



TALE OF THE POOL

SUMMER 2008

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

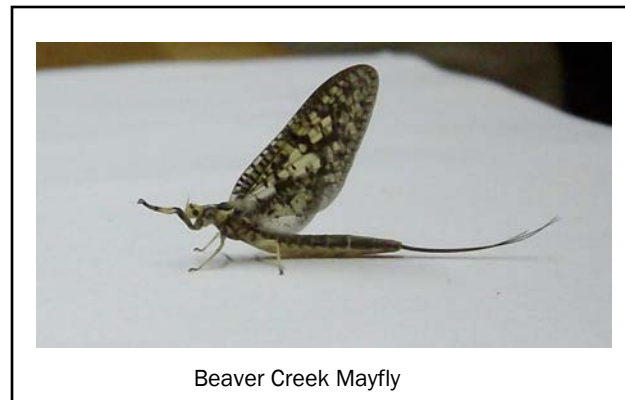
- Trout Stocking: Saturday June 28, 2008, Yough Tailraces **9:00 am**
- Trout Stocking: Saturday July 19, 2008, Yough Tailraces **9:00 am**
- CRTU Family Picnic: July 19, 2008, Yough Tailraces USACE Campground Pavilion, **12:00 noon**
- Membership Meeting: August 13, 2008, Knights of Columbus, Uniontown, PA **7:00 pm**

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The annual CRTU banquet was held on March 29, 2008 at the Uniontown Holiday Inn. As part of the banquet ceremonies, the Chapter presented its annual conservation award to the Somerset County Conservation District for sponsoring the Growing Greener Grant for the Laurel Hill Water Resources Management Plan. All in all, the banquet was very successful and a good time was had by all.

On April 5, 2008, as part of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Adopt a Highway Program, the Chapter collected various trash and tires along a two 2-mile section of State Route 1055, which parallels Dunbar Creek. Although the turnout was lighter than expected, 36 bags of trash, 37 tires, and two televisions were collected.

In 2005 CRTU members discovered two 4-inch pipes buried under ground, discharging untreated mine water onto state game lands and into Jonathan Run. The DEP has ordered Purco Coal Company to uncover the buried pipes and install a temporary treatment system until a permanent treatment system can be designed, permitted, and constructed. In the interim, a sam-



Beaver Creek Mayfly

pling program will begin to characterize the make-up of the waste stream, particularly the concentration of manganese. Articles on the Jonathan Run discovery appeared in the March 2008 issue of Fly Fisherman (page 33) and TU's spring issue of Trout magazine (page 44)

The survey and easement for legal access to construct the Morgan Run Acid Mine Remediation Project have been completed. Hopefully, grants and the land transfer agreement, which expire on June 30, 2008, can be extended again so that this project can be constructed. The chapter is putting much effort into bringing this project to a successful conclusion.

Amerikohl mining has submitted a permit application to strip mine in the Morgan Run Watershed. The NPDES permit application process requires a "public" meeting to obtain public input on the project. The meeting held on April 16, 2008 did not fulfill these requirements. The Mountain Watershed Association, Friends of Ohioyle and CRTU requested and received another public meeting at the Morrel Volunteer Fire Department near Connellsville. The date and time for the second meeting have yet to be determined.

The Water Resources Management Plan for Laurel Hill Creek, CRTU has nominated Laurel Hill Creek as a (continued on page 3)

CRTU FAMILY PICNIC JULY 19, 2008

The annual CRTU family picnic will be held on Saturday 12 noon on July 19th, 2008. Visit us at the USACE Yough tailrace campground pavilion. Hamburgers and hotdogs will be sizzling on the grill and refreshments will be on ice in the cooler. Please bring a covered dish or a desert. Everyone is welcome. Note: There will be no July membership meeting at the Knights of Columbus.

CRTU members will be stocking trout before the picnic. We got some really big trout to let go, so consider bringing your children (or grandchildren) if interested meet us at the nursery in the Yough spillway at 9 AM.

GAS EXPLORATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEB SIMKO

Gas exploration in Pennsylvania is nothing new. It has been occurring for over 100 years. What is different today is the discovery that the Marcellus Shale can now be targeted using a new type of technology called horizontal drilling (fracing). Why is this important and why should we care? As fly fishers and outdoor enthusiasts, we love the solitude that a pristine mountain stream provides. We love the sound of the water rushing past our waders and the trees gently swaying above us in the breeze. But all of that may disappear in a blink of an eye. The Marcellus Shale is said to hold the 3rd largest natural gas deposit in the United States and gas companies want this gas now, today. Not tomorrow but today! The Marcellus Shale is found in $\frac{3}{4}$ of Pennsylvania, $\frac{3}{4}$ of New York and all of West Virginia. To get to this gas, however, a well has to be drilled 6,000 ft or more. In order to drill (or frac) one vertical well, it will take approximately 600,000-800,000 gals of water. To frac a horizontal well it will take anywhere from 1,000,000 to 6,000,000 gals of water. This is fresh, clean water. Then the driller has to capture the waste water from the well and dispose of it. Because the gas companies want this gas now and the price of oil is going through the roof, many counties/townships and even our own governor see this as an economic boom for Pennsylvania. And it may well be – but at whose expense and at what price? Didn't we learn anything from the rape of our streams by the coal companies 50-100 years ago because the proper regulations were not in place or enforced? Will this now happen again by the gas industry because our regulations are not in place and there is not enough staff at the PA Department of Environmental Protection to enforce the rules that are there? Will we sacrifice our native brook trout streams or any stream for that matter for the almighty dollar again? The answer so far is yes as landowners are signing leases by the hundreds in the hopes that they can make money. Many times landowners do not even know what is in the lease and some are even being coerced into signing. Streams are being dewatered, 2 gas companies in Lycoming County have been partially shut down, one gas company has been kicked out of Pennsylvania and not allowed to do business here, drinking water wells have been contaminated, roads are fragmenting our forests and the canopy that shades our streams is gone and there are not enough treatment plants to take the wastewater.

Why do we have to be in so much hurry? The gas has been there for a million years. And yes, the gas companies have the right to take the gas and the landowner has the right to make a profit on the gas. But why can't we do this in a controlled and well thought out fashion? I ask each and every one of you to get to your legislators and make them aware of this situation. Pennsylvania is not ready for this, ask for a moratorium on gas well permits for at least a year until the PA DEP and other agencies can be brought up to speed. The gas isn't going anywhere – it will still be there in 6 months or a year. Please, I urge you to become more educated about this gas well situation in PA. Go to www.crtu.org to find additional links about the Marcellus Shale. This is not going to go away – the gas industry is here to stay and they want that gas!

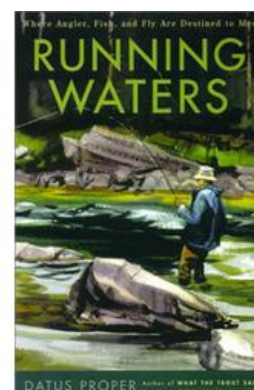
(President's note: With soaring energy prices, gas exploration in the region has increased exponentially This exploration has the potential to create numerous negative environmental impacts such as contamination of drinking water supplies, unmonitored reduction of stream flows, erosion and sediment pollution, improperly treated "brine" discharge, etc. We must actively monitor the situation and spearhead long term efforts to revise Oil and Gas Mining Regulations to protect the environment rather than the interests of the oil and gas companies.)

FROM THE BOOKSHELF: RUNNING WATERS BY DATUS PROPER

Running Waters; what better name for book about fishing? In this delicate little book of essays, we go from Montana to Portugal, with some Pennsylvania and Virginia streams fished and explored as well. The book begins in Virginia, near Skyline Drive. The author encounters a woman who grew up along the streams and hollows of the area. Her poignant memories of her father, his struggles to care for his family, and his deep love for his home in the mountains are touching. This lady is as much a part of Dark Hollow as the brook trout who live there.

Bailey Spigler and Scotty Chapman are two guys you will meet. These individuals hail from different parts of America, but have a deep hunger for the fishing life. The chapter on fishing in Yellowstone with Scotty is worth the price of the book alone. When fishing in our home state of Pennsylvania, who else to fish with but the master, Vincent Marinaro? His time along the Letort makes me realize that frankly I'll never be Vince Marinaro! (If you are a fly fisherman, Marinaro's books are a must read)

Datus Proper fishes the "limestone country", as he calls it, with great pleasure and affection. My favorite part of this book is the story of his home. He really knows the spring creek on his property. He speaks of it on very intimate terms. Everyone has a "home" stream, and his is literally in his yard. Throw in a trip to Portugal, fishing the Bighorn River with a gourmet chef, or fly-rodding for carp, and the result is one entertaining book .



Submitted by:
Dave Gilpin

LOSING A BIG FISH HAS ITS OWN REWARDS

BEN MOYER

No other outdoor experience is quite like losing a big fish—a truly big fish. It's something you think about for hours. Maybe you never stop thinking about it. I don't know. I've never lost a fish like the one that left me standing, slack-jawed and line limp, this morning. Nor have I caught one.

I had fished half way around the big loop the stream throws around a rocky knob before it spills into the river. It was hot, even in the shadowed gorge, but the water was up and stained from storms. In a deep and narrow run, a long, broad golden shape shifted and wavered in the green depths. The shape was a very big palomino, or golden, or whatever name we are calling these freakish fish now, and it seemed excited.

Sometimes, I've observed, when these mutants behave this way they will strike as if from aggression or defense. It ignored my pheasant tail nymph, though, and I tied on the biggest, most garish, flash-a-bou streamer I could find in my box, then crimped a splitshot just above it, noting that my tippet was way too frail for this kind of cargo.

I sent the thing on a half-dozen drifts through the run. Each time it neared the yellow trout the fish turned toward it but stopped short. I lifted the whole assembly and lobbed it a little farther upstream, intending to get it deeper by the time it reached "old goldie."

The streamer sank and started downstream but the line stopped about four feet short of the palomino. There was no tug or jerk; it just stopped. I lifted the rod, expecting a snag, but the line moved upstream in short staccato bursts. I struck harder and the thing at the other end pulled out line like some mechanical force. I saw a faint flash of tail far, far behind where my fly line entered the water. I still think it was a brown trout, lurking unseen above the golden, but the dimensions didn't make sense. I had the impression that I was linked to something approximating the mass of my own leg, but possessed of far more speed and power.

Somehow I kept the thing from going over the downstream lip of the run into a hopeless cascade of rapids where there would be no way to follow. But maybe, I thought later, it just didn't want to go down there. Maybe it liked its deep run and was sure it could stay there, despite this minor sting in its jaw and the bothersome pull from above.

I started looking for favorable slack water upstream—someplace I could coax the fish where it would have fewer options while I wore it down. But looking frantically back and forth from the straining line to the upstream backwater, I sensed a reversal of roles. Normally, it is the trout that is frantic, leaping and splashing in reckless flight while the angler stands in cool command. This fish, though, displayed no panic. It was as if it had hooked a human and was pulling it down out of the air toward its own element. It was the warm-blooded half of this duel that was spooked.

The fish settled into the deepest part of the run and began shaking its head. I could feel the abrupt tugs and relaxations in the rod. Then, as suddenly as a thing can occur and the mind can comprehend it, the line went slack. I lifted the fly to the surface in denial that the fish was gone. I had an impulse of wanting to push some kind of rewind button, to go backward in time and hold the rod differently, yield a little more slack, or apply a little more pressure, to remedy whatever it was that had offered the fish an edge.

When you lose a fish like that you don't just start casting again. You look around at the tight dark hemlock bark and the pink bursts of laurel bloom where the sun cuts through. You notice some unidentified bird of the woods slice through a shaft of light. You fiddle around with the fly rod as if you could make some kind of resurrecting adjustment, and you sense the finality of loss amid the seamless beauty and mystery in the forest around you ...and it feels like a kind of balance.

Part of this balance is a resignation that you don't really need to fish anymore right then. But you will need to again, more acutely than ever. And there will be more deep green runs where you can't see the bottom, and every moment when the fly is out of sight will be primed with possibility.



Palomino or Golden Trout

FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

critical water planning area under Act 220 of the State Water Plan. If selected as critical water planning area Laurel Hill Creek will receive additional protection. Also, the Chapter has submitted two growing greener grant applications to the DEP: 1) For additional tasks to complete the Management Plan for approximately \$28,000 and for a 2) Storm Flow and Sediment Analysis for approximately \$242,000.

Over 10 "priority" sites have now been identified in the Dunbar Creek Corridor Assessment Project. These sites will be the focus of possible future improvement projects. The draft assessment report is tentatively scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2008.

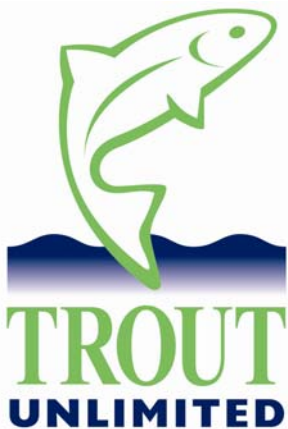
It is my pleasure to welcome Jim Tobal as CRTU's Youth Committee Chairman. Jim will be overseeing the Trout in the Classroom projects for the chapter. Please do your best to attend our chapter meetings. See you on the stream ...

Scott Hoffman
President CRTU

Chestnut Ridge Trout Unlimited
Chapter #670
P.O. Box 483
Uniontown, PA 15401

We're on the Web!
www.crtu.org

Trout Unlimited's mission is to conserve, protect and restore North America's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. Trout Unlimited's Chestnut Ridge Chapter has been a leader in coldwater conservation in southwestern Pennsylvania since 1995. With its efforts focused on the watershed of the Youghiogheny River, Chestnut Ridge TU works for cleaner streams, public awareness of water quality issues, and high quality trout fishing for the region's residents and visitors.



Tale of the Pool
Official Newsletter of CRTU

LAST CAST: FROM THE EDITOR

The CRTU annual Beaver Creek outing on June 6th was a huge success. Many thanks to our host, stream manager (and CRTU member) Daryl Bassett for his hospitality and the delicious roasted turkey. There was some discussion of CRTU having a fall outing, possibly in mid-October.

Carmichaels Area School District was a recipient of a 2008 Trout in the Classroom start up grant! TIC training will be held on Saturday, October 4th at Lock Haven's Sieg Center near Lamar, PA.

Time to stock some trout! Stockings are scheduled for June 28th and July 19th. Trout stockings are always a lot of fun so do your best to join us. Contact Tom Shetterly at 724-483-8654 or Tick McClintock at 724-322-0757 for more information.

Due to the recent storms and high muddy water we lost about 200 Brook trout from the nursery. On a more positive note, Tick has informed me that CRTU was awarded a grant from the Somerset Co. hotel tax rebate fund. This \$500-\$800 grant will be used to purchase educational supplies, such as life jackets for student groups who tour the nursery. CRTU has plans for an environmental educational center in the Yough tailrace area.

On June 6th CRTU board member Al Budinsky attended a technical advisory committee meeting regarding the Ramcat Run Coldwater Conservation Plan. For further details, visit our website.

As membership chairman, I will begin scheduling membership meeting programs for the fall. For the August 13th meeting, John Provident will present a program about his experience at PATU's River's Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp. CRTU's April's membership meeting at Gander Mountain brought 20-23 new faces and the chapter is planning an October meeting in Greene County.

Many thanks to members Deb Simko, Dave Gilpin and Ben Moyer for their contribution to this issue of Tale of the Pool. Visit our website at www.crtu.org for the latest news of the chapter

Take care



Beaver Creek Brown Trout

Allen Tedrow