



Scott Parker with a 25-30 pound King Salmon from the Salmon River - caught on a Chartreuse Comet



Scott Parker with a beautiful brown from Oak Orchard Creek

Clearwater Currents

**The Official Publication of the Clearwater Chapter
of
Trout Unlimited
169 Old Niskayuna Road Latham, NY 12110**

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*America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation
Organization
Promoting Habitat for Wild Trout and Salmon*

Trout Unlimited Has Been Fighting for Coldwater Fisheries Conservation for 52 Years

Join us before each meeting at 6:30pm for a tying demonstration. Meetings begin at 7:30pm, the third Monday of each month (except Banquet month, July and August), at the Best Western on Western Avenue, Albany, NY (about a mile east of the end of the Northway).

Upcoming Events

November 14 Chapter General Meeting –**Robin Hill** of the Angler’s Net speaking on “Fishing for False Albacore” - Guest Fly Tier **Walto Susko** starting at 6:30pm – free and open to the public – Best Western Hotel – Western Ave Albany about 2 miles east of the end of the Northway

November 24 Thanksgiving

December 25 (Sunday) Christmas

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Clearwater Chapter of TU PO Box 9686 Schenectady, NY 12309
www.ClearwaterTU.org

November 2011 Chapter General Meeting

The speaker for this month's meeting will be **Robin Hill** of the Angler's Net. As a child he learned to fish on the local ponds, streams and brackish streams that flowed into Massachusetts Bay. Fly Fishing became a passion for Robin during college in western Massachusetts. Robin and two college buddies went to Alaska one summer and he ended up getting a job with the Alaskan State Park and fished the river that he was stationed at every day. The next year he returned as a fly fishing guide at one of the lodge's that fished that river daily. He spent a total of 7 summers in the great north. That was Robin's fishing bum stage of life during which he fished New Zealand, Argentina, British Columbia, Montana, Oregon, Nova Scotia as well as Connecticut.

Robin ended up meeting his wife and moved to upstate New York 12 years ago. They have one child and while he doesn't get as much time on the water as he did many years ago the time he does get is more appreciated. He can't imagine a place with a wider abundance of fishing opportunities within our area.

False Albacore are a pelagic species that visits our waters every late summer and fall as part of the great fall run down the eastern seaboard. They are an incredibly fast and powerful fish that move around a great deal chasing bait. At times fishing for them can be so easy and other times extremely challenging. I will present an overview of the fishing for these great game fish in our region.

All are welcome. Meetings are held at the [Best Western Sovereign Hotel](#) about a mile east of the end of the Northway (I-87). We start with **Walt Susko** as guest fly tier at 6:30pm and our presentation begins about an hour later.

Admission to our meetings is free and public is always invited, so please bring a friend(s) and meet with many of the local 'expert' Fly Fishers, Fly Tiers, and Conservationists.

Chapter Fly Swap

Ron Boutin

Bring in 13 of the current months category and get 13 back of the same category from other tiers in the Chapter. It's a great way to build your fly boxes and try some new flies. New ideas are always welcome as to what you want swapped so call me at 453-9843 or email me at rx4fishing@nycap.rr.com if you have further questions or ideas.

Nov Streamers
Dec Salmon/Steelhead

Fish of the Month 2011 Contest in Full Gear

Mark A Brown

The Chapter's Fish of the Month Contest is already in its fourth year having crowned **Noe Mead, Jim Berry** and **Bill Bach** as winners in its first three years. The contest is open to all members (except me!) and the children of the Chapter and is not necessarily based on the biggest fish, but the quality of the fish, story behind it and picture quality all make up a winning entry. Simply send a photograph to me at my email address at brownie6@nycap.rr.com or contact me for my mailing address if you have a Polaroid or 35mm shot. As the entries come I'll publish them in the newsletter and select a winner in December when the winner will get a dozen hand tied flies as a prize.

I have two entries for November and both are from the same angler, **Scott Parker**. Two beautiful fish from the Lake Ontario system this fall. If you haven't been out there you NEED to book a few days to head west and latch into some of these big fish.

A Member Passes

David F. Boyd, 57, died on October 5, 2011. David was born in Troy, the son of David F. and Alberta Boyd. He was a U.S. [Army](#) veteran. He had been a sales representative for several years in the greater Capital District. David is survived by one daughter, Kerry; his wife, Susan; his mother, Alberta; five siblings, Barbara, Daniel, Douglas, Betty, Beverly; an uncle, and many nieces and nephews. Memorial contributions may be made in David's name to Homeless Veterans Fund, c/o Joanne Lamphere, 650 Warren St., Albany, NY 12208. Please make checks payable to: GFT 1315. ***Editor's Note*** – For many years Dave was a big contributor to the Chapter's Annual Banquet building rods and donating other equipment for the Banquet to raffle for funding. I remember Dave as one of the nicest fellows you'd ever meet and a very good angler.

Chapter Thank You's for Battenkill Cleanup

We successfully completed the fourth and final highway cleanup of 2011 on Route 313 along the Battenkill. We begin again in April and could always need some more help. Thanks to: **Ed Wnek, Scott Parker, Heath Clayson, Bill Cosgrove, Stu Bartow, Mark Pohl, Stan Duncan, and Bart Chabot.** *Editor's Note* -

Competitive Fly Fishing League

Check out the website, www.troutlegend.com for information about forming a team to compete in a trout fishing tournament league next year. Sounds like a lot of fun and has the opportunity to build camaraderie maybe lead to bigger things in the world of tournament fly fishing.

Book of the Month: “Fly Fishing Strategies for On-The-Water Challenges” by John Mordock
In less than 100 pages the author answers a lot of the most common questions the beginning and intermediate angler will need answered in order to catch fish. Quick to read with a lot of information packed into a small number of pages this is a great stocking stuffer book for Christmas. I also like the reference to many online and literary sources that answer the questions as this allows the reader to gain additional insight where needed. Like other Mordock books there is quite a bit of information gained from local waters. \$15 and available online just in time for the holidays.

Henrietta Jordan



Henrietta Jordan

Henrietta Jordan is Principal Consultant with Trailmarker Associates, a team of highly experienced consultants who provide services to nonprofit organizations. Henrietta has worked with nonprofit organizations for almost 30 years. She has conducted organizational assessments for dozens of land trusts and specializes in helping land trusts implement Land Trust Standards and Practices. She also assists nonprofits with strategic planning, legislative policy campaigns, communications, board training and development, executive coaching, and conflict/crisis management. Henri has directed four nonprofit organizations serving people with disabilities, crime victims, and children and families. She worked for the Land Trust Alliance from 2003-2009,

conducting capacity-building and policy programs for land trusts in the Northeast and managing the application review process for the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. Henri has presented numerous workshops at regional and national conferences on Land Trust Standards and Practice, public policy advocacy, organizational assessments, and board effectiveness, and has written extensively on policy issues and achieving excellence in land trust practice. Based in upstate New York's Adirondack Mountains, Henri also lives and works for part of the year in Colorado.

Report from Johns Brook by Henrietta Jordan

Fifty years ago, a friend and I spent a splendid August afternoon boulder-hopping down Johns Brook. We started just beyond the old trestle bridge about a mile from the brook's confluence with the Ausable River, and carefully worked our way over the great grey rocks and the small pools and eddies, daring each other to cross the brook where the waters ran fastest. Although I was a lot more agile then than now, this was hard work for a pudgy nine-year-old in battered red sneakers, and it was with a great sense of accomplishment that we climbed out of the brook bed at the Rte. 73 bridge in Keene Valley.

That brook is no more.

Most of the section of Johns Brook we clambered down that day has been dredged and diked into an unrecognizable flat-bottomed stream, riffing over a bed eerily stripped of the large boulders that once filled this iconic Adirondack mountain brook. They have been piled up in huge mounds lining the banks recently scoured by Hurricane Irene's torrential floodwaters—in a couple of places, steering the brook away from its meanders into a straighter, more uniform channel. As my dogs and I splashed down the channel through the shallow, strangely warm waters this afternoon, I had the feeling we were walking in a drainage ditch. It reminded me of the greasy, lifeless rivers in the Yukon and California, that still, more than a century after the Gold Rush, bear the scars of heedless miners who took the gold and left the sludge.

Thus was Johns Brook punished—for the crime of responding to Irene's wrath as mountain streams do when 10 inches of rain are dumped on them in 18 hours. Already saturated from a wet summer, the soils of the Johns Brook Valley could hold no more, and the rainwaters turned the brook into a leaping, roiling brown torrent that tore at its banks, uprooted trees, and spread up into the woods. From my porch, about 100 yards

away from the rocketing waters, the rocks and tree trunks crashing down during the storm sounded like artillery fire.

After Irene passed, the brook was a mess—huge chunks of its banks had been gouged away, tree trunks and debris were piled up, and cobbles were strewn everywhere. But it was still a brook. And if you walked the banks of it, you could see that this had happened before, that violent storms had caused pileups of boulders now covered by forest duff and trees, as the brook shifted in its valley over millennia as brooks are wont to do. Unlike drainage ditches, brooks are complex and dynamic hydraulic and geomorphic systems that, like all systems, strive to reach equilibrium when they are destabilized. River scientists have learned how to help speed up the stabilization process by reforesting banks and recreating step pools, chutes, side channels, backswamps and other natural features of healthy streams.

Unfortunately, this did not happen in Johns Brook. Local and state officials took advantage of the Governor's temporary suspension of permit regulations and Adirondack Park Agency rules to "fix" the brook by drastically altering its flow and transport of sediment into the Ausable using methods that have largely been discredited. Giant bulldozers ripped up the lower reaches of one of the most beautiful streams in the High Peaks, an ecologically rich habitat for brook trout and the invertebrates they feed on, and transformed it into a rock-lined half-pipe that will make floodwaters flow even faster and more violently into the Ausable. As a citizen and taxpayer, it makes me inexpressibly sad to know that the destruction of Johns Brook was done in my name and with my money.

Can Johns Brook be restored? Yes—if we are willing to admit that we got it wrong the first time and work with the forces of nature to help the stream heal and better withstand the impacts of high water flows. This can't be done overnight and it won't be cheap, but the consequences of not trying will be far more costly, especially when the next big weather event sends floodwaters racing down the straightened and channelized streambed into the settled area of the hamlet even faster than they did during Irene. I'd like to think that someday, not too long from now, my grandchildren will boulder-hop the stream between shaded, deep green pools filled with brook trout, shrieking with delight as they dip their toes into the clear, cold waters of one of the most beautiful mountain streams in the Adirondacks. *Editor's Note* – if you haven't been to Keene or Ausable Forks you must go for the day to look at the damage and "cleanup." Have lunch at the Noonmark and take a look for yourself.

Dear TU Volunteer Leaders

Trout Unlimited chapters and councils received a special invitation recently from the Fly Fishing Film Tour. TU is an official sponsor of the 2012 Fly Fishing Film Tour (F3T,) and will present a pre-screening "commercial" aimed at attracting film tour audiences to Trout Unlimited. Because TU is sponsoring the tour, TU chapters and councils can host independent screenings of this year's event for \$800, a \$200 discount. For that fee, F3T will provide posters, tickets for chapters to sell, some give-away items (the first 50 independent screenings to sign up with F3T will get some Costa sunglasses to give away/raffle off) and, if chapters sign up for a screening before Nov. 15, they'll be included in F3T's national marketing campaign that kicks off Dec. 1. Any proceeds raised from the independent events are the chapter's to keep to apply to on-the-ground conservation work in their area.

[Please visit this link for all the information you'll need to sign up for a Fly Fishing Film Tour screening](#) (great additions to annual banquets, expos, or just a dead-of-winter event to keep folks excited and to attract new members.) For more details on how to sign up for an independent production of the Fly Fishing Film Tour, please be in touch: (208) 552-0891, ext. 714 or chunt@tu.org.

Salmon returning to namesake river

November 1, 2011 by John McCoy



Anglers net a good-sized Chinook salmon from the Salmon River (AP photo)

The Salmon River in upstate New York has had salmon for years, but they weren't the right kind.

The Lake Ontario tributary used to harbor fine runs of Atlantic salmon, but those disappeared during the late 1800s. Now the river is better known for runs of hatchery-bred Pacific salmon species — Chinook and coho — and hatchery-bred brown trout and steelhead.

Now Atlantic salmon are coming back. The Associated Press has a terrific piece about the comeback:

PULASKI, N.Y. (AP) — Native Atlantic salmon are once again reproducing in the wild in central New York's renowned Salmon River, where anglers travel from across North America and overseas every autumn to reel in hatchery-bred Atlantics as well as non-native chinooks, cohos, brown trout and feisty steelheads that swim upstream from Lake Ontario. After more than a century without a wild-breeding population, this is the third year in a row that researchers from the U.S. Geological Survey have found young Atlantic salmon in the river, said USGS scientist Jim Johnson. When the young mature, eggs will be taken from some to propagate at the USGS research lab in Cortland, he said. The goal is to re-establish a heritage species that had a prominent place in the cultural history of the region, where early settlers wrote of spearing hundreds of salmon a night during the spawning run. "Our geneticist says any strain that survives to adulthood will be a preferential strain to use in the future," Johnson said. Lake Ontario once supported the world's largest freshwater population of Atlantic salmon. But the fish vanished in the late 1800s as a result of overfishing and habitat destruction. Government agencies in the U.S. and Canada have maintained an Atlantic salmon fishery by the annual stocking of millions of hatchery fish, but the fish haven't been able to reproduce in the wild because of a thiamine deficiency caused by eating alewives, an invasive species. Alewives contain an enzyme that destroys thiamine, also known as Vitamin B1. "After Atlantic salmon and lake trout were extirpated, there was no longer a major predator to eat the alewives in Lake Ontario and the population exploded," said Fran Verdoliva, Salmon River program coordinator for the state Department of Environmental Conservation. Pacific salmon — chinook and coho — were brought in from hatcheries to control the alewife population in Lake Ontario in 1968, and brown and steelhead trout were added in the 1970s. "The sport fishery developed out of what started as biological control of invasive species," Verdoliva said. On a typical fall weekend, you'll find anglers lining the banks of the Salmon River almost shoulder to shoulder. The fish are so abundant that in shallow areas, it seems you could walk across their shining backs from one stony bank to the other. Tens of thousands of mature fish that instinctively return to the state hatchery where they were born are stripped of sperm and eggs by hatchery workers to breed a new generation.

The workers toss the fish, which naturally die after spawning, into a garbage bin because of state Health Department limits on consumption by humans or animals. All fish from Lake Ontario are contaminated with low levels of toxic PCBs and the pesticide Mirex.

The health advisories don't deter anglers from their annual pilgrimage to the Salmon River. Last year, an estimated 113,000 people fished the river, making it one of the most intensive fisheries in the United States, Verdoliva said. Many, including Verdoliva, release all the fish they catch, fishing only for sport.

"On the 18 miles of the Salmon River below the dam, the number of fishermen surpasses all other tributaries combined plus the boat fishery on the lake," Verdoliva said.

"This is the only place in the Northeast where you can catch 25-inch king salmon in ankle-deep water," said Phil Bortz, a fishing guide who has had clients from as far away as Oregon, Arizona and Switzerland.

"Steelhead are the holy grail of the species. Pound for pound, they're the toughest fighting fish out there. It's like having a lightning bolt on the end of your line."

Gail Sult, of Allentown, Pa., said she and her husband, Frank, fish in Canada, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and North Carolina, but the Salmon River is their favorite. "Here, the fish are much bigger, the scenery along the river is awesome, and people are very nice, down to earth."

Atlantic salmon are a welcome addition to the Lake Ontario fishery not only because they're native to the lake, but also because they run up the rivers earlier than the fall-spawning fish, thus extending the fishing season.

They're also prized by anglers because of their fighting spirit.

"The Atlantic is a better-fighting game fish than the chinook," said tackle shop owner Malinda Barna, who would like to see the state reduce the number of chinooks stocked and concentrate more on coho, steelhead and Atlantic salmon.

It's unclear why Atlantic salmon are now reproducing in the wild, but a decline in the number of alewives coupled with a rise in numbers of another invasive species called the round goby may have something to do with it.

"Gobies are high in thiamine," Verdoliva said. When salmon eat gobies, it may increase their thiamine level, countering the ill-effect of alewives, he said.

The downside of the Salmon River's huge fish population is that it draws some people who are less interested in sportfishing traditions than in bragging rights to a trophy fish — particularly during the fall chinook run, Barna said. She said many anglers still snag fish — the now-illegal practice of dragging hooks through the water to catch fish by the tail, gills, or other body parts. Many leave beer cans and other garbage along the riverbank and in the woods.

She wants to see more state enforcement of fishing regulations and stiffer fines for violators.

Rock Snot Invades Vermont Fish Hatchery



By WILSON RING
 Associated Press

[MONTPELIER, Vt.](#) — An invasive algae species known as "rock snot" appears to have contaminated a Vermont fish hatchery. That means an expensive cleanup to prevent a possible spread, but also donations of Atlantic salmon to native American tribes in the Northeast.

On Thursday, the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission voted unanimously to remove the salmon from the federal Bethel Fish Hatchery, clean them and donate them to the tribes so the facility can be closed and cleaned.

The algae, believed to be transported by anglers moving from one body of water to another, pose no threat to human health. But rock snot can overwhelm cold water lakes and streams and biologists fear the Vermont hatchery could be contaminated with the algae because it is known to be present in the White River, the waterway that damaged the hatchery during the August flooding.

"These are very valuable fish. Traditionally they would be used to further the efforts of restoration of Atlantic salmon to the Connecticut River basin," Bill Hyatt, the director of the Connecticut Bureau of Natural Resources and the chairman of the Connecticut River salmon commission, said Thursday. "Unfortunately, with the contamination of didymo at the facility, it makes it totally impossible to use the fish in that manner."

The hatchery also contains about 434,000 lake trout destined for lakes Ontario and Erie. A separate decision about whether those fish can be safely released without spreading rock snot, or whether they will have to be disposed of, is expected later this month.

The Atlantic salmon at the Bethel hatchery are part of a Fish and Wildlife Service program that is working to restore the species to its traditional habitat along the Connecticut River. Historically, the fish hatch in the tributaries and young salmon swim downstream into the Atlantic Ocean, where they remain for several years before returning to the streams where they were hatched to spawn.

The salmon habitat on many of those rivers was destroyed by European settlers who built power dams that prevented the fish from reaching their spawning grounds.

Over the last 10 to 15 years didymo has been found across North America. It is thought to be transported on fishing gear. A number of states, including Vermont, have outlawed felt-soled fishing waders thought to be easy carriers of the algae.

Rock snot was first found in the Connecticut River in Vermont and New Hampshire in 2007 just south of the Canadian border. Since then, it's been found in various locations across the region.

Since the hatchery was inundated with water from the river known to contain didymo, the experts want to make sure the water used to carry the fish to the locations where they are stocked do not spread the algae.

The fish have to be removed from the hatchery before it can be cleaned.

About 3,000 salmon, some as large as five pounds, will be given to the Native American tribes. Another 3,400 smaller salmon, about six inches, will be released into parts of the Connecticut River basin where didymo is known to be present so there is no threat of new contamination.

Thousands more were washed into the White River by the flood waters.

Once the fish have been removed from the hatchery, technicians will then scrub the hatchery's fish tanks and other equipment as part of efforts to repair the facility that was damaged by the floodwaters. It could take up to two years to repair the hatchery, said Bill Archambault, the Fish and Wildlife Service's assistant regional director for fisheries.

Archambault said testing is under way to make sure no didymo is in the water that would be used to carry the 434,000 lake trout — about 8 inches long — for early stocking in lakes Ontario and Erie.

The decision about the lake trout in the hatchery will be made by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

Meanwhile, Fred Corey of the Aroostook Band of Micmacs around Presque Isle, Maine, said his tribe expects to receive 120 salmon that will be used as part of a Nov. 20 ceremony to mark the 20-year-anniversary of the tribe's formal recognition by the federal government.

Corey said that before European settlement, salmon was a staple of the tribe.

About 1,000 people from the tribe and other groups from the U.S. and Canada are expected for the celebration. The salmon will be served along with moose meat, fiddlehead ferns and other traditional foods.

"Any time a resource like that is utilized the tribe expresses respect for the fish that gave its life to provide food," said.

Without the donation of the salmon from the federal government, it's doubtful the tribe would have been able to afford salmon for the celebration.

"It would have been very challenging and part of it would be the cost," Corey said. "Our tribe is very low-income. We don't have a lot of resources."

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Fly Tying Classes 2012

Beginner's Classes start on January 17th, 2012 and meet every Tuesday until March 6th

Advanced classes start on January 19th, 2012 and meet every Thursday until March 8th.

Times: 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Location: St. Joseph's Parish Center in Scotia (map) MacArthur Drive, Scotia, NY

***** An extra week was also reserved at our location in case of cancelled classes due to inclement weather.**

Participants need a vice and set of their own tools. Materials and handouts will be provided.

More info TBA as dates get closer.

*****These would make great holiday gifts...**

Fly Fishing Classes 2012

Fly Fishing Classes start on March 27th, 2012 and meet each Tuesday until May 8th with an additional 'on the water' class held on the Battenkill on either May 19th or 20th, weather & flows permitting.

(Please do whatever you can to influence good weather and no floods like last year!)

*** An extra class day on May 15th is tentatively scheduled in case of inclement weather if needed.

Clearwater Chapter Trout Unlimited Fly Tying/Fly Fishing Class Registration Form

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Email _____
Address _____

(Please check one)

Fly Tying: Beginner's _____ or Advanced: _____

Cost: \$65.00 for TU members, \$80.00 for non-members, which includes a one year TU membership.

Fly Fishing: _____

Cost: \$135.00 for TU members \$150.00 for non-members, which includes a one year TU membership.

We have a limited number of fly rods available on first come\first served basis - check here if you need one: _____

Trout Unlimited Membership #(if applicable): _____

Make checks payable to TU Clearwater Chapter and mail with registration to:

Doug Howard

38 Velina Drive
Burnt Hills, NY 12027-9412
Ph: 399-8566
Email dhoward11@nycap.rr.com

