

Blue Ridge NC Trout Unlimited



May 2023 Newsletter

Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BlueRidgeTU/>



The saying goes that "The Tug is the Drug." When it comes to tug, the bonefish is the king. A little 3# bonefish can grab your fly and take you into the backing in seconds and then repeat a few more times before he comes to the boat.

While this photo depicts beauty and calm I don't want to start out this newsletter by being misleading. While you get days like this there are more of them with wind than calm. But there are enough days like this to create a love in your heart for time spent on saltwater. This month our speaker will present saltwater fishing, so if he convinces you to give it a try, we've dedicated this newsletter to help you prepare for that first trip.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We are amid the fishing season with all trout streams stocked. As you venture out to fish you will likely see some violations being committed. People using bait where they are not allowed to or keeping more fish than allowed.... Please take the time to observe the situation, and then call the NCWRC hot line 800 662-7137 to report it. This number can be found on the back of your license. According to NCWRC all violation complaints are logged into a database. When wildlife officers see a spike in violations in one area, they increase their patrols of that area. So even if there are no officers available to come at the time you make the complaint, your call will make a difference in the future. Please avoid confronting the violators and let law enforcement handle the situation.

Robbie Abou-Rizk

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I go to the mountain streams for the peace and serenity. I go to the saltwater for the challenge and adventure."

MAY MEETING

When: Tuesday, May 16th, 6 PM

Where: Sixty-Six Grill and Tap House
3440 Frontis St, Winston Salem

Who: Sam Methvin – Orvis Greensboro manager

What: Saltwater Fly Fishing

APRIL CHAPTER MEETING

The April BRTU speaker was Jason Sparks who gave a passionate overview of the art of Tenkara.

Jason is a leading authority on Tenkara in North Carolina and is well known throughout the Tenkara community nationwide. His explanation of the technique, gear and history helped to educate the group on Tenkara a hundreds of years old type of fly fishing. Tenkara has seen a peak in interest since being introduced to the United States by companies like Tenkara USA and Dragontail Tenkara. With Jason's help these companies both donated to our recent fundraiser.

You can learn more about Tenkara by following Appalachian Tenkara Anglers on facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/appalachiantenkaraanglers>

Jason also writes for Tenkara Angler and shares his knowledge and experiences. <https://tenkaraangler.com/>

He also sponsors Tenkara Jam, bringing all levels of Tenkara fishers together for a camping weekend of fishing and education.

Be sure to follow his articles and Facebook group for more information on Tenkara.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 20 Chapter Meeting, Derrick Warr, a forester from Duke Power will be speaking.

Fly Tying Classes

At 9am on Wednesdays Project Healing Waters will host fly tying classes and at 6pm on Wednesday evenings Blue Ridge Trout Unlimited will host classes. The classes are free and all are welcome - from beginners to advanced. No need to sign up, just come join us. If you have specific questions about the evening classes, you can contact, Rusty Berrier at rustyberrier@outlook.com.

Balsam Trip May 4-7 is fully booked.

Bryson City Oct 12-15: This year we will switch from going to Balsam Smoky Mountain Retreat ([Link](#)) That area hosts all

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to BRNCNews@gmail.com and let us know.

kinds of streams and opportunities. Details will follow in the next few months.

Trout in the Classroom: The first release for Trout in the Classroom took place on a beautiful day on April 20th. This first day included over 100 students from Forbush, Reagan, and Davie Schools.



The next two releases take place on May 5th and 9th. We can use your help, so please volunteer. [TIC Signup](#)

Mitchell River stream clean and monitoring. On June 10 we will be doing a stream clean on the Mitchell River from 10-12, with lunch to follow. More details will be provided next month.

We need your help monitoring the Mitchell River. The fields that caused all the sediment release last year have been plowed now and will likely pour sediment into the river again. The biggest one is at the end of the DH section. We need help with replacing sediment bags, reading sediment on the sediment gauges and temperature data loggers monitoring. We also could use your observations and photos. If you are on the Mitchell on a wet day and the water is colored or muddy, please take photos. If you can venture to the end of the DH section and walk to the left to see if there is sediment running off the fields. Take photos and send them to our email address blueridgetuws@gmail.com. If you see the stream is muddy and have some time to drive upstream to observe conditions above the fields, please do so. As you get a mile or two up river road you can observe the color of the water and take photos to show the difference above and below the fields.

The second property is up about 3-4 miles, turn left on Haystack Rd, off of River Road. The field is just below the

Devotion estate. Again observe water color and sediment run off, above and below the property and take photos.

If you are willing to help with the sampling and monitoring please let us know. Send us an email or contact Robby Abou-Rizk 336 9723949.

Thank you.

Youth (15 and under) Fishing Event on Elkin Creek May 18th 4-8:30 PM at Elkin recreation park on Big Elkin with Watershed Now and Blue Ridge TU to highlight the effects of sediment on both Elkin and the Mitchell Stream.

BRTU- provide volunteers, information table, fly tying, Fly casting demonstrations, and help with fishing.

Watershed NOW & Surry Community College (Adam and Grayson)- Information table

- stream ecology with display of how sediment hurts habitat of streams, looking for invertebrates in the stream trout biology.

Please contact Robby Abou-Rizk to volunteer or sign up on website.

drrobbyab@gmail.com cell 336 972 3949

watershed NOW nurturing our waters

FRIENDS OF BIG ELKIN CREEK

FISHING EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE!

YOUTH TROUT FISHING AFTERNOON
MAY 18TH
4PM-8:30PM
@ ELKIN RECREATION PARK ON BIG ELKIN CREEK
(MEET AT PARKING AREA NEAR TRAIL)

EDUCATION, DEMONSTRATIONS, COMMUNITY!
HTTPS://FB.ME/5RQSO81Z

BLUE RIDGE CHAPTER Trout Unlimited

HATCHERY SUPPORTED

Sign up here

SOUTHERN FLY FISHING HALL OF FAME WEEKEND - MAY 5-6 2023

The 2023 Hall of Fame Weekend will feature: A Friday, pre-event evening fundraiser: 'Lagers with Legends' on the rooftop at Mountain Layers Brewery, 90 Everett Street, downtown Bryson City. 6- 9 pm. No cover charge.

On Saturday, the Hall of Fame Ceremony will be at the historic Fryemont Inn, 245 Fryemont Street. The event begins in the back garden with a 'Meet and Greet' at 12 pm offering light hors d'oeuvres and drinks. We will move inside at 1 pm to enjoy a luncheon prepared by the Fryemont's Chef, George Brown.

2023 STOCKING SCHEDULE

COUNTY	LOCATION	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
Alleghany	Little River	6	6	4	3	2
	Helton Creek	1	3	1	2	1
Ashe	Trout Lake	1	3	1	9	7
	Big Horse Creek	6	6	4	3	2
	South Fork New River	6	6	4	9	7
Burke	Jacob Fork	3	5	3	10	8
Caldwell	Wilson Creek	2	4	2	10	8
Clay	Fires Creek	7	11	2	5	13
Graham	Big Snowbird	7	6	1	2	9
Haywood	West Fork Pigeon River	1	4	8	2	6
Henderson	North Fork Mills River	2	5	5	3	1
Jackson	Tuckasegee River	3, 7	3, 5	1, 3	9, 10	2, 8
Macon	Nantahala	2	4	8	3	14
Madison	Big Laurel Creek	1	10	4	4	1
	Shelton Laurel Creek	1	10	4	4	1
	Spring Creek	3	6	4	6	9
McDowell	Curtis Creek	3	5	3	4	3
	Mill Creek	3	5	3	4	3
	Catawba River	3	5	3	4	3
Mitchell	Cane Creek	3	5	3	5	6
	North Toe River	2	4	2	10	9
Polk	Green River	6	4	3	6	7
Surry	Ararat River	3	3	3	11	9
	Mitchell River	1	3	1	2	1
Swain	Tuckasegee River	6	10	2	11	3
Transylvania	East Fork French Broad River	2	3	1	4	6
	Little River	1	3	5	5	7
Watauga	Watauga River	1	3	1	9	7
	Lake Coffey	1	3	1	9	7
Wilkes	East Prong Roaring River	1	3	1	2	1
	Stone Mountain Creek	1	3	1	2	1
	Reddies River	2	4	2	9	7
	Elk Creek	2	4	2	9	7
Yancey	Cane River	7	10	5	5	6

ROD BUILDING CLASSES



Rod Building Classes will begin May 10, 2023. The classes will be at South Fork Community Center Wednesday mornings and evenings 9:00AM - 12:00PM and 6:00PM -

8:30PM through July 26, 2023.

If you want to participate and learn how to build your own fly rod please let me know ASAP.

Also I need to know if you want to participate in the National Rod Building Competition. *Our Winston-Salem program has a stellar reputation when it comes to achieving top honors.*

I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Thanks to **George Yezbak, Kim Reed, Rusty Berrier** and **Joseph Ashley** who have thrown their hat into the ring for their willingness to assist this year. Let me know if I can add your name to this list....I need all the help I can get Rickie W., Steve H., Tim M., Chris M., Jaime S. and Aaron T. who is welcome back anytime.

Ed Graham

Edgraham31@gmail.com

336-413-5457

TURNING TO SALTWATER

I started fly fishing for trout when I was about eight years old and grew up on Michigan's trout streams. The streams in the 50s and 60s still had some pressure, but nothing like we see today. Each year the men of our family would take 10 days at the beginning of August and head to northern Michigan with our tent trailer. We would drive along the

streams until we found an area to set up and would camp on each stream for a couple days. I couldn't have had a better time than growing up on those streams and forests. When I graduated from high school I went to Michigan Tech located on the tip of Michigan's upper peninsula. The streams were wooded and cool and beautiful and it was rare to even see another fisherman. I got a great deal of peace from the efforts of college.

After college there was a long period raising a family that I was unable to get away to do much fly fishing. My oldest never fell in love with fishing, but my youngest learned to love it as much as I do. We did a little fly fishing, but then he went to college at Appalachian State. I equipped him with all the gear he needed and he spent a great deal of time on the Watauga River. After college he and I started doing a great deal of fly fishing together on the streams in North Carolina.

In 2012 he took a trip to Alaska for rainbow trout and loved it. In 2014 he took me there and other than ending the trip with heart failure (that's another story) we both enjoyed it. We had more trips to Yellowstone and to the Green River and back to Alaska one more time. But then decided it was time for something different.



We decided it was time to try out saltwater and booked a trip to Belize. The calm and serenity on saltwater is nothing like one of those streams in Michigan's UP, but there is an excitement in cruising the flats and hooking a bonefish makes your heart race and now that I have a pacemaker it can really get exciting. Since then we have made saltwater an annual event with three trips to the Bahamas and one trip to the Yucatan for baby tarpon. We haven't given up fresh water as we still love it and have been back to Alaska and the Green River. This year we've included a trip back to the waters of Michigan in June to try to catch the mayfly hatch.

While we will never give up our love of the trout streams, the adventure of saltwater fishing draws us back every year. By the way, while bonefish and tarpon are fun, perhaps the most exciting fish is the barracuda. I have purchased a 10 weight rod and tied up some barracuda flies for the trip there this year. I'll share that result with you in the next issue.

So why have I shared all of this with you? I want you to know that while you are likely in love with the trout streams there is an adventure waiting out there in the saltwater that you ought to try. I will admit that in addition to the adventure comes some frustration trying to cast in the wind, it is something you can learn with some effort and the scream of the reel from that first little bonefish (and there are big ones) will be something that will "hook you" for the rest of your life. Read on and we will share with you how to get ready for that first trip to saltwater.

SALTWATER FLATS CLOTHING

When you are bonefishing out on the saltwater flats you will spend most of your time standing on the bow of the boat in full sunshine. If you don't dress properly it won't take long to develop a blistering sunburn. You need to cover your body as much as possible, but you need to do it with clothing that will keep you cool and dry. I have found that polyester works well for me, but nylon is often recommended and the latest fad seems to be microfiber. You can check these out on-line. So let's talk about what you need out there.

Choose light colored clothing for two reasons: 1) it will keep you cooler and 2) you are less visible to the fish. Standing there on the bow of the boat in bright or dark colors will make you stand out. I like to wear light blue as the background behind you is mostly the blue sky.

You will often get splashed with saltwater running to and from the flats. Often when I get back from the daily trip I just climb into the shower with my clothes on. A light weight fast drying fabric allows my clothes to dry out and be ready for fishing the next day.

Hat--It is good to have a wide brim hat to keep the sun off of your face and out of your eyes. It is generally windy out on the flats so the hat should also have an adjustable chin strap to keep it from blowing off, especially when you are running from place to place.



An option to a wide brim hat that my son uses is a buff and ballcap. The buff (with UPF protection) keeps the sun off your head and neck while the ball cap keeps it out of your eyes. I don't like any tight clothing so prefer wearing the wide brim hat.



Shirt—My son uses a microfiber pullover shirt and really likes it. My choice is a loose fitting button up polyester. I believe I get a little more breeze through it. You should wear a long sleeve shirt that has UPF protection to avoid sunburn. You will often get splashed with saltwater making runs to and from the flats.

Bottoms—Shorts may seem like a good choice, but as mentioned before you don't want bare skin exposed to the hot sun of the flats. Often you will just be on the boat the whole day so a pair of lightweight pants of microfiber, nylon or polyester with fixed legs is your best choice. If you will be wading during the day, these will still work fine if they are quick drying, but another choice is to purchase a pair of pants that zip off at the knee.



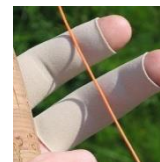
Footwear—If you are spending the day on the boat I suggest a pair of tennis shoes. Be sure to have a pair with white soles as often the dark soles will smudge and stain the boat. You could also wear a pair of boat shoes, but I wouldn't suggest

leather as they are likely to get soaked with saltwater during the day.

My son has a different opinion that I think can be a great idea. He wears fishing booties. When bonefishing you will have a pile of flyline laying on the deck in front of you and it's not unusual to get it tangled under your feet. He says with the fishing booties he can feel the line is there and clear it. My problem (perhaps an age thing) is I don't feel that I have the balance from the soft booty that you get from a more rigid sole.



If you will be wading, you will need a pair of wading boots. The flats are not always sandy. Often you will be wading through areas of coral that can be very sharp so you need an ankle high boot with strong soles. You can use your stream boots as long as they don't have cleats or felt soles. I prefer a pair of lightweight canvas boots. I wear a pair of neoprene wading socks with the boots because I already had them for fishing streams without waders. Mine are knee high, but if you can find something shorter it would be better. If you use the neoprene socks, be sure to wash them each day. I once went three days without doing that and they grew a bacteria that gave me a rash on that last day.



Sun Gloves—These are actually just light weight fingerless fishing gloves. Without these the back of your hands will likely be blistered by the end of the first day. I add to this stripping fingers. Bonefish are famous for making mad runs when they are hooked and stripping out lines through your fingers can cause a whole other type of burn as the line streams out. You probably only need these on your stripping hand and probably just on first two or three fingers.

THE TIDE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

If you are new to saltwater, you need to learn about the tides and how they can affect fishing. Let's start by defining the two major types of tides:

- **Spring Tide:** a tide just after a new or full moon, when there is the greatest difference between high and low water.
- **Neap Tide:** a tide just after the first or third quarters of the moon when there is least difference between high and low water.

Saltwater fly fishing takes place almost entirely in the mangroves and the flats with the best bonefishing on the flats just outside of the mangroves where you can sight fish for them. Generally, the mangroves are too tight to cast into for the fish. So the best fishing is at the falling tide when the fish are coming out of the mangroves. However, with a Spring Tide the water can become so low that it is difficult for the guide to poll through the flats.

There are times, however when that extremely low tide can cause problems with your fishing. In a trip to Campeche for baby tarpon last year we ran into that issue. The low tide was in the evening and during the first day we fished the mangroves and then with the falling tide came out to the flats. As the tide fell the tarpon came out to the coves at the edge of the mangroves and the water was boiling with baby tarpon. We had a tremendous time. In the evening we motored back out to the ocean to head home. It was shallow, but doable. The next two nights the tide came a little earlier each day. On that second night we had to leave a bit earlier and only a few tarpon had returned to the cove and on the third night the access to the ocean was so shallow the guide took us home very early and there were no tarpon in the cove on the way out. This guide group had no business scheduling trips during this extremely low Spring Tide.

The tarpon fishing and the mangroves of Campeche are a bit different than fishing most flats for bonefish. Generally a guide will know the waters well and be able to guide you to some deeper flats during those very low tides.

Moving tides are the best time to be out there. The moving water moves the food around which moves the fish around and rising or falling tides change the depth where the bonefish can feed and moves them. These conditions and a good guide give you the best chance of catching fish. On that basis, the best time to fish is with a low tide at mid morning. Since most trips start early in the day this allows you to fish both the incoming and outgoing tides during your day on the water. But remember, the tide changes by about an hour each day so you might want your first day to have a low about 9 AM.

All that said, there are other factors that can affect the tides, perhaps the largest is the wind. A strong wind can create a very high tide on the windward side of an island and a very low tide on the leeward. It is good to go to an island that can be fished on both sides.

If you have plenty of available time, take a good look at the tides to plan your trip, but if you are limited like most of us just go when you can. A good guide will know the waters well and be able to find the right place for any tide condition you experience.

WHERE TO CATCH BONEFISH

Bonefish can be found in most all of the warm water oceans of the world. The Seychelles in the Indian Ocean, Christmas Island in the Pacific and of course the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico near us. My son and I are really beginners and have fished three locations. Our first was Turneffe Flats in Belize which was a beautiful location, but some tough fishing around the open reefs. Our second two trips were to South Andros which is a great place to go. Then my son and his wife took a trip to Exuma and while there he found a guide and went out for a day. He did very well and liked the guide so we went back there this year.

The first three trips were to lodges, but the lodge on Exuma had closed and ours was an independent guide. We

rented a cottage and a car and the total cost was considerably less than a lodge. I'm not saying that should be your choice. A lodge will provide complete service from picking you up at the airport, providing your meals and drinks and you have a more social evening with the other guests. On this trip my non-fishing son was able to join us and we all enjoyed cooking our own meals and being together. With a lodge you often have to share a room or pay considerably extra, while we were able to rent a three bedroom cottage and not listen to each other snoring.

Which way you plan your trip is totally up to you on what kind of experience you want, but at least for a first trip you might consider a lodge where there will be people around to talk to and learn more about bone fishing. The only other thing I can suggest is that in Belize, the Bahamas and of course the gulf coast they speak English. On a baby tarpon trip we took to the Yucatan our guide spoke no English. It still worked out, but was a bit more difficult.

Finally, where you go on your first trip is entirely up to you. Where there is a lodge is likely to be a good place to bonefish. If you want to go independent, be sure to get the recommendation of others who have been there. Most likely wherever you go you will enjoy the beauty of the blue water flats and the mangroves, so make up your mind to do it and scope it out. I'd be happy to share some advice if you need some. My email is at the end of the newsletter.

GET OUT THERE AND FEEL THE TUG!!

ELK CREEK TREE PLANTING

In February of 2022 on a blustery day many volunteers braved the elements to restore a section of this brook trout stream. This year we will be doing another section that is twice as long. We just received some photos from the consultant we worked with stating we had about 90 percent survival rate of our plantings. These live stakes and trees should take off this year in growth and size. They are just starting to leaf out now. Thanks to all the volunteers and the boy scouts that joined us that day. Their efforts are paying off.

Photo Feb 2022 restoration day



Photo April 2023 post restoration



TIPS: Fish have a “cone” of vision just like humans. If a fish, if that trout is submerged deep it has a wider cone of vision. Try to stay LOW and creep up behind or to the side of fishy water.

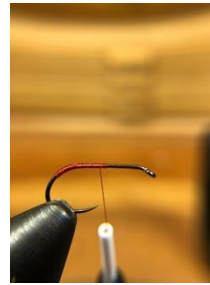
ADVICE FROM THE VISE

Many years ago I was on the Davidson in May around dusk, and the air was filled with these small yellow flies. After collecting a few and looking closer at them I realized I had met the Yellow Sally—a small stonefly rather a sulphur mayfly. I think I enjoy the bugs as much as the fish. I was excited to tie up a parachute to lie a bit lower in the water like those spinners had done to keep in my box for next time. Next time came about a year later a nice quiet strip in Cherokee at dusk. The small wild rainbows were taking the sallies off the top and by dark I had netted several using this pattern.

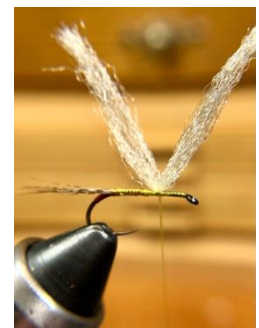


It's a great color that is nicely visible to both the fish and the angler. I'm using a Firehole 419 in #12, I tie these down to #16. I like the wide gape hook on parachutes as they ride low by nature and having more hook below the film has decreased my “dang it, missed him” utterances. For the recipe, red thread to start, then yellow. I'm using Coc de Leon for tailing, white Antron for the wing and post, barred ginger hackle and yellow UVX dubbing.

Tying parachutes can be daunting to new tiers but you don't get better without practice. I'll give you some lessons learned here and promise that once you master this, you will want to time those as your primary dry. I love the way they fish, and wild fish seem to smack them without hesitation on the drop.



Start dressing with the red thread at the midpoint with touching turns to about a third of the way down the bend to signify the red egg sac these guys are known for. Tie in the tailing and whip finish that off about a third of the way from the eye to the bend.



Dress from the eye to the bend with the yellow thread and at the one third mark tie in the Antron post. Now come the Emagic. Create a really strong foundation by taking several figure of 8 wraps around the base of the post. Snug not super tight. Pinch hold traction on the post in your non dominant hand while snugging your wraps up the post with touching turns. This takes the trial and error to adjust your tension on the thread while holding the post and wrapping with the bobbin. The key is getting a good solid foundation.



Dub the body from the bend up to the post, and tie in a short length of Antron for the wing. It will get trimmed at the

end, so don't be concerned about length, long enough to extend over the end of the tail.



Now it time for the hackle. The trick to this is have plenty of stem. You want the barbs to start at the top and come down in even touching-but not overlapping- wraps. Anchor the hackle in from the eye to the post. Having the plain stem allows you to wrap it up a few time and creates a much stronger hackle wrap. The picture shows the stem wrapped



to the top of the post without barbs until the top. Once there you can start the wraps down, again keep tension on the post as you wrap.



Once you have the post wrapped with hackle, gently pull back the post and hackle to tie off the hackle end-use several wraps to ensure you have a solid tie in for the hackle, and snip the butt. Clean up the stray fibers that are between the post and the eye with your scissors.



Dub the remaining space between the post and the eye and whip finish the head. Pull the post upright and fluff out any trapped fibers. Trim the post even with the highest hackle barbs and trim the wing by applying gentle traction rearward and trimming even with the tail. Some floatant on the post and wing will keep this guy in the film and catching fish in the dusk every time. It's a pattern the lends itself to other colors, so use your imagination. Parachutes take practice, but be patient with yourself and once you get it, it's a pretty fly you can turn out by the dozen.



As always, I'm honored to answer questions, give a lesson, or just talk fly tying and fishing. Don't hesitate to contact me at Jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com or check out some of my current ties on Facebook and Instagram at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Dave Everhart

BRTU BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

Board members needed for the fall election: In October, 3 of our board members will finish their terms. If you have enjoyed all that Blue Ridge offers you, then it is time for you to step up and join the board. If you are interested, just talk to a board member at our chapter meetings or contact us at our website www.blueridgetu.org.

We'd love to hear your input. If there is a topic you'd like addressed or if you have something to share in the newsletter, please contact us at BRNCNewsletter@gmail.com.

BLUE RIDGE NC TU OFFICERS

Robby Abou-Rizk.....Pres drrobbyab@gmail.com
Joel Shephard.....VP
Jon Bowman.....Sec
Fred Frank.....Trea

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rick Conner
Tom Jackson
Troy Machamer
Barry Parks
Rickie Woodson
Rusty Berrier – Special Projects
Sam Ogburn – NCTU Council
Editor....Chick Woodward BRNCNewsletter@gmail.com