

# "Currents"

News about activities and cold water fishery conservation published by the Greater Boston Chapter of Trout Unlimited

51 Hawthorne Avenue  
Arlington MA 02476



An upside-down day; snow in Massachusetts, but not in NH. An expert on the Blackwater in E. Andover, but no fish. November 2005.

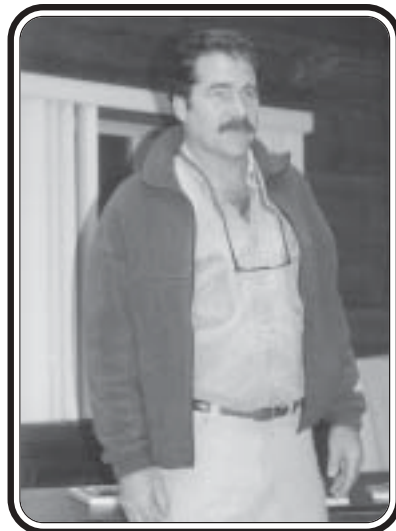
## Captain Hook's Streamside Chat

Season's Greetings! As of early January there is still open water out there, a luxury we have not enjoyed this late in many years. Though the pond midges are mostly gone, *Woolly Buggers* fished low and slow will do the trick. Ponds producing as of late include Grew's, Hamblins and Peters on the Cape and Horn and Cochituate closer to home. If you are going out, don't forget, you'll need a 2005 fishing license! We are now proud parents of hundreds of brown trout. The blessed event began Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> at the Oak Hill Middle School in Newton, site of the GBTU sponsored *Trout In The Classroom* project. The first alevin lay on the bottom after hatching from their eggs. Knowing brown trout, they were probably analyzing the situation and uploading data, though they did occasionally go for a swim. Jonathan Roy, in whose classroom the trout reside, said he couldn't recall seeing the kids more

excited. The students seem to understand just how special these fish are, and this program is the perfect vehicle to deliver that message. We should be looking for other venues and funding sources for trout classrooms in our area. At our Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, Sandy MacGregor will present a show on *Fishing the Western Mountains of Maine*, covering such storied rivers as the Rapid, the Kennebec and the Androscoggin. Sandy is a Registered Maine Guide, thus a member of a select, knowledgeable group. This will be an informative show for what is, essentially, the wild fishery closest to Boston. Anyone who fished the Salmon River in Pulaski NY. during the hey days of the 80's and 90's likely visited the shop of our Feb. speaker, Jim Rusher. His shop, *Whittaker's* was an oasis in a place that sometimes resembled an Alaskan Goldrush town of the 1880's. Jim was the first person I ever saw fish a Spey rod for steelhead, covering

water that would have been impossible with a single handed rig. On the Salmon River, more so than any other fishery, the people with the most knowledge and the best technique hook the vast majority of fish. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from one of the masters.

-GBTU President Brad Voight



GBTU president Brad Voight, presiding over the November 2004 meeting, Drumlin Farm.



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January - February - 2005

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## White River Redux

They are two distinctly different feelings, Peter Rietzl mused. Seeing your pals catching wonderful fish in Costa Rica, or Montana, or some other exotic place you may never get to, is inspiring. But watching fishermen catch trout and smallmouth bass right here in New England is also inspirational ... in a different way.

How true. And no evening has demonstrated this more than our January meeting at Drumlin Farm, complete with fishalogue and slide show from our old friend, Brad Yoder of Pomfret VT.

Brad has been guiding in the White River and tributaries for over fifteen years now, and quite a few of those present had enjoyed his skillful services, some more than once.

And why not? There isn't a more beautiful venue in the world than a clear, rocky bottom stream and dense green woods in central Vermont. Where else can one fish all day, in more than a couple of streams, and not see another angler? I know no one who has gone out with Brad and hasn't caught trout!

Then there's the lunches! What attracted me to Brad's guiding my first trip was his gourmet lunch break program. Mid-day he pulled his FWD off the road next to a quiet, cool rivulet and opened the huge hatch, revealing a series of equipment and coolers that made one wonder how many people were meeting us there. While we stripped off some of our gear to get comfortable, Brad did the same, donned an apron, unfolded a table and two chairs, and laid out a perfect lunch for my son, Erik, and me, complete with flowers in a vase, wine glasses and a full-course menu. Without exaggeration, only the experience was as good as the food ... definitely gourmet. When we were finished, he folded the whole operation into his truck in a flash, and we were back over fish in less than a memorable hour!

The first time we fished with Brad, we stayed on good-sized waterways. He bonded with Erik, who, to this day, remembers every second of the experience. Erik learned how to set up his equipment, choose flies, tie them on, cast and work the fish. Brad made a huge investment both in Erik's productivity and in his enjoyment. It was clear very quickly that I was there to carry the bags!

The weather had not been kind to Vermont for our second trip with Brad; the water temperature was high, the water level was low, and, once the sun was in the sky, our fishing open water was finished for the day. Brad dove into the woods, following what appeared to me

WHITE RIVER continued from p. 1

to be a trickle of cold water running down off the hillside, shrouded under a tree canopy. As Erik and I ducked under low-hanging branches, the air immediately went from close to 95 degrees to slightly over 40.

For the rest of the day Brad and Erik stalked fingerlings in tiny pools as we attempted stealth, clamoring over rocks and squeezing under fallen trees. Of course, my two comrades had pretty much emptied each pool of willing, gullible trout by the time I started whacking the water with my feathered weaponry. Ah, well, I kept telling myself, this trip is about Erik having a good time, it's not about me. Ri-i-i-ght.

Brad's slide show was both enlightening and entertaining. He has now started ifloat trips to reach recesses beyond slogging range, and his slides of huge smallmouth bass and trout demonstrate this was a good idea.

He is still doing sumptuous lunch breaks, but admits it is not quite as frilly as it was a few years ago. As both Brad and his wife are excellent cooks, I am confident food is just as good, but I imagine the flowers are history.

Inspirational? My older son, Mark, is quite pleased; my present for his 35th birthday is a Brad Yoder Float Trip, about which Mark is very excited! I'm looking forward to the lunch, but I just hope the two of them let me catch a fish or two! - CP



Vermont fishing guide Brad Yoder, troutonthefly.com, 802-457-9498



## DAM REPORT

Owners propose rebuilding a breached dam on a Maine tributary which runs through Waterville, impounding 1.25 miles of water. The Messalonskee Stream enters the Kennebec about 20 miles above the head of tide in Augusta.

The Union Gas Dam was built in 1901. FPL Energy, prior owners, breached it in June of 2001 after a spillway collapse. The dam was sold this year, along with several active hydro dams on the stream, to Maine Renewables, Inc. of Annapolis, MD.

Since construction 100 years ago, the dams have destroyed most of the free flowing habitat on the Messalonskee. Blocking passage of migratory fish, they continue to kill fish trying to migrate downstream. Currently, there are only about two miles of unblocked stream. Although thought to have abandoned spawning there, in recent years both wild Atlantic salmon and several thousand blueback herring were observed doing so.

American shad, American eel, sea lamprey, sea run brook trout, striped bass and rainbow smelt have begun repopulating the stream during the five years after Edwards Dam was removed on the main stem of the Kennebec, restoring a free flow from Waterville to the Atlantic Ocean. A rebuilt Union Gas Dam will flood most of the Messalonskee that is

now free flowing, destroying the post-breach riffle-pool structure. The Maine Council of the Atlantic Salmon Federation needs help fighting the rebuilding project. A slide show documenting part of the stream's recovery can be seen at [www.kennebecriver.org](http://www.kennebecriver.org). The Maine Council of ASF can be contacted at [www.maineCouncilasf.org](http://www.maineCouncilasf.org).

-Peter Schilling

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Whether it's selling tickets, or collecting money at the door Frank LaGambina is the man.

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## BLACKSTONE RIVER STUDY UNDERWAY

The Army Corps of Engineers, the State of Massachusetts and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are exploring restoration options on the Blackstone River, which flows through Worcester County and Rhode Island to Narragansett Bay. The study is part of an Urban Rivers Restoration Initiative by the Army Corps and EPA.

Key aspects include an inventory of dams on the river, evaluation of water quality, and an assessment of the threat posed by contaminated sediments. The Blackstone, like other New England rivers, was used as a source of power for mills. In recent years, both the Narragansett and the Worcester Chapters of TU have focused efforts on improving Blackstone River habitat for coldwater fish. Chapter members who fish the Blackstone in both states report an increase in hatches, and good numbers of large trout taken throughout the season.

- Peter Schilling



Peter Schilling, outgoing treasurer of MA/RI TU Council, does his share of event duties.



The Grand Raffle Prize at the 03/20/05 GBTU PastaFest is an exquisite rod, reel and line outfit. Come, eat, take a chance, take great stuff home!

## SHOW BUSINESS! Schedule Announced

**January 21, 22, 23 2005**  
**Marlboro Show**  
 Friday 10:30-6, Saturday/Sunday 9-6. Royal Crown Convention Center.

**February 10, 11, 12, 13 2005**  
**Worcester Show**  
 Thursday/Friday 12:30-9:30, Saturday/Sunday 10-7. Centrum.

**March 12, 13 2005**  
**Wilmington Show**  
 Saturday 9-6, Sunday 9-4

*Volunteers willing to help work a booth should call **John Salemi** at 508-481-3034 or **Peter Schilling** at 617-484-9903. You will be glad you did!*

**DON'T MISS!**  
**SANDY MCGREGOR**  
 of  
**MOUNTAIN RANGER**  
**GUIDE SERVICE**

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**MONDAY, JANUARY 24TH**  
**7:30PM DRUMLIN FARM**

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*iFly fishing the fabled waters of the Rapid, Kennebago and Androscoggin in WESTERN MAINE*

## HADDOCK FISH STOCKS NEWS

After a decade of gloomy news on the fate of multiple New England fish species, we have more; salmon lead the way, numbers dropping consistently and no clear reason why. Cod and other North Atlantic species haven't been far behind. Striped bass seem to be an exception, though there is some contention. This fall, however, the Division of Marine Fisheries has good news regarding stocks of haddock on Georges Bank.

The 2003 haddock crop is estimated to be higher than in 1963, which was estimated at 486 million fish. For forty years, haddock recruitment hasn't exceeded 20 million fish. The last large spawning was 75 million fish in 2000. The fish in 2003 crop will reach the 19 inch legal size in 2006, and may provide relief to long-suffering New England fishermen.

The New England Fishery Management Council and the fishing industry now face a new challenge: How to handle the success of this species. Key issues are bycatch of herring and other species, fish over the trip limit, and juvenile fish.

These reports of success in fisheries management provide hope for other anadromous fish, such as Atlantic salmon and sea run trout.

-Peter Schilling