



# **TIGHT LINES**

## **February 2026 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 website!



Now on Instagram!  
[@rabunchaptertu](#)

## **February, 2026 Rabun Chapter Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 17**

Meeting will be held at [Currahee Brewery](#), 93 West Savannah Street, Clayton, GA.

Fellowship starts at 6:30 pm, Program starts at 7:00 pm

### **“Wild Trout Management in North Georgia”**

**Presented by James Miles, Georgia WRD Region 2 Fisheries Biologist**

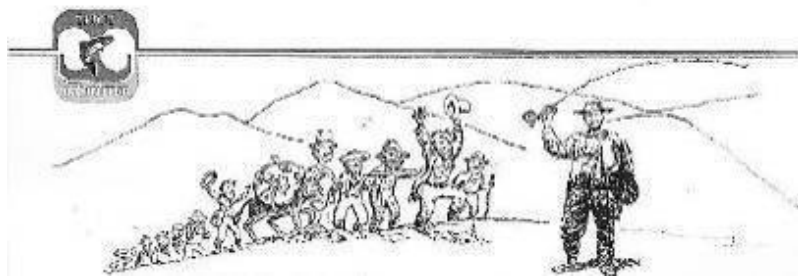
James is a native of Hays, NC and his passion for the outdoors stemmed from a childhood of hunting, fly fishing, hiking, camping, and snorkeling for aquatic species.

James received both his bachelor's and master's degree in biology from Western Carolina University. While in college, he focused his research on habitat requirements of rare and endangered fishes and mussels in the Little Tennessee River Basin. Prior to coming to the GA DNR, he worked for the National Park Service at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park doing trout monitoring and brook trout restoration work.



## **Important Upcoming Dates Mark Your Calendars Now!**

- **Saturday, February 7. 39th Annual Rabun Rendezvous.** Doors open at 4:30 pm. Rabun County Civic Center, 201 West Savannah Street, Clayton, GA. See pages 3-6 or contact [Ray King](#) for more information.
- **Tuesday, February 17. Monthly Rabun Chapter Meeting.** Currahee Brewing, 93 West Savannah St, Clayton, GA. Social starts at 6:30 pm, meeting starts at 7:00 pm. Program will be presented by James Miles, GAWRD Fisheries Biologist. Important: nominations will be taken on Chapter officer vacancies, with a vote to be taken at the March Chapter meeting. Contact [Tammy Hopton](#) for more information.
- **Saturday, February 28. Women's Fly Casting Clinic + Fly Casting Skills Development.** 10 am—2 pm. Cauley Creek Park, Johns Creek, GA. Hosted by the Georgia Women Fly Fishers, in partnership with the Southeastern Council of Fly Fishers International. See page 7 for more information.
- **Saturday, March 7. Annual Budget Planning Meeting.** Anyone can attend. 9:00 am Northeast GA Food Bank Community Room. Contact [Tammy Hopton](#) for more information.
- **Friday, March 13—Sunday, March 15. Trout Unlimited Southeast Regional Rendezvous.** To be held at the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly, Black Mountain, NC. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.
- **Saturday, April 11. Rabunite 101—An Introduction to Fly Fishing.** To be held at the Rabun County Recreation Center, Clayton, GA from 8:30 am—1:00 pm. \$25 per student. Contact [Charlie or Kathy Breithaupt](#) for more information or see page 8.
- **Saturday, April 11. Hoot on the Hooch.** Annual fund raising event for the GA Foothills Chapter. To be held at Helendorf Inn, Helen, GA. 5:30 pm. The winner of the 2026 Dream Trip Raffle will be announced. Contact Foothills Chapter President [Pat Berzsery](#) for more information.
- **Saturday, April 25. Blue Ridge Trout and Adventures Festival, aka Trout Fest .** Annual fund raising event for Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter, among others. To be held at Downtown City Park in historic Blue Ridge, GA. [CLICK HERE](#) or see page 10 for more information.
- **Wednesday, May 6—Saturday, May 9. Annual Rabun Chapter Spring Campout.** [Oconee State Park](#), Mountain Rest, SC. Make your own campsite reservations. We will use Site #93 as our gathering place for meals and fellowship. Contact [Terry Rivers](#) for more information.
- **Thursday, May 14. GA and SC Delayed Harvest Season Ends.**
- **Friday, June 5. NC Delayed Harvest Season Ends**



The Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited proudly presents  
A Celebration of Rivers, Streams, Trout, and Trout Fishing!

## Please join us for the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual **RABUN RENDEZVOUS**

*"The Rendezvous was unlike anything before or since, a gathering of uninhibited men down from the mountains. The event attracted perhaps a hundred mountain men, their Indian wives, and assorted visiting tribesmen. Amusements included gambling, drinking, storytelling – continuing day and night." Quote from [The Mountain Men](#), by George Laycock.*

**WHEN: Saturday, February 7, 2026.**

**WHERE: The Rabun County Civic Center**, located 201 West Savannah Street, Clayton, GA.

**WHO: Everyone! The more the better!** Anyone interested in conserving and protecting our cold-water resources, including their families, friends, and all who love cold streams, trout, and trout fishing.

**SOCIAL: Doors open at 4:30 pm.**

The Foxfire Boys will again provide their 'down home' style of bluegrass picking and singing for your enjoyment from 5:00 to 6:00 pm. CD's will be available for purchase.

Raffle and silent auction items will be available for your chance of purchase. We welcome donations of raffle and auction items!

**DINNER:** A variety of barbeque meats and delicious vegetables and deserts, all made by [Blue Hound Barbe-que](#), Dillard GA, will be served at 6:30 pm. It is a serve yourself buffet and you will not leave hungry! BYOB.

**ENTRY COST:** Advance ticket sales are \$45 for adults and \$20 for youth ages 5 through college, or at the door for \$50 for adults and \$25 for youth ages 5 through college. Advance sales may be made at <https://go.tulocalevents.org/71c306>. Cash, check, AMEX,VISA or MasterCard will be accepted at the door.

**LODGING:** Make lodging reservations on your own. [CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of Rabun County hotels.

The 2025 Rabun Rendezvous provided financial support for the following: GA Council Youth Trout Camp; Sponsoring youth to attend Trout Camp; GA Department of Natural Resources Smithgall Woods Conservation Education Program; US Forest Service Kid's Fishing Event at Tallulah River; Fly-Fishing 101 educational event; Helicopter stocking program; In-stream habitat improvement on a brook trout stream; Casting for Recovery; Fly Fishing for Vets; National TU's Youth Education, First Cast, Embrace-A-Stream, Griffiths Circle, and Southeast Lands program; and GA Council Conservation fund.



# Rabun Rendezvous

39th  
Annual

Saturday, February 7, 2026  
Rabun County Civic Center  
201 W. Savannah St., Clayton

Get your tickets online and  
save money!



Celebrating rivers, streams,  
trout and trout fishing

Doors open 4:30 PM  
Dinner, music, and  
silent auction following

\$45 per person  
\$20 ages 6-college

BYOB



More info at [rabuntu.org](http://rabuntu.org)





## **SAVE THE DATE – RABUN RENDEZVOUS!!!**

**Event: 2026 Rabun Rendezvous**

**Location: Rabun County Civic Center, Clayton, GA**

**When: Saturday, February 7, 2026**

**Time: Event begins at 4:30 pm**

Please join us for the 2026 Rabun Rendezvous at the Rabun County Civic Center in Clayton, GA. The Foxfire Boys will be in attendance providing their special brand of Bluegrass Music, great deals on items in the Silent Auction and Bucket Raffle areas great fellowship and good food!

### **MENU:**

Award Winning Blue Hound BBQ, Dillard, GA, will cater this year's event. Plan on enjoying:

**Pulled Pork, Sliced Turkey, Chopped Smoked Chicken**

**Collard Greens, Appalachian Soup Beans, Sweet Potato Crunch**

**Legendary Banana Puddin'**

**AND MORE!**

**BYOB.**

### **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

We need items donated to support the fundraising event, volunteers to help staff the areas and ensure a smooth event, and most importantly, **WE NEED YOU TO COME!** All the net proceeds go to fund Trout Unlimited activities. Funds are used to support stream conservation projects, youth education. GA DNR Kids Fishing Events, Casting for Recovery, Project Healing Waters and many other conservation efforts.

### **HOW CAN YOU ATTEND?**

Advanced ticket sales are available online at the TU Events Center:

<https://go.tulocalevents.org/71c306>

Adult - \$45.00

Youth, 6 thru current college student - \$20.00 (thru 23 Years)

Preschool Dinner, 5 & Under – **NO CHARGE**

**NO PAPER TICKET REQUIRED - PURCHASED ITEMS WILL BE LISTED AND REDEEMED AT DOOR!!**

Purchase at Door (Night of the Event)

Adult - \$50.00

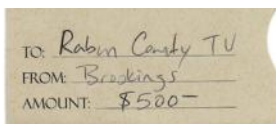
Youth, 5 thru current college student - \$25.00

Get your tickets early and join us for a great time!!

Ray King

Rabun TU Treasurer / Rendezvous Chair

## Scenes from Previous Rabun Rendezvous



### Rabun Chapter Caps Are Back!

Baseball-style caps in various colors with the "Rabun Chapter TU" logo will be available to purchase at the Rabun Rendezvous.

Cost is \$20 per cap.

Contact [Tammy Hopton](#) for more details.





The clinic will feature multiple FFI-certified instructors on-site, offering hands-on guidance, personalized feedback, and casting drills to help you hone your skills—whether you’re brand new to fly fishing or looking to refine your cast.

This event is part of FFI’s [Fly Casting Skills Development \(FCSD\) program](#)—an expanded and redesigned evolution of the Fly Casting Skills Challenge—created to help anglers build confidence, improve technique, and track personal progress in a low-pressure, encouraging environment.

After lunch, participants are invited to take part in the FCSD tryout with spectators welcome to watch and cheer everyone on. Participation in FCSD is completely optional and designed to be educational, confidence-building, and fun.

The \$15 registration fee includes lunch, instruction, and a raffle entry for a brand-new rod, reel, and line combo.

No supplies needed—just bring yourself and a good attitude!

Space is limited. Please register by completing the form and submitting your payment [here](#).

Best fishes,

Danielle Witt

GWFF Outreach





# FLY-FISHING SEMINAR

[www.rabuntu.org](http://www.rabuntu.org)

- *Ever wanted to try your hand at fly-fishing for trout but never learned the in's and out's of it?*
- *Ever wonder why some people seem to get so "hooked" on it?*

Now's your chance! The Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited is planning a half-day fly-fishing seminar for adults (male and female 16 years and older). The seminar will cover equipment, casting, knots and entomology (the bugs we imitate for fish to eat).

Instructors include local experts for a hands-on learning experience that will be helpful and fun.

**WHAT:      Beginning Fly-Fishing Seminar, aka Rabunite 101**

**WHEN:     Saturday - April 11, 2026   8:30 am until 1:00 pm**

**WHERE:    The Rabun County Recreation Center Upper Gym.  
On highway 441 near Rabun County Middle & High School complex.**

**COST:      \$25.**

**CHECK NEXT MONTH'S TIGHTLINES ON HOW TO  
REGISTER ON-LINE FOR THE CLASS.**



**"There is certainly something in fishing that tends to produce a gentleness of spirit, a pure serenity of mind."**

***Washington Irving***



## Tickets for 2026 Dream Trip are Now on Sale!

*Get your Dream Trip 2026 tickets and help support Georgia Trout Limited's Youth Education programs.*



### Dream Trip Grand Prize Fly-Fishing Vacation for Two

- Grand Prize Winner and Guest receive - Five days hosted fishing/six nights lodging in Idaho for two/July 19-24, 2026 plus \$500 total in travel expenses.
- Grand Prize Winner and Guest each receive: A float trip on the Madison River, *plus choice of*
- Winston AIR2 - 3 wt- 6 wt. or BILL-x 4 wt.-8 wt. fly rod. Fly reel with Scientific Anglers or Winston Energy Fly Line, a fly box and flies for the trip.
- Plus LOTS of runner-up prizes!

Get your tickets here: [GA Council of Trout Unlimited Dream Trip 2026 | Trout Unlimited](#)

Don't forget to designate Rabun Chapter as your sponsored chapter.

Winners will be announced at the Hoot on the Hooch, Saturday, April 11, 2026.

Celebrate Trout Fishing in the Trout Capital of Georgia ...

**9th Annual**

## Blue Ridge Trout & Outdoor Adventures Festival

10 am to 6 pm, April 25, 2026

Downtown City Park, Blue Ridge, Georgia



(01-09-26)



On April 25, 2026, 10 am to 6 pm, the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Blue Ridge Trout & Outdoor Adventures Festival returns to Blue Ridge, Georgia, and Fannin County – the *Official Trout Capital of Georgia*.

Fishermen, river sports enthusiasts and outdoor recreation fans and their families gather at Blue Ridge's downtown city park for recreational services, fun, food, activities, entertainment and shopping, while increasing the public's knowledge of trout and cold-water conservation associated with Trout Unlimited. Net proceeds of Trout Fest '26 support cold-water conservation, education, recreation and community awareness and outreach programs funded (in part) by the all-volunteer Blue Ridge Mountain Trout Unlimited #696.



Contact us:  
Bob Borgwat  
Event coordinator  
770-827-6657  
info@blueridgetroutfest.com  
[BlueRidgeTroutFest.com](http://BlueRidgeTroutFest.com)

Associated  
Event  
Partner



### MAKE IT AN ABOUT-TROUT WEEKEND!



**NEW! CATCH IT! ... ON FILM** – Blue Ridge Mountain Trout Unlimited and Blue Ridge Mountain Arts Association presents a selection of short films focused on local, cold-water environments – the fish, the fishing, the water and its secrets – of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Ticketed guests mingle from 5 to 7 pm, April 24, in the gallery while enjoying food, beverages, raffles and the camaraderie of the trout-fishing community, raising funds and building greater awareness for local cold-water resources. More info at [BlueRidgeTroutFest.com](http://BlueRidgeTroutFest.com).

### TROUT FEST '26!

**CAST-PADDLE-HIKE-CAMP-GOLF-RIDE-ART-LIVE MUSIC-CRAFT BEER-FOOD**

More than 4,000 visitors ... and the selection of exhibitors keeps growing!



**MORE THAN 130 EXHIBITOR SITES** present fishing gear/accessories, wildlife art/jewelry, outfitter apparel/gear, outdoor cooking, guided fishing services, and much more!

**Trout Fest Activity Zone opens up a world of outdoor fun** ... fly-casting, mountain biking, golf games, trout pond, crosscutting, gem mining and more!



### TROUT FEST '26 TAGGED-TROUT FISHING DERBY

March 27-April 25

Cash, awards  
& sponsored prizes.

More information  
[BlueRidgeTroutFest.com](http://BlueRidgeTroutFest.com)



Scan image  
to learn more



**Trout Fest Program Tents** ... Professionals reveal local trout fishing, mountain biking, hiking, paddling and more in Fannin County -- the *Trout Capital of Georgia*.

**Trout Fest Food Court** features new and returning vendors, and our Beer/Wine Garden will feature brews from Grumpy Old Men Brewing Company.

### AND TROUT FEST '26 PRESENTS IN CONCERT!



### ... FINISH THE FUN WITH A 5K RUN!



**THE TROUT TROT 5K** ... Enjoy a run or a walk on the picturesque course that takes you 3.1 miles through 2 states and the charming downtowns of McCaysville, GA and Copperhill, TN.

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 26 @ 6:30 PM

**WHAT:** 3.1 Miles, all paved (view more at [MapMyRun](http://MapMyRun))

**MORE INFO:** [TROUTTROT5K.COM](http://TROUTTROT5K.COM)

### TROUT FEST '25 PRESENTING PARTNERS



### The Ever-Best Festival Sponsorship Team





### ***Nominations to be Voted On During March Meeting***

The Rabun Chapter Board of Directors respectfully submits the following slate of officers to fill upcoming vacancies on the Chapter Leadership roster. Any Chapter member may nominate any other qualified persons to these positions. A vote for these positions will occur at the upcoming March, 2026 Chapter meeting.

<b><u>Position</u></b>	<b><u>To Serve Through</u></b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>
President	March, 2028	Jeff Durniak
Vice President	March, 2028	Peter Croes
Director	March, 2030	Trey McFalls

### **A "Thank You" Note from the GA Tech 5 Rivers Chapter**

Dear Rabunites,

We are reaching out today to sincerely thank you for your continued support of our students and our organization. Your donations allow us to expand the capacity of our events, helping us bring more & more young conservationists into the Trout Unlimited community. During our final exams back in December, we put your gear to good use on a local day trip. We have attached a few photos from that outing, including some of our members sporting those goodies (yes, even the Breithaupt's old waders!).

We also want to thank you for the role you have played in bringing the broader GATU community into the effort to support 5 Rivers programs across the state. The Rabunites have long been known for nurturing youth engagement through

programs like Trout Camp, and your early & ~~enthusiastic~~ enthusiastic support of our club has become a powerful model for other chapters looking to invest in youth programs themselves. We truly believe that youth engagement is vital to the future of Trout Unlimited, and from the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for uplifting us in that mission.

With gratitude, Tight Lines!

GT5R Executive Officers



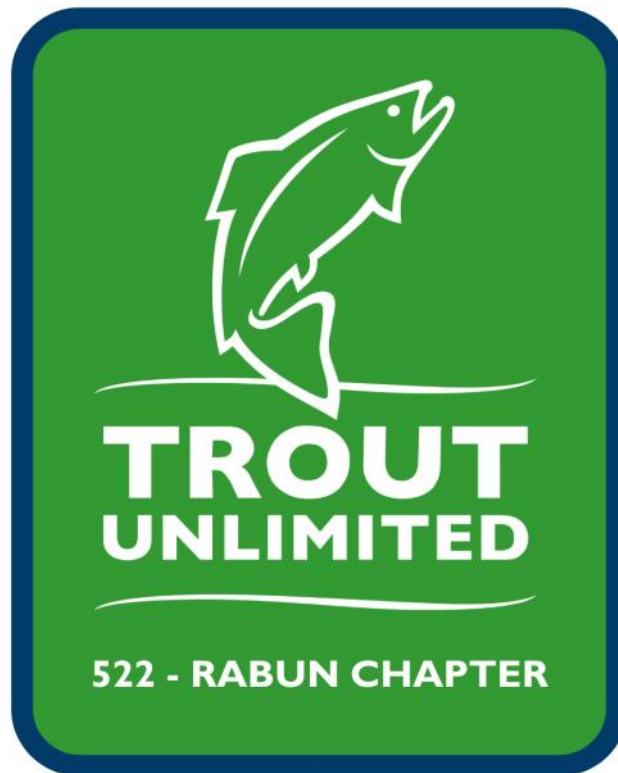
## **Rabun Chapter Membership Update**

No new members this month.

Current Chapter membership: 130 adult members and 1 youth member.

**You are Invited to Join Trout Unlimited!**

Click here [tu.org/join522](https://tu.org/join522) or scan the QR code below:



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO SIGN UP FOR  
A TROUT UNLIMITED MEMBERSHIP!**



## 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 and 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

## Fly of the Month

By Terry Rivers

**WD 40**

**HOOK:** #14—20 Scud

**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.

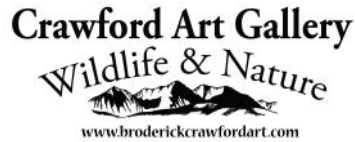
***See you on The River! Terry***



## Call for A Volunteer

The Chapter is looking for an Editor of the Rabun Chapter monthly newsletter, "Tightlines", effective April, 2026. Pat will make and mail the March newsletter, but we are looking for a new editor beginning with the April, 2026 newsletter. Contact [Pat Hopton](#) if you are interested.

## 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.**

## How to Connect With the Rabun Chapter TU

Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/rabuntu](http://www.facebook.com/rabuntu)

Follow us on Instagram at @rabunchaptertu

Check out our website at [www.rabuntu.org](http://www.rabuntu.org)

Have photos, videos or news to share with Chapter members? Send them to either [Jeff Durniak](#) or [Tammy Hopton](#).

To send an email directly to the Chapter President, use [rabunchapterprez@gmail.com](mailto:rabunchapterprez@gmail.com).

For postal mail, use PO Box 371  
Clayton, GA 30525

## Rabun Chapter Leadership Contacts

### Voting Leaders

[Tammy Hopton](#)

[Trey McFalls](#)

[Ray King](#)

[David Ruth](#)

[Jeff Durniak](#)

[Ray King](#)

[Mike Anderson](#)

[Rick O'Hara](#)

[Ken Kellerman](#)

[Jack Wintle](#)

Chapter President thru 03/26

Chapter Vice President thru 03/26

Treasurer

Secretary

Past President thru 03/26

Fundraising Chair

Director thru 03/26

Director thru 03/27

Director thru 03/28

Director thru 03/29

### Non-Voting Leaders

[Jerry McFalls](#)

[Pat Hopton](#)

[Pat Hopton](#)

Scouts Liaison

Tight Lines Editor

Memorials



## **Prez Notes**

Hope you all are ready for the Rendezvous! Ray has been busy finalizing the last minute details . Looks like the 2026 Rendezvous will be another great event that you should not miss.

We all have worked together to gather donations and spread the news so that it will be a great success. If you don't know, the money we raise will be used to continue our efforts in restoring and maintaining clean, cold water for trout habitat.

We also give funds to support other organizations like Casting for Recovery and Project Healing Waters. We support youth conservation education and encourage the love of all things outdoors through Smithgall Woods Education programs and Fishing Rodeos.

But how we support the 5 Rivers Clubs in Georgia has become one of our biggest successes. Thanks to the 5 Rivers leaders, these programs have grown tremendously! Rodney Tumlin and Jay Shelton were some of the early 5 Rivers advocates. I am sure there many others.

Last year the Rabun chapter budgeted \$500 for each 5 Rivers group. Jeff Durniak worked with all of the four 5 Rivers groups to use our funds to provide waders, boots and other fishing gear to add to their coffers. See page 10 for a Thank You note from the GA Tech 5 Rivers chapter.

The enthusiasm of these young people is very encouraging. If you get a chance to fish with them or have them help with a conservation project, you will get infected with their excitement too! I hope you have that opportunity.

Our fundraiser is coming up fast. You can help by providing donations; join us on Friday and Saturday to help with the set up; or volunteer to help during the event. Contact Ray to see where the biggest need is at this time.

Most importantly, come to the Rendezvous, bring friends and enjoy!!

See you on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Civic Center!

*Tammy Hopton, Prez*