



TIGHT LINES

September 2020 Newsletter of the Rabun Chapter (522) Trout Unlimited

The mission of the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited is to conserve, protect, and restore Northeast Georgia's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

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September Chapter Meeting



"Yellowstone 1-2-3"



Tuesday, Sept 15 at 7:00 pm

To be held using Zoom video conferencing.

The program will be given by our Chapter Prez and well-known fishing guru, Jeff Durniak, aka "Dredger". He will share his 15 years experience of western fishing trips by discussing the "1-2-3's" - fish, wildlife, and scenery.

To Join the Zoom Meeting—Click Below and Enter the Meeting ID and Passcode

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3424822877?pwd=cDlFdKpzSmR0Zyt1TmRzV0o1SDZmdz09>

Meeting ID: 342 482 2877

Passcode: 9kpE08



September Hatch Chart

<u>The Bugs</u>	<u>Time of Month</u>	<u>Time of Day</u>	<u>Suggested Flies</u>
Small Dun Caddis	All month	Mid am to late pm	18 Brown or Grey Elk Hair Caddis 18 Grey Caddis Pupa
Speckled Grey Caddis	Late	Late pm	14-16 Dark Elk Hair Caddis w/ Yellow & Brown 14-16 Dun and Yellow Caddis Pupa
Large October Caddis	Late	Early am and Late pm	8-10 Ginger Elk Hair Caddis 8-10 Ginger Caddis Pupa
Trico Mayfly	Mid to Late	Mid am	20 Parachute Trico
Trico Spinner Fall	Mid to Late	Late pm	20-22 Polywing Black Spinner

Fly of the Month

By Terry Rivers

Zug Bug

HOOK: #12-16 Nymph

THREAD: Olive

TAIL: 4-6 Peacock Swords

BODY: Peacock Herl Palmer with Silver Tinsel

WING CASE: Wood Duck

LEGS: Brown Hackle

HEAD: Brass Bead

ONE OF MY FAVORITE FLIES TO FISH AS A DROPPER. DURING A CADDIS HATCH ON TOP AND THE RISES SLOW DOWN DROP THIS IMITATION OF A CASE CADDIS BEHIND A DRY CADDIS IT HAS DONE THE JOB FOR ME. JUST FOR HISTORY OF THIS FLY WAS INVENTED IN 1930 BY J. CLIFF ZUG.



See you on The River! Terry

Fishing Reports

Brian Weeks—Yellowstone 2020

Yellowstone. Known for its lodgepole pines, mountain ranges and canyons, sweeping golden meadows, pristine wildlife, and yes, fishing. Wild native Yellowstone cutthroats to be exact.

A week and a half out there was just enough to have me planning my return trip before I left. How'd it go while I was there?

Some highlights include sweeping landscape views, beautifully colored wildflowers, several black bears, almost zero humidity(!), and landing an 18-plus-inch cutthroat out of Yellowstone River while a bald eagle flew 40 feet directly overhead with a wingspan of at least 5 feet. Almost surreal. Oh, and a broken rod.

But first, in case you're wondering how flying is these days, the flight out there. I've been on a lot of flights and I think this was the most enjoyable one I've ever taken. It was on Delta, and they require masks for both employees and customers at all times. Everyone in the airport, at the gate, and on the plane had them on. And the stewards and stewardesses made announcements before and during the flight about how to properly wear a mask, that it was mandatory, and that if anyone didn't comply, they'd be swiftly addressed. The flight out and back was without incident. But what made it so enjoyable was that, even though Delta has capped their domestic flights at 50% capacity, the flight out and back were even less full than that. So, there was oodles of overhead bin space! And plenty of room back in coach where us Clark Howard listeners sit.

So, the broken rod thing went down like this. One of the days I set aside for an all day trip planned to a backcountry location with about a 5 mile hike in. This area is considered bear country and is notorious for its biting flies and mosquitos. So, that morning, I arrived at my parking spot, got geared up, and, armed with bear and bug spray, hit the trail.

Two and a half hours later, I arrived at the stream. Gorgeous as ever. Oh, and on the way in, I enjoyed a close, but safe, encounter with a black bear. For those that remember my last report, no bear spray was deployed! But I did get some good views and pictures from a safe distance. But back to the stream.

It was one of the ones I was most excited about fishing this trip. It's the stuff fly fishing dreams are made of. And as you've already gathered, it's a commitment. There is no just running back to the car for something. I mean, when you're out there, you're out there. Well, I was out there alright. And I was stoked. And two casts into the day, my rod tip breaks. The last 14 inches just snapped clean off. "Welp," I thought, "I can either call it a day - nah forget that, that's crazy talk. I'm not cutting this day short just because I'm missing the end of my rod. I'm fishing. I'll try to make the best of this and see how it goes."

Well, I'm already not a great caster, so this certainly didn't help. And while my casts weren't pretty, I was able to manage long enough casts to fish. So, as far as I was concerned, I was in business. Thankfully my rod didn't break in half. If it had, I suppose I would have had to wad the fly line up in my hand and throw it out as far as I could. But, thankfully it didn't come to that.

A 15 inch cutthroat was taken on that broken rod, and I must say, that was rewarding. Some other smaller fish were brought to hand too. By late afternoon, it was time to make the long, but idyllic, trek back to the car. Don't want to be caught in that bear country at night.

And in case you're wondering if you have to be great at long distance casting to catch fish out west, you do not. I'm not a great caster. And most of my fish came from within 20 feet of the bank. As a matter of fact, the fish of the trip hit the fly less than 10 feet from the bank while my boots were dry and with less than 15 feet of line and leader out. Some of the best advice I read in George Daniel's "Nymphing" book was to make a cast before you step into the water. His advice has paid off well for me here in Georgia and out west, especially since the trout love to hug the banks out there.

Another satisfying fish story from this year actually began last year. When I first arrived out there last summer, I let the fly shop (Parks' Fly Shop - spot on advice from friendly, down-to-earth guys) know I was willing to hike and asked where I could find bigger fish and less pressure, and maybe even catch a salmonfly hatch. They told me about a canyon and the game trails that led down to the water. I followed their advice, did experience an incredible salmonfly hatch, caught some sweet fish on a fly that was about the size of a washing machine, but wasn't able to land one particular riser I was targeting at the end of the day.

Here's what happened. I was down in the canyon, and the bank of the stretch I was fishing was made up entirely of rocks, from football to boulder size. This stretch was navigable until I got walled out by the canyon, meaning, the bank went from rocks to a perfectly vertical canyon wall that went straight down into the deep river. The water there is very intimidating. There might be enough ankle deep water to stand in place, then it drops off to lots of feet deep. The water against the bank is slow enough to hold fish, but just past that is utterly raging. In other words, I didn't want any piece of that on any level. I had no interest at all in stepping in this water unless I had to to release a fish, and only as far out as would allow me to step back onto dry land in one step.

When I got to the end of this fishable stretch, I looked upstream into the relatively calm water against the vertical canyon wall and saw a really nice cutthroat rising every minute or so. It was 35 plus feet upstream, which meant the farthest cast of the trip by far. I still had on the salmonfly. So I stripped out enough line to hopefully get me out there, and a couple of casts later, the likeness of brown and rust red emerged from the deep, took a good look at my offering, turned, and headed back down. Such anticipation, then let down. But, I figured, this was the last opportunity of the day, so I continued to cast. Then, a handful of casts later, here she comes again. But this time, she broke the surface of the water and took the floating appliance-of-a-fly! Immediately after setting the hook, she turned, shot back down into the depths of the river, and proceeded to decisively break me off, breaking my heart at the same time. Well, I didn't forget her. Not for an entire year.

Cut to July 2020, I returned to that same canyon, fished that same stretch, and ended my day at that same canyon wall. This time, again, a prolific salmonfly hatch was happening. If you've never experienced one, imagine fishing, then seeing little hummingbirds flying around over the water and landing all over your hands, face, hat, shirt, pants, boots, the rocks you're leaning on, everything, everywhere. Those are salmonflies.

After catching some nice ones up through that same stretch as last year, I arrived at The Battleground. Was I crazy to think that same fish would be there this year? And even if so, would she rise? These are the questions that went through my mind. I stripped out a good bit of line, made a few false casts to let line out (I can't haul to save my life), and lowered the rod tip to lay the line out which landed, more or less, where I wanted it to - up against the canyon wall in the calmer water. I waited as it dead drifted down and! . . . nothing. I gave it another cast. Again, nothing. A third, nothing. A fourth and fifth cast, still nothing. Then, about a half a dozen casts in, I thought, man, I'm flogging this water. Should I head back to the car? Nah, a few more casts. And sure enough, there she was! That same, rust colored swimming mass rose toward the surface. The 2019 triumphant champion. And without reservation, she hit the fly. Knowing that if I set the hook too soon (which I was so tempted to do), I'd lose her, I patiently waited for what seemed like an eternity until she turned to head back down, then I set the hook, and she and I once again became connected. Immediately I tried to keep her high in the water column and away from the intimidating current just beyond her. The fight had me maneuvering around very large rock and down the bank some to a little spot in the water where I could safely land her, if things got that far. She fought, but I fought back. I was running 2X, so that gave me some much-appreciated confidence when it came to coaxing her away from the current. Nevertheless, she wasn't going down without a fight. As she began to take a break, I tried to get her to the net, but it wasn't her time and she flipped away, slipped past the net and downstream. So, downstream I went. Thankfully not too far so that I was able to maintain the fish-upstream-angler-downstream advantage. During her second break to catch her breath, I raised the rod up and back, dragging her across the water, hoping she wouldn't get a third wind, and lo and behold, she coasted right into the net. Boom! I can't tell you how satisfying that was. And after some pics, she was back in the water for, hopefully, another round sometime.

On the drive back to the airport for my return flight home, being reminded of my time on those Yellowstone waters by a sore right shoulder, I stopped by America's favorite fast food restaurant: In-n-Out Burger. If you've never been to one, go. And when you do, get a Double Double animal style, fries "light well," and a neapolitan shake. You'll thank me later.

Pictures: https://rzim1-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/brian_rzimakademy_org/Eve6E15iyChOpEkJ64e_0TkBqB-lyvleNZSVcTbAl1w-EA?e=sLYer1

Or <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/fyzbj3jbxu9wwje/AAAMkv01vcuHsV6Lm2Ep4LwVa?dl=0>

Fishing Reports, cont.

Jeff Durniak—Try the Bluelines!

Rabunites, the fishing has been really good due to the frequent summer rains! While my bass rivers have been blown out, the high elevation trout waters have been on fire. Give em a try. For tiny bluelines, just sneak upstream and dapple a size 16 Adams or elk hair caddis in front of their noses. For bigger waters at high elevation, try a beetle or stimulator dry and a two-foot dropper down to an ant or hares ear. And if you're in the Smokies, quit before dark and go elk watching. More intel in my Friday fishing reports on the Unicoi Outfitters (public) Facebook page. Go get 'em soon in a blueline near you!



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Thank you, Sponsors! We appreciate your support of the Rabun Chapter!

All donations to Rabun TU (a Federal Tax Exempt 501(c)3 non-profit) are tax deductible.

You are Invited to Join Trout Unlimited!

[CLICK HERE](#) to go to the membership page of Trout Unlimited. Once you join, TU will assign you to the nearest Chapter according to your Zip Code. If you wish to be a member of the Rabun Chapter regardless of your Zip Code, specify Chapter 522 in your application.

If you have any questions, contact the Chapter Prez [Jeff Durniak](#).

We look forward to having you in our Chapter!

Rabun Chapter Leadership Contacts

Voting Leaders

Jeff Durniak	Chapter President
Tammy Hopton	Chapter Vice President
Charlie Breithaupt	Treasurer
Kathy Breithaupt	Secretary
Kent Wilson	Past President
Ray King	Rendezvous Chair
Tony Allred	Director thru 2020
Justin English	Director thru 2021
Terry Rivers	Director thru 2021
Jimmy Whiten	Director thru 2022

Non-Voting Leaders

Michele Crawford	Women's Outreach, Memorials
Jerry McFalls	Scouts Liaison
Pat Hopton	Tight Lines Editor
Steve Perry	Conservation Chairperson

Prez Notes

Here's a warm welcome back to everyone after our collective August respite from Rabunite business. I hope y'all are still safe, sound, and socially distanced. In fact, I hope that some folks were able to really *distance afar* in their campers and RV's, and have returned with some good fish stories from Out Yonder, you know, west of Hiawassee. Please take a little time to share your stories with all of us via a submission to Pat for the newsletter. I suspect that several of you indeed revisited old haunts such as IDBIS River and Notellum Creek, so humor us Stranded Souls with a few lies and pics to Pat for his upcoming, stellar newsletters.

On to Rabunite business. We enjoyed our inaugural Zoom chapter meeting in July and had a good turnout to welcome our new game warden, Ethan Franklin, to our hilly environs. We'd like to build on that success and offer another remote chapter meeting on 9/15. The Zoom invitation should be in this newsletter. If anyone forgets, feel free to call or email me for the link. The topic is Yellowstone 1-2-3 by yours truly. I had created a decent Powerpoint for the Blairsville TU Chapter last winter and it went over well when delivered in person, before the shutdown. I thought I'd try it remotely on my chapter's guinea pigs. Dial in and see what you think. Remember, the subscription price is right, as Rabunite Zoom is much cheaper than Netflix or HBO! By the way, the 1-2-3 is fish, wildlife, and scenery. Hopefully my angling quartet's tips from 15 years of Out Yonder trips will help some of you with your own trip planning this winter for the summers ahead.

Thank you!!! That note goes to a nice handful of Rabunites for volunteering to participate on our three teams, Conservation, Socialization, and Education, when the Covid-coast clears for our gatherings. We still need another big handful or two of YOU remaining members to raise your hands and fill out these team rosters. Volunteer soon so that you can bring project ideas to team leaders and help shape their respective work agendas. Call or email Tammy or me if you'd like more information on the teams and if you'd like to volunteer. C'mon, we are counting on y'all to help us carry the Rabunite load and then reap the benefits, from specks under your stream structures to scout smiles from your picnic burgers and angling guide expertise.

While we were officially "off" in August, key admin business continued and you need to know about it! Newsworthy stuff includes the Chattooga copter stocking and the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA). It looks like Kathy and the GATU Council have secured a \$10K grant from the US Forest Service to continue copter trout stocking on the river. Wow, that's the very good news! The bad news is that we likely can't get that money into the pipeline for copter reimbursement until Fall 2021. But for this fall, all parties are working together to try and come up with an interim funding plan to have some, if not all, of the traditional copter stocking happen this November. Stay tuned. Special shout-outs go to Kathy and Charlie B and Steve Westmoreland of the Council, and Chad Bell of the Forest Service for working through the federal grant quagmire to maintain this stocking program on 15 miles of remote river below Burrells Ford, where high summer water temps limit the trout fishery. For some background, see Doug's "backcountry" paragraph in his History document: <http://rabuntu.org/site/about/work-projects/the-story-of-the-chattooga-coalition/>

GAOA passed both houses and was signed into law by the President. THIS IS HUGE!!! Now the GA national forests are working hard to get their fair share of a) recreation maintenance dollars to fix structures, roads, trails, etc and b) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) bucks to acquire new lands. For this fiscal year, our Chattahoochee Forest is targeting some prime tracts for sale in the Etowah headwaters. That is awesome! GATU and Rabun TU both responded to USFS with support letters for Georgia program funds, which should help our forest compete nationally for those GAOA funds. For more on GAOA, look here:

<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/07/the-likely-impact-of-great-american-outdoors-act/>

I hope to see many of your smiling faces on our 9/15 Zoom call. C'mon, give it a try. And if you're not paying attention, we just might nominate you to be the next Rabunite president! So you better keep an eye on Rabunite happenings. In the meantime, get out there and fish. We are blessed with so many angling opportunities in our area, from headwaters to ponds to lakes to the Smokies. With all the summer rain, the fishing has been great. More importantly, science proves that flyfishing is good for your noggin! Don't believe me? How about dem Ivy League experts again?

<https://neuro.hms.harvard.edu/harvard-mahoney-neuroscience-institute/brain-newsletter/and-brain/fly-fishing-and-brain>

Try some hydrotherapy soon. Doctor Dredger promises that you'll feel better as soon as you slide into IDBIS Creek. Then I'll see your happy face on my 'puter on the 15th. Be safe, and thanks for being a Rabunite.

Prez Jeff