



Stream Lines

Champlain Valley Trout Unlimited



Fall 2024

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Mark your Calendar

December 10, 7:00 pm in the Amphitheater at the Doubletree, Williston Rd. - Speaker: Julie Butler, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Tuesday January 14, 7:00 pm, at The Overland Shop, Essex Jct. - Speaker: Mark Wilde, FFI Certified Casting Instructor – also, **CVTU TAG SALE**

Tuesday, February 11, 7:00 pm at The Overland Shop, Essex Jct. - **Guides Night!** Meet with area fishing guides and learn about angling opportunities in the upcoming season

TBA – March 2025, - **2025 International Fly Fishing Film Festival**

Help CVTU Clean Out the Storage Locker!

CVTU will hold a **Tag Sale** at our January 14 gathering at the Overland Shop in Essex Jct., featuring a varied collection of fishing and fly tying items found, kept, donated and left over from a decade or more of chapter storage. Don't miss this opportunity to scoop up a bargain or two. Cash or PayPal only – proceeds benefit CVTU projects and activities.

New Meeting Space for January-February

CVTU member Jesse Smith will provide a new space at The Overland Shop in Essex Jct for chapter events that require a lot of open area. The space is large and high, with ample room for January's casting demonstration by Mark Wilde, and room to meet with numerous guides on Guide's Night in February.

The Overland Shop is located at 10 Corporate Drive in Essex Junction, off Allen Martin Drive, which is off Route 15 - Jericho Road. See the map on the Events page of the chapter website, www.vttu.org/events for directions. Thanks, Jesse!

Annual Fundraising Raffle

TU gatherings often feature our popular "bucket raffles," but this is something extra special! At the March screening of the 2025 IF4 film festival, we'll be drawing for TWO amazing prizes. Tickets will be on sale throughout the CVTU winter season, in person at all of our Winter Series events, and from designated Raffle Team members. Proceeds from the Annual Fundraising Raffle support CVTU activities, including conservation, education, and community projects.

Topping the list is a **3-day/2-night fishing holiday for two at Quimby Country**, for more than a century one of the region's premier fishing lodges. Quimby's cabins are nestled at the side of Forest Lake, which is well-stocked with brown trout and trophy rainbows. In addition, it's only a fifteen-minute walk from Quimby Country to Great Averill Pond, a premier destination for lake trout. Fishing opportunities abound in Quimby Country.

This is a three-day, two-night stay. It includes the use of boats and facilities. A continental breakfast is provided.



This year's fundraising raffle also includes a **deluxe, custom-built fly tying station**, donated by Steve Bushey, a master tyer who, sadly, has had to retire from the craft. We'll have this amazing setup on display at upcoming CVTU winter events.

Tickets for the Annual Fundraising Raffle will be on sale for \$10 each at all CVTU events. They can also be obtained from CVTU Board members. Email treasurer@vttu.org for information.



Winter Fly Tying Classes

Local guide, fly tying guru and CVTU member Jamie Eisenberg will lead winter fly tying classes again this year, at two different skill levels.



The “Introductory” class for beginning tyers covers basic fly-tying tools and techniques. Each week students will be shown a different fly pattern and be given instruction on how to tie it during the session. All tools and materials will be provided, as well as “recipes” for each fly that will be tied. Students will be able to keep any flies that they tie during the session. Fly patterns will include streamers, wet flies, dry flies, and nymphs.

The “Next Level” course covers advanced fly-tying tools and techniques. Fly patterns will include streamers, wet flies, dry flies, and nymphs with advanced techniques such as parachute posts, dubbing loops, quill bodies, saltwater flies, spinning deer hair, etc.

Participants should bring magnification glasses (readers) whenever possible.

Jamie’s fly tying classes are offered in two separate programs, at two different locations:

Sunday afternoon sessions will be held at the **United Church on Park Street in Underhill**, from January 12 through March 16. The “Beginners” group will meet from 2:00 to 3:30, with the more advanced “Next Level” group meeting from 4:00 to 5:30. There will be a \$50 donation for 10 weeks or \$5 per session, cash only. All money collected will go towards materials and the balance remaining will be donated to the church for the use of the space.

Jamie will also teach fly tying classes sponsored by the **Essex Junction Recreation and Parks department, in the Aspire building at Maple Park**. Beginner sessions will run on Saturdays from 1:00 to 2:30, January 11 through March 1. Next Level classes run on Mondays from 6:30 to 8:00, January 13 through March 3. Cost for either Essex Junction class is \$165. Register on the [EJRP web site](#).

CVTU member Jamie Eisenberg is a longtime fly fishing guide, expert tyer, custom rod-builder and master teacher, based in Underhill as [Eisenberg’s Fly Fix](#).

Special Thanks

CVTU extends special thanks to member Larry Bruce for his generous donation in support of chapter projects and activities. Thanks too to member Peter Shea, for donating copies of his *Atlas of Vermont Trout Ponds* in support of membership recruitment.

CVTU – On the Water

Fall Fishing Meetup – New Haven River

CVTU members met at Sycamore Park in Bristol on a beautiful September afternoon. Like all streams this fall, the New Haven River was quite low, and participants generally reported that the fishing was much better than the catching. Fellowship was excellent, though, and several folks continued the event afterwards at one of Bristol’s welcoming restaurants.

Thanks to CVTU member and local guide Liz Orr for her help in making the meet-up happen!



CVTU anglers on the New Haven

Tree Planting – Lewis Creek

Volunteers from CVTU and the Lewis Creek Association joined forces in October to plant trees along a meandering stretch of Lewis Creek in Hinesburg, as part of ongoing efforts to improve and maintain water quality and wildlife habitat.

Partnerships like this further the Trout Unlimited conservation mission, and help to make our home waters more resilient in the face of climate-driven challenges. Our partners and members help to identify locations and issues where we can work together to make a difference in the health of our home waters.



Lewis Creek Association file photo



Brewster River Stream Science

Harper Ruderman, of Stow Massachusetts spent Labor Day weekend helping Champlain Valley Trout Unlimited conduct a stream survey on the Brewster River. Harper, A senior at Nashoba High School, previously completed an Entomology course as an elective and attended the Roger Williams university Marine Biology Camp this summer.

With the help of CVTU volunteers, Harper conducted stream sampling beginning downstream of Route 15 up to above the Morse Dam Reservoir. The sampling included water temperatures, nitrate levels (NO₂) (NO₃), salt levels, and macroinvertebrate sampling. Water temperatures were very consistent throughout the river, from 61 degrees downstream of Route 15, to 59 degrees above the Morse reservoir. Nitrate tests were negative in the lower stretches of the river but were not conducted in the upstream sections due to the negative results. The salt levels were also low, with levels at 15 – 16 ppm near Route 15 and 10 ppm at the mid-section of the Brewster River.

The macroinvertebrate sampling was Harper’s favorite aspect of the sampling. “I think people should have more interest in bugs. There is such a wide variety of insects, and they are an important indicator of the environmental health of a river.” She collected stoneflies, dragonflies, and dobsonflies larvae in her sampling.



“I would like to return in several weeks to spend more time sampling to see if we can find greater numbers or a wider variety of macroinvertebrates,” says Harper. She also thought it would be beneficial to conduct another assessment of salt levels in the early spring to measure potential salt runoff.



Harper also spent some time fly fishing the Brewster River, conducting an informal brook trout survey.

Story and photos by Dave Barch

Trout in the Classroom

In schools across the region tanks are being set up, filled with water and brought up to standards of temperature, aeration and temperature in anticipation of another season of Trout in the Classroom. CVTU sponsors more than 40 installations in Chittenden, Addison and Franklin Counties, providing deep and far-reaching learning opportunities for students classrooms ranging from elementary schools to high school Advanced Placement sections.



Trout in the Classroom is a many-hands project. CVTU volunteers provide support and assistance to teachers - the primary TIC facilitators. In Vermont, Trout Unlimited’s “TIC” program is supported by partners the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, “VINS” for short, and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. VINS provides teacher training and organizational structure; Fish and Wildlife provides eggs from its hatchery in Salisbury along with technical advice; TU secures grants and donations, and recruits volunteers to help make it all happen.

As this edition of Stream Lines is readied for distribution, brook trout eggs are being nurtured at the hatchery, where they will be counted, packaged and prepared for distribution by CVTU’s TIC team in early January.



Within a few weeks, the eggs will hatch into “alevins” – immature trout – which will grow until they “swim up” and begin feeding as trout “fry.” Teachers and students continue to monitor and maintain the tanks as the fry grow to “fingerling” size, at which point the fish are released at carefully selected locations.

While TIC fish do wind up in area trout streams, leaders emphasize that it’s not a stocking program. Instead, Trout in the Classroom exists to teach important lessons about healthy streams and human stewardship of our precious resources.

Unlike fish being raised for statewide stocking, the eggs raised by TIC come from a strain of brook trout originating in Rome, NY, selected for hardiness and adaptability to the needs of the classroom program. The TIC fish are raised as “triploids,” a genetic process that renders them sterile in order to minimize their impact on wild populations they’ll mingle with.

If you’d like to join the TIC Team, contact Bob Wible (rwible@vttu.org) or Mark Manley (mmnley@vttu.org)

President's Message

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-Aaron Todd, CVTU President

CVTU Meets

The winter season kicked off with a solid turnout November 12, at the Doubletree Hilton meeting space. Featured speaker Declan McCabe presented highlights from his book, *Turning Stones*, a collection of essays based on his study of our homewaters in the Champlain Valley. The Saint Michael's College biologist cited trees as the most important contributor to healthy and productive trout streams. Not only do they provide cover and shade that keeps the water cool, but a diverse population of trees produce leaves that feed the crucial aquatic invertebrates that in turn feed the fish.



The Winter Speaker Series continues in December 10, with US Fish and Wildlife Service scientists Julie Butler and David Minkoff speaking at the Doubletree on Williston Road. January and February gatherings will move to the more wide-open space afforded by The Overland Shop, at 10 Corporate Drive in Essex Junction. There, FFI Certified Casting Instructor Mark Wilde will offer a demonstration on January 14, and on February 11 CVTU will present a Guides Night, featuring an array of fishing guides from around the region. Details on Winter Speaker Series events, along with directions to each venue AND a look at the great Annual Raffle prizes can be found on the CVTU website: www.vttu.org

Get involved with CVTU

It's great to be a member of a local organization that promotes things you care about and activities you enjoy doing. Why not be more involved with your Trout Unlimited chapter? Here are ways you can step up and pitch in:

- Come to CVTU-sponsored events, such as fishing meet-ups, our Winter Speaker Series and more
- Take part in CVTU-partnered conservation projects. Help with tree-planting, clean-up and other conservation activities, usually on selected weekends in the fall and spring.
- Become a CVTU "Stream-bassador" for your favorite stretch of home water, alerting the Chapter to events, issues and conditions you observe, and helping to organize a CVTU meet-up at a suitable gathering spot. Contact CVTU Vice President Dave Barch (dbarch@vttu.org).
- Join the Education Team for Trout in the Classroom. Represent TU and provide occasional support to participating classrooms throughout our region. There's probably a TIC school near you! Contact Bob Wible (rbwible@vttu.org) or Mark Manley (mmanley@vttu.org).
- Help out with CVTU working committees:
Fundraising – contact Catherine Todd (ctodd@vttu.org)
Communications – contact Rob Brown (rbrown@vttu.org)
Membership – contact Dave Barch (dbarch@vttu.org)
Finance – contact Nicky Paquette (npaquette@vttu.org)

Why not help put the "U" in CVTU!

Cyber Tackle? – And One Great Idea

Unlike anglers of old, few of us venture forth without packing along our trusty cell phones. These ubiquitous devices have become true multi-function tools, capturing pictures of our catches and – when the fish aren't biting – of breathtaking fishing spots. They let us call a to buddy a half mile upstream, for a reservation as the sun goes down, or for help in an emergency. They're a map and a compass, even a flashlight. They're another darn thing to worry about dropping in the stream. And many of us wouldn't leave home without them.

Enter **Fishbrain**, **TroutRoutes**, **onWater**, **Fishing Spots** and other apps that claim to make the ancient art of fishing easier and more hi-tech. Most of them offer basic mapping function free of charge, and then add special features for an additional price tag. Some of those extras can be useful, adding information about stream temperatures and flow, and showing locations of public and privately owned access points. Some apps identify species likely to inhabit each body of water, with some going so far as to classify streams by their likely productivity.

Cyber Tackle, cont'd...

Some of these apps serve as a kind of anglers' social media, inviting users to share photos and details of their catches. Critics argue that such features encourage overfishing and, at worst, large scale spot-burning. In their fully featured "pro" versions, these apps can be pricey, charging subscription fees of up to \$80 a year.

One of our favorite apps is free. It won't find fish, but it can help build a big picture of our waters by collecting key data. The **TU RIVERS project** lets anyone with a cell phone record observations, mapping a wide range of disturbances on the streams and ponds we visit. Whether it's a relic dam, a problem culvert, an eroding bank or a gravel deposit, a documented observation can be mapped and cataloged for effective action planning. The RIVERS project uses the free **ArcGIS Survey123** app, and doesn't require a login. After installing Survey123 and adding TU's RIVERS survey, users can record data and post photos wherever they see disturbances. The information can then be retrieved to help prioritize conservation projects. Watch for more information on how you can take part in the RIVERS project in future newsletters and on the CVTU website.

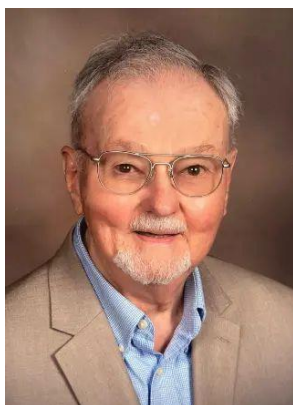
In Memoriam



Alan Holcomb - We were saddened to share the news of Alan's passing in October. Alan was a long time supporter of our Chapter who always generously supported our activities and fund raisers.

His love of fly fishing and generosity in sharing his many gifts with others will be remembered. We will miss you 'Flyologist'. Rest easy old friend, we'll see you downstream.

-Janie Merola McKenzie



Ed Schirmer - Edward "Ed" Francis on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at the age of 93. Upon retiring from IBM, Ed turned his passion for fly fishing into a business when he founded Schirmer's Fly Shop. He meticulously ran his business — offering fishing equipment, custom fly rods, fly tying lessons, and guide services — for over 30 years.

Last Cast: Angling Art and Forbidden Flies

I was fishing with my cousin Dave on a beautiful late-spring morning, the kind of day when fishing is akin to poetry. The water was cold and clear, the air was sweet, and the stockies were still just a little stupid. It was a perfect day for gently lofting pretty Catskill dries on the end of a gossamer tippet. Y'know, *fishing*.

Just as my fly settled ever so gently on the surface, a guy came clambering down the bank. With a short syllable of greeting, he took a mudworm out of a yogurt cup, skewered it on his hook and chucked it in below where my Tinkerbelle Adams was finishing its elegant drift.

I looked toward Dave up at top of the run. We shook our heads and reeled in. While the worm guy was tossing his third fish — or maybe it was the fourth — into a plastic bucket, we walked back to the truck to start looking for a more secluded spot. We didn't say much, though Dave reflected that "there ought to be a law."

For the most part there isn't. Fish and Wildlife takes the position that if someone has a fishing license, pays attention to special restrictions and stays off posted property, it doesn't usually matter what's on the end of the line. (Let's be clear, there really *are* some of those restrictions — read the regulations!)

As fly fishers, we sometimes get a little snobby. For those of us who prefer fishing with style, guile, and a fortune's worth of fancy gear, the idea of offering trout a helping of raw meat is unsettling. It's just barely above using dynamite, we say. We tell ourselves that if fishing was supposed to be that easy, anyone could do it. Fly fishers pride themselves on doing it the hard way, because it's elegant, poetic and *cool*.

The *super* fly fishers, folks who compete in Olympic-style tournaments that follow the rules of *La Fédération Internationale de Pêche Sportive Mouche*, have very specific limitations. According to the official rulebook, *...artificial flies made of moulded/shaped plastic, silicone or rubber are banned. (Includes moulded/shaped imitations of worms, eggs, baitfish, maggots, twisters...)* In other words, if you're fishing in a FIPS-Mouche competition, leave the Squirmy Wormies at home.

To be fair, the folks who fish in that league have uncanny, superhuman skills that enable them to reliably pull trophy trout out of a highway pothole. So banning wiggly-gummies may give their fish a sporting chance.

Even though he only rarely winds a garden worm on a hook, calling it a "dirt-nymph" or a "ground-hackle," my cousin Dave knows that taking less than a purist's approach to fly selection can sometimes offer the best chance to catch fish. Worms made from Koosh toys, larvae made from wet mops, and eggs fashioned from goodness-knows-what may offend some sensibilities. But it's good to remember that they're "forbidden" *because they work*. Dave and I could grumble about the worm guy jumping in the hole we were fishing, but there was no faulting his technique. We got skunked that day — unusual for Dave, at least. But the dude with the "uncouth" bait? He caught a *lot* of fish. -Rob Brown

Featured Fly

By Jamie Eisenberg

One of these days the water will eventually get high and dirty, so having a worm pattern in your fly box can really pay off. I know that the "Squirmy Wormy" has been very controversial, and lord knows I want to stay out of any arguments about the integrity of a fly pattern. What I do know is that I really don't like using or tying with squirmy worm material... It's difficult to work with and will "melt" eventually in your box. So, this pattern has been a great solution. Give it a twist... "literally"!

DNA WORM (Devin Olsen)

HOOK: Wide gap nymph or curved scud
BEAD: Slotted tungsten - copper
THREAD: Red
BODY: Life Flex (spandex rubber leg material) Use 2 colors (pink & red, red and tan, etc)



1. Get the bead on the hook about 1/4 from the hook eye



2. Tie in 2 pieces of Life Flex by the tips



3. Twist about 4 times and fold back twisted section back and tied in behind the bead



4. Wrap back behind the bead a few times and then "jump" the thread and then the Life Flex in front of the bead. Repeat the process and tie off in front of the bead. Whip finish and cement.
image.png

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHAPphiYiNU&t=13s>



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

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