



Clearwater  
Chapter

*Clearwater Currents*

The Official Publication of the Clearwater  
Chapter of  
Trout Unlimited

169 Old Niskayuna Road Latham, NY 12110

Issue No. 09-007

Summer, 2009



*America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation  
Organization*

*Promoting Habitat for Wild Trout and Salmon  
During 2009 Trout Unlimited Celebrates Its 50<sup>th</sup> Year  
Fighting for Coldwater Fisheries Conservation*

**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**

September 21 Chapter General Meeting – Starts at 6:30pm with Guest Fly Tier and then at about 7:30pm our Featured Speaker

**Board of Directors/Staff**

President	Doug Howard	399-8566	Trips	Bob Mead	399-9000
V.President	Rich Bogardus	377-1022	Treasurer	Ken Waldie	573-4793
Education	Rich Bogardus	377-1022	Ex-Officio	Ron Boutin	453-9843
Secretary	Brad Mohr	482-4645	Youth	Bart Chabot	393-9918
Conservation	Roy Lambertson	872-2217	Newsletter	Mark Brown	<a href="mailto:brownie6@nycap.rr.com">brownie6@nycap.rr.com</a>
Stream Research	Art Coleman	399-5550	Programs	Heath Clayson	573-6008
Quartmaster	Doug Howard	399-8566	Flea Market	Bob Mead	399-9000
Schoharie	Ed August	295-7663	Membership	John Morette	393-6443
At Large	Stan Duncan	877-6610	Membership	Dick Hermida	399-6272
Video Library	Richard Atkinson	377-8249	Youth	Mike Walchko	234-4192
Battenkill	Greg Cuda	587-1189	Banquet	Bill Cosgrove	766-2405
Board Member	Glenn Kuhles	869-0817	Publicity	Bill Wemple	384-0014
Website	John Morgan/Doug Howard 399-8566				

Clearwater Chapter of TU PO Box 9686 Schenectady, NY  
12309

[www.ClearwaterTU.org](http://www.ClearwaterTU.org)

## Treasurer's Report

Ken Waldie

Chapter Treasurer is looking for a replacement. He would be willing to teach and guide any new member wishing to step up into this all important position. If you can help let Ken or Doug Howard know asap.

## Chapter Fly Swap

Ron Boutin

Another year of fly swapping is upon us and starts at this months general meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup>. 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](mailto:rx4fishing@nycap.rr.com) if you have further questions or ideas.

Sept	Terrestrials
Oct	Spinners
Nov	Nymphs
Dec	Streamers

## Streamside Cleanups and Tree Plantings

Art Coleman

We successfully completed the second of our four annual roadside cleanups. Thanks to: **Stan Duncan, Heath Clayson, Bill Borthwick, Ron Zawoysky, Doug Howard, David Kievit, Dot Harrop, John Nacca, Bill Wemple, Drew Wemple, Anita Witten, and Stu Bartow.** A great lunch was provided by **Bill Cosgrove.** The next opportunity for you to help will be September 19.

## Conservation

Roy Lamberton

**Batten Kill** - \$4k received from NYSC TU Conservation Fund for the Hi-Brow Farm stabilization project. Greg & Doug will write a request for an extension of completion to NYSC. USF&W is considering allocating \$35k for work on the Batten Kill or White Creek. There will be a meeting among Greg, Art, Ron Frisbee, BKWA, Roy, Doug, Adirondack Chapter to set priorities. Greg and Art will arrange the meeting. Art would also like "fishing guides" to lead groups in fishing proposed project sites before work is begun.

**Onesquethaw-Coeymans Creek** - **Carl Schwartz** of USF&WS has met at the Barber site with a number of agencies: NYS DOT, Albany County's S&WCD and Office of Natural Resources, TU, OC Watershed Council. A natural stream design bank stabilization and habitat project will be designed by USF&W. ACS&WCD staff, **Art Coleman**, and **Roy Lamberton** are completing a geomorphic survey needed for the design. Regarding development of a watershed management plan for the creek, Roy is presenting a comprehensive study to town governments with a request for participation.

**Mettawee Creek** - **Art Coleman** and other chapter volunteers are doing a survey for Adirondack Chapter for a bank stabilization project. The project is on hold during bank reclamation of coal tar, which may take 3 years.

**Cavadutta Creek** - **Ron Dorn** is participating in a stream clean up July 18. He is representing the chapter in the Gloversville Branch.

**Brook Trout Survey** - **Art Coleman** and **Ron Bellisario** are leading teams to sample small tribs for brook trout. 36 sites have scheduled by DEC and 11 have been done.

**Trout in the Classroom** - **Ron Dorn** will coordinate this effort, and follow up with all participating teachers regarding fish survival, where the fish are released, when, condition of equipment.

## **Fish of the Month Contest**

The Fish of the Month Contest winner for 2008 is over with **Bill Bach** of Glenville our first winner! Bill's fish wasn't the biggest, but his story about his experience was the greatest among the entrants. The year 2009 is shaping up to be another great angling year (see snow, cold, etc so far this winter) so get your cameras ready and let me know about your fish of the month to get entered. A great opportunity for young/old and new/veteran angler alike so everyone should enter in 2009! Send all entries to the Editor at [brownie6@nycap.rr.com](mailto:brownie6@nycap.rr.com).

### **Fish of the Month Contest for Summer, 2009**

I am new to TU, actually new to fly fishing. I was introduced to this wonderful sport some three years ago when I was 57 by Joe Costello. Fishing with Joe is like having a guide on each trip.

On this particular trip I was alone on the Battenkill, fishing a 4wt with 6x and swinging a wet fly that I actually tied. Truly I never knew what hit me as they say and after a long fight finally got this guy into the net, he was returned to the water to fight again another day. It was one of the biggest thrills that I have had during a life time of fishing.

Regards,  
Jim Berry





# OUTDOORS magazine

*The Premier Outdoors  
Publication Of The Northeast*

## Breaking News: Brook Trout Record Shattered

It was just a matter of time before New York produced another "new" state record brook trout, and this time the lucky angler was well-known Utica wildlife artist Tom Yacovella.

Actually, if you know Yacovella, than you also know "luck" had little to do with it. He is a brook trout specialist with a nose for where the big ones live.

The monster female brookie tipped the scales at 5 pounds, 4 ½ ounces on four different state-certified scales. While the 21-inch length is impressive, it is dwarfed by the fishes' amazing girth of 15 inches.

Yacovella was fishing on Raquette Lake. He was using an interesting three-way swivel with a pencil lead sinker. His lure of choice was a 3½-inch floating Rapala with a shad finish.

In recent months there have been rumors of other potential record brook trout coming out of the Adirondacks which have turned out to be splake. Yacovella's fish was examined by NY DEC biologists who confirmed it was indeed a brookie.

One way to differentiate between brookies and splake is to count the pyloric caeca (the finger-like projections in the small intestines). Brookies have 23 to 55 pyloric caeca, and splake have 65 to 85. Yacovella's fish had 37, thus confirming its status.

This is considered a new record in New York as all the old records dating back to the 1800s, including a rumored 14-pounder by well known politician and dictionary founder Daniel Webster caught in the Carmans River on Long Island in 1827, were retired within the past decade. The previous "modern" record was 4 pounds, 15 ounces taken by Jesse Yousey on a Lake Clear Wabblar somewhere in the Five Ponds Wilderness in 2006.



## Dear Clearwater Chapter Member,

How does a free guided fishing trip sound?? Sounds too good to be true, well it is not, as part of the Batten Kill River restoration program several members have volunteered to take Clearwater Chapter members out on the upper Batten Kill on a one day guided fly fishing trip to do a creel survey.

The fishing trip would be set up later on during the season, August or September, at the convenience of the guide and the members signing up for the trip. A section of the Batten Kill upper river would be selected and the guide would take a number of members out fishing. The number going in each party would depend on the total number signing up for this great opportunity.

Each member would bring his own lunch, meet the guide at a location to be determined by the guide and all would enjoy a day of fly fishing.

This program is being set up to help establish the trout population in the upper Batten Kill prior to the start of a restoration program for the "Catch and Release" section of the river.

This is a win win program, a win for those participating and a win for the Batten Kill, so please consider participating. If you would like to participate in the program please contact one of the following members.

**Doug Howard:** (518) 399-8566 or e-mail at [dhoward11@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dhoward11@nycap.rr.com)

**Rich Bogardus:** (518) 377-1022 or e-mail at [richari1@yahoo.com](mailto:richari1@yahoo.com)

## Chapter Thank You

Bart Chabot

With completion of the Sunnyview/ARC Disabled Fishing Project and Kids Learn to Fish in Central Park, I wish to thank the following businesses and assistants in no particular order: Goldstock's Sporting Goods, Taylor & Vadney Sporting Goods, Wiggly Worm Bait Supply, Nick's Field-n-Stream, Sch'dy Parks Dept., Six Mile Water Works, **George Cass, Yan Panek, Len Tobler, Ron Beauparlant, Bill Bach, Arnie Schultz, Glen Kuhles, Bill Donato, Greg Cuda, Ron Bellisario, Ron Dorn, Dick Hermida, John Morrette, Lois & Rich Atkinson, Chuck Pallidino, Mike Fluty, Bill Cosgrove, Bill Wemple, Bob Alheim, Doug Howard & Bart Chabot.** We put smiles on many faces this summer and the Veteran's fishing clinic "rain date" is August 19 at Six Mile W-Works from 5:00pm to 7:30pm.. We will need about four people to assist, 393-9918. Thanks for all your help in these important projects.....Bart

## **Anglers caught in the middle as U.S.-Canada at odds over live bait restrictions**

**Posted by David Figura/The Post-Standard July 23, 2009 6:26PM**

Clayton fishing guide Rich Clarke was out with clients on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence River last Saturday. He didn't see it coming.

During his 29 years of guiding on the river, he's been stopped by Canadian conservation officers for license checks, or to see how many fish he had in the live well.

Everything was routine -- until the officers asked if Clarke and his clients were using live bait. Sure, he responded. His clients were using minnows he'd purchased at the Thousand Islands Bait Shop as he'd done countless times before. He had the receipt to prove the bait was free of the dreaded fish-killing, VHS virus as New York State law requires.

Not good enough, the officers said. From now on, anglers who want to fish with live bait on the Canadian side need to purchase Canadian bait or risk a \$300 fine. The restriction covers minnows, crayfish, leeches and salamanders. The only live bait one can use from the American side is worms.

"I was absolutely shocked," Clarke said. "He then said he was cutting me a break today as he took down my name, rank and serial number. That I could take my bait and go back and fish on the American side or get a ticket."

For decades, New York and Ontario officials have cooperated, making it relatively easy for anglers to go back and forth across the country boundaries to enjoy fishing on the St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario, the western half of Lake Erie. The result has been a multi-million dollar recreational fishing industry from which both sides have benefited.

News that Ontario is now enforcing a live bait restriction that differs markedly from New York's rule is a step backward, U.S. guides and bait shop owners say.

Buying bait on the Canadian side isn't as easy as just driving a little further and pulling into a marina. Customs officials have to be contacted, passports shown. It's complicated.

And you can't take the Canadian bait back over to fish the American side because it's not tested for VHS by an approved, independent lab as New York Law requires.

The Ontario rules entail setting up a "VHS management zone," and then only allowing the sale of bait to anglers that was caught within that area. No testing of the bait is done. The only requirement is that the bait be caught and sold within the zone.

The Ontario law against importing live bait has been on the books in one form another for more than 30 years, according to Brenda Koenig, an aquatic ecologist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

She said her agency's enforcement actions are the result of an increased awareness of the problems and dangers caused by VHS.

"We have a mandate for managing fisheries," she said. "Any laws we have will potentially be enforced."

She said it would make sense to "try and harmonize" rules and regulations concerning VHS between the two countries. However, such changes on the Canadian side would require federal action and normally take about one to two years to occur.

Viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) virus is a serious pathogen of fresh and saltwater fish that is causing an emerging disease in the Great Lakes region of the United States and Canada. The virus affects fish of all size and age ranges and has produced some sizeable fish kills. It does not pose any threat to human health.

Steven LaPan, Lake Ontario unit leader for the state Department of Environmental Conservation, said the St. Lawrence River has had its share of VHS-related fish kills, including a big muskie kill in 2005, and a smaller kill in 2006. The disease continues to show in smaller amounts in St. Lawrence River bass and in gobies, he said.

"The science (concerning VHS) is still evolving. We had no big fish kills this year, but that doesn't mean we're out of the woods," he said, adding New York officials were unaware of Canada's increased law enforcement efforts.

Meanwhile, U.S. guides and bait shop owners along the U.S./Canada border on the St. Lawrence River are fuming.

"American guides are there on the Canadian side every day ... in addition to hundreds of other American boaters," said Todd Cerow, owner of the Thousand Island Bait Store in Clayton. He said if something can't be worked out -- and soon -- he and others plan to contact the area's state and federal elected officials, asking them to intervene.

Clarke said in the Clayton area about two-thirds of the best fishing is on the Canadian side.

"What do I tell my customers who are coming in August who've already bought their licenses?," he said. "They're not professional fishermen. They like to fish with live bait over the side."

## **Another New Law You Should Be Aware Of**

A new amendment to New York's navigation law has charter captains and other outdoor enthusiasts in the state outraged.

The law was approved through the state's Assembly and Senate and was ultimately signed into law July 11 by Governor Paterson. It states:

***\* (e) No owner or operator of a pleasure vessel less than twenty-one feet, including rowboats, canoes, and kayaks shall permit its operation, between November first and May first, unless each person on board such vessel is wearing a securely fastened United States Coast Guard approved wearable personal flotation device of an appropriate size when such vessel is underway.***

In layman's terms: if you are boating in a New York water body [including those parts of Lake Champlain and the Great Lakes] between November 1 and May 1, and the vessel you are in is under 21-feet in size, than you must be wearing a life preserver. It does not matter if the vessel is a canoe, kayak, or fishing boat.

Obviously, this will have a tremendous impact on fishermen who enjoy trolling in the late fall or early spring when action is often at its peak. Likewise charter captains have concerns about the way the law may affect their business.

## Connetquot River fish get checkup from DEC

August 2, 2009

Armed with nets, rubber boots and electrified wands that pack a 300-volt wallop, a team from the state Department of Environmental Conservation waded into the Connetquot River on a recent summer day to check up on the fish.

It had been seven months since the historic fish hatchery here at the Oakdale state park was shut down because of a persistent virus in trout. The DEC feared that the disease - infectious pancreatic necrosis, or IPN - found in the hatchery could spread to wild fish in other Long Island streams.

"We're coming back to see if the disease is still in the river, and assist [state] parks in developing a management plan to allow them to reopen their hatchery," said Charles Guthrie, the DEC's regional freshwater fisheries manager.

To do that, Guthrie employed a technique known as electrofishing: shocking fish with an electrical charge to stun them so they can be collected and counted.

The seven-person team unloaded their equipment by the horse trail at Collins Crossing, about a half-mile below Veterans Memorial Highway. A generator on a small floating barge supplied the juice. DEC wildlife technician Erik Latremore pulled the barge while three biologists in waders "shocked" the knee-deep water with electrodes tethered by retractable cords. Rubber boots and gloves protected workers from the charge.

Behind those holding the wands, other workers followed with nets, slinging small trout, pickerel and mud minnows into a holding tank on the barge.

Green skeins of water starwort, a native plant, waved in the current and clung to the team member's waders. "Good fish habitat," noted aquatic biologist Heidi O'Riordan.

The Connetquot has been stocked with sport fish since the 19th century. The survey will help the DEC determine how many more fish the river can support in the future. Samples from trout also will tell scientists whether the virus persists in waters above the hatchery.

"The goal is to know clearly, and with as much certainty as possible, what we need to do to be able to raise fish disease-free," said John Kowalchuk, deputy regional director for Long Island state parks.

First detected at the hatchery in late 2006, the virus can kill young fish but poses no known risk to humans. IPN has the potential to infect wild species because it lingers dormant for years in fish who survive it.

For now, the Connetquot River is being stocked with healthy adult trout from the Cold Spring Harbor fish hatchery, mostly before special weekend fishing events. "We've cut back," on the number of fish being stocked, Kowalchuk said. "We want to reduce the density of the population in the stream" because the disease spreads more quickly among fish in proximity.

Upstream from the hatchery, the generator rumbled. Guthrie, O'Riordan and Philip Hulbert, the DEC's superintendent of fish culture, traced their wands through the shallows in search of fish. The stunned specimens were placed in buckets of water onshore. By the end, the team would pluck more than 200 fish from about 900 feet of river upstream from the hatchery, as well as from stretches below more favored by fishermen.

"This is your classic Long Island trout stream that hasn't been monkeyed with too much," said Guthrie. A cool 57 degrees, the groundwater-fed river flowed clear over rotting logs, past mossy, tufted islands and stands of sweet pepperbush and high bush blueberry.

Most of the day's catch was tossed back in the river after counting. But the trout, mostly four to seven inches long, were put on ice and sent to an upstate laboratory for tests.

Results are expected back this month. A big concern is whether the virus persists above the hatchery, whose ponds are fed by the river.

"If the fish above the hatchery are diseased, the disease is going to go right into the hatchery," Guthrie said. "What we're hoping is that the population's not dense enough to maintain the disease up here."

## **Spiny water flea threatens lake's food web** **It could alter ecosystem and interfere with game fishing.**

By Candace Page, Free Press Staff Writer • August 5, 2009

A leading lake researcher is warning a new invasive species that "is at our doorstep" represents a serious threat to the Lake Champlain ecosystem.

The invader is the spiny water flea, a tiny crustacean that can do outsize damage, said Tim Mihuc, director of the Lake Champlain Research Institute at the State University of New York in Plattsburgh. Mihuc said the flea represents "perhaps the final nail in the coffin for Lake Champlain."

While other scientists and lake advocates use less-apocalyptic language to describe the threat, there is general agreement that the water flea could disrupt the Champlain food chain and make game fishing more difficult.

"The flea is undesirable food for fish. I've seen video of small perch trying to swallow them and spitting them out. It's like eating toothpicks," said Doug Jensen of Duluth, Minn., who works in a program to prevent the flea's further spread in his state.

The flea's imminent arrival here — it has invaded a nearby New York lake — has lent new urgency to talks about how to stop invasive species from traveling through the Champlain Canal between the Hudson River and Lake Champlain.

Invasive species such as the zebra mussel, Eurasian milfoil and the alewife have altered the lake's ecosystem and created problems for humans. Boat motors get tangled on milfoil; zebra mussels coat the lake bottom and slash the feet of unwary swimmers.

Mihuc and others say the spiny water flea is only the vanguard of dozens of invasive species found in the Great Lakes and capable of traveling to Lake Champlain through the New York canal system. "It's time to do something," Mihuc said Tuesday of the canal connection. "I hear talk, but I don't see action."

## Clogged fishing lines

Anglers fear the water fleas in part because their thorn-like spines attach to fishing line, collecting in large globs that make trolling difficult or impossible.

In Vermont, Mihuc's cry has been taken up by Lake Champlain International, the angling group, whose leader is urging the state Agency of Natural Resources to help prevent the water flea from reaching the state.

"Scientists have been warning about this threat, but they have a hard time getting traction with anybody but the fishing community," LCI Executive Director James Ehlers said. "There are 21,000 LCI anglers. We want to know how we can help."

The threat to Lake Champlain became more immediate last year when the creature was found in Great Sacandaga Lake, just west of Glens Falls.

The lake flows into the Sacandaga River, a tributary of the Hudson. The Champlain Canal connects the Hudson to Lake Champlain, providing the flea with a watery highway from New York to Vermont.

"The introduction of this exotic animal to a freshwater lake may ultimately destroy the natural food web resulting in a potential collapse of the game fishery," Mihuc wrote last week to Ehlers. Mihuc is an expert on the lake's plankton communities, the microscopic plants and animals that serve as food for larger creatures.

Those who have studied the flea in the Great Lakes offered a more measured assessment.

Joseph Makarewicz, a biologist at SUNY-Brockport, has studied spiny water fleas in Lake Ontario. He said there's clear evidence the flea has altered the makeup of the plankton communities. But, he said, "There do not seem to be any major changes in fish populations. It's not like zebra mussels that changed the whole system."

In Minnesota, Jensen said, the spiny water flea is definitely a nuisance, and millions of dollars are being spent to teach boaters and anglers how to avoid inadvertently spreading the creature. The flea out-competes and displaces some native animal plankton, but is a poorer food source for fish.

"How does this translate into effects on the fishery?" he said. "We just don't know."

In the past, the canal operators seemed indifferent to the canal's role as a conduit for invasive species. That changed last year, with new leadership at the canal system and a summit meeting on invasive threats.

Canal Corp. Director Carmella Mantello said Tuesday the partners are pursuing two tracks: a feasibility study of ways to keep the spiny water flea out of a feeder canal, and a bigger project to install a barrier in the main canal.

"We are committed to working with all the parties while protecting our mission to operate this

national treasure,” she said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will commission the feeder-canal feasibility study this summer, Western New England manager Dave Tilton said.

A likely solution is some kind of screening system, perhaps at the outlet of Great Sacandaga Lake, that would keep the fleas from moving downstream. Mantello urged patience.

“Nothing is going to happen overnight with this. It will take time and patience and partnership to move forward,” she said.

Lake Champlain doesn’t have time, Mihuc said: “There are over a hundred invasives we have to work to prevent. We don’t want our ecosystem to get any worse. We don’t need another meeting. We need a plan to prevent an invasion on our doorstep.”

**Have a Great Rest of the Summer 2009!! See You in  
September!!**