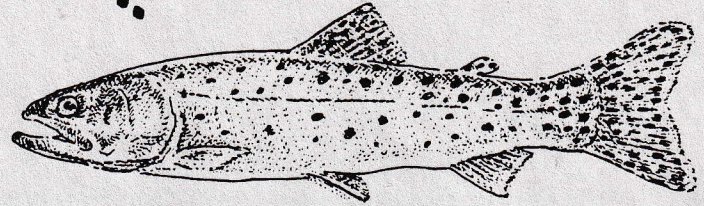


Tight Lines.....

Newsletter for the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited
January 1995

From the land of the Rabunites...
Rabun Rendezvous January 28, 1995
5:30 until... Dillard House, Dillard, GA



First off, thank you for electing me President of the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited. I'll do my best and that's about the only promise I can make. There are a few things that I would like to see accomplished during this next year:

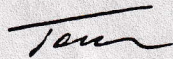
1. Establish a phone pyramid of members in the immediate area whereby we can make quick contact to notify you of meetings, outings, work projects and the like.
2. Have an extra set of mailing labels at the ready in the event we need to make a mailing in a hurry.
3. Encourage the agencies with whom we work to schedule activities as far in advance as is practical to us both and stick to the agreed upon date and project.
4. Schedule campouts along with the work projects. We should shoot for three or four get-togethers each year. If a work project is not planned, then let's just camp and fish!
5. Take a more active roll in TU National's annual membership drive. If you know of a past member, take the time to call him or her and ask them to attend our next meeting. How about inviting them, personally, to the Rabun Rendezvous on January 28th. Let's get these members back.
6. Have a board meeting twice a year. The first should occur shortly after the Rendezvous and perhaps the second in the fall. As always, the membership is encouraged to attend these meetings.
7. Lastly, we need to have stimulating programs each and every meeting. You the membership need to let it be known what you want. Hands on fly tying? Rod building? Do you want to hear from someone who has made an exciting fishing trip to a place you have always wanted to go? Do you want speakers with a conservation message? How about studies that relate to the protection, enhancement and improvement of our cold water fisheries? You call it, it isn't fair to expect one person to come up with programs unless you are heard from.

AND THE BEST WAY TO GET THESE THINGS DONE IS TO ATTEND THE NEXT MEETING!

The Rabun Chapter will be just as good as you make it! We need to grow and we need to get busy if we really want to maintain or improve a viable trout fishery in Northeast Georgia. Never mind how good it use to be. That's fun to talk about around the campfire but it sure as hell doesn't do anything for the here and now and it certainly won't insure trout fishing in the future. All projections are for this area of north Georgia to grow dramatically during the coming years. The fishing pressure is not going to subside. Been out to Burrell's Ford lately?

One last reason to keep the Rabun Chapter growing and active. There are special interest groups out there making their wishes known and many times their goals for public lands is a far cry from ours. Once in a while we must adopt a "it's us or them attitude". Even fellow TUTers disagree with how to manage our trout waters. We must be heard with a loud and persistent voice.

I know I can count on you! Tight Lines in '95!


Tom

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Notes from the last meeting, for those of you that didn't make it>>>>

A Georgia Council meeting was held on December 10, 1994. A lot of the discussion at the last chapter meeting focused on the issues that were raised at the December Council meeting. Here's a quick recap for those of you who were unable to make it:

The Georgia Council will be convening a committee to address Trout Unlimited's interest in the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund can be used to purchase and thus protect tracts of land that might be critical to protecting our coldwater fisheries. Tom Burns will be chairing the committee. Hopefully, this group will be able to do some effective lobbying when tracts of land need to be acquired to protect sensitive trout waters. This fund can provide the financial resources necessary to acquire the property.

Resolution #1 - I will position the phone on my side of the bed. This will eliminate waking the wife when my fishing partner calls at 2am and tells me to meet him at the river at 6am.

Legislation Could Change Mandated 100' Buffer Zone- Five years ago the state mandated a 100' buffer be established for any stream recognized as trout waters. Earlier this year, the legislature passed a law stating that even exempted activities must comply with the 100' buffer along state-designated trout streams. Legislation is being introduced that would replace the law currently on the books thus removing the 100' buffer regulation. The chapter voted to write a letter stating that we support the current law and that any variances granted should be reviewed on a case by case basis. If you wish to write a letter on your own, correspondence should be directed to Governor Zell Miller, The State Capitol, Atlanta, GA 30334; and/or Commissioner Joe Tanner, Dept. of Natural Resources, 205 Butler St. SE, Atlanta, GA 30334

All TU members in Georgia are invited to attend the **GEC '95 Legislative Reception** which will be held at the Atlanta Botanical Gardens. The reception is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 11, 1995 from 5pm to 8pm**. Many of the state and local politicians will be at the reception and this may provide a sounding board for TU's mission. If you are interested in attending, contact Charlie Miller at (404)934-3607 for additional information.

Resolution #2 - Promptly throw away all Cabela's, Orvis, and I.L.B. catalogs.

Year Round Trout Season- The Ga. Council of TU has picked up some support for a year round trout season. The Georgia Wildlife Federation (16,000 members+) is now urging the legislature to open more of Ga.'s trout streams for year round angling. The chapter voted in favor of supporting this new legislation. Want to voice your opinion? Direct correspondence to Commissioner Tanner at the address above.

"Embrace A Stream Grant"- The Rabun Chapter and Chattooga River Chapter co-authored a grant request for \$10,000. Thirty-five proposals were submitted and TU national will be reviewing the grant applications. An award announcement will be made by April. The proposal submitted by the Chapter is a research project that includes a telemetry study of the brown trout in the Chattooga River and its tributaries. Our neighbors, the Foothills Chapter, also submitted an application for an outdoor classroom on the Soque River. We wish them luck!

Resolution #3 - When I fail at number 2, I will not use my charge card.

Environmental Fund Group- The Georgia Council will probably get back its initial investment from this group. The Rabun Chapter was 12.1 hours short in their time donation. The members present voted not to try to get in that number of hours before the end of the year. The bottom line was that no one could commit to working off the required number of hours in Atlanta this late in the year.

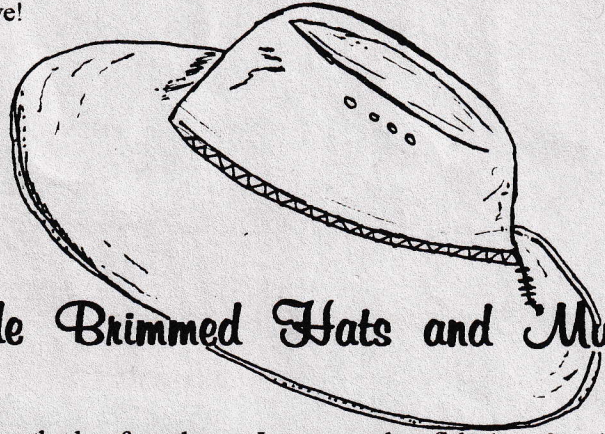
Officers- The chapter voted in the new officers for the coming year. The chapter's new President will be Tom Landreth; Russ Berken was voted in as Vice-President; Mike Hogelin will be our Treasurer for another year; and yours truly will do the newsletter another year because no one else was dumb enough to volunteer.

Reed Creek- You may remember that a work project was scheduled for Reed Creek last year but fell through at the last minute. You need to put it back on your calendar; June 16-17th, 1995. This will be a joint effort with South Carolina and perhaps North Carolina. Make your plans to attend, this should be a fun one! I'll include details as they become available.

Resolution #4 - When number 3 goes down the tubes, I will pay off the charge card monthly instead of letting the interest accrue.

Hatchery Closing- Closing of the Federal Rock Creek Hatchery was discussed at the last meeting. The latest word is that this facility will remain open in 1995. This hatchery provides about 30% of the stockable trout in Georgia. Funding for the hatchery will probably be an issue again next year. Write your representative!

Someone anonymously submitted another article for this month's edition of Tight Lines. I enjoyed and hope you do too. Thanks for submission, whomever you may be. ED



Wide Brimmed Hats and Mustaches

There is a man that has, for as long as I can remember, fished my favorite section of my favorite creek. My father gave me my introduction to trout fishing on this particular section of the creek and I can recall seeing this gentleman on our first outing. I remember being a little upset over the intrusion because my father had elaborated on the qualities of "our secret spot." I found little relief in the fact that my father referred to the man as Charlie and told me he had been fishing this river since I was but a twinkle in my mother's eye. That little bit of information was followed by "and that will always be Mr. Charlie to you son." My first trout fishing lesson proceeded without incident but I have never forgotten Mr. Charlie.

There was something about the man that made me just a little bit uneasy. Children as most of us know, have a knack for conjuring up all types of demons and dragons when their parents are trying to put them to sleep at night. As I think back on it, I am sure it had a lot to do with his physical appearance. To a little fellow he was as tall as a giant, I estimated him to be every bit of ten feet tall. He moved through the water in a manner that even to a young child, suggested grace combined with power. At the time I was just about as coordinated as a dead mayfly floating belly up, but I knew enough to sense the strength that powerfully thrust the tiny fly to an unsuspecting trout. He wore a felt hat with a wide brim that cast an eerie shadow over his face. It seemed to disguise all his features except the most notable one, a handle-bar moustache. I didn't realize why at the time but being the gentleman he was, he exited the water long before he arrived at the pool we were fishing. His movements were mystical and no matter how hard I strained my eyes, it seemed that he just vanished into the forest. Almost specter like.

Time moved along and I discovered that Mr. Charlie was a kind of a legend on the streams near my home. He was one of those folks that always could catch a trout when no one else could. He never bragged about it though. I know this because my friends, the would be trout fishermen, would tell the stories over a beer. In one way or another most of them had the same story line. My friends would allow that they had fished all day without a bite but passed Mr. Charlie on his way out with fish tails hanging out of an overflowing creel. Catch and release had not caught on at this point in history.

Mr. Charlie was probably what we would refer today as eccentric. He lived alone in a large mansion and was never really seen in the circle of the politically correct although it was rumored that he was "rather well off." Although he tied his own flies he would never sell them. Another over a beer story included one of my best friends, Jason. It was a well known fact that Jason's casting skills were not up to par. He tended to lose a lot of flies. One spring evening the hatch was really on and Jason had left his last "match the hatch" fly in a bush. He was extremely distraught when Mr. Charlie appeared. He handed my friend several "match the hatch" flies he had tied over the winter. At a loss for a way to express his appreciation, Jason started to retrieve his wallet. Mr. Charlie told him that the flies weren't for sale, give or take a few four letter words.

If I had known growing up what I do now, I know my fears would have been unsubstantiated. But after my first impression of Mr. Charlie, I adorned him with monster status. It was certainly an unjustified label but you know how the mind of a kid works. That impression stuck with me even as I grew to an age that I could and often did, go fishing without my father. I always kept an eye out for my invented monster Mr. Charlie. I thought about what type of things a man like that could do to a young boy. When fishing I constantly looked over my shoulder to be sure the ten foot tall giant was not sneaking up behind me. Oh- what games the mind can play with a young boy.

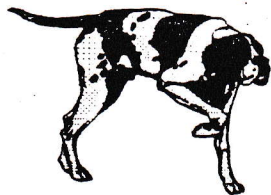
Everyone has to eventually face their fears. My time came one spring day when a boy's mind is on fishing and even ten foot monsters are out of sight and out of mind. I never even heard Mr. Charlie walk up behind me. I just felt the hairs on the back of my neck stand up when I felt the cool shadow on my neck and realized in a split second that the sun was being blocked by a wide brimmed hat. Fear caused me to jerk and I promptly pushed a small fly hook into the soft flesh of my finger. For the first time in my young life I was rendered totally speechless.

Resolution #5 - Give my spouse more than two hours notice about the trip out to Wyoming that I had been planning for months.

learned doesn't even begin to describe the fleeting moment of fear. I didn't even notice the pain in my finger. I slowly raised my head to confront what I was sure would be a ten foot monster foaming at the mouth with blood on his shirt. I was quite relieved when I looked into Mr. Charlie's face and saw the smile playing at the corner of his mouth. He didn't seem as tall as I remembered him being. He walked me over to the creek bank and gently removed the hook from my finger. I am sure he sensed that I was scared and offered me a few flies to assure me he was no monster. I quickly accepted his offer and the reason for wearing a wide brimmed hat became apparent when he took it off and pulled a few of his "homemade" flies off the under side of the brim. He laughed loudly when with a cracked voice I announced that I was out of float wax. He simply reached up and fingered his handle-bar moustache. He then rubbed the moustache wax through the hackles of the flies he had given me.

I saw Mr. Charlie now and then when fishing my favorite section. I had put my childhood fears away and even considered him my friend. I started to secretly admire his hat and saved all of my allowance and bought one. He would always take the time to offer me a few tips and a couple of his coveted "homemade" flies. I always looked for him and enjoyed our brief encounters on the stream.

Now, many years later, Mr. Charlie only fishes in my memories. But, he unknowingly taught me a simple but very important lesson: nothing is ever as bad as you think it is. Mr. Charlie caused me to face my fears and it is a subtle lesson that has never been forgotten. As adults, we all still create our own monsters. Adult monsters are different than those conceived by a child but can be just as frightening. When I start creating a monster in my mind, I'll get a tingling in my finger, the same finger Mr. Charlie removed the hook from. I'll study the small scar and the lesson is learned again and again. There is I am sure, a lot to the saying that fishing is a lot like life. It's funny how even adults need a little reminder every now and again.



Bird Dog Burrell's Fly of the Month

Tellico Nymph

Hook: Mustads #9672 or any wet fly hook.

Tail: Wood Duck

Wing Case: Turkey tail or wing.

Body: Yellow Yarn

Rib: Peacock Herl

Hackle: Brown hen

Thread: Black

I think everyone is probably familiar with this old Smoky Mountain classic. The first trout I ever caught on a fly took a # 14 Tellico. I stopped using them for a time because the wing case kept coming apart after catching a few fish. I'm glad to say that I have figured out a way to prevent this. Take your turkey wing and spray it with Polyurethane. This will make it hard and durable yet flexible enough to work with. Spray polyurethane can be found in most any hardware store. Spray one side of the wing, let it dry (about 5 minutes) then spray the other side. Be sure to do this outside. Be sure to weigh the fly with lots of lead and fish it in deep pockets on a dead drift. Use a parachute Adams for a strike indicator and you've got a potent combination. See you at Rendezvous! BDB.

Check Off For Non-Game Wildlife

It's that time of year when the tax man cometh..... If you have a few dollars to spare, consider contributing a portion of your refund to the Wildlife Conservation Fund. Your tax-deductible donation will help fund projects for Georgia's non-game wildlife, including endangered species. Check off revenues in previous years have made possible more than 100 projects for non-game plants and animals such as the restoration of bald eagles and the protection of sea turtle nest. Look for the appropriate box on your tax form.



The next meeting of the Rabun County Chapter will be held on January, 17th at the Rabun County library. We will discuss final details for the Rendezvous and Kyle Burrell will give a short presentation on the management of brown trout in Wyoming rivers. Join us at 6:30 for the social and 7pm for the meeting.

* Whoops!!!

The printer messed up this month.... This should have been the last page. SORRY... Hope you enjoy the newsletter anyway.
Editor
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