



TIGHT LINES

www.pacvtu.org



Cumberland Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited

Sept. 2017

+++++++ Recipient of the 2011 Trout Unlimited "Gold Trout" National Conservation Award ++++++

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27
Members and
Guests Attended
the July
Membership
Meeting and
48
Attended the
August Picnic

The Letort (Part 2)

By Jerry Kerstetter

The watercress beds located in the headwaters of the Letort used fertilizer in their beds. This fertilized water coming downstream increased the growth of aquatic vegetation. Because of many stream obstructions previously written about, the velocity slowed. Silt settled behind and around those obstructions. The elodea would then expand. Add in the fertilizer and the streambed disappeared under these enormous elodea and silt beds. This condition lasted for many decades although once in awhile a small section of the stream could be seen.

Many Letort anglers (myself included) knew the stream was silt, silt and more silt. We also knew you had to be careful where you were stepping. We tolerated this condition as the Letort was home to many brown trout including some really big ones! The excessive silt and elodea was home to cress bugs, scuds, and sculpins. The sulfur hatch was not present in most of these bank to bank elodea sections. New fishing techniques and flies had to be

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Letort, Photo Courtesy: D. Weaver

Membership Meeting:
Wednesday Sept. 20th at 7PM
Monroe Township Fire Hall, Boiling Springs

For our September meeting, we'll be conducting a round table discussion/Q&A with our new Fish & Boat Commissioners along with PFBC Director John Arway. We're also inviting other local chapters to attend the event.
Tom Miller



Quick Bites and Short Strikes

Dave Weaver - Editor

Submission of articles and suggestions for this newsletter are encouraged and may be sent to dweavflyart@yahoo.com, or you can call me at **338-1952**. The deadline for the next issue is the 22nd of each month. The primary distribution of *Tight Lines* is currently via Mail Chimp email system. *Tight Lines* will be mailed by request only.

Dave W.

Calendar of Events

2017

Sep 9th

Last Supper
Vince's Meadow
Carlisle

Sep 13th

CVTU Board Meeting
Holly Inn
Mount Holly Springs

Sep 20th

Members Meeting
Monroe TSP Fire Hall
Boiling Springs

Sep 21st

Chapter Breakfast
Momma Spriggs
Restaurant
Carlisle

Oct 2-6th

Fishing Trip
South Holston

Oct 29th

Fishing Trip
Spring Creek



~ If you move, change your phone number, or e-mail address, notify us by emailing CVTU at: cvtu052@gmail.com I can change your info at TU National for you. TU also has a "Do Not E-Mail" option for members who do not want to receive TU reminders and solicitations via e-mail...they'll still get it through USPS. You will have to call TU's membership services to make that change.

John Leonard

~ If you haven't had a chance to check it out yet, we launched our new website back in February at www.pacvtu.org If you haven't been there yet or have had trouble loading it up, please double check your bookmarks since the old "homestead" address is no longer active. Our new site features an easier to navigate format and is chock full of easily accessible information about chapter happenings. Featured on the front page will be our latest news briefs and links to upcoming chapter activities to help keep you informed. Please check it out and explore a bit. There's more to come!

Tom Miller

~ Jeb Betar has submitted our Embrace a Stream Grant application and we should know soon whether it has been approved.

Tom Miller



Tom H. Casting at the Picnic, Photo Courtesy: D. Weaver

CVTU Membership is Currently 563!

CVTU receives a \$15 rebate from the **special \$17.50 first-year membership dues** when the chapter code 052 is marked on the application. **New Members** may also join online at www.tu.org/intro. Be sure to select chapter 052, Cumberland Valley. You may renew your membership by mail or on the web at www.tu.org. You may also renew, or change your membership information by calling **TU Customer Service** at **1-800-834-2419**. For more information, contact **John Zazworsky**, Membership Chairman.

President's Message

From the President, Tom Miller

Cumberland Valley Chapter Officers and Directors (term)

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Boy, what a summer and a welcome change from last year! Mother nature has been doing her best to keep our streams running cool and full with these regular doses of rain and no real nasty extended heat waves that I can recall. I'm really hoping this trend continues through the winter as we're finally seeing the water levels on our local limestoners moving in the right direction again. What a change from last year where the extended seasonal drought really took its toll.

It was great to see the excellent turnout at this year's annual summer picnic! Our picnic is always a good time to catch up and relax as the summer winds down and it wouldn't be the success that is without your involvement. The new venue at South Middleton Park on the Yellow Breeches was a great location that everybody seemed to enjoy. I can't thank Gary Leone, Jeb Betar and John Leonard enough for all that they've done for this year's picnic. We sure had some great prizes for the "Bring Your Old Stuff Bucket Raffle," your generosity never ceases to amaze me. Special thanks to Mary Shugart and Tom Baltz for organizing this year's raffle. Everybody's contributions go a long way to the success of the chapter. Also, a shout out to Neil and Dusty for putting together the annual chapter casting contest, always a fun challenge.

We'll soon be tackling some of our annual Fall stream projects, most notably the F.I.T.S. crew will be prepping the spawning areas of the Letort to help ensure another successful year for those amorous brown trout. Keep an eye on your emails and our Facebook feed as notification of the planned work parties will soon be announced. There have been some concerns about the conditions of the Letort this year in the Heritage water and we've been keeping a close eye on things there. Unfortunately, the low water level from last year's drought really took its toll on the in-stream vegetation through certain stretches during the late winter-early spring months. We're confident though that this is a passing trend as we've been seeing a lot of sediment being flushed out of the main channel. We've been witnessing plenty of good gravel and clay stream bed being exposed where it was once shin or sometimes even knee-deep muck before you would find solid footing if you dared to wade, which can only benefit the health of the stream in the long run. Slowly but surely the vegetation is returning which is evident all along our property from Vince's on up to the recent sink hole remediation at the old Otto farmhouse. It's a slow process as is Mother Nature's way, but hopes are high that we'll see this trend continue. As mentioned above, more water in the stream would certainly help, so cross your fingers that we continue to see these regular cycles of precipitation from now until next spring and beyond.

Moving forward, our annual elections for the Board of Directors will be held at the September meeting and we'll be taking nominations from the floor if you're interested. If you'd like to learn more about the role of being a part of the chapter's board, please reach out to us and we'll be happy to answer any questions you might have. Otherwise, please keep your eyes out for any stream issues or concerns you might run across while out and about and let us know about them. We're now entering into our planning phase for 2018, so if you have an idea for a potential project or know of something that might need immediate attention, please don't hesitate to let us know as we begin to fill in the blanks. As always, please give me a call at 717-258-8265 or drop me a note at tomimcmillar@comcast.net if you have any concerns or questions.

Tight Lines,

Tom

Biff's Beetle

By Biff Healy

On a perfect summer day a number of years ago, I was privileged to fish the Elk River in West Virginia with the inimitable Sam Knotts, who at the time owned and ran Appalachian Fly Fishing. We were fishing below the Hemlock hole in a riffle, and Sam was cleaning up, while I was catching a few on caddis flies. I asked Sam what he was using, and a smile crossed his face as he said, "Beetles." He then showed me his foam beetle, and gave me one to use. Things changed immediately for me as I started hooking up with a myriad of brown and rainbow trout. The best was a 22" rainbow, which was a real trophy on a 2-weight rod. Sam later shared his pattern basics with me, and I started tying them for myself and friends using the pattern in its basic form in my tying classes in the local state parks. I have since worked the pattern into a little more involved fly which I am presenting here. With the onset of hot weather, and completion of many of the hatches on area streams, terrestrials become an important food source for our watery denizens. I wanted to call this the "Sam Beetle," but he said that my updates make it mine, hence "The Biff Beetle." Thanks Sam.

Hook: size 14 or 16 dry fly (I use Eagle Claw L0595).

Thread: Danville 140 Denier Flymaster plus, in medium olive.

Shellback: 1/16" black closed cell foam.

Topping for shellback: iridescent 3/16" plastic ribbon (Kreinik Easter Grass).

Body: 3 peacock herls.

Legs: Watermelon Rind Crazy Legs.

Wings: Kreinik Metallic Medium (#16) braid.

After pinching down the barb on the hook, place it in the vise and lay down a close wrap of thread from just behind the eye and all the way to the bend. Tie in the iridescent ribbon on top of the hook at the bend. Cut a piece of the foam about 3/8" wide and 9/16" long. Cut a point on one end of the foam and tie in at the hook bend atop the ribbon, with the point towards the hook eye and the rest of the foam behind the hook bend. Next tie in the peacock herl at the bend. Take the tying thread to the mid point of the hook shank and tie in two pieces of the Crazy

Legs at a 90-degree angle to the hook, on top of the hook. Cut the legs to a length equal to the length of the hook shank. Separate the legs with carefully placed figure-eights of thread, and then take the thread to an eye width behind the eye. Wind the herl to the front of the hook and tie off. Clip the excess. Grasp the foam with hackle pliers and pull forward to the front of the hook and secure with three or four wraps of thread. Pull the ribbon over the foam to the front of the hook and tie off. Carefully clip the excess foam and ribbon and whip finish at this point, but DO NOT cut thread yet. Cut a 1" piece of the Kreinik Braid and tie in at the midpoint of the piece. Take a few wraps of thread around the braid pulling the two ends into an upright position. Take the thread to the front of the hook behind the eye and whip finish, and cut the thread. Coat the thread with Hard as Nails and pick apart the braid so to be ragged wings. This is as much for the angler as the fish. These wings glitter in the sun and make the fly visible to the angler. Enjoy!

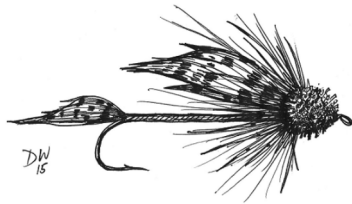


Win \$5,000!
CVTU Chapter Raffle
By CVTU

New for 2017-18, Cumberland Valley Trout Unlimited (CVTU) is conducting a special annual raffle to raise funds for the Chapter's cold water conservation and education programs and projects. Although we do a good job of raising funds through your generosity at our annual banquet and smaller raffles, the current funding climate means grant awards for our projected stream improvements and educational programs are more competitive than ever. *Cont.*

If you would like more information, please contact Jeb Betar at jebbetar25@gmail.com or by telephone (571) 643-8101. Jeb prefers email. Feel free to share with friends and neighbors this wonderful opportunity to support Cumberland Valley Trout Unlimited. Raffle ticket sales are open to all. Each raffle ticket is \$50, and CVTU is only selling 250 tickets for the chance to win this one grand cash prize! The drawing will be held at the 2018 Limestoner Banquet on March 16, 2018 at the Park Inn in Mechanicsburg, PA. Tell your friends, tell your neighbors! These special raffle tickets make for a great gift idea for birthdays or the Holidays with probably a better chance to win than those Lottery scratch offs.

Special raffle tickets will be on sale at CVTU membership meetings and other CVTU activities and events until all of the tickets are sold. Regulations that govern small games of chance activities for nonprofit organizations prohibit CVTU from accepting credit card payments to purchase raffle tickets.



Letort Cont.

adapted to catch these trout. Ed Shenk developed several flies for this type of fishing, such as cress bug, sculpin, and white minnow. These were very effective when fished correctly. Sometimes, browns could be seen sitting on top of elodea. They would move into the elodea and start shaking, then drift backwards eating the cressbugs that were dislodged. These brown trout were then identified as "rooters."

Vince Marinaro had stopped fishing the Letort because trout had stopped feeding on the surface. He would say, "Those trout are a bunch of grubbers, feeding on the bottom!" I heard him say that they cannot even see the surface because elodea was blocking their view. I finally came to believe that statement as it made a lot of sense.

Last spring, the Letort experienced a loss of aquatic vegetation. Many individuals were

concerned about this condition. I was not alarmed about this vegetation loss as the stream velocity had increased. It was now flowing with fewer obstructions on the stream bed. Elodea can only grow in silt and a lot of it was being moved out and down stream. The Letort was cleansing itself of the excessive silt. The original stream bed can now be seen at many locations. I now see rocks and rock formations in locations that I never saw before.

Elodea will not disappear as there will always be silt in the Letort. The stream will allow it to grow naturally. Vince Marinaro described thick elodea beds in his book *A Modern Dry Code*. He wrote that book before barrels, railroad ties, etc. made their way into the Letort. Because of the increased stream velocity this silt cleansing will continue most likely right through Carlisle.

Letort anglers will probably have to hit the reset button. The cress bug, scud, and sculpin will still catch the Letort brown trout. I believe the reset will be a more balanced approach. Hopefully the bank to bank elodea will be a thing of the past. The Letort browns may again see the surface in many sections. Hopefully, this will entice them in to more surface feeding. So will the jassid, ant, midge, beetle, and cricket make a comeback? That of course remains to be seen. Then again, some new fly patterns may emerge, as the Cumberland Valley has many excellent fly tiers.

It may even be possible to step into the Letort and cast a fly. Vince and I were fishing the lower section of the Letort and trout started rising along the far bank. He said he was going out there and start casting to them. My response was I wish we could do that in the regulated section. Vince said at one time it was possible to step into that section. He said you had to be careful, but sometimes you had to go out in order to cast over a section of watercress. So is this a new dawning for the Letort? Or is it merely a new dawning for those of us who never saw it fifty or more years ago? What we might come to see is a hard streambed with elodea beds here and there, watercress, speedwell, and duck weed spread out in a more balanced approach.

Nothing should be put in the Letort blocking the natural flowing water. Remove fallen trees if they are obstructing the flow catching silt. CVTU has been doing a good job for many years maintaining and improving the Letort.