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Coming Events - Mark Your Calendar

September 10 - CVTU's September fishing meet-up at Sycamore Park in Bristol. Created in the aftermath of devastating floods in 1998 on the New Haven River, Sycamore Park offers easy access to some great stretches. The 4:00 pm meet-up gives us a chance to get together for fishing and camaraderie.

October 13 - The Friends of the Missisquoi NWR are hosting its National Wildlife Week kickoff event Oct. 13 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the refuge. The day will center on their Walk for the Wild 5K Challenge, while bringing visitors out to the refuge to enjoy its trails and waters.

October 19 – CVTU will collaborate in our third annual tree planting/maintenance day in cooperation with the Lewis Creek Association, Oct. 19. Details will be posted on the web: www.vttu.org. Or contact Aaron Todd: atodd@vttu.org.

November 12 – CVTU Winter Speaker Series – Doubletree in Williston, Amphitheatre, 7:00 pm. Featured speaker will be biologist and author Declan McCabe (*Turning Stones*)

December 10 - CVTU Winter Speaker Series - Doubletree in Williston, Amphitheatre, 7:00 pm. Featured speakers will be Julie Butler and Dave Minkoff, experts from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Details for all CVTU events will be posted on the chapter's website, www.vttu.org, as well as on the TU Events calendar, and on the chapter's Facebook feed.

If there's something you'd like to see in a future issue of Stream Lines, whether it's a story in words or pictures, we'd love to hear from you. Get in touch with editor Rob Brown at rbrown@vttu.org.

Summer Deluges – Again

While the peak of summer generally brings warm stream temperatures and a slowing down of the fishing tempo, few anticipated a repeat of 2023's massive rainfall and subsequent flooding. Precisely one year to the day later – July 10 – the remains of Tropical Storm Beryl dumped torrential rains on Vermont. The NEK caught it again a few weeks later, marking the summer of 2024 as exceptionally challenging.

This time the worst of the floods hit the Northeast Kingdom, although rivers and streams overflowed throughout the region. In some places, well thought-out floodplain management efforts helped to mitigate damages downstream.



VT Fish & Wildlife Photo

Overall, though, the story was a repeat: a lot of water and destruction, followed by a lot of mud and more destruction, followed by a lot of muddy water.

Just as it will take time to repair and restore homes, businesses and roads damaged by the July storms, so too will it take time to for rivers and major streams to find the "new normal." Stream banks will have been re-shaped, and underwater structures may have shifted. Stream bottom material may have been redistributed, changing where and how we wade.

There's room for optimism, as some observers have found fish doing well in the floods' aftermath. Writing on his Maple Country Anglers website, local guide and CVTU member Ben Wilcox points out that higher waters have provided "more area for trout to spread out from one another. They are not confined to deep holes and springs and can occupy the entire river all summer."

He goes on to note, "High and dirty water also hide the trout from predators such as osprey and mink. Increased flows bring lots more food into the drift from dislodged earthworms and grubs to aquatic insects. Minnows and crayfish are easier for larger trout to prey upon in high stained water. In short, aside from surviving the short window of raging flooding, the fish are very happy and feeding heavily."

Informal streamside speculation suggests that trout fared well after last year's floods. Plentiful food helped more fish survive the winter. Ben Wilcox adds that the stormy weather may have had another benefit for the fish: "Fishing pressure was way down... because the average angler does not like to fish high flows or muddy water."

Chapter Notes

Special Thanks!

CVTU extends special thanks to Remo Pizzagalli and Peter Pizzagalli, of Pizzagalli Properties, LLC for their generous donation in support of Trout in the Classroom. CVTU depends on donors large and small to carry out our mission of conservation and education throughout the Champlain Valley. Thanks for your support

In Memoriam



We are sad to report the passing of long time CVTU member Dr. Thomas Clark. Many will remember Tom as an ardent supporter of our CVTU Chapter and our conservation mission.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends. Rest easy Tom.

--Janie Merola McKenzie

President's Message

As summer draws to a close, the nights are beginning to get cooler and the days shorter. I reflect on this summer and how Vermont had another challenging July with more flooding in our communities.

The work CVTU and TU does to help improve river habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms also helps make our streams more resilient to flooding and improve water quality.



Fall is my favorite season, with perfect weather for being outside. It's also a great time of year for planting trees. CVTU will be partnering with the Lewis Creek Association again this October for another tree planting along Lewis Creek so keep an eye on our events page. If you have never been able to attend a tree planting, I encourage you to do so. It can be a great opportunity to learn about a new place to fish and meet some great people.

CVTU is working on the calendar of events for the winter, so I hope to see our membership come out for one of our meetups or our winter speaker series. I am looking forward to meeting more of our membership this fall and winter at our events.

--Aaron Todd, CVTU President

*"Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in.
Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains."*

--Henry David Thoreau

Celebrating the Brewster River



Braving intermittent showers and lowering skies, CVTU volunteers joined with the Lamoille Country Conservation District to celebrate conservation efforts on the Brewster River at Smuggler's Notch on June 8. Staffing the CVTU tents were Aaron Todd, Dave Barch, Jake Holzscheiter and

Rob Brown. In addition to CVTU demonstrations, visitors saw presentations on electrofishing and toured dams along the Brewster slated for removal.

2024 Missisquoi River Fishing Festival

The 2nd Annual Missisquoi River Fishing Festival took place Saturday June 29, in Enosburg Falls. The festivities were a success in spite of the rainy weather. Brave folks who came out enjoyed the various stations, activities, including electrofishing, ecology, species ID, and fishing in the Missisquoi River--



all designed to encourage more people to connect with the rivers, fish, and wildlife traveling through our communities. CVTU volunteers, Don Tobi, Sarah Carther, Susan Carter and Nicky Paquette demonstrated casting, fly tying and knot tying. The Missisquoi River Fishing Festival was led by Franklin County NRCD, Champlain Valley Trout Unlimited, US Fish and Wildlife, VT Fish and Wildlife, Missisquoi River Basin Association, and the Enosburgh Conservation Commission.

--Nicky Paquette

TU Membership

Most CVTU events and activities are open to everyone, whether or not they're "official" members of Trout Unlimited. Still, one of the best ways to help advance our mission is to be a member! If you are a CVTU member – which you probably are if you're getting Stream Lines – you can help grow the organization by recruiting new members. Right now TU is offering a first-time introductory membership for half price – just \$17.50.

Membership information and links to new (and renewal) membership are on the CVTU website:

<https://vttu.org/join-tu>

Trout in the Classroom "Release Day"

"Release Day" is a happy capstone for nearly every TIC class. Last June we were privileged to join students from Charlotte Central School as they released close to 100 baby trout into the headwaters of Lewis Creek.

Thanks to Charlotte Central teacher Chris Evans for inviting us to witness the excitement, and for providing these pictures of Release Day!



The warm spring day was ideal for splashing. The release site, Cota Field in Starksboro, offered easy access to the stream along with lots of room for allied activities. Among the fun things to do was casting, using yarn-strung practice rods. Hopefully, some future anglers will come from the group!

Before releasing their fish, students dipped into the creek in search of macroinvertebrates – they all knew the big word and its relation to fish habitat – and spent time identifying their finds using anatomical charts. (They also got help from a couple of experts who happened to be there for the event, TIC directors Bob Wible and Ed Collins!)



It's clear to see from the students' response to Release Day the lasting impressions and varied learning experiences that come with their school's participation in Trout in the Classroom.

TIC continues to promote the Trout Unlimited mission: to care for the streams so future generations can experience the joy of wild and native fish.

Congratulations and thanks to Chris Evans, and to *all* TIC teachers throughout the region for their great work.



What's in the Word: Palmering

Back in the Middle Ages, religious pilgrims made harrowing journeys to Jerusalem. Crossroads and byways would sometimes attract scruffy-looking travelers who had been, or *claimed* to have been pilgrims to the Holy Land. They told wild, hair raising stories. And often, they were looking for a handout.



The symbolic palm leaves they wore, and as well the palms of their outstretched hands, gave them the name "*palmer*s."



Just as scruffy looking, ubiquitous and hungrily opportunistic as these medieval street people, fuzzy caterpillars were also termed "*palmer*s," or "*palmer worms*." And from this bit of history and medieval metaphor, a fly was born: even then, anglers knew that fish loved the critters.

"Palmer worm" fishing lures are described as early as 1651, by Thomas Barker in his *Art of Angling*. Wrapping a hackle feather in a spiral around a fish hook shank produces a spiny-furry effect that looks like a palmer-worm caterpillar. Over time, in the sort of linguistic process that turns nouns into verbs, "*palmering*" has stuck in the vocabulary of fly tying. --RB



Palmering a Woolly Bugger

Time to Step Up, and Wade In!

Your local chapter of Trout Unlimited continues because a handful of folks have volunteered over the last year and a half. Some serve as members of the CVTU Board of Directors, while still more have pitched in to help organize events, raise funds, and carry out our goals of conservation, education and advocacy.

We need your help to keep it all going. If you'd like to wade into the TU stream, and get involved with picking projects, planning activities and making it all happen, reach out to any CVTU Board member, or send an email to volunteer@vttu.org.

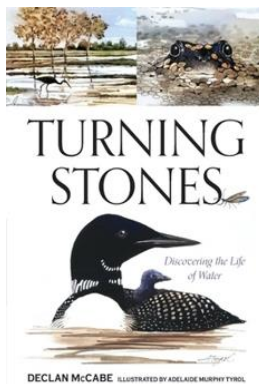
The CVTU Board meets online on the third Tuesday of each month.

CVTU Board of Directors

Aaron Todd - atodd@vttu.org, President
David Barch - dbarch@vttu.org, Vice President
Nicky Paquette - npaquette@vttu.org, Treasurer
Eileen Worcester - eworcester@vttu.org, Secretary
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Rob Brown - rbrown@vttu.org

Last Cast - A Genial Companion: Turning Stones, by Declan McCabe

While a TU chapter newsletter may be one of the last places you'd expect to find a book review, exceptional reads merit exceptional additions. Biologist and Saint Michael's College professor Declan McCabe is our featured speaker opening CVTU's winter series in November, and his book *Turning Stones* (Down East Books, 2024) belongs on your shelf.



The collection of 54 short essays forms a series of walks, mostly in the lower Winooski watershed, in which we're invited to observe, alongside a genial guide, the life in and around the water. The essays aren't lectures so much as they're reflections on questions. In each episode we can hear the leading voice of a master teacher: "What do you see? What do you make of it?"

Each little chapter is short – maybe a dozen paragraphs or so. They can be nibbled at leisure, or binged to satiation. Broadly arranged by flow and depth, they reflect on "turning stones" to see what creatures live beneath them. McCabe marvels at the engineering ingenuity of various caddis flies, and the mysteries of mayflies. It's solid macroinvertebrate biology, framed in the greater context of the stream, the landscape, the watershed and the future.



Declan McCabe

The pages are full of fascinating "Say, I never knew that!" revelations one might get from a friendly guide – or from an amazingly rich class. Consider midges – the non-biting *chironomids* that act as "trout candy" in the early and evening rises. McCabe and his SMC students have found them in every water body they've sampled. They're plentiful, and they continue to diversify.

In its last section, "What Lies Ahead," *Turning Stones* describes how good floodplains help to mitigate flood damage, why removing dams can fix many problems, but not all of them, and why leaving fallen trees in streams makes far more complex sense than the simple saying, "wood is good."

Alongside your collection of John Gierach, Lefty Kreh, Lee Wulff and Tom Rosenbauer classics, make room for *Turning Stones*.

--RB

Declan McCabe is an aquatic biologist and professor of biology at Saint Michael's College. He is a columnist for Northern Woodlands magazine, and a regular contributor to a variety of other publications. He will present at the CVTU meeting on November 12 at 7:00 pm, at the Doubletree Amphitheatre.

Featured Fly

by Jamie Eisenberg

Here is a streamer pattern I use a lot throughout the year. Great for tightline nymphing or just getting deep and not getting hung up as much! Can be dead drifted, stripped, swung and jigged (since it really is just a variation on a classic Woolly Bugger). Can be tied in all colors.



I tie this in black, olive, yellow, rust and white

Micro Jig Bugger

- Hook: Jig style #8-10
- Bead: Slotted Tungsten / silver, gold or black
- Wire: Non-toxic lead wire / halfway down hook shank
- Thread: Red 70 denier
- Tail: Arctic Fox fur (or long fiber rabbit from zonker strip)
- Rib: Silver wire / brassie
- Lateral line: Pearl mylar (or flashabou)
- Body: Micro chenille
- Collar: Rabbit zonker (or pine squirrel zonker) fibers in a spun dubbing loop
- Hot spot: Red thread



CVTU Board member Jamie Eisenberg is one of the area's leading guides and teachers. She also repairs rods and builds custom fly rods. Learn more on her web site: www.eisenbergsflyfix.com

