kid even if we look a little older.



## Results of the 2012 Brook Trout Study Lower Warner River Watershed

After another busy summer of field work, New Hampshire Fish and Game fisheries biologist Ben Nugent, colleagues, and a corps of volunteers have produced a broader understanding of wild brook trout in central New Hampshire. At the January 17<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting, Ben presented the key findings from this past summer's work. In his presentation, "Summary of Fish Surveys in the Lower Warner River Watershed – 2012" Ben discussed New Hampshire's efforts to identify wild brook trout habitat and populations across the state, how this fits into the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, and what the goals of this multi-year program are for New Hampshire.



Ben Nugent

According to Ben, the Lower Warner River Watershed is one of 330 in the state. The sub-units of each watershed are mapped as catchments. The methodology of the New Hampshire Fish and Game effort is to determine the ratio of catchments with and without wild brook trout. The

Lower Warner River Watershed contains 50 catchments – which underscores the magnitude of Fish and Game's multi-year effort that began in 2007. Because early efforts focused on watersheds in the northern and western portions of the state, data on wild brook trout in our region was scarce. Thanks to Basil Wood chapter members, Ben and his Fish and Game colleagues earmarked the Lower Warner River Watershed for study in 2012.

The 59 square miles of the Lower Warner River Watershed contains 76 miles of streams. There are 17 active dams, numerous wetlands, with 14 percent of the watershed under conservation easements. Like much of New Hampshire, 80 percent is forested. One of Ben's important observations was that wild brook trout habitat varies throughout the watershed but this is not necessarily a sign of negative impact or impairment. For example, wetlands which have a high environmental value, have warm water. And warm water is not conducive to brook trout. The study found that stream sections below wetlands can support brook trout when there is good canopy and lower water temperatures from both shade and

groundwater infiltration. Steeper stream gradients also contributed to better brook trout habitat.

Although some of the Lower Warner River tributaries were on the warm side, several contained brook trout. But, there were no young-of-the-year brookies. However, cooler tributaries had higher densities of brook trout and young-of-the-year. The study incorporated water quality assessment based on aquatic macro-invertebrates, dissolved oxygen, and conductivity.

A total of 13 sites scored "Excellent" with 9 having wild brook trout. Another 13 sites scored "Good" 6 were home to wild brook trout. The streams rated "Poor" had none. In some streams, there were 32 to 60 brook trout captured in 100 meter stretches.

The information from this study and from all other watersheds can be used for education, headwater stream protection, stream crossing inventories, and communication. Chapter volunteers and others from the Warner Conservation Commission make studies like this possible logging over 400 free hours. Ben's official report will be out by the end of February.

## Bill Thompson of North Country Angler to Speak at the February Chapter Meeting

Bill Thompson and his wife Janet own the North Country Angler fly shop in North Conway. Although never to be a "true" native Bill has lived and fly fished in New Hampshire for well over thirty years. Bill has been, and still is, a licensed New Hampshire Fishing Guide. For over 22 years the Saco River has been his home river. He has traveled extensively in pursuit of trout and salmon. For many years Bill and Janet fished in the Yellowstone area of Wyoming and Montana. Bill has made several trips to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia for Atlantic Salmon. He writes a weekly column on fly fishing for the *Conway Daily Sun* and a monthly column for the *New Hampshire/Vermont Outdoor Gazette*. Bill has contributed articles to *Fly Tyer* and *Fly Tying* magazines and his flies appear in several books on fly tying.

Bill's presentation is titled "Fly Fishing in the White Mountains of New Hampshire" and concentrates on the "Eastern Slope". The Saco and Ellis Rivers are featured along with several other tributaries of the Saco. And of course, Bill will point out the major hatches and fly selections suited for the water he knows so well.

*Remote Ponds, continued from page 1*

on a road custom made only for a Jeep with big tires and suspension to match. My wife guided me through the trail's many narrow stretches, around sharp rocks, and dips that seemed deeper than the trail was wide. Around noon we stopped for lunch and checked the map to find out we had three more miles of this! At the breakneck speed of one or two miles an hour, we knew we would make it there in time for great sunset fishing, but there was no way we were going back in the dark, nor were we going to sleep in our SUV or on the ground when a great comfortable bed was awaiting us back at the Stark Inn! So at the first chance, we found a place I could make a ten point turn and back we went. It sure seemed a lot steeper on the way down!

Our Pathfinder found the way back to the path to Whitcomb Pond. We stopped and inflated our float tubes, put on our waders, packed up our fins, fly rods, accessories, and hiked in. It was a logging road to the pond, where the smells of the cedars, spruces and hemlocks was refreshing, since we were huffing and puffing like horses!

We found an opening in the shoreline trees, caught our breath as we rested on some boulders, and scouted the pond. We donned our fins, got our rods ready and paddled out. Behind us we left a trail of silt in our wake for the water was only a couple feet deep. It was about one o'clock in the afternoon, but trout were sipping midges. After over an hour of finning and drifting, a caddis hatch suddenly happened around us! The trout began actively feeding on the surface so we quickly switched to dry flies. We succeeded in many takes but no nettings! Frustrating to no end, but fun! The hatch quit as quickly as it came, so we followed the trout's lead, found some shade and took a nap.

Half an hour later we were back on the water, slowly drifting trying to find those elusive trout. The water was cool and clear, varying in depth from 2-10 feet, with some grass and lily pads poking above the pond. We tried everywhere, again we got some hits, but landed no fish.

After hiking back to the SUV, we were bushed! We had time before dark, so we decided to try Little Bog Pond which we went by early that day. A few miles back down the road we decided to use the canoe since our legs were sore from finning. This water was 2-5 feet deep and was like warm, black coffee. We caught many sunfish on our quest to find a cool inlet or some hidden underwater spring where we hoped those remote trout were hiding.

As soon as the sun dropped below the trees the water started boiling! We bee-lined it to the trout-filled inlet area that was only a foot or two deep! We lost count after twenty something—each! Some were hatchery trout, but some were natives with all fins intact and their lengths varied from 3 to 10 inches. Great fun!

We slept great that night and dreamed of that half hour at sunset where it was a trout-a-cast! All in all, it was a great first experience of getting off the beaten path to places less fished! We shall do it again this year. I would recommend the Stark Inn. The hostess is very accommodating. Plus, it was only \$50 per room each night last year, including a tremendous breakfast of whatever you want! Try making some new memories this year!



Brad Towle is one of the chapter's newest board members. When not floating remote ponds or navigating rugged trails trying to find them, Brad and his wife Susan can be found in Chichester.

## Piscataquog River Eastern Brook Trout Project

Paul Doscher

For the past three years, both the Basil W. Woods and Merrimack Valley TU Chapters have been supporting a scientific study of the Piscataquog River watershed. The focus has been identifying the presence of wild eastern brook trout, the tributaries that can support them, and finding opportunities to protect and improve their habitat.

This work has been led by Dr. Barry Wicklow of St. Anselm college, several student interns, local, and TU volunteers. TU culvert specialist Colin Lawson has simultaneously been leading a watershed-wide inventory and analysis of culverts and stream crossings under the auspices of the NH Geological Survey. This labor intensive effort is made possible by 20 volunteers, including 15 TU members. Nearly 500 culverts and crossings were documented in the field. The culvert and stream crossing study results will be made available to town road agents, engineers, and planners. It will identify ineffective or failed culverts which need replacement and how that can be done in ways beneficial to aquatic organisms, including brook trout.

As most TU members know, good water quality is essential to healthy brook trout populations. Sufficient water depth, riparian vegetation, gravel stream bottoms, in-stream large wood and cold temperatures are also critical. The Piscataquog study has identified all these factors and found a select number of tributaries that support healthy brook trout populations. In other stream sections, improvement of certain healthy stream components may be able to restore the wild trout populations.

In December 2012, Burr Tupper, the New Hampshire TU Council Chair, coordinated the preparation of a proposal to TU's *Embrace a Stream Program* for funding to continue the Piscataquog work. A key goal of the 2013 work will be to focus on one very high quality stream and thoroughly review its existing road crossings and culverts. The intent is to determine which culvert/crossing pose the greatest impediment to fish passage. The follow-up work is the design and engineering of replacements that would take place in 2014.

Because *Embrace a Stream Program* grants require a local match, the Basil W. Woods board of directors and the Merrimack Valley Chapter have pledged

funds for the match. This is just one of the many examples of how members' dollars, raised through donations and attendance at the annual banquet (March 9, 2013) support TU's vision:

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



The Good Life: Susan Towle, photo by Brad Towle

### Troutlines and You

Editing and publishing Troutlines is usually quite fun. When the printing deadline is approaching having new and interesting material keeps it that way.

We would love to have you share your stories, photos, tips, and other tidbits with our readers. Some of the best material in Troutlines doesn't come from the editor's desk but from members. Bob Ives' tongue-in-cheek stories, Angus' pictures of football shaped Brookies, and Jim Timmins' reports, tips, and reviews are some of the best things published in this members' newsletter.

As the comedian Red Green says, "we're all in this together" so send us something you think others would enjoy. And if you have a Letter to the Editor - send it along too. Mail it or e-mail it. We read 'em all. Thanks!

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**Troutlines**

February, 2013

## Calendar through May, 2013

**Thursday February 7** Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM Szechuan Garden, Penacook

**Thursday February 21** Bill Thompson of the North Country Angler in North Conway will present "Fly Fishing in the Saco Valley". This promises to be a good introduction or reminder on this northern NH resource.

**Thursday, March 7** Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM Szechuan Garden, Penacook

**Saturday, March 9** 25th Anniversary Annual Conservation Banquet. Grappone Center, Concord.

**Thursday, April 4** Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM Szechuan Garden, Penacook

**Thursday, April 18** Judy Tumosa, NH F&G and some Trout in the Classroom teachers will share with the chapter this year's Trout in the Classroom activities. Elections for chapter officers will be held.

**Saturday, April 20** Youth Fishing Day, Merrill Park Pond, Eastman Street, Concord

**Saturday, April 20** Discover Wild New Hampshire, NH Fish and Game, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord

**Saturday, April 27** Trout Pond Opening Day

**Thursday, May 2** Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM Szechuan Garden, Penacook

**Thursday, May 16** Annual chapter picnic. Place and exact date and time to be determined.

All chapter meetings at 7:00 PM, Society for the Protection of NH Forests, 54 Portsmouth Street, Concord  
unless posted otherwise.

Always check the chapter website for news and updates. [www.concordtu.org](http://www.concordtu.org)

### Other Happenings

**Fly Fish New Hampshire Show - March 2-3**  
<http://www.merrimacktu.org/FFNH-Flyer-2013.pdf>

**Great Bay TU Canoe Raffle - Drawing April 13**  
16'9" Old Town West Branch Fishing Canoe  
Info and tickets: [www.greatbaytu.org/](http://www.greatbaytu.org/)

**2013 NH TU Kids' Trout Camp - July 24-28, 1st Connecticut Lake**  
Applications available at chapter website:  
[http://www.concordtu.org/news\\_\\_announcements](http://www.concordtu.org/news__announcements)

### Welcome New Members

We look forward to hearing from you and meeting you soon.

Roscoe Bartlett  
Leo Briand  
Gerard Carroll  
James Cropsey  
Philip Deitsch  
Milan Krainchich

Erik Limmer  
Richard Meserve  
Christopher Pope  
Erika Randmere  
David Wyatt

### Newsletter Information

**Troutlines** is published September through May. Chapter members who have given TU national their e-mail address will receive an e-mail notice from us through the TU national server that the latest newsletter is online at our chapter website. Paper copies are sent to members who don't have an e-mail address listed with TU national.

If you would prefer to receive paper copies of **Troutlines** rather than electronic copies, drop us a line to either our e-mail or mailing address. If you now receive a paper copy and would prefer to read it online, drop us a note and update your membership information with TU national.

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