

# Hickory NC Trout Unlimited

## December 2016 Newsletter



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### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we move into the holiday season, the weather will become much colder and those of us who continue to fish will find a solitude on the streams that only winter can bring. If you do not fish in the winter, I encourage you to give it a chance. With warm layers of clothing and a few fly changes in your fly box, you can experience a most wonderful time of year.

Our TU chapter had a good year for growth as we opened our first Trout in the Classroom program at Riverbend Middle School; began a very successful Women's Initiative program; provided you with a superb newsletter; conducted a comprehensive Wilson Creek survey; exceeded our annual fundraising goal while offering informative and educational programs at the chapter meetings.

In 2017 we will continue building on our successes by providing our members opportunities to learn more about fly fishing and meeting others who also enjoy the sport; increase our conservation efforts for Wilson Creek; expand TU outreach programs and expand communication efforts to members and the community. All designed to have you become more involved in Trout Unlimited.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Fish Tales... Gary Hogue

### DECEMBER MEETING

There will be no meeting in December due to all the activity during the Christmas season. Please take this time to enjoy your family and perhaps a trip to your favorite river. The next meeting will be on January 17<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see you there to start off a great new year with another great program.



### FUTURE MEETINGS

We are beginning plans for meetings in 2017. If you have a topic you would like to have presented or if you have a topic you would like to present, please contact us.

January: Essentials of Fly Casting by Gary Hogue

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"The fish is not so much your quarry as your partner."  
.....Arnold Gingrich*

Each month I search the internet for a fishing quote that seems especially good. The one I found this month hit home. Over the years this has been true with most of my trips to the river. People I have fished with have often been at least life-long memories if not life-long friends.

This is especially true with my son. The best thing I ever did was to teach him fly fishing. In my older years as my vision, dexterity and balance have dwindled he has helped me into the stream, untangled my snarls, and tied on a few of my flies

for me. I hope all of you have the opportunity to make one of your children your quarry for trout fishing and can enjoy the pleasure of their company. They often bring more pleasure than the fish.

### **TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM**

The science class at River Bend Middle School has been actively working on the trout in the classroom project, testing and monitoring to make sure the conditions are right and the fish survive. A major effort



has been keeping the tank clean. Vacuuming the rocks with the store bought siphon and expecting good results is problematic at best. However, they sat down and tried to figure out a better way of doing this. The store bought siphon has very little suction and tends to only scatter the debris rather than remove it. It does capture the smaller particles, but the larger ones are left floating in the tank, only to get caught in the filter netting.

Therefore, Mr. Turner went to the hardware store and purchased some plumbing supplies and created a more powerful and more thorough siphon. Using the plumbing pieces, they built an in-line filter. (the black



part in the middle of the image) It contains three 3 internal filters made from screen and netting. One end is attached to the pump via an adapter. The larger end is

used to clean the tank. When engaged, ALL debris is pulled up, cycles through 4 filters, moves through the pump and is recirculated back into the tank after the water falls through a 5th screen. It works very well; you just have to be careful to keep the cleaning end near the bottom. It pulls up the rock from the bottom and because these fish are of a curious nature,,,,,they swim close to it and risk getting sucked up also. Yes it did happen once, but the first filter in the large clear canister was small enough to catch it unharmed.



### **HICKORY HIGH SCHOOL FLY FISHING CLUB**

Please welcome the Hickory High School Fly Fishing Club and visit their very impressive website at: [www.hhsflyfishingclub.com](http://www.hhsflyfishingclub.com)

The club is teaching fly casting and fly tying to its members, but is drastically short of equipment. If you have fly fishing or fly tying equipment and supplies that you can donate to the club, please contact Lisa Barron at [hhsflyfishingclub@gmail.com](mailto:hhsflyfishingclub@gmail.com).

### **ARTICULATED FLIES**



**Articulated Woolly Buzzer**

Articulated flies such as the Woolly Buzzer shown above have become quite popular due to the live action they present. There are numerous ways to tie them. At the beginning, most were tied to



the leading hook with monofilament line. Tied too tight, this option limited the action of the fly. Tied too loose, this often left so much slack that the rear hook would tangle in the fly. Some added a bead between the hooks to improve the action, but this still did not produce the full action of the second hook. The best



option to date seems to be the Strung-Out MOAL. It gives the freedom of movement to the second hook, but keeps it

in line so that it does not get tangled in the fly when casting. Instructions for this fly can be found at:

<http://hatchesmagazine.com/blogs/Hatches/2009/12/09/strung-out-moal-leech-by-loren-williams/>

But a word of warning. The State of North Carolina only allows us to use single hook flies. Some people try to claim these are simply a fly with a very short dropper, but I have confirmed with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission that the game warden is not going to agree with you and you'll likely be ticked.

But there is a solution to that. There are a couple ways to tie it as a single hook fly. You can buy



front flies that hold the second hook, but these again will restrict the action of the fly. The best way is to just



tie up your fly in the manner of the Strung-Out MOAL and cut off the first hook at the bend. That

will give you the best of all with a second hook that gives you good action, no snagging back on the fly, and a legal fly to use in North Carolina. Give it a try.

## SQUEEZE SCISSORS



Just by chance a few years ago I ran across these scissors in a craft store. Since that time I've fallen in love with them for fly tying. Whenever I pick up regular scissors it takes time to get my fingers in the loops and when I set them down again my fingers are almost always caught in them. With these I just grab the scissors, give them a little squeeze and set them down.

They are much less cumbersome and very time saving. The other advantage of them is the very thin blade and fine point. I am even able to cut feathers and thread out of the hook eye. They look cheap and inexpensive, but I've been using my pair for several years now and they seem just as sharp and usable as when I bought them. They are often not easy to find, but if you search "squeeze scissors" on the internet you can find them.

## WILSON CREEK ENTOMOLOGY

We are going to take a pause in describing the insect life at Wilson Creek this month to publish an article that is perfect timing for the December newsletter as we move into the winter months. Some of the best fishing of the year and some of the least crowded times on the river come this time of year. This article was published in the Orvis on-line newsletter and written by Brown Hobson. Brown is owner and head guide at Brown Trout Fly Fishing in Asheville, NC.

# Top 10 Winter Flies for Western North Carolina and East Tennessee

Written by: Brown Hobson, [Brown Trout Fly Fishing](#)

Winter fishing in the Southeast isn't what it is in the rest of the country. We are blessed with average lows in the high 20s and average highs in the upper 40s. That still puts average water temperatures in the high 30s and low 40s, unless you are close enough to a dam to



This winter rainbow came from the Watauga River.  
Photo courtesy Brown Hobson

to enjoy temps in the upper 40s. Those temperatures are warm enough to allow enjoyable fishing all winter, but do put trout in feeding modes that are different from those of spring, summer, fall. I fish all over Western North Carolina and East Tennessee, and these

are flies that I have found work all over during the winter months on both freestones and tailwaters.



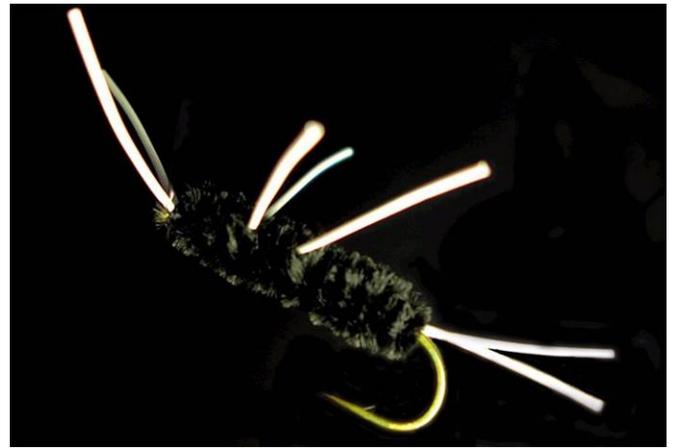
### 1. Squirmy Worm a.k.a. The Worm

This worm pattern has significantly more action than its little cousin, the San Juan Worm. In the winter, I fish this fly pretty large, like a size 8 or 10. We get more rain during the winter, so terrestrial worms are washed into the river systems and because of its size, fish often will move to it even when they aren't actively searching for food.



### 2. The Brain – a.k.a. Micro Spawn

This fly is a monster, size 12, at least in terms of egg patterns used for trout. We find that fish eat this fly more because of its shock value than because it simulates fish roe. As with many of the large flies on this list, winter fish aren't feeding as actively as they do when water temps are warmer, but this big meal is one that they often can't pass on.



### 3. Girdle Bug

Most of our streams have stonefly populations, and trout seem to be looking for these big meals periodically throughout the year. Even our tailwaters have big stones, and it seems like the fish only need to see a few before keying in on them. This is also a great big fly that will get fish moving during cold weather.

### 4. Rainbow Warrior

Lance Egan really hit a homerun when he designed this fly. It is super effective on almost every stream I fish, and I prefer sizes 16-22 during the winter. We don't have nearly as many bugs crawling around during the winter, but the few that do are usually in the smaller sizes. The flashy nature of this bug seems to really attract fish well when standard looking flies aren't.



### 5. Pheasant Tail

This fly is pretty standard and doesn't need more publicity, but it is so effective that I couldn't leave it off. I have an entire box dedicated to variations of this fly in sizes 8-24. I find that during the winter this fly—with a copper bead in sizes 18-24—is a go-to pattern every day.



### 6. Walt's Worm

I've seen a lot of tutorials going around the Internet about how to tie this fly and its cousin, the sexy Walt's worm. Caddisfly larvae in the South this time of year are only two or three months away from hatching and are usually becoming quite large. I have caught fish on this fly in the really large sizes, such as 8 and 10, as well as in sizes 14 and 16. I usually put a bright, colored bead or bright dubbing behind a metallic bead for this fly during the winter.

### 7. Soft Hackle Surveyor

This fly works great in deep, slow pools where trout are resting. The dubbing color has just enough flash to get fish's attention, and the big, billowy partridge feathers are tantalizing in the slower moving water. I mostly have this fly in sizes 10 and 12.



### 8. Brown's UV Soft Hackle

This is a fly I was hesitant to put my name on because it is so simple and many guides fish flies just like it. I felt it needed a name to be on a list, so there it is. I fish this in size 18 during the winter. I will fish a 16 at times during the rest of the year, but during the winter it's always 18

because that's the right size to match the bugs present in cold weather. The UV dubbing seems to really trigger strikes and while I've tried many bead colors, copper is the best. I either fish this fly behind a larger bug or as a dropper off a dry fly.



### 9. Zebra Midge

The Zebra midge and the many variations are probably already in your box. Midges are the bugs I see hatch most during the winter, and like the Pheasant Tail and UV Soft Hackle, I always try at least a couple of these behind a worm or stonefly. They are also small enough that you can fish them below a small parachute or even a Comparadun if you see fish midging in slow water.



### 10. Puff Daddy

This is one you may not have heard of unless you are on the Watauga or South Holston Tailwaters. The Puff Daddy was created by Blake Boyd for the super-picky fish in the slow flat water. It is small and sparse and takes a good helping of Frog's Fanny to keep it afloat, but is very effective. I mostly fish dark colors, such as black and olive, during the winter and match the CDC to the thread body. I use it in sizes 18-22.

Brown Hobson is owner and head guide for [Brown Trout Fly Fishing](#), in Asheville, North Carolina. He's also a former [Trout Bum of the Week](#).

## **TU WOMEN'S INITIATIVE**

For information Contact Holly Cole at 828-639-1689 or [hc1958@charter.net](mailto:hc1958@charter.net).

## **FLY FISHING EXPO**

The 2016 WNC Fly Fishing Expo is scheduled for December 2, 3, & 4 at the WNC Agricultural center in Asheville. For more information visit:

<http://wncflyfishingexpo.com/>

## **LEGENDS OF THE FLY**

On February 3rd 2017 at The Fly Fishing Show in Atlanta, Georgia, a ceremony will be held to officially induct six grandfathered in anglers and announce six additional inductees chosen by online balloting. You can vote on the additional six (including several NC fly fishermen) at:

<http://www.southerntrout.com/hall-of-fame/>

## **CHAPTER WEBSITE**

The Hickory NC TU Chapter website is now up and running. It's still under development, but we would love to have you take a look and give us any input on how we can make it better for you. Visit [www.HkyNCTU.org](http://www.HkyNCTU.org) Our thanks to Clay Ford for his efforts in the development of the site. If you have suggestions for improving our we improving our website, please contact Clay at [HkyNCTUveep@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTUveep@gmail.com)

## **SPONSORS INVITED**

As part of our fundraising, we invite you to post an advertisement in our monthly newsletters and on our section website. For \$100, we will post your business card on both locations for twelve months. Please send your business card and a check for \$100 to:

Hickory NC Trout Unlimited  
PO Box 9401

Hickory, NC 28603

For more information, please contact us at

[HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com).

## **NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS INVITED**

Send us a photo of your fishing trip, an article you'd like published, or just a topic you would like us to write about. [HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com)

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