



TIGHT LINES

February 2022 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.

[CLICK HERE](#)

to visit our Award Winning Website!



February, 2022 Rabun Chapter Meeting

Saturday, February 12

**“Tour of Burton Fish Hatchery” — Hosted by John Lee Thompson,
GA DNR Hatchery Manager**

Gather at 2:30, tour starts at 3:00 pm.

The February, 2022 Rabun Chapter meeting will be held Saturday, Feb 12. Please note that this is different from the normal date for the monthly meetings. The meeting topic will be a **guided tour of the newly-renovated Burton Fish Hatchery**, located at 3695 GA Hwy 197. John Lee Thompson, GA DNR Wildlife Resources Burton Hatchery Manager and Trout Stocking Coordinator, will host the tour. The DNR has no COVID-19 requirements for visitors at the hatchery, for more COVID safety information see the page 2. Plan to **meet at the Hatchery parking lot at 2:30 pm, the tour will start at 3:00 pm**. Wear comfortable clothes; the Hatchery does require the soles of shoes be dipped into a disinfectant solution prior to entering the hatchery so wear appropriate footwear. John Lee is excited to provide the tour as a way to show appreciation for all the support the Rabun Chapter has provided to the Burton Fish hatchery! This will be a fun and informative meeting.



Important COVID Safety Information

This month the Rabun Chapter will have our first in-person Chapter meeting in two years! After careful deliberation, the Board of Directors has decided to resume Chapter meetings provided we follow facility, National TU and State guidelines for the prevention of COVID-19 spread. The current guideline from National TU is to follow State guidelines. The Georgia State guidelines for indoor meetings recommends people be fully vaccinated, that we consider using outdoor rather than indoor meetings, encourage social distancing of 6 feet between people, and provide face masks and hand sanitizer for use.

Most importantly, it is up to the individual to determine their own comfort level as to whether or not to attend in-person meetings and what, if any, safety precautions to take. The Rabun Chapter will not "police" your personal health decisions, the above guidelines are recommendations. The Rabun Chapter does not take responsibility for the results of your decisions; accordingly you will be asked to sign a liability release form prior to in-person meetings.



From a friend: *“Dukes Creek at Smithgall Woods is fishing well for experienced folks who have already paid their dues.* Jeff Durniak



RABUN RENDEZVOUS - 2022

2021, as was 2020, remained an uncertain year. The COVID-19 virus continued to impact our daily lives. The RABUN Chapter of Trout Unlimited felt the effects as we did not hold our annual RABUN RENDEZVOUS in January of 2021. Concern over the virus and potential issues with the health and safety of our attendees warranted the cancellation of the event.

FELLOWSHIP AND FUNDRAISING!

These two words sum up the RABUN RENDEZVOUS.

With these two words in mind, we have decided to not hold the RABUN RENDEZVOUS in January, 2022. Concerns over the health and safety of our friends and neighbors, who have graciously supported the RENDEZVOUS, over the years, remained foremost in our minds while making this difficult decision. We are continuing to comply with state and local regulations and that of TU National, pertaining to indoor gatherings.

In 2021 we did not actively pursue fundraising for our chapter. We are making an effort to begin returning to a sense of normalcy and will be working on fundraising events, and other chapter activities, in 2022. To that end, we are using suggestions and guidelines from TU National on fundraising activities in these trying times and have benchmarked other chapters and organizations across the USA.

ONLINE AUCTION

We will be hosting an online auction in early 2022 to provide fundraising for the RABUN Chapter. To make the auction successful, we need your support in providing donations. We'll not focus as much on Bucket Raffle items this year. We still welcome all donations and items not used in the online auction will be retained and used during future events. We want to focus our online auction activities on, e.g., trips, lodging accommodations, fishing gear, and artwork.

More details will follow as to the actual date and times of the auction, site access information and "How to Bid" directions.

A virtual event will never be a replacement for the fellowship and fundraising we enjoy during the RABUN RENDEZVOUS, but it will allow us to continue to support the key pillars of Trout Unlimited! Thank you for your support.

Ray King
RABUN Rendezvous Chair

2022 Dream Trip Tickets Now On Sale!

The GA TU Council has voted to again conduct the 2022 Dream Trip raffle online. The link below will take you to the site where you can purchase Dream Trip tickets.

[GA Council of TU Dream Trip 2022 | Trout Unlimited \(tulocalevents.org\)](http://tulocalevents.org)

Tickets are \$10.00 each. Only 2,000 tickets will be sold. There will be a small online fee added to each purchase. The winners will be announced at the Council meeting on Saturday, March 18, 2022.

Thanks again to Laine and John McGarity for their generosity in providing us with this opportunity!!!!

DREAM TRIP - FLY FISHING FOR TWO!





GRAND PRIZE

"The 2022 Dream Trip reaches new heights. The opportunity to fish with John McGarity, stay in his fabulous log cabin conveniently located between the Madison River, Yellowstone National Park and the Henry's Fork puts you smack dab in the middle of some of the most famous trout waters in North America. John is the consummate trout angler, fishing almost every day during the 5 or 6 months each year he resides in Idaho. Blue Ribbon Flies in West Yellowstone checks with John for fishing reports. Having been a restaurateur, John is also an excellent cook... you will not go hungry on this trip! TU couldn't ask for a better host and guide for this year's Dream Trip."

-Jimmy Harris,
owner, Unicoi Outfitters

- **5 days hosted fishing / 6 nights lodging in Idaho JULY 24-29, 2022**
- **\$500 total in travel expenses** - travel arrangements will be the responsibility of the winners.
*Fishing licenses, gratuities, and alcoholic beverages will be the responsibility of the winners during their stay.
- **Each winner receives:** A float trip on the Madison River, plus choice of Winston AIR 3 wt. - 6 wt. or BILL-x 4 wt. - 8 wt. fly rod. Fly reel with Scientific Anglers or Winston Energy Fly Line and a fly box and flies for the trip. (approx. 5 -7 dozen per box)

Tickets \$10

Proceeds Benefit TU Cold Water Conservation and Trout Camp

RUNNER UP PRIZES:

The winner(s) of this raffle are responsible for any tax due on the value of the winnings.

- TFO- Blue Ribbon - 4 wt. 8'9", 4 piece fly rod (perfect trout rod). Donated by The Atlanta Fly Fishing School
- BVK SD I (4-5 wt.) reel. Donated by the Atlanta Fly Fishing School
- Twin fly rod case for two 4 piece 9 ft fly rods. Donated by the Atlanta Fly Fishing School
- Fly box with 8+ dozen trout flies. Donated by the Atlanta Fly Fishing School
- Fly box with 3 dozen bass poppers. Donated by the Atlanta Fly Fishing School
- Fly box with assortment of Terrestrial flies. Donated by the Atlanta Fly Fishing School
- A private fly-casting lesson including digital casting analysis and video analysis (this donation would apply to those having mastered basic casting skills already). Donated by the Atlanta Fly Fishing School for 2022 year.
- Witching Hour (4 hour) Trip for Bass on Lanier or Carp on the Chattahoochee in the summer. Donated by Henry Cowen. Trip must be used from end May thru Sept. 2022.
- Unguided half day fishing at Nacoochee Bend for two anglers. Donated by Unicoi Outfitters.
- \$100 Gift certificate from the Mid-Georgia Chapter.
- Half day trophy brown trout guided float trip for two on Chattahoochee River, valued at \$350. Donated by Chris Scalley "River Through Atlanta" www.rivertroughatlanta.com
- Gift card in the amount of \$500 for goods and services with Unicoi Outfitters in Helen or Clarkesville Georgia. Donated by the Cohutta Chapter.
- Half day guided trip for two on the Chattooga or Chauga River. Donated by Karl and Karen Ekberg owners of the Chattooga River fly Shop in Mountain Rest, SC. www.ChattoogaRiverFlyShop.com
- Two draws of Six Dozen Trout Flies each. Donated by the 12 TU Chapters in Georgia.



Jimmy Harris, owner of Unicoi Outfitters



Mack Martin working on Rajah's new custom made rod for the trip.



2021 winner - Rajah Anglere



For complete rules and details visit www.georgiatu.org

Fishing Report

By Jeff Durniak, 2/2/22

Welcome to the dead of winter. For many of our fisherfolks, that means a nice fire, a soft recliner, and a good book or a fly-tying desk. It is, indeed, a great time to catch up on things and prepare for the spring fishing season that usually kicks off in March. Don't get caught short on your spring bugs when noses are poking through the surface film in the Chattooga backcountry, so tie or buy now!

But the dead of winter doesn't mean that our sport is dead. We just have to be more selective in our outdoor adventuring. Watch for a warming trend and hit your favorite water on a fifty-degree afternoon. That warm sunshine will push water temps past the mid-forties and turn some fish on. Most will hit slow-rolled nymphs, eggs, soft hackles, and midges on deep drifts. But if you're really lucky, you could discover some surface action, too! I caught a chunky Smith Creek rainbow on a #18 parachute Adams last week. I caught more of his DH brothers and sisters fish on drowned bugs, but that one riser made my day. It sure beat sitting in the house.

The winter game depends first on the temperature and then on flow. As I scribe this column today (2/3), we are finally having a long, steady rain. That will bring our low streamflows back up to decent levels, at least for a few days. Better flows will allow bigger bugs, so try your eggs, rubberleg stones, and bigger (#14-16) nymphs like hares ears, pheasant tails, and walts worms. You can even drift some small buggers.

But if flows drop back down to the drought levels we've had all winter, then recall: "low and clear equals long and light." The name of the game right now is winter stoneflies, blue wing olives (BWO's), and midges, so come prepared with 6 and 7X tippet, size 18 little black stones, size 20-24 BWO's, and equally minute midges. Try a dry/dropper combo to fool some of the surface and mid-column sippers that you'll spy in slow water on warm afternoons.

I hate midges. They make me try to thread wispy tippet thru microscopic hook eyes. After dozens of failed stabs, I recently admitted my age and have employed magnifiers (flip focals, Orvis readers) to restore my batting average on hook-threading. And these midge imitations (zebra midge, WD40's) have tiny hooks that uncap often from fish lips. My thin tippet snaps easily when glanced off a rock or ice shelf, or wrapped around a rhododendron branch that snuck up behind me when my back was turned. Gimme some stout 4X and a meaty #10 black leech and I'm in a much better mood. Did I tell you that I hate midges?

Fishing Report, cont.

But winter trout love them! Therefore I, and maybe you, have got to match the hatch to maximize our winter trout fondling. So prop those magnifiers on your nose, rub those toasty handwarmers, and pierce those itty-bitty hook eyes. You might just learn to live with midges, too. Oh yeah, bring a small hand towel and stuff it in the top of your waders. Dry off your cold, wet hands after each of your trout releases and you'll stay warmer. If this old dog can learn a new trick, you can, too. Good luck. While I still hate midges, I'm learning to live with them...all the way to my full net.

PS: Chatoga DH has been crummy, mainly due to low flows and no holding water. You might try the upper reaches with more boulder pockets. Smith's upper half has been decent, and less crowded on weekdays. Best fishing is after the shadows fall at 4 through sunset at 6. Nan DH has been good when the power company isn't running us off with ripping bypass flows. Smokies are colder, thin, and clear, and finned residents have PhD's. Check Luftee's USGS gauge and find a warmer day when the water will rise above 40. Catch a few truly wild trout (usually as the only angler on IDBIS Creek) and then enjoy the wildlife on your way out. Last Thursday my tally was four beautiful and spunky 8-ich bows, 2 flocks of gobblers, and two herds of elk. While the "catching" is always better in the spring, this was still a mighty fine fishing trip! Good luck, fellow Rabunites.



Attention All Rabunites! From the Rabun Chapter Conservation Team:

We want to continue our efforts to conserve trout waters in Rabun County. Our team welcomes your help. While you are out fishing, if you see areas that could be improved or repaired, such as erosion problems, stream siltation, streamside or in-stream trash, feel free to take pictures, identify the issue and location, and send the information to Justin and me. Our team will look into the issue, discuss with BOD, and see if it's something we can remedy, or encourage our managing agencies to do so. Working together, we can all conserve the great water resources that make us proud to live, work, and play here!

Team Leader- Steve Perry: email- flyguide@gmail.com.
Cell- [828-371-1633](tel:828-371-1633)

Assistant Team Leader- Justin English: email- trouter10@hotmail.com
Cell- [706-490-5032](tel:706-490-5032)

Rabun Chapter Membership Update

Current membership: 158 adult members and 2 youth members.

Welcome New Members!

No new members this month.

Thanks for Re-Uping!

Larry Ekman, Stephen Griner, Preston Pitts, David Crouch, and Mark Salter.

Soon to Expire Members !

Brooks and Amanda Adams, Robert Blalock, Doug Bryant, Tammy Hopton, Dennis Williams, and Derek Barlow.

Unless one can enjoy himself fishing with the fly, even when his efforts are unrewarded, he loses much real pleasure. More than half the intense enjoyment of fly fishing is derived from the beautiful surroundings, the satisfaction felt from being in the open air, the new lease of life secured thereby, and the many, many pleasant recollections of all one has seen, heard, and done.

Charles F. Orvis

Fly of the Month

By Terry Rivers

WD-40

HOOK: # 14-20 SCUD HOOK

TAIL: WOOD DUCK FIBERS

BODY: GREY THREAD

THORAX: GREY DUBBING

WING CASE: WOOD DUCK FLANKS

HEAD: GREY THREAD OR SILVER TUNGSTEN BEAD.



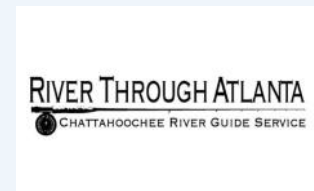
GREAT FLY TO USE ANYTIME DURING THE WINTER MONTHS AS A DROPPER.

See you on The River! Terry

February Hatch Chart

<u>The Bugs</u>	<u>Time of Month</u>	<u>Time of Day</u>	<u>Suggested Flies</u>
Black Stonefly	All month	Late am to Mid pm	18-20 Black Elk Hair Caddis or Griffiths Gnat 16-18 Black Stone Nymph or Pheasant Tail Nymph
Small Dun Caddis	Late month	Late am to Mid pm	18 Brown Elk Hair Caddis 18 Hairs Ear Nymph
Quill Gordon	Late month	Late am to Mid pm	12-14 Quill Gordon 12 Quill Gordon Nymph
Blue Wing Olive Blue Quill	All month	Late am to Mid pm	16-18 BWO, Blue Quill, Adams Parachute 16 BWO Nymph, Pheasant Tail
Midges	All month	All day	18-22 Griffiths Gnat 18-22 Midge Pupa
None at all	All month	All day	Dredging Nymphs: 12-16 Prince, Hare's Ear, Zugbug, Pheasant Tail

Click on the Images and Visit the Websites of our Sponsors



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](#)

[Tammy Hopton](#)

[Wayne Prosser](#)

Vacant

[Kent Wilson](#)

[Ray King](#)

[Justin English](#)

[Terry Rivers](#)

[Jimmy Whiten](#)

[Trey McFalls](#)

Chapter President

Chapter Vice President

Treasurer

Secretary

Past President

Rendezvous Chair

Director thru 2021

Director thru 2021

Director thru 2022

Director thru 2023

Non-Voting Leaders

[Michele Crawford](#)

[Jerry McFalls](#)

[Pat Hopton](#)

[Steve Perry](#)

Women's Outreach, Memorials

Scouts Liaison

Tight Lines Editor

Conservation Chairperson

Prez Notes

The Rabunite New Year gains momentum and we hope that you'll be a part of our progress! I'd like to thank Tammy and the BOD for their extensive research and planning efforts for our new year activities. Three big ones are now at hand. First, for any members who feel comfortable enough to gather, a nice outdoor tour of the renovated Burton Hatchery is in store. You should have already received Pat's email blast, and I'm sure there is additional info in this newsletter. And for our members who are not yet ready to re-emerge and gather, we totally understand and respect your personal decisions on family health and welfare.

Second is Rendezvous Ray's awesome online auction. Here is where all members can help by donating auction prizes and soon helping to advertise this auction to potential bidders. Remember our goal of revitalizing our chapter bank account. If each member helps a little, the net result on our operating funds will be truly significant. And for anyone who is stumped on an auction item donation, feel free to consider a direct monetary donation to the chapter. Ray and Treasurer Wayne are working on that option for you, too.

The third initiative is the Dream Trip raffle by our state council (chaired by our own Rabunite Eveready Bunny, Kathy!). That raffle funds the annual TU Trout Camp for kids, a truly noble cause. Secondly, our chapter receives three bucks from the Council for each raffle ticket sale that acknowledges the Rabun Chapter. If we simply sold as many tickets as we did last year, that would generate a thousand dollars for our chapter! So please buy a few, encourage friends and family to buy a few, and credit the Rabun Chapter during those online purchases. The prize list, from the McGarity grand prize to the 14 runner-up gifts, is truly worth the cost of a few tickets.

Tammy, the BOD, and I can't thank you enough for your perseverance and assistance. We are truly hopeful for a great new year. Given the three events at hand right now, it looks like we are off to a great, early start. Thank you all for your contributions toward Rabunite success in our fourth decade of existence!

Prez Jeff