

Across the Stream

A Publication of the Heart of America Fly Fishers

www.hoaff.org

March 2012

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE MARCH 2012

Greetings -

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Dick Martin and Don Grundy for putting together this year's outstanding Spring Program with Charlie Craven. We had about 48 people attend the seminar and -- from everyone's feedback -- they all enjoyed the day. I also want to thank Ron Carruthers for all his efforts on Saturday, and last but not least I would like to thank Jim Hill for opening up his home on Sunday for a morning of Fly Tying with Charlie Craven. Everyone had

an enjoyable time and learned some new techniques. Thanks to everyone!

The other Item I would like to bring to your attention this month is the Blue River Clean-up on March 31st headed by Kevin Carril. Please reach out to Kevin and tell him you would be happy to volunteer some of your time that Saturday. He can be reached at **913-362-9379** or via email, **rrac3@sbcglobal.net**

Until next month,

-Peet Crissey

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING OUTINGS/EVENTS

MARCH 19 HOAFF MEMBER MEETING ACTIVITY

The Underwater World of Trout - Trout Vision and Refraction - See our flies and our world, from the trout's perspective

We will present portions of a DVD by Ozzie Ozefovich, which will help us be better able to present a fly where the trout will see it. This quote from Gary Borger says it best:

"For most of us, this DVD by Ozzie Ozefovich will provide a highly informative view of the world through the trout's window - a view that we all need to understand, but one that few have seen. Be certain that you see this DVD, it will make you a better angler".

Visit Ozzie's web page to view a brief video introduction to the DVD:
www.underwateroz.com

Ozzie says 'Every angler knows the frustration of lining a fish. After finding that big fish actively feeding, we make a cast where we think it should be, and — quick

HOAFF MEETINGS

- March 19, 2012** – Club Meeting
Video - The Underwater World of Trout
- April 16, 2012** – Club Meeting
Mike Siepker, Trout Biologist from the MDC
- May 21, 2012** – Club Meeting
John Bell, Cliff Cain & Bill Brant –
Michigan Steelhead



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as a flash — it's gone. What you forgot about was the law of refraction. That fish wasn't quite where you thought it would be. You thought it was six inches below the surface. But how deep was it, — one foot, two feet, — or was it deeper? How large was it's "circle of vision", and does it matter?

Sound confusing, well it's surprisingly easy once you understand what is happening. Refraction has an impact on how we view a trout and its world, and conversely how a trout views us and our world.'

(Quoted from www.underwateroz.com/pg4_trout_visionhtml)

BLUE RIVER CLEAN-UP

SATURDAY, MARCH 31ST - 8:00AM TILL NOON

Mark your calendar for March 31st and plan to join your fellow fly fishers for this year's annual Blue River clean-up! As in previous years, we will be coordinating our efforts with the Lakeside Nature Center's Project Blue River Rescue XXII. Last year our members who participated had a good time while helping to do something concrete to improve this watershed.

Our site this year will be an area north of Alex George Lake. (Note that the Blue River Road is closed just South of Bannister Road so don't plan on driving that way) To get to Alex George Lake, take I-435 to Holmes (2 miles east of State Line), go south on Holmes 1 mile, turn left (east) on Red Bridge Road and go 1 mile, turn left (north) on Blue River Road. Go about 1/4 mile until you see the lake. You can't miss it. We will be meeting in the parking lot Besides picking up trash we will be cutting invasive bush honeysuckle if weather permits.

Wear your work clothes and bring a small hand saw or loppers, if you have them. We'll provide the snacks, gloves, trash bags and great company! You can sign up for this worthwhile event at the March meeting or by contacting **Kevin Carril** at **913-362-9379**, cell **913-544-4686** or **rrac3@sbcglobal.net**. Having a count of the number of volunteers helps me plan but you are welcomed to attend even if you don't sign-up ahead of time.

REMINDER:

*FELT-SOLE WADERS BANNED BEGINNING MARCH 1, 2012
IN MISSOURI TROUT PARKS & DESIGNATED WATERS*

The Missouri Conservation Commission has approved a regulation change banning the use of porous-soled waders or footwear incorporating or having attached a porous sole of felted, matted, or woven fibrous material when fishing in trout parks and other specific trout waters. Pending public comment through the Secretary of State's office, the new regulation will go into effect March 1, 2012, the opening day of catch-and-keep fishing at Missouri's four trout parks.

SPRING OUTING, TROUT HOLLOW LODGE – APRIL 13-15

BY PEET CRISSEY

This year we are going back to Trout Hollow Lodge on Lake Taneycomo, (800-328-1246 or www.trouthollow.com).

We have reserved space for 16 people on a *first come, first served* basis. The accommodations are four units, each with one bath and two bedrooms (two twin beds per room). Each unit has a full kitchen and a living area.

The outing begins on Friday night with dinner on your own. An Italian Restaurant just across the street has been recommended and for anyone more adventurous Branson is just across the river. Saturday morning breakfasts, then we're off for a day of fishing. Lunch is on your own. We will finish the day with a cook out, hosted by the club. On Sunday we will have a continental breakfast before everyone heads off for another day of fishing or home.

If they are generating too much water at Taneycomo keep in mind that Roaring River State Park and the Beaver Lake Tail Water are both just over an hour away.

If you are interested in renting a boat, several are available from the Trout Hollow Lodge but you need to call the lodge directly to make your boat reservations (800-328-1246). Ask for Monica and tell her you are coming to the lodge with Heart of America Fly Fishers on April 13-15.

The cost for the weekend lodging and meals is \$85.00. To reserve your spot, you can call Peet Crissey at 913-706-7299 or email him at pcrissey@gmail.com. You can also call Ron Carruthers at 816-741-7251 or email him at rcarruthers2@kc.rr.com.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

–Peet Crissey

HOAFF BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE:

At the February club meeting Kevin Carril was elected as a Director of HOAFF. Kevin replaces Darrin Watson whose 3 year term had expired.

THE BATTLE

BY Steve Jenkins



ABOVE: Au Sable Brookie

The fish was rising with an almost regular rhythm. It had staked out a spot under the outstretched arm of a fallen cedar tree, a “sweeper” they are called on the AuSable River here in Michigan. It just might be the best looking fish I had seen on this trip – a trip which, so far, wasn't living up to our anticipation.

Doug had fished the river twice before.



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This year, when his fishing partner had a work conflict, a spot opened up for another fisherman. I had read about this stream for years. The prospect of getting to fish it with someone that knew the water was a bonus, and maybe we could avoid a guide fee. We had hoped to catch the tail-end of the Hendrickson hatch, but the combination of lower snowfall in the winter and an early, warm spring had advanced the hatch ahead of our date. But, the sulphurs were on – both the Light Hendricksons and the Pale Evening Duns.

We arrived about noon. It was mid-May, the weather was fair, but windy and cool. We fished mostly the South Branch, and caught numerous small brook trout and an occasional small brown. Before quitting for the evening, we stopped at a spot on the main stem and I caught a 13 in. brown on a size 14 sulphur dun imitation.

The next day was rain, all day. It was only about 42 degrees, but no wind. I fished all day in the rain on the main stem and caught a bucket-full of small trout.

On day three, the rain had gone, but left the clouds and wind. The sulphurs were active, again, yet we saw nothing but small fish. It was getting disgusting. When a few caddis showed up, we switched to an appropriate imitation and the small trout took these fakes eagerly, too.

Day four was our last full day. We headed to the South Branch again. The weather looked much more promising – little wind, warmer and spotty clouds. It was a 20 minute drive to the parking area through the woods and over old logging roads. There were other access spots along the way, and many had a full load of cars. When we got to our spot, there were only a couple of cars, but we still had a hike to get to the river. This stretch of the South Branch showed very little of the remains of the logging days, remains so prevalent on the main stem. The water really did look inviting.

We split up and I got the downstream stretch. With the sulphurs still expected,

I mounted a size 14 soft hackle that looked like it was an emerger. Swinging it downstream, I began picking up the small trout again. And, there were many flies hatching. The high bank I had been following sloped down to the water at the nearby remains of a log stairway and a small, old dock. I saw a small splash just above the dock structure, but couldn't work the soft hackle to the spot. Changing over to a small Ausable Wulff (why did I pick that fly?), I caught a nice brook trout on the third cast. It rambled all around, trying to tangle me in the dock remains. It was a good fight for a 10 inch fish.

Having waded downstream quite a distance, I decided to reverse the track and put on a size 14 no-hackle dun in the sulphur colors. This dry fly yielded a couple of small browns. Continuing upstream, I saw this rise back among the branches of the cedar sweeper. It was almost in regular rhythm, seeming to pick of the sulphur duns or emergers at will. But, it was in a difficult spot. The main trunk of the sweeper was broken off where it was still about two inches in diameter. With the associated branches, it was a sturdy tree and had "fly eater" written all over it.

I first tried to pitch the no-hackle dun directly upstream and to the right of the rise. But, with the branch and the current, there was no way I could get the fly close to the rise. Even with several "novel" casts, I couldn't get the fly to a spot above the fish. Moving upstream was tricky because of restricted space for a backcast, but that was about the only option. Being careful to not spook the fish, I moved right and tried to hug the bank and avoid the submerged snags. Finally, I could get a tentative cast launched and managed to avoid the backcast issues with the trees on the right bank. But, the fly could get above the rise, and after a couple of short drifts through the rise, I began to feel more confident of this position. After several casts finally the

*continued on page 5
Across the Stream*

fish came up for the fly, but no hook-up. Yet, with the fish now showing itself, I could see it was clearly the best looking fish seen on the trip, so far. But, after that rise, no more.

Thinking a different pattern might be of interest, I picked out a size 16 Light Cahill pattern in the classic Catskill style. Aiming again above the fish, I promptly hung the fly in a tree behind. Using the tip of the rod, I was finally able to unhook the fly without losing it. After several casts, I caught a small brook trout, but the target fish didn't seem interested.

Maybe another pattern – maybe a Grey Fox Variant in size 14. Holding my spot, and trying to avoid the congestion behind me, I began to work this fly toward the area where the fish was last seen.



ABOVE: Au Sable Sweeper

Between casts, it started rising again, but maybe a foot to the left. In this location, the track of the fly drifted it under the outstretched sweeper. Letting the fly drift well beyond the spot, I was trying not to further disturb the fish, but another small brook trout hit the fly. I'm not sure this put the fish down, but the rise rhythm was interrupted. "Resting" the fish for a few minutes, I redressed the fly and shifted my feet a bit. When resumed, the cast and drift were much the same and on the second cast, up came the fish, slapping the fly as much to say, "Hey buddy, I know what you are."

In addition to the sulphurs, there were also some ginger colored caddis, and one of the deer-hair caddis dry flies I carry would be a good imitation. Maybe this would fool that fish. But, no luck -- I did manage again to feed the caddis pattern to one of the trees. It took over five minutes to retrieve the fly, but this may have "settled" the fish some. By now, I had been working this fish almost 45

minutes and had only seen it briefly once. The surroundings were so confining, I was beginning to hunger for more casting space, yet that fish was beginning to mess with my mind – what pattern, where to cast the fly, and such.

Some years back, I had developed a yarn-wing dry fly pattern. It was particularly suited for smaller mayflies. Digging around in the dust of patterns not used recently, I found a likely fake in size 16. I began, again, trying to work the fly into the drift lane where I thought the fish was waiting. His rise rhythm

was maybe a bit slower, but it was still taking on the surface. The fly would land about three feet above the spot and take the drift lane to well below, just like the other casts. I was beginning to think there was no interest and was about to retrieve the fly when the fish finally hit. It was a picture-perfect rise, but I wasn't ready. Still, there was a hook up and the fish came out of the water. It was a nice brown, probably about 15 inches. But after chasing me around for about several minutes, it got off. And, I was shook. After fighting this one fish for an hour, competing with the trees, trying three or four fly patterns, having it rise to at least a couple, when I least expected it, it was gone.

I backed over to the bank and took a break. After all that, all I did was contribute to the education of an already pretty smart trout.

-Steve Jenkins

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Steelhead fishing can be addictive. Many good, sane fisherman have been lost to the pursuit of those giant sea-run behemoths who almost magically appear and disappear from many pacific coast rivers. I spent five years living in Northern California recently, and even after



returning to Kansas City it seems I can't kick the habit. When I received a message from my old club (Fly Fishers of Davis) that there was an opening on their January two day Trinity Float trip, I felt compelled to jump on it. I flew to Sacramento the day before the float, and then hitched a ride north with others in the group. As we approached Redding I got the first glimpse of the snow-capped Mt. Shasta...the massive 14K volcano that dominates the Northern part of the state. In Redding we stopped at The Fly Shop, who outfits the trip, to purchase fishing licenses, steelhead tags, and get the recommended flies for the trip (golden stones, red copper johns, and psycho prince among the hot flies).

From the Fly Shop we headed west on CA 299 over the mountains towards the Trinity River. One hour later (with only a little motion sickness), we arrived in Lewiston with the view of the Trinity Alps to the west. The Trinity River is undammed between here and the ocean, so it provides a highway for Steelhead (and Salmon) to make their runs to spawning grounds. However, it is long trip for them, 110 river miles from Lewiston to the Klamath river, and then the Klamath runs another 43 miles to the Pacific. So these Steelhead have already traveled 153 river miles from the ocean to reach the stretches of the Trinity we will fish. The

mornings on the river were in the mid-upper 30s with fog lifting around 11am, and the afternoons warming with the sun to near 50 (though much colder in the shade, which in some sections the river is completed shaded for long stretches).

We checked into the motel in Lewiston (the only one), and met for wine, cheese, smoked salmon, and dim sum (Arthur brought some from Chinatown) before dinner. The next morning after breakfast at the local 'greasy spoon' we met our guides. The first day I was paired with Mike (another member of the club) and Lonnie, our guide, who was very confident we'd have a great day. We did. Lonnie put us on just the right drifts where the Steelhead held, and we had consistent action throughout the day. A great day of steelheading usually involves 1 or 2 fish to the boat. I landed 4 adult Steelhead that day alone, losing another 4 to long battles. In addition I caught a good sized brown trout and a half-pounder Steelhead. Mike also caught 4 adults, however, he caught 3 of them on three straight drifts late in the day. The adult steelhead ranged from 22-30 inches. With the largest a 10-pound, brightly colored male I caught just as it was getting dark. The adults invariably provide strong runs after being hooked, and the biggest can take several minutes to land. The half-pounder Steelhead are

continued on page 7

Across the Stream



usually 14-18 inch Steelhead that return from the ocean after just one year before returning 2-3 years later as adults. Even though they are the “teenagers” of the Steelhead, they fight hard and are lots of fun to catch.

I wasn't the only successful one that day. Almost everyone caught steelhead, with Jim catching the most adult Steelhead (6), and Arthur catching the biggest (yes, bigger than the 10 pounder I caught). After another evening of good wine, food, and friends, and a well earned night's sleep, we traded fishing-partners and guides to go on the second day. The second day I went with Cary (the fishmeister of the trip), and Ross. Ross

felt there were too many drift boats on the upper stretches, so we drove about 25 miles downstream past Weaverville to escape the other Redding guides. It was a good plan. I landed two more nice adult Steelhead that day, another half-pounder, and a 22 inch sea-run brown trout (yes, they run to the ocean too). Cary did about the same with 2 adults and 2 half-pounders. At the end of the day Cary hooked a very large adult, who after a long battle managed to wrap him around a submerged log (the big ones are good at that). Right after that (just before we reached the take out) I hooked another large adult Steelhead (no, not the same one). Who after fighting a short time



ABOVE LEFT: Arthur with large adult steelhead.

ABOVE MIDDLE & RIGHT: Brian with a few nice steelheads.

ABOVE: A fisherman at Trinity.

just came loose (that happens too), and thus ensuring I would remain addicted.

-Brian Bechtold



AFTER SEEING JOHN BELL'S STEELHEAD, JERRY MORRIS REACTED:

*"John,
It is truly amazing what one can do with Photoshop. Seriously, though, nice one."*

For the group's review, I am attaching a couple of similar photos of a Northern Pike and a Walleye, taken this past summer at Hatchet Lake in far northern Canada.

-Regards, Jerry Morris



Hi All: It's been so long since I made a filing of this variety that someone asked about my demise. That report is overstated, as I think Mark Twain said, and as the photo shows.

A nice Chinook salmon on the Manistee River in Michigan in 2005. 8lb tippet. You can see the double egg fly (size 8) just below the gill plate. That is not a dissatisfied angler!

-Regards to all, John Bell

UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

March 19, 2012 – Club Meeting Video - TBA

April 13,14 & 15 – Outing Taneycomo –
Trout Hollow Lodge

April 16, 2012 – Club Meeting Mike Siepker, Trout
Biologist from the MDC

May 19, 2012 – One Fly Tournament Hartell
Conservation Area

May 21, 2012 – Club Meeting John Bell, Cliff Cain & Bill
Brant – Michigan Steelhead

June 9, 2012 – Day of Fishing Olathe Lake

June 18,2012 – Club Meeting Terry & Roxanne Wilson –
Summer fly fishing for warm water species

June 21, 2012 – Day of Fishing Lake of the Forest

July 16, 2012 – Club Meeting Casting Games –
Mark Borserine



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