

CALENDAR

Next Meeting
7 October
7:30pm on Zoom

The Chapter Meeting will be hosted on Zoom at 7:30 pm starting with our guest speaker and followed by Chapter business. To participate in the meetings you must register. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing instructions and the confirmation number needed to join the meeting. See the website for the Zoom link.

October

7 October
7:30 Virtual Member Meeting

14 October
7:30 Virtual Board Meeting

November

4 November
7:30 Virtual Member Meeting

11 November
7:30 Virtual Board Meeting

December

2 December
7:30 Virtual Member Meeting

9 December
7:30 Virtual Board Meeting

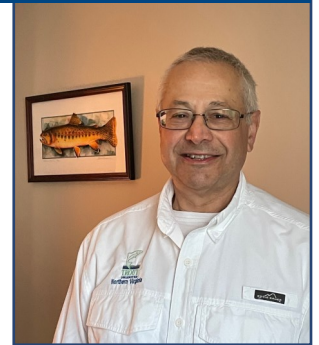
FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

It's been an eventful summer for all. Again our plans have been overrun by events. With the resurgence of Covid, the board has decided to not hold in-person indoor events for the foreseeable future. We have held and continue to plan outdoor events with some precautions added.

The chapter continues to hold our regular meetings using Zoom, with great turnout for the interesting speakers we've had. We are lining up more speakers to present on topics we think you all would like to learn more about.

George Paine, the leader of our Trout In the Classroom (TIC) program is preparing to provide trout eggs for the 20 schools that participate in TIC. That program is I believe, the best example of what Trout Unlimited can do to teach the next generation about clean water and protecting the environment.

NVATU will again have an end of year fundraising appeal, please consider NVATU when planning your year end giving. The money raised helps support : Trout In the Classroom, "Kid's Fishing Days" in several of our communities, TU Tri-State Conservation and Fishing Camp for Teens, Casting For Recovery, Project Healing Waters, The Mayfly Project, NVATU Family Fishing Day, Stream Girls and our new project with Thomas Jefferson High School for Science.



--Tony Hill

NEW MEMBERS

June 2021

Nicholas Tucker	Great Falls
Jon Barry	Reston
Cataldo Giuliano	Leesburg
Jonathan Campbell	Arlington
Donald Crate	Fairfax
Michel Joseph	Alexandria
James Nelson	Arlington
Anne Gilbride	Alexandria
Paul Howerton	Woodbridge
Peter Halpin	Arlington
James Barr	Burke
Joseph Mikrut	Clifton
Phillip Sturgill	Alexandria
David Nadasi	Annandale
Tom Newell	McLean
Shelley Rodgers	Alexandria
Anthony Wiest	Woodbridge

July 2021

Michael Gabbay	Herndon
Corbett Ekonomou	Arlington
N Bayert	Woodbridge
Jason Vanlandingham	Ashburn
Jon Scott-DeLeon	Alexandria
David Burpee	Springfield
Anthony Garrett	Springfield
Phillip Noack	Alexandria
Elena Parkin	Herndon
John Spicer	Ashburn
Omid Khonsari	McLean
Matt Kozak	Sterling
Hiroaki Suzuki	Vienna
Logan Wright	Herndon
Tom Puderbaugh	Vienna
Michael Kyle	Woodbridge

August 2021

Michael Lawless	Leesburg
Ray Vanden Berghe	Springfield
Dylan Hitt	Arlington
Christopher Buchen	Fairfax
Charles Rowe	Great Falls
Robert Sabo	Arlington
Charles Fletcher	Fairfax Station
Kenisha Houston	Arlington
Richard Weiss	Alexandria
Gary Carsten	Reston
Lisa McKenna	Arlington
Thomas Baltazar	Herndon
Edward Braese	Montclair
Ed Cantow	Arlington
Michael Milano	Alexandria
Ryan Hindman	Alexandria
David Wisniewski	Arlington

July 31, 2021, Conewago Restoration Workday

Northern Virginia TU (NVATU) Chapter members Carl Jordan, Jay Lovering, Matt Kozak, Bob Krieger, Don Grattan, Chris Rich, Scott Russel, Daniel Lazenby, and two non-member volunteers Marcus Jackson and Bill Lottins gathered at the Rockwell Lanes parking lot. There we met up with 27 Adams Count TU (ACTU) volunteers and three Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) staff.

Introductions were made then Gary Perry and Dave Swope gave a quick briefing about the days' work which included repairing a mudsill and preparing the ground for planting the riparian buffer; PFBC installation of a new habitat improvement device; installing a toe wall above the gazebo; cutting back weeds and invasive rose bushes along the creek banks; grooming social trails to the creek along the 1-mile-long access road;

cutting a new social trail from the road's terminus towards the cable marking the start of the catch and release fly fishing only section. Dave announced Bobcat of Adams County donated the use of a Bobcat front loader and digger for the day's restoration work.



Gary and Dave broke the 37 volunteers into land-based and water-based work teams, assigned tasks, and distributed tools. Work teams began arriving at the gazebo

around noon and took the opportunity to meet, chat with other volunteers, and gain a new fishing partner. At about 12:30 PM all work teams had arrived. Dave took a few moments before the cold lunch was served to update everyone on the Conewago Access Project and there will be a 40th ACTU-NVATU Partnership Anniversary in 2022. In the shade of the gazebo and trees people gathered, chatted, and enjoyed their lunch. Jay shared with NVATU non-members, visiting Conewago for the first time, the history of the gazebo, the memorial bench, and the NVATU-ACTU partnership.

A big shout-out goes to Bobcat of Adams County. Without their support, we could not have accomplished our restoration workday goals.

A special thank you to our first-time restoration volunteers Marcus, Matt, Bill, Chris, and Bob.

-- Bob Krieger

Crooked Run Beer Release Event - 24 July 2021

After a little over a year of isolation, the Northern Virginia Chapter, began looking for a way to bring chapter members back out into the community. Tony Hill, NVATU chapter president, identified a local brewery: Crooked Run Fermentation (CRF), to see how we could collaborate on an event.

Crooked Run Fermentation was identified as a possible partner based on their reputation as a champion for operating as an environmentally conscientious business. They source much of their ingredients from local producers. They give back to the community: sending the mash remains from boiling off the grains to a local farm for feed. And, most significantly, they recycle and repurpose as much water as possible—it takes a lot of fresh water to make their products and they recognize the value of cold clean water.

Tony and Scott Allen, NVATU VP, spoke with the CRF Head Brewer, McKinnen Leonard, and agreed to collaborate to brew "Let it Fly" lager. Both McKinnen and the lead brewer for the lager, Logan Wright, are outdoor enthusiasts and fly fishers. About a month before the release, Tony and Scott were invited to "help" with the brewing of the beer. The lager was ready for canning and kegging three weeks later. The can sported a unique 'fly' design along with our chapter logo on it.

To commemorate the release of the lager, CRF provided private space in their Barrel Room and the adjacent outdoor space for socialization, thirst quenching, eating, and activities. On Saturday, 24 July, CRF hosted the chapter, along with our family and friends. Activities included: Target & Distance Casting in the outdoor space, Indoor PractiCaster Challenge, and a Fly-Tying Challenge. CRF provided swag for those that proved up to the challenges. At the event, Logan got on his phone and in less than a minute became a TU member, taking advantage of the free introductory membership as a veteran. The event and experience of the collaboration was, by all accounts, a huge success.

Crooked Run Fermentation's commitment to a lasting relationship with NVATU is evident in their actions: The are donating ten percent of the proceeds of the sale of Let It Fly Lager to the chapter, they are offering a 15% discount to TU members on beer and merchandise, they have plans to brew the lager twice a year, they want to get their employees involved with the chapter's conservation projects, and they have become a TU business partner.

This collaboration is a model by which any chapter can use to engage the community to the mutual benefit of both the partner business and chapter. We are already considering future events with CRF, to include fly tying and member meetings. We look forward to collaborating with CRF for a long time.



Brew Day: (top row--Cody, Tony, Logan; bottom row—Ryan, McKinnen, Scott) / Can Logo / Banner & Swag

--Scott Allen

Show your TU Membership Card to receive 15% off Beer and Merch at both Crooked Run Locations

COMMUNITY—CONSERVATION—EDUCATION

40th Anniversary Celebration

On Sunday, 26 September, members and their families celebrated 40 years as a Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Over 60 Attendees enjoyed a day of fishing on Cedar Creek at Double Spur Outfitters. At noon, lunch was served. Following lunch, Tony Hill made a few announcements and then a drawing was held for raffle items.

- - Scott Allen



Lunch has been served and it's time for the raffle!



Bob Parsons showing how its done



Tony Hill addressing the attendees



The OG: Peter Cary, Scott Russell, Terry Lowe, Bob Krieger, Carl Jordan

WE ARE ASKING FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Each year, we ASK each of our members to make an Annual Supporting Contribution (“ASK donation”) to help sustain our Chapter’s continuing financial obligations for operating and administrative expenses and ensuring we can continue to contribute to and support our activities.

Annually, our Chapter’s operating expenses include monthly meetings (currently via Zoom), publishing our monthly newsletter “Troutline” (a valuable tool distributed to local fly shops to help attract new members), and maintaining a web and social presence. Programs and activities we support through our three pillars: Community, Conservation, and Education include supporting Casting for Recovery, Project Healing Waters, and May Fly Project, supporting other TU chapters for stream restoration on waters we fish, funding Trout in the Classroom programs, Save our Streams programs, Boy Scout merit badge, and Stream Girls, and contributing to the Tri-State Conservation and Fishing Camp.

We hope you consider donating to ensure that NVATU can continue to carry out its role in our community as the vibrant focal point for

fly fishers in supporting TU’s mission. Donations can be made to the general fund, which is distributed across all of the Chapter costs or donations can be earmarked to support specific activities. To earmark all or a portion of your donation, just add a note along with your donation.

Your donation is tax deductible. Download the form on the website, or request the form with your check as a record of your donation.

Contributions by Credit Card (through PayPal) or by PayPal can be made on our website at:

<https://www.novatu.org/donate>

Contributions by check can be made out to NVATU and sent to:

Northern Virginia Chapter of Trout Unlimited
PO Box 3592
Oakton, VA 22124

FISH WITH A MEMBER

OCTOBER



Smallmouth Trip to N. Fork of the Shenandoah — Virginia

When: Saturday, October 2

Depart: 8:00 a.m.

Return: Whenever

Meet: Starbucks at 12957 Fair Lakes Shopping Center, Fairfax, VA 22033 ([map](#))

We've planned a fall trip in hopes that the river will be free of algae plus the park brookies have had a tough summer. The quarry will be smallmouth bass. Wet wading is an option so bring both waders and wet gear. This trip require cautious wading due to irregular bottoms, as well as silt and algae so cleated boots and wading staffs are suggested.

You can almost always get away with a short fly rod, but when there is room to cast (and mend line) a longer rod is a significant advantage. I like a long 6 weight rod. A heavy rod allows you to toss heavy streamers and sinking leaders. Stay flexible, however, and carry a floating leader. Streamers to imitate hellgrammites and bait fish are my go-to. Top water bugs work well as well as nymph imitations, my favorite being a Zug Bug.

-- George Paine

NOVEMBER

Rose River — Virginia

When: Saturday, November 6

Depart: 8:00 a.m.

Return: You decide

Meet: Starbucks at 12957 Fair Lakes Shopping Center, Fairfax, VA 22033 ([map](#))

This freestone stream runs through the Shenandoah National Park and wild Brook Trout are the target. We will be going to the lower park boundary. Please park as close to the park gate as you can. The land owner that shares this road has a bit of a temper and has been known to express himself freely with those he thinks are parking too close to his property. As always, be respectful of all land owners. Being a good fisherman means being a good neighbor as well. If you see some trash out it might earn you some points with him if you take the time to remove it. Carpooling also cuts down on the number of cars.

The Rose River is one of the streams that fall under the SNP Brown Trout removal program. In an attempt to return the Rose and other streams to pure Brook Trout streams, the SNP made it illegal to return any Brown Trout to the river. Any Brown over 7 inches must be harvested. Any Brown that is less than 7 inches must be discarded away from the stream and trails. There are still some ill feelings about this regulation, but as conservationist and sportspersons we don't pick and chose the rules we follow.

Recommend light rods and short leaders for this stream. A 7' 4-weight rod is more than enough. If you decide to use a longer rod, select one with a mid or full flex. This will allow you to load the rod with as little as 6-8" of fly line extended beyond the tip. With clear water use the finest tippet material you can see. Casts are generally short, calling for a rod that can roll cast well. Like many of the Park's streams, the Rose is mostly pocket water. A shorter leader, 5-6' long with 18-24" of tippet material, works well for the shorter casts and drifts. The stream is shallow enough in most places that you can get away with hip waders. Ants and beetles (especially Harry Murray's deer-hair or foam beetle) always do well. A #14, #16, or #18 Blue-Wing Olive, or "Wulff" dry-fly patterns work well. Elk Hair Caddis and olive nymphs are my favorites.

-- George Paine

DECEMBER

Rapidan-Staunton Rivers — Virginia

When: Saturday, December 4

Depart: 8:00 a.m.

Return: Whenever

Meet: Starbucks at 12957 Fair Lakes Shopping Center, Fairfax, VA 22033 ([map](#))

We will fish the Rapidan/Staunton near Graves Mill near where the Rapidan leaves the Park. Make sure you have a current Virginia license, and remember this is a catch and release only stream.

I like anything that imitates a little black winter stonefly, like an Orvis Look-Up ant. If you nymph, a size 14 or 16 Hare's Ear, flash-back Pheasant Tail, and Prince nymphs, fished deep and allowed to tumble along the bottom, or a soft hackle fished on a swing will usually take fish.

Short rods, 5x or 6x tippets, and hip boots will be all you need to fish this stream. Waders will keep you warmer. The terrain can be steep at times, so I suggest packing light and bringing some water to keep you hydrated. A backpack can slow you down, so if you can fit lunch and water in your vest or on your belt you'll be able to wade and fish more efficiently.

-- George Paine

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

OCTOBER SPEAKER



Raising and distributing trout throughout the Commonwealth, the Virginia Stocked Trout Management plan, and the Trout in the Classroom Program

Jason Hallacher is a District Fisheries Biologist for the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. His district covers the Shenandoah Valley from

Winchester to Lexington. He focuses mainly on managing warm water rivers and small impoundments, but also assists with coordinating trout stocking and the Trout in the Classroom program. His talk will focus on how the VDWR hatcheries raise and distribute trout throughout the Commonwealth, the Virginia Stocked Trout Management plan, and the Trout in the Classroom Program

The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. As before, registration information will be sent to all members.

NOVEMBER SPEAKER

Presentation about some of the trout habitat restoration work that Piedmont Environmental Council has been involved in

October Greenfield joined PEC's staff in September 2021 as the Wildlife Habitat Restoration Coordinator. Her work includes executing a diverse portfolio of wildlife habitat restoration projects, leading community-based conservation efforts, and promoting landowner engagement. October has worked on a variety of research projects, studying species such as peregrine falcons, red-headed woodpeckers, American kestrels, barn owls, and more. She has extensive experience in environmental education for all ages. October grew up in southeastern South Dakota and graduated from South Dakota State University with a B.S. in Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences. She completed a Master's degree in Global Sustainability from Virginia Tech in 2021



The Piedmont Environmental Council is leading a regional initiative of conservation organizations, federal

agencies, and the Virginia Department of Transportation to restore and reconnect habitat for the Eastern brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) and other aquatic organisms in headwater streams that border Shenandoah National Park. We are working to improve stream health and connectivity by removing or replacing culverts in the upper Rappahannock watershed with more wildlife-friendly versions. So far, we have reconnected 20 miles of stream habitat for the brook trout and other native wildlife!

The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. As before, registration information will be sent to all members.

DECEMBER SPEAKER

Fishing in Alaska

If you have ever even thought about fly-fishing in Alaska, you don't want to miss NVATU's December meeting presentation. Jason Rockvam, Alaska lodge owner and fly-fishing entrepreneur, will be joining to educate and discuss the following essential topics to consider when planning your trip:

A general overview of fly-fishing in Alaska: Destination Options and Selection, Peak Fishing Seasons, general gear selection and trip duration. How Alaska was affected by Covid-19, the current state of travel to Alaska and things to consider when traveling in the future.

Jason will also discuss the state of salmon fishing in Alaska, challenges to the salmon fishery, and conservation efforts by TU and others.

A general Q&A session to follow for those eager to seek more informative resources on fly-fishing travel to and within Alaska.



The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. As before, registration information will be sent to all members.

2021 VIRGINIA COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of TU's Virginia Council was held virtually on Saturday September 18th. Much of the discussion during the meeting centered on the presentations by Seth Coffman and Keith Curley of TU about VA stream projects and the expected effect of TU National's updated strategic plan on Council activities. Two action items resulted from this discussion. One was forming a workgroup whose goal is to design and deliver training to teach our members (and perhaps others) how to identify and document barriers on our aquatic corridors. The second action item was to form a Priority Waters work group whose mission is to work with national TU staff (Seth Coffman) to develop a Priority Waters plan for Virginia. The Priority Waters group will need to complete its task by early in 2022. The timing for aquatic corridor barrier training is less well defined.

Another time critical item discussed was the Section 401 Water Quality Certification process for the Mountain Valley Pipeline's proposed construction activities in SW Virginia—including crossing Big Stoney Creek in Giles County. There is a public hearing on this application scheduled for September 28 in Radford. The New River Valley chapter will be working with Jen Orr-Greene of TU National to make our concerns known. This stream is in a Karst region, which makes an underground pipeline crossing a threat to that Class A trout fishery. The public comment period extends through October 27th.

It was also agreed at the meeting that the Executive Committee will work with the Treasurer to determine how best to handle some of the monies in restricted funds accounts in the Council treasury. An example is some funding received from national TU for the TIC program that was not spent the past two years because of COVID.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Council workgroups or if you have questions for the Virginia Council, please contact Jim Wilson (jhw210@juno.com).

-- Jim Wilson

October: Mini Bugger



Originator: Lance Putney, Arlington, VA.

This is my favorite “go to nymph” for stocked trout, pan fish, and small mouth bass and one I teach to scouts earning the Fly-fishing merit badge. It is basically a small bead-head Woolly Bugger without palmered hackle. The standard pattern that was given to me on Four Mile Run in Arlington

VA in 2002 had a gold bead head, olive chenille body and a black marabou tail with some Krystal flash, but I’ve had good luck with an all-white version and an all-black version too. I think the smaller size, which probably is seen by the trout as a crayfish, leech or minnow, when used on smaller streams doesn’t scare the trout as much as a big Woolly Bugger hitting the water. Who knows what the trout really thinks but this fly really works. After not knowing who the unknown fisherman who gave me the fly was in 2002 I finally met him at Anglers Lie in October of 2007. Lance told me that his inspiration for developing this fly was to use

up some left over egg hooks from a fishing trip in Alaska. He also told me that he has also uses any bushy dubbing in various colors (drab olive works best) as the body and they work well too.

This is a very easy and quick fly to tie; so if you want to try your hand at tying a fly this is a good one to start with.

Tying techniques to be learned:

- * Fixing a bead head onto the hook
- * Tying in a marabou feather tail
- * Using Krystal-Flash to add accent to the tail
- * Using various colored chenille for a body

Recipe:

Hook: TMC 105 # 8, #10 or any Egg Hook (or use any size 12 hook)
 Head: 5/16 Gold Bead Head (can go up or down a size if you want)
 Thread: Black 0/6
 Tail: Black or other color Marabou and Krystal-Flash or some other synthetic material
 Body: Olive, Black, White or any other color small chenille, can also use bushy dubbing (leave in guard hairs) in a variety of colors.

Fishing Technique: Dead drift with an indicator then drift with short strips. If you are getting hits from fish nibbling on the tail, but no hookups, trim the tail.

November: Griffiths Gnat



Originator: George Griffith, one of the founding fathers of Trout Unlimited.

A must have addition to your fly box and one I use most for winter fishing. The fly imitates an adult midge or a cluster of midges.

Techniques and materials to be learned:

- * Making peacock herl bodies
- * Palmer hackle

Recipe:

Hook: Standard 1X Dry, sizes 14 – 22, TMC 100 or 101

Thread: Black or Olive, 6/0, 8/0

Rib: Fine gold or copper wire, optional but helps bullet proof the wraps of peacock herl and hackle

Body: Peacock Herl – three or four pieces of herl, snap weak tips off strands

Hackle: Grizzly - palmered

Tying Tips:

- * Lay down tight wraps of thread from the head to the hook bend, tie in optional gold or copper wire
- * Tie in Grizzly hackle at the bend with the bottom, dull, concave curve side of the hackle facing forward so that the

individual barbs curve forward when the hackle is wrapped around the shaft. After wrapping the peacock herl wrap the hackle with about 1/16” separation between wraps; basically following the wraps of the bundled peacock herl.

- * To help “bullet proof” the peacock herl loosely wrap the bundle of herl with three or four wraps of thread and then pull the wrapped herl over the top of the hook and work forward to just one eye width of the eye, tie off and cut off excess (save herl if it is long enough to tie another fly)
- * Counter wrap (opposite direction from the herl wraps) the gold or copper wire from the bend forward to one eye width from the eye, tie off, wrap and head and tie off with a whip

finish or two half-hitches.

- * Google search or go to <https://howtoflyfish.orvis.com/fly-tying-videos/dry-flies/730-griffiths-gnat>

Fishing Tip: This is my best winter fly for brook trout on the Shenandoah National Park streams. Please stay off the loose gravel in the streams, which may contain eggs of future brook trout from mid-October until March. Cast to the head of a small pool, mend to prevent drag, and dead drift the length of the pool. On a large pool, cast first to the lip, to the sides, in front of boulders, and over submerged ledge/shelf rock formations, and then finally to the head of the pool on either side of the plunging water inflow and in the back eddies.

December: Copper John



Originator: John Barr of Boulder, Colorado in 1996; Rated The 25 Greatest Flies of All Time (#16) by Field and Stream 2009.

The Copper John is a wire-bodied nymph, with a bead head and lead weight that sinks rapidly to get to the bottom where the fish are. This is not a hard fly to tie but

takes some time as it has several materials and steps to finish it.

Techniques to be learned:

- * •Attaching a bead head
- * •Tying on split biots tail
- * •Wind on a copper wire body
- * •Using peacock herl to form the thorax
- * •Using Partridge feather for legs
- * •Using thin skin for a wingcase with a Flashabou accent
- * •Using 5 minute Epoxy finish

Recipe:

Hook: Standard 1X Nymph Hook #12 to #22, TMC 5262, 5263

Head: Gold Bead Head, sized to match hook size

Thread: Black 6/0, 8/0

Tail: Goose or Turkey Biots, Brown or Black

Body: Copper wire or optional colored copper wire, red, green or black

Thorax: Peacock herl, two or three strands; optional ostrich or dubbing

Legs: Partridge, soft hackle or from hen back

Wingcase: Thin Skin with Flashabou center strip and Epoxy finish (turkey feather optional)

Fishing Technique: In moving water dead drift within a few inches of the bottom with or without an indicator then drift with short strips. In calm water cast past the target area, let sink to near the bottom, strip to bring the nymph to the surface and then let sink again; repeat until you cover the target area. Target fish: primarily trout but works on many other species too.

Angling on the Elk

While totally cliché, one can't help but hum at least a few bars of John Denver's iconic song, "Take Me Home, Country Roads," while heading to "Wild Wonderful West Virginia."

Although Virginians and West Virginians still (often heatedly) bicker about some of the song's lyrics, especially whether some place names are in one or the other state--or both, West Virginia is rural and beautiful.

Despite this, I hadn't ever fished in the Mountain State, so after getting "jabbed," I set about righting this grave, inexcusable fly fishing wrong.

Since I'd skied there before, the area around Snowshoe (Ski) Resort seemed like a good place to start my research. It also gave me an idea of how far the drive would be from NOVA—about four hours.

I rang up Gil Willis at Elk River Inn & Cabins (elkriverwv.com) to get the skinny on the local fly-fishing scene, his guide services, and how my timing might be for a mid-June visit to Pocahontas County.

Gil told me that his place is at Slaty Fork, which is in the heart of the Monongahela National Forest--and that the nearby Elk River provided some terrific trout fishing. The Cranberry and Greenbrier Rivers are also close.

He also advised me that with a local base elevation of about 2,500 feet and with some decent rain, fishing on the Elk could be great through the summer.

Gil also noted that while West Virginia is well-known for its stocked trout, it had some great wild trout spots as well, especially for browns.

He didn't disappoint.



With a limited window away from home, I planned to arrive at Slaty Fork in the afternoon to fish the evening. I'd follow that with some angling the following morning before heading home.

Carl Calabro would guide me.

We met at the Elk River Inn at 5:00 PM and within minutes we were gearing up in the parking lot of the Slaty Fork section of the upper Elk River. We hit the trail along the old railroad tracks and headed downstream.

This section of the Elk River is known to be more technical than other stretches. The target this evening was wild browns with a long leader attached to a dry-dropper rig on a 4-weight rod.

The highlight of the evening was clearly running that set-up at a 20+ inch brown in shockingly fast, skinny water. Carl said finding big trout in that sort of water isn't uncommon on the Elk.

With a high canopy and the sun setting, the light was beginning to fade when I ran the tandem flies through a chute between the rocks into a small, shallow-ish, but fast-moving pool.

The first time I ran the flies through, I spied a large shadow quickly turn on the rig. Carl and I looked at each other wide-eyed and gasped, "Whoa!"

The second time, the brown followed before eating hard on the third attempt. The fight was fast and furious, but unfortunately the brown won after abrading the 6x leader on a slate-like rock in the run.

I did mention that this section was tougher, didn't I?

The Sulphur hatch was also on thick that evening, but I failed to connect. I was trying to try and cover a lot of water and if I'd taken the time to throw on a Sulphur emerger, I probably would've scored.

The next morning, we hit the lower Elk River below where it goes subterranean through limestone caverns for some five miles before surging above ground again at a trout-pleasing temperature and pH.

The game that morning was stocked rainbows using nymphs under an indicator or Euro nymphing. A bit surprising, considering my skills, but I quickly netted a 14-inch wild brown on the Euro set-up.

I later landed a 16-inch stocked rainbow and what-could-have-only-been a wild 16-inch 'bow, judging by the natural, unworn appearance of its fins.

The lower Elk is also wide open to the sky and the sight of the river against the lush, leafy Allegheny mountains is breathtaking. If it weren't so green, you'd think you were out West somewhere in the Rockies.

My time on the Elk was too short considering the vast fly-fishing opportunities. I would've liked to have spent more time on slinging dries and streamers at the local salmonids.

With year-round hatches—from midges to stones to caddis—and with the possibility of bringing browns, brookies, 'bows and golden (rainbow) trout to the net, there's a lot more fishing to do.

No surprise that I recommend hitting those (country) roads to West Virginia—with or without John Denver—to wet some fly line on that "Almost Heaven" Elk River fishery.

--Pete Brooks



Dr. Peter Brookes is a DC foreign policy nerd by day and an award-winning Virginia outdoor writer by night. Brookesoutdoors@aol.com

**WANTED
Bug Counters**

A critical component of NVATU's education program is assessing the health of our local streams. One approach to this assessment is macroinvertebrate sampling that is typically done twice each year. Whether you are a biologist with macroinvertebrate knowledge or a flyfisher interested in knowing what that fly at the end of your line is supposed to imitate, please join us as a volunteer and we will help you learn about the creatures in our streams and assist you in becoming certified.

Your involvement is essential to the success of our data collection in support of our youth education program. Please contact rparker@novatu.org if you are interested in being involved.

MEMBER PHOTO ALBUM



Dave Swope (ACTU) & Jay Lovering (NVATU)



Jay, ever the vigilant supervisor

During the July 31st Conewago Creek restoration workday lunch, Dave Swope, Treasurer, of Adams County TU presented Northern Virginia TU past president Jay Lovering with a token of appreciation for Jay's 39 years of advocacy and support for the ACTU-NVATU Conewago Creek Restoration Partnership.

--Daniel Lazenbey



MAILING ADDRESS:
Northern Virginia Chapter
Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 3592
Oakton, VA 22124

CHAPTER WEBSITE:
www.novatu.org
contact@novatu.org

Go to the Chapter Website for information on chapter activities and to sign up for a full year of TU member benefits including: TROUT magazine, discount on travel and fishing gear, opportunities to win trips prizes, and more. Be sure to specify Chapter 360

KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST CHAPTER HAPPENINGS ON FACEBOOK:



www.facebook.com/groups/334014474470

VA STATE TROUT UNLIMITED



WEBSITE:
www.virginiatu.org



NATIONAL TROUT UNLIMITED WEBSITE:
www.tu.org



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