



Stream Lines

Champlain Valley Trout Unlimited



Spring 2024

In This Issue...

- Mark Your Calendar
- Chapter Highlights
- Special Thanks!
- TU Northeast Regional Rendezvous
- VT Trout Camp for Teens
- Trout in the Classroom
- Fly Tying – Gerry Herrera
- Spell Check: “Tier” vs “Tyer”
- President’s Message
- CVTU Online
- IF4 Film Festival
- CVTU on Lewis Creek
- Last Cast: How to Tell a Fish Story
- Featured Fly

Mark your Calendar

- **June 8** - Fishing on the Brewster
- **June 29** – Missisquoi Festival
- **Details on these and other summer events on the CVTU website:** www.vttu.org

Chapter Highlights

Changing the Guard:



The Chapter is pleased to announce that **Aaron Todd** succeeds **Ed Collins** as President, effective with the April start of the organization’s fiscal year. Aaron has served as Vice President for the past year, bringing fresh ideas and new energy to the post-pandemic renewal of CVTU.

CVTU President Aaron Todd

The chapter is grateful to **Ed Collins** for his leadership and guidance. While stepping down from the Board of Directors, Ed will remain active in the chapter, continuing to focus on **Trout in the Classroom**. Thanks, Ed!



President Emeritus Ed Collins



New CVTU VP
Dave Barch

CVTU also welcomes a new Vice President. Board member **Dave Barch** will step up to fill this leadership role, continuing his work in organizing community events. Thanks, Dave!

Members interested in leadership opportunities in CVTU are invited to get in touch with any Board member! We need people to help plan social, recreational and community service events, conservation projects, membership development, fundraising and more.

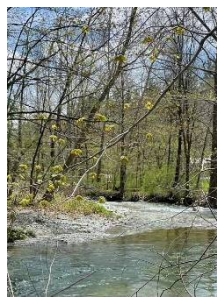
Special Thanks!

The Champlain Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited extends thanks to the Water Wheel Foundation



for a generous grant of \$1700 in support of Trout in the Classroom. Announcing the grant, the Foundation noted, “We are honored to be able to offer this donation on behalf of the members of the band Phish and their generous community of fans.”

TU Rendezvous – Batten Kill Festival



Like a confluence of two strong streams, the annual Batten Kill Fly Fishing Festival combined with the Northeast Regional Rendezvous of Trout Unlimited for a great weekend May 3-5 in Arlington, VT. The simultaneous twin events brought anglers and conservationists together on the banks of the legendary Batten Kill.

Hosts from TU’s Southwestern Vermont Chapter directed participants toward good spots along the Batten Kill and nearby tributaries for some excellent fishing. Meanwhile on Arlington’s town common, attendees gathered for socializing and informative presentations that included a keynote talk by Orvis “Chief Enthusiast” Tom Rosenbauer, along with sessions on conservation projects and TU membership engagement. Your CVTU board was well represented. Watch for ideas netted from the weekend in the year ahead.

Trout in the Classroom

In 36 schools throughout CVTU's three Vermont counties, tiny trout have been growing in anticipation of their Release Day.



CVTU archive photo

Often scheduled as a special field trip, Release Day is a special occasion in many of our TIC classrooms. Students gather on a stream bank designated in cooperation with state Fish and Wildlife staff and TU volunteers and then release their fish.

The young trout began their lives as eggs, obtained from a nearby hatchery. Under the watchful care of teachers and students, they have hatched and grown into fingerling fish. Release Day – a kind of graduation – marks their transition to the wild.



More significant than any supplement to the region's fish population are the teaching opportunities and learning experiences that TIC affords. Our Trout in the Classroom students, teachers and CVTU volunteers are grateful for the generous support of the donors whose gifts help to underwrite this important program.

Fly Tying Demo – Gerry Herrera

The Vermont Fly Gals/CVTU winter fly tying group had a special treat in March, a visit from master tyer Gerry Herrera. Gerry demonstrated a variety of big, spun deer hair creations with an awesome display of tools, materials and techniques.



Gerry Herrera



Cheers and a twirl of the rotary vise to Jamie Eisenberg, who organized the group and arranged for Gerry's demonstration.

(Photos by Eileen Worcester)

Vermont Trout Camp

The 12th Annual Vermont TU Trout Camp will take place June 23-27, 2024 for youngsters age 13-16, at Quimby Country in Averill, VT. Campers will be introduced to the basics of fly fishing through a series of fun and engaging outdoor activities, under the guidance of some of Vermont's most accomplished fly anglers and conservationists.

In addition to fishing skills and fish biology, campers will learn first-hand about conservation and issues facing our cold water fisheries. Campers will also have ample opportunity to test their newly acquired skills while fishing the upper Connecticut River and nearby ponds - hopefully catching lots of fish!



CVTU has pledged a \$1200 contribution in support of local teens attending this year's Vermont Trout Camp.

Spell Check: Tier? Tyer?

Plenty of arguments surround our passions and pastimes. We don't often see *spelling* controversies in the fishing community, but a couple of times last winter we (editorially) were asked about how to represent "persons who tie flies."



Some folks, including those who subscribe to *Fly Tyers Magazine*, are adamant that it's spelled with a "Y," and that's that. "Not so fast," say language historians. For centuries, someone who tied knots was a "tier," and any other spelling was regarded as a mistake. Merriam-Webster still dismisses "tyer" as a variant spelling. It wasn't until *Sports Illustrated* began writing articles for and about "fly tyers" in the late 1970's that the currently-favored spelling really took hold.

It would be simpler if we chose to "tye" our flies. But mostly we haven't done that since the dawn of modern English. Dame Juliana Berners, the 15th century fishing nun, suggested that for "a good sporte" the angler "**tye the corde to a gosse fote**" – apparently a medieval version of a dry dropper using a live goose as a sighter. (*Juliana Berners, "Treatyse on Fysshynge wyth an Angle," 1498.*) Dame Juliana would have liked "tyer."

Because the word "tier" (pronounced "teer") also denotes levels or steps, we lean toward the new standard. From here on, *Stream Lines* will go with the editors of *Sports Illustrated* and *Fly Tyer*, and continue to celebrate our "**top-tier tyers**" in CVTU.

--RB

President's Message

Now that winter has passed, everything is sprouting with new life, green and lush, filled with optimism and promise. We had a great turnout for the International Fly Fishing Film Festival in March. I am filled with optimism that CVTU will be able to continue its mission to conserve, protect and restore the cold water fisheries in Northwestern and Central Vermont.



Trout in the Classroom will be wrapping up by releasing their trout in local streams, and we should thank all of our volunteers and teachers that make this program possible. Also students aged 13-16 can still apply to the Vermont Trout Camp this summer to experience four days of fly fishing, entomology and cold water fisheries management in Averill, VT.

The Trout Unlimited Northeast Rendezvous came to Arlington, VT the first weekend of May. This was a great opportunity to learn about different programs TU is doing and how we as individual members can contribute to both our conservation mission for cold water fisheries in our area and how to help to educate the next generation of anglers.

It coincided with the Batten Kill Fly Fishing Festival and I had the opportunity to listen to Tom Rosenbauer speak on his 12 step program to improve your angling. There was a lot of great advice in his presentation but two things stuck with me. The first is to not get stuck in a rut always using the same tactics. Trying something different will help make you a better angler and help you expand your toolkit. His last step really stuck with me, he said "practicing catch and release does not make you a conservationist." I really hope that you will be able to join CVTU for one of our education or conservation events this summer.

--Aaron Todd, CVTU President

CVTU Online

The CVTU website, www.vttu.org, continues to offer news and useful resources to chapter members and the public. Whether it's mapped locations for upcoming events, links to stream and weather data, or listings of the chapter's friends and partners, you'll find it online. If there's something you'd like to see, or if you'd like to help evolve the website, drop a note to webmaster@vttu.org.

Lewis Creek

For the third year in a row, CVTU helped put "boots on the ground" in cooperation with the Lewis Creek Association. Gathering at the Hinsdale Property in North Ferrisburgh, volunteers went to work inspecting, reinforcing, pruning and planting trees on a critical section of river bank.

The project highlighted the chapter's goal of working in partnership with other organizations and agencies to improve and preserve the quality of streams and habitat in our tri-county watersheds. Additional tree plantings may be planned in the fall.



Photo by Aaron Todd

Called "Sungahneetook" by the Abenaki, Lewis Creek rises in Starksboro and wanders for 33 miles through areas of Addison and Chittenden counties on its way to Lake Champlain. Between several good-sized waterfalls, the creek meanders through a variety of woodland and open fields. Water quality and habitat are challenged by the usual combination of agricultural runoff and development. Since 1990, the Lewis Creek Association has worked to restore and revive the stream and its banks.



archive photo - Lewis Creek Association

Known to local anglers for its spring steelhead run, Lewis Creek also offers early-season smallmouth bass. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department typically stocks the upper reaches with brown and brook trout.

International Fly Fishing Film Festival

CVTU's "cold season" 2023-24 calendar wrapped up on a high note with the screening of nine fishing adventure films at the Essex Cinema. More than 200 members and friends turned out for the show. The strong turnout, coupled with the generosity of sponsors **Lake Champlain Ferries** and **Precision Chiropractic**, made the fun event a significant fundraiser for the chapter, supporting its programs and member services throughout the year.



A packed house at Essex Cinema

(IF4 Film... continued)

In addition to cinematic pleasures, the event provided an opportunity old friends to get together, and for folks to take chances on a bevy of bucket-raffle prizes – both long-standing CVTU traditions!



Friends get together at IF4



Lucky Winner Ted Yates, with raffle prize "Clyde"

Last Cast...

"How to Tell a Fish Story"

Everyone who has gone to the water's edge, and gone and gone again has heard them. The luckiest have heard them from an older generation, or perhaps from someone made iconic by years of experience and fish-wisdom. Fish stories shape our angling habits, and link us to a world far greater than ourselves.



Sometimes tagged as exaggeration and outright fibs, fish stories have a bad rap. But the best fish stories tease the hearer to that willing suspension of disbelief. Good fish stories always carry a measure, or at least the illusion of truth, enough to tempt the hearer to imagine what just might have been.

You begin a good fish story with what's knowable, if not what is actually known. "My cousin Dave and I were knee-deep in the upper Lamoille" has the appearance of truth. You won't know Dave, but I'm right here sitting across from you. And the Lamoille, well you know where that is, even if you haven't fished way upstream above MoVegas. Assuming an easy familiarity helps, too.

(continued...)

A good fish story begins in the ordinary, presented specifically, though without spoiling things by giving away the point of the story - or the fishing spot. "We were on a stretch, just a ways above Elmore Brook, and Dave - he was working his way around a sweet little hole where that big black ash went over into the water a couple of years back. Or it might have been a swamp oak. I don't know. Anyway, it was raining a little."

It's best not to get too technical. It doesn't matter that Dave was tossing a number 16 Pale Olive Distelfink with a butt-heavy 4-weight. No, it's enough to say that he was swinging a fly through the raindrops toward the head of the pool, when he felt a tug at the seat of his pants. There now. As a fish story teller, you set the hook.

"Dave turned and looked down, and saw that there was a big green wooly bugger hooked on his rear, with a long tail of heavy leader... tailing away from *his* tail to the tail of the pool." It might help the tale at this point if things got a bit worse, since you want to keep both the listener and cousin Dave on the hook. So to speak. "Well. The rain started coming down harder, and harder. And we could hear thunder in the distance."

"Dave hollered out that he was stuck, and I started working my way down toward him. Just then there was this incredible bolt of lightning below us. And there in a split second, there was Dave, silhouetted against the flash. And rising up out of the water below the pool was the biggest brook trout you ever saw... with the end of that leader clamped in its mouth and wrapped around its tail, hauling like mad trying to bring Dave in."

You know that the whole thing sounds preposterous, but that's how it is with a fish story. You wouldn't believe it. You couldn't believe it - if you hadn't seen it yourself.

Just like I did, that day, on the Lamoille, with my cousin Dave.

--Rob Brown



Brewster River

In the catalog of Vermont trout streams, the Brewster River probably doesn't appear near the top of anyone's list. It's relatively short, rising in Smuggler's Notch and flowing north to the Lamoille River in Jeffersonville. Nonetheless, the Brewster River is home to wild and stocked brook trout, along with other reported species. It has some lovely, easily walkable trails, and includes some dramatic waterfalls along with runs and pools. CVTU is working with the Lamoille Conservation District and Smugglers Notch Resort to help remove dams on the Brewster. There will likely be future tree plantings, too.

CVTU members will take part in a gathering and celebration of the Brewster River on Saturday, June 8 – an event that coincides with Vermont's Free Fishing Day, when folks can fish without the need of a fishing license.

Check the CVTU website – www.vttu.org – for details.



Missisquoi Fishing Festival

The Missisquoi Fishing Festival is happening June 29th in Enosburg Falls. It's a family event - an opportunity for people of all ages to share their love of the water and learn more about fishing. The Saturday festival runs from 10 am to 1 pm, at the Missisquoi River Access on St. Albans Street – just off Pearl Street – Vt. Route 105, in Enosburg Falls.

CVTU members will join the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other partners, hosting stations where attendees can learn about and practice casting, knot and fly tying, species identification, sustainability, ecology, and of course fishing! The Missisquoi Fishing Festival aims to encourage more people to connect with the rivers, fish, and wildlife in the area our communities.

Organizers add that there will be a raffle with prizes and food for sale!

Watch the CVTU website for details.

Featured Fly

This issue's fly comes from **Jamie Eisenberg**, and from a trout's perspective, it looks delicious.

It's a variation on a classic Pheasant Tail Nymph.



Pheasant Tail Nymph Variant, by Jamie Eisenberg

Here's the recipe:

Hook: 1x long nymph hook #14 - 18 (barbless)
Thread: Red 8/0 or 70 denier
Rib: Red UTC Ultra wire (Brassie)
Tail and Body: Pheasant tail fibers / brown (approx 6)
Thorax: Pheasant tail Ice Dubbing
Legs: Pine Squirrel / tan (dubbing loop)

Jamie adds: I use the Mark Petijean dubbing clip and CDC Clip to make the dubbing loop. Cut off a 1/4" section of pine squirrel. Grip the hide in one clamp, then use the other to measure the length of leg desired. Cut off the hide and discard. Use minimal squirrel fibers to make a spun dubbing loop and create the legs (or collar).

--Jamie Eisenberg



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