



Blue Ridge Chapter, Trout Unlimited Winston-Salem, North Carolina

January 2011

Winter Fishing Tips

Mike Davis, Chapter Vice President and Education Chair

I love winter fishing and although it can be less productive, it's a good medicine to ward off the winter blahs and you can't beat the quiet of fresh snow in the woods.

- Streams in winter tend to be clear and very cold so it's best to slow everything down.
- Definitely leave the pink Orvis shirt at home and wear your camo since the lack of leaf cover will require you to be more stealth. If you do happen to be out during deer season be sure to wear a blaze orange hat or vest. Stealth is good but not worth getting shot over.
- Sometimes there may be a warm snap or warm rain and that's a good time to fish
- Fish the slack water, eddy and pool edges, the trout will not be in those riffles or swift water like they are in the warmer months.
- Water temps above 40° are fine but once they get below 40 the trout metabolic functions really slow down. I've caught trout under 6" of ice on a lake so it's not impossible, just tougher.
- Depending on the temps and stream you may find ice flows in your water. Be careful as even a thin piece of ice several feet wide can knock you off balance. I try to keep an eye upstream for ice flows, logs and anything other flotsam that might knock me over.
- And definitely dress appropriately, bring a change of clothes and know how to recognize hypothermia!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan 18 – Chapter Meeting: Al Kittredge, Smith River guide

Feb 26 – Conservation Banquet

Keep up to date with events at our website:

www.blueridgeTU.org

2010-2011 Chapter Leadership

Officers:

David Richards, President
Bob Lassiter, Sec.
Peter Lloyd, Treas.
Peter Lloyd, Past Pres.
Mike Davis, VP

Board Members:

Brandon Frakes
Scott Larsen
Robin Searight
Jayne Sommer
Tim O'Connell
Don Davidson
Barry Johnson

Blue Ridge Trout Unlimited's Fundraiser

Conservation Banquet

Feb. 26, 2011

Time: 5:30

Place: Pine Brook Country Club on Germantown road in Winston Salem (pinebrookcc.com)

Advance: \$35.00, At the door: \$40.00, Child \$20.00

How to Purchase Tickets:

If you are a chapter member you will receive a package in the mail that will allow you to purchase tickets in January. If you are not a member or want to get the tickets before your package arrives you can contact Peter at loydpb@forsyth.cc or access an online form by going to the Meetings Tab on our web site www.blueridgetu.org, clicking the highlighted text on the Fund Raising Banquet and open the document on the bottom of the page.

Head to the Tailwaters for Winter Fishing

By Barry Johnson, BRTU Board Member and Programs Chair

Tailwaters provide the most consistent winter fishing. The temperature of the water released from the bottom of a large reservoir fluctuates over a narrow range throughout the year. In summer months that means much colder water in comparison to freestone streams. But in winter when the small streams water temps drop significantly the Tailwaters will actually be warmer in comparison. The metabolism of tailwater trout does not slow as much as their freestone brethren. The water can be more comfortable to wade in for the fisherman as well.

Of course the colder air temps significantly change the activity of aquatic invertebrates for both freestone and tailwater fisheries. Smaller bugs with shorter periods of activity (one of the benefits of winter fishing is sleeping in). Here the warmer tailwater excels again because even though the adults will be smaller than summer (size 20s to 26s rather than 14s to 20s) hatches can be exceptional though shorter in duration. Midges and small BWO emergences are the bread and butter of winter fishing, though micro caddis may be encountered.

Fish will not move as much in winter to intercept food so you must work a piece of water more thoroughly to give your offering the opportunity to literally bump the fish in the nose. Just as the fish are moving slower, all the aquatic organisms have slowed down so presentations of flies should be slower.

I was on the Hiwassee tailwater in February several years ago with air temps in upper twenties around 10am. Water temp around 45. I was dead drifting a small pheasant tail with extra split shot to bump the bottom as is customary in winter fishing since the fish will be on the bottom. No takers. The sun popped out and as the day warmed in to the upper thirties I started to see the tale tell flashes of feeding fish. Time to try the leisenring lift. After a couple dozen passes through the run still no bites. Then I thought cold means slow. So I very slowly lifted the rod as I came through the fish and half a dozen fish later considered it a successful experiment. I caught the only fish that day, including a nicely shouldered rainbow and of course did not share my revelation with my compatriots until fireside that evening.

In winter just as in late summer springs that flow into streams and rivers can provide likely spots to find fish. The spring water can be slightly warmer. Winter fishing is probably the most contemplative fishing and is best approached that way. Slow everything down. Take your time as wading is usually more difficult with stiff soles, waders and joints! Not to mention the extra bulk of clothing that is required. The escalated risk and discomfort of a dip in the drink warrants deliberate movements.

Welcome New Members!

- Jay Bland
- Hayes Henderson
- The WS Foundation

January Chapter Meeting

January 18th Chapter Meeting to Feature Al Kittridge

Bob Lassiter, Chapter Secretary and Conservation Chair

We have been trying to get Al Kittredge to visit us for about a year, and he finally has found a break in his fishing and deer hunting schedule to make a trip to BRTU to speak to us. Al is a longtime fisherman, guide and advocate for the Smith River trout fishery up in Basset/Martinsville, VA (One of VA's top 5 trout streams) He also has established a statewide-recognized youth fishing/fly tying program in his home town, Fayetteville (Al is a 34 year army veteran and settled there). You may have read some of Al's many, instructive posts on the Southeast Fly Fishing Forum, and some of you may unknowingly have Al's incredibly effective trout fly creation (the Allie Worm)in your fly box. It will be instructive, and it will be fun! Please make plans to join us on Tues. Jan 18.

Our chapter meets at Lone Star Steakhouse, at 1110 Creekshire Way, Winston-Salem, just off of Hanes Mall Blvd across the road from Target. Our meetings start at 6:00 PM to allow folks to mingle, order dinner and get settled before the 7:00 program. We welcome new members and visitors. Bring your family with you. This is a family oriented meeting.

For online directions, go to <http://tinyurl.com/blueridgetu>

Featured Fishing Report:

SLOWWWW day on the Mitchell ... by Scott Larsen

On January 5th, the Mitchell river was low, cold and the clearest I have ever seen it. Fished until mid-afternoon with only one decent bite and talked to 6 other fishermen who were having similar luck. Decided to fish one last big SLOWWWW pool before I left and found if I SLOWWWLY (just this side of glacial speed) drifted a #20 beaded hares ear on a 7X tippet through the deepest and SLOWWEST section I could get them to bite. Bites were very light and although I hooked at least 20 I only brought 6 to the bank with one of them in the 15 to 18" range.

For more fishing reports, check out our website www.blueridgetu.org and click on Fishing Reports

Ararat River Delayed Harvest to Open in October 2011

Thanks to Blue Ridge Chapter, Trout Unlimited members that showed their support for opening the Ararat River under Delayed Harvest rules. BRTU members supported this change in regulations by writing their comments to the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and appeared at NCWRC meeting last fall. The show of support was successful!

According to Jacob Rash, Coldwater Research Coordinator of NC Wildlife Resources Commission: "On 1 August 2011, the portion of Ararat River from NC 103 bridge to US 52 bridge will be classified as Delayed Harvest Trout Water, and this approximately 2-mile section will begin receiving fish in October 2011. The current Hatchery Supported Trout Water reach of Ararat River (SR 1727 bridge downstream to the NC 103 bridge) will remain intact and receive stockings as it has in the past. As you may know, the new Delayed Harvest reach is located within a portion of the river that has received significant habitat restoration and improved angling access; thus, we are excited about the angling opportunities associated with this water."

