

Hickory NC Trout Unlimited June 2019 Newsletter



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CHAPTER PICNIC TO CONCLUDE 2018/19 PROGRAM YEAR

WHEN: Saturday, June 29th, 4-7 PM

WHERE: Glenn C. Hilton Jr. Park, Pavilion 1
Access from 6th Street NW

RSVP REQUIRED: HkyNCTUveep@gmail.com

**Open to members, non-members, and guests.
Bring your entire family.**

We will wrap up the program year with a picnic in the park. All food and soft drinks are provided. The entrée will be smoked pork butt prepared by Cathy and Wes Starnes.

Events at the picnic will include:

- A fly-casting contest (we are providing the rods so that all contestants will be competing equally)
- A drawing for the Thomas & Thomas Avantt rod that we have been raffling for the last few months. Tickets can be purchased right up to the time of the drawing.
- A door prize of a full day float trip on the Catawba River Special Regulations water. To be eligible for the Raffle you must **RSVP no later than June 15th** to the above email address. Please include the number of people in your party as each reserved attendee will receive a ticket for the drawing. You must be present at the drawing to win. You can read all about this trip in the following article.

Please join us for this great event and take some time to relax and chat with other members and maybe take home some great prizes.

DRIFTING THE CATAWBA RIVER SPECIAL REGULATION WATERS



In the last few years I've read several articles on-line about the Catawba River "trophy" waters below the Lake James Bridgewater Dam. The articles were positive and talked

about a nice brown trout fishery. The water at the dam is released from the bottom of the lake which keeps it relatively cool throughout the summer. The NCWRC felt that the water had the potential for a good brown trout fishery and began releasing about 10,000 brown trout per year with hopes that many would summer over and grow to reach trophy size. To help promote the number of larger fish, the water was listed as Special Regulation waters with a limit of two fish over 14".

The idea of drifting and catching some nice fish this close to home has intrigued me. I discovered that John Zimmerman out of Morganton guided these waters, so I spoke with him and he agreed to speak to us about it at the February meeting this year. I liked what he had to say and asked him to set up a trip for my son and me. John has become very involved in Casting For Hope so was unable accommodate us. Instead he set us up with Brandon Harrison and we scheduled a trip the first weekend of May.



As a bit of an aside, the section of the river below the dam down to Muddy Creek is managed as Hatchery Supported water. There you are allowed to keep seven fish with no size restriction, but if you catch and keep any fish there, you

cannot legally continue with them into the Special Regulation waters.

The other thing you need to know about fishing the Catawba River is that it depends on flow from the dam. The flow can vary from almost nothing to very high and strong enough to sweep you away and can change in seconds. The release schedule can be found at https://lakes.duke-energy.com/index.html?_ga=2.149437046.1132152738.1557511990-255577299.1556399786#/flow. To give you an idea of the change in water levels, look at the gage height for the river below the dam at

https://nwis.waterdata.usgs.gov/nc/nwis/uv/?site_no=02138520&PARAMeter_cd=00065.00060. This shows the river rising two feet (almost instantaneously) when one unit comes on-line. And another two feet when the second unit comes on-line. The hydro station will blow a warning alarm before beginning the release, but if you aren't paying attention or are too far down stream to hear it, it can be a disaster. If you are wading the stream

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the wave of water can easily knock you off your feet and if you happen to be fishing from the island below the dam you may not be able to wade across to shore. Brandon told us that the drift through the trophy water depends heavily on the flow rate. If no units are operating, the lack of current will make the row gruesome. One-unit running is ideal, but two-units make the fishing difficult.

The schedule for the day was an ideal 1-unit flow. We planned our arrival for between 7 and 7:30, but arrived a bit late. There is currently road work and a detour barricade on the road down to the launch. We followed the detour around and discovered a second barricade at the other end.



We drove all the way back around and through the lower barricade to the launch site. As we arrived the warning siren was going off to begin the 1-unit release. You can see in the launch photo that even that one unit creates a fairly strong flow rate. The

island mentioned before is across the stream here and you can see that with only one unit running it would be a difficult wade back to the ramp.

The launch ramp is in the Hatchery Supported section of the river as we started our drift. The cold water combining with the humid air left a light layer of fog still sitting above the river and presented a beautiful view. The river for the whole trip was beautiful and we passed very few homes along the way.



Brandon set us up with streamers to start the trip. Due to the fast and relatively deep water we used sinking lines on a 7 wt. rod. This was my first venture using sinking line and it took a while to get used to casting that weight. Even my son Michael, who is a much better caster than me had issues getting used to the line, but eventually we both adapted and did well for the rest of the day. Starting in the Hatchery Supported section we each caught some nice rainbows but threw them back of course as we were heading into the Special Regulation section.

As we reached the end of the Hatchery Supported waters, Muddy Creek appeared on the right and was living up to its name. The benefit of the release flow that carries you through your drift is the higher flow also reduces the effect of Muddy Creek on the Catawba River. The rise in the Catawba from the higher flow pushes up into Muddy Creek and reduces the inflow of mud. It also holds the muddy flow tight to the bank for a long stretch. The clear/mud line is one of the first good places to fish. The fish hang out right along

the mud line waiting to ambush food coming out of Muddy Creek.

The river holds Brook, Brown, Rainbow, as well as wild Brown trout that reproduce annually. Also Smallmouth, Largemouth, Striper, Perch, Walleye, and Carp can be caught on the tailrace section.



On this day we only caught browns after we left the Hatchery Supported section and most were in the 9-12" size. Of the 10,000 planted in the fall, many do carry over. You can identify them by the red spots that appear on them, and several of those we caught did have the spots. The trophy fishery does exist with reports of 28" browns being caught, but

this day we caught mostly the current year plants. We each got about 15 fish and lost several more due to our inexperience with barbless hooks and weighted line. Further down the river we did switch to drifting some nymphs below an indicator and had good luck on the rig. Brandon passes this along if you are planning your own trip down the tail race.....The Catawba has several kinds of mayflies as well as a few different caddis hatches, midges, crane flies, dragon and damsel flies, and of course stoneflies.

Even if you have your own boat or kayak for fishing this river, I highly recommend that you take at least one guided trip. Much of the fishing, and fish we caught, was in areas I never would have thought to fish. One of the best spots was in a large rapids that had a channel that you would likely never find without an experienced guide. Brandon guides for Appalachian Fly Guides who has been running trips on the Catawba tail race for over ten years. They have three guides and four boats to handle most any group of fishermen.



The forecast for the day included widespread afternoon thunderstorms and in many places there is cell service which let us know the storms were on schedule to hit us around 3 PM. The last stretch Brandon put his arms into the oars and



we arrived at the pull out on Watermill Glen Alpine Road just ahead of the storms. We got everything loaded and tied down and headed back up to the dam to pick up my truck. By the time we arrived it was pouring rain.

It really was a beautiful day on a very beautiful section of the Catawba River. The price is reasonable and it's only 45 minutes away from Hickory (providing you don't take the detour like we did). Brandon said the temperatures do get a little warm in the summer so they give the fish a rest for a time. You may have to wait until

fall for a trip, but the good news is brown trout average growth of ¾" per month and those 9-12" fish we caught may average 14" by then.

And as a final point, you may want to do a little weight lifting before you head out on the trip. At the end of the day my arms were a bit sore from tossing that heavy line all day. Probably was a good prep for the trip to Belize that my son and I have planned for June. More on that in the next issue.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"It has always been my private conviction that any man who puts his intelligence up against a fish and loses had it coming."

John Steinbeck

HICKORY NC TU LOGO GEAR



The Hickory Chapter has an account at Lands' End for clothing and other items with our logo.

There are frequent discounts available that you can sign up for by going to <https://business.landsend.com/>. To access the account go to: <https://business.landsend.com/store/hkynctu/>

We also have a second option for logo gear that Zan's wife Peggy has set us up with. Check out the following website: www.companycasuals.com/hickorytrout/start.jsp (note: this site requires a minimum of 12 items)

NEW ACCESS PLANNED FOR HENRY FORK

Ryan Sparks from Foothills Conservancy gave a presentation to our board meeting this past month regarding plans to create fishing and boating access to the Henry Fork River in Burke County. The plans include access at two sites they own along the river. The upper site is adjacent to the Hatchery Supported waters and the NCWRC is reviewing it as an addition to the current water. The second site is about 8 river miles downstream so would create a nice drift. These plans are in early stages and we will keep you up to date as they progress.

To learn more about Foothills Conservancy or make a donation visit: <https://foothillsconservancy.org/>

Tight Lines & Road Kill

Don't Leave This One in the Bucket!

The famous philosopher Tim McGraw said, "I always want to learn, but I'm sure on my dying day, I will feel like I left something in the bucket." Everybody's got a bucket list; I'm sure I'll leave several things in my bucket. Check your bucket, and if this one's there, be sure NOT to leave it: fishing in Yellowstone National Park.

I tell folks frequently that if you tell me I'll die in a month, but I'll feel OK for 30 days, I'm headed to Yellowstone! I've been fortunate to fish many of the best fisheries on this continent, but for the complete experience, nowhere I've been can hold a candle to Yellowstone. If it's in your bucket, be sure you take it out. If it's not, add it!

First, it's one of the most beautiful places on earth. There is a reason it was the first spot to ever be designated a national park. Mountains, geysers, hot springs with every color in the rainbow, rock formations that look like an alien planet, mud volcanos – lots of things that go bump in the night! The wildlife is mystifying. You really need at least two trips, one just to look and another (or several) to fish.



Next, it's the only place you'll find what I consider the second most beautiful species of trout I've seen, the Yellowstone cutthroat. (Nothing tops the Golden trout I caught in the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming.) Here's an example ... yes, those are my hands:

Depending on the stream you fish, you'll catch other species too: native rainbows in the streams that ultimately drain into the Pacific, brookies and browns, grayling, lake trout, and mountain whitefish. The brookies and browns were stocked in the late 19th Century, and the lake trout are a nonnative invader. Like many places, including native brookie habitat in North Carolina, folks thought the indigenous fish weren't good enough, so they planted brookies and browns. Stupid ideas are pervasive!

There is now an extensive program to restore the native cutthroat ecology. Rainbows and brookies in the Lamar River drainage have been selectively poisoned. If you catch one there, by law you have to keep it or kill it. In Yellowstone Lake they have gill netted the invasive Lake trout. You also have to keep or kill them if caught. The program has been modestly successful. For many years the numbers of Yellowstone cuts in the Yellowstone River near the lake were drastically reduced because of the Lake trout eating the small cuts. In recent years the cuts have recovered fairly well. We just aren't smarter than Mother Nature!

The fishing is quite varied. Every stream fishes differently. There are small freestone streams teeming with beautiful brookies (they're leaving them alone). The Madison and Firehole fish a lot like other large rivers in the West. Sight fishing to rising cuts on the Yellowstone is technically tough but may be the most fun you can have with your waders on! The first time you go, fish with a guide or someone who knows the park.

Here's a great website to give you a start on fishing the park:

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/fishing.htm>. You need a special park permit but you don't need a state license. (Be careful though, some of the streams meander outside the park boundaries. You can get nabbed for not having a state license there.) A seven-day permit is only \$25 – probably the best bargain in the sport. Felt sole boots or boot-foot waders

are now illegal. You have to fish barbless hooks or crimp your barbs.

Finding lodging in the park is a huge challenge! Those places book up years in advance. Flying into the small airport in West Yellowstone, MT works well. There are lots of places to stay in W. Yellowstone, located right at the west entrance to the park. Flights into Bozeman, MT tend to be a bit cheaper with more options available. You're about an hour-and-a-half drive from Gardiner, MT, also with lots of available lodging. Gardiner is just outside the north park entrance. There are lots of good fly shops in both places. My favs are Blue Ribbon Flies (<https://www.blueribbonflies.com>) in West Yellowstone and Parks' Fly Shop (<https://www.parksflyshop.com>) in Gardiner. Superb guides in both and each owner, Craig Matthews and Richard Parks respectively, is on the Mount Rushmore of Yellowstone. There's a great education to be had by just dropping in to talk to either of these masters. Each has written a book about fishing the park; read both before you go.

So, on your dying day, be sure this one is not left in your bucket. This column gives you just a brief glimpse. The links I've included can help you plan a trip.

Feel free to drop me a note (hkyNCTUtrk@gmail.com) if you have questions or need more info. Make plans and go. You won't be disappointed. And don't blame me once you're a Yellowstone addict!

By Joel Miller

TIP OF THE MONTH



[Gear Reviews](#) [Tips/Tactics](#)

Let's Rethink the Wading Belt

By [Domenick Swentosky](#)

Seems to me, the last piece of gear many anglers think of is the wading belt. Often seen as an add-on, an accessory, or even unnecessary, some guys will tell you to tie a rope around your waist and be done with it. The wading belt provided with your new pair of waders perpetuates this notion. Every fresh box of breathables I've opened has a thin, flimsy belt thrown in as an afterthought. It's good for helping you not drown as you go ass-over-tee-cups into the river, but not much else.

So I propose a rethinking of the wading belt. I treat mine as a utility belt — a place to carry heavier things. It's an integrated part of my system for having everything I need right and ready

at any moment, while keeping the weight and resulting fatigue of that gear to a minimum.

What works for me may not feel right to you. But some of these ideas may meet your own needs and preferences.

My belt system is designed for the wading angler who covers a lot of water, who walks away from the parking lot and hikes in a bit, who spends long hours pushing through heavy river currents and returns at dark. Of course, I don't have the hours to fish like that all the time, but even on short trips, this wading belt system serves me well.

Safety First

Let's get this out of the way. Wear a wading belt if you love your family. To me, most of the risks anglers talk about are negligible: snake bites, lightning, and broken legs in the backcountry are pretty rare. Drowning because you didn't wear a wading belt seems more awful. But hey, choose your own adventure.

Fall into the flow with a wading belt snugged up, and the water stops at your waist. That's nice, because the air trapped in your pant legs helps keep you afloat until you reach shallower water. (Yes, I've experienced this first hand. And no, there are no pictures documenting the event.)

Fall into the flow without a wading belt, and any water over your waders fills your pant legs, dragging you down and preventing the leg motion you need to swim to safety. Worst case scenario, you drown.

Again, choose your own adventure.

Batman

One of the greatest superheroes of all time actually has no superpowers — no bullet immunity, no invisibility, telepathy or even superhuman strength. Batman is just really smart, super rich, and he works out a lot.

He also wears a utility belt to hold a bunch of his gadgets at the ready — because he's ultra-prepared and obsessed with efficiency.

As a walk and wade fisherman, I treat my wading belt as a utility belt, purposed for holding a few things I want within easy reach, conveniently keeping the weight off my shoulders and on my hips.

Hiker's Weight

Backpackers, law enforcement officers, hikers and scores of others use the concept of carrying weight on your hips rather than your shoulders. The hips carry a heavier load longer than your shoulders ever will, without fatigue.

So instead of carrying heavy items in your vest or fishing pack, attach them to your wading belt. Seriously, the difference is huge.

What's Heavy?

Attached to my own wading belt are the following items: water bottle, net, wading staff and camera (in a case). All of these things would significantly weigh down my vest, pull down on my shoulders and wear me out faster if they were in my vest. I literally fish longer and harder because I carry the weight of those heavy items on my belt.

I do like my fly boxes, tippet, forceps, nippers, leaders, split shot, and all the other small stuff accessible higher up — in my vest and closed in behind zippers and Velcro.

Incidentally, I'm not a fan of hip packs, because I often wade real deep. And the waterproof zippers required in high-end hip packs are too stiff to be efficient. There's also never enough room in a hip pack to carry everything I need. So for me, a vest or chest pack for the regular stuff and a utility belt for carrying the heavy things is just the right combination.

The Best Belt

In the next month or so, I'll publish an article about each of the four things I carry on my wading belt. But first, let's cover home base — the belt itself.

If you know me, you won't be surprised when I admit that I bought six belts before I found the right one. But true to my nature, when I did find the best tool for the job, I stopped searching and have been satisfied ever since.

My favorite wading belt is a [Blackhawk Two Inch Web Duty Belt](#). It's sturdy enough to hold the heavier things I attach, without being overly stiff or uncomfortable (and that's important).

*** Note **The links below is are affiliate links, meaning, at no additional cost to you, Troutbitten earns a commission if you click through and make a purchase. So, thank you for your support.*



[Buy Blackhawk Web Duty Belt with Hook and Loop Closure Here](#)
[Medium](#), [Large](#), [Extra Large](#)

The two-inch width and a tight, double-layer nylon web is necessary for a belt to hold its shape when heavier things are mounted. Flimsy, thin or elastic belts simply won't do.

Blackhawk makes high quality gear designed for law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel. I've had the same belt for about five years now, and I suspect I might wear it for the rest of my life. It shows no signs of wear and is pretty much bulletproof.

A sturdy two-inch belt also lends a bit of lower back support, and that's nice too. It's not as much support as a wider belt, of course, but anything over about two inches becomes prohibitive for what you can mount on the belt and slide around it.

The [Smith Creek Wading Belt](#) is another good option. It's thinner and more flexible, so if you don't plan to add many things to the belt, but you do want the utility of a wider belt, it's a good solution.



[Buy the Smith Creek Wading Belt Here](#)

The Blackhawk belt is adjusted with Velcro on the *inside*. And while it allows for a precise fit, adjusting this way is not as easy as a standard belt clasp or one with holes. But there are good reasons for the design. It's a utility belt. And once you start mounting a few things to it, the features become apparent.



Keep the weight on your hips, and fish longer.

I mount a [Smith Creek Net Holster](#) at the back center of the belt. A [carabiner](#) holds my [Nalgene water bottle](#) next to it on the left, and a [Gear Keeper retractor](#) holds my [wading staff](#) at the ready, behind me and out of the way. On the right side, I mount my [Ape Case camera bag](#), keeping it behind me until I slide it around to the front when I want the camera.

Because of the sliding camera bag, I've cut the extra length from the right side of my belt and permanently stitched it near the clasp. So the occasional adjustments (to accommodate for extra layers) happens only on the left side.



A few stitches keep the right side fixed. Adjustments for fit on the left side.

Do It

The whole system really works for me. By keeping extra weight off my shoulders and on my hips, I carry all the things that I very well might leave at home because they're too heavy.

I'm sure you'll find your own things to mount to the belt, with a system that matches your needs.

The bottom line: Treating a wading belt as a tool, and not a frivolous accessory, can really improve your efficiency and enjoyment of long, wonderful days on the river.

Fish hard, friends. Enjoy the day.

Domenick Swentosky

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SUMMER FLY FISHING

While most of us only fish Delayed Harvest from October through May, there is still some terrific fly fishing during the summer months. The trick is to find a wild trout stream above 3000' where the trout can survive through the warm summer months. To help you do that, we have maps of many of those streams near by that were provided to us by Kinnon Hodges from the NCWRC. You'll find those maps on our website at <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/nc-wild-trout-streams/>. Another good source is the Interactive NC Trout Stream Map that can also found on the helpful links page of our website.



And what makes this fishing even better is that these wild trout love dry flies. Summer is a great time for terrestrials so try out some ants, beetles, and grasshoppers during the day. Early morning and late evening you are likely to run into some hatches. The elk hair caddis and adams are a couple great go to dry flies.



For more information on fly hatches and patterns, visit our website helpful links page at <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/> and look for the NC Fly Hatch Chart

ADVICE FROM THE VISE

Welcome to the June edition of Advice from the Vise. Hard to believe we are on the far side of spring already. This month I want to continue the work around dubbing. Last month we worked on forming a tapered body with a noodle, this month I want to take it to the next level and make a dubbing loop and the pattern that was very effect earlier in the month for me, a Zonker Tail Leech. This is a great little streamer that produces in a variety of colors. You can tie it heavy or light, big or small dependent on the water conditions. I fish this pattern with a swing and strip method downstream by casting across and letting it "swing" down current with a tight line and then slowly strip back in at the end of the drift.

The dubbing loop is just that, a loop of thread we are going to put some longer strand dubbing in and then spin that thread to trap the fibers in the loop to give a fuzzy strand that has great movement in the water to get noticed, and hopefully crushed.



Starting out, I've got a #10 3X Long hook with a 3.5mm Tungsten Bead. You can add wraps of lead-free wire to this for heavy, change to a brass bead with lead free for medium depth or flow, and just a brass bead for a lighter fly. For Thread I'm using Danville Flymaster 140 denier. A little heavier than standard 70, but as we want a bit of bulk to the body, it works well. Once you have your selected weight picked out, dress the hook with thread starting at the lead free and building a ramp so that there is a transition. Opting out of lead free, just start being the bead and dress to the end.



I'm using a rabbit zonker.....a what you say? Zonkers are strips of tanned hide with hair, cut with the length of the source critter, typically they are rabbit or pine squirrel. They add great movement to the fly. They come in every color imaginable, and several widths. This is a standard or 1/8" strip.



Now comes the magic- we are going to form a thread loop by taking a long wrap of thread and sticking a finger in the bottom of the loop, then wrapping the ends of the loop towards the bend of the hook as shown below.

A little swipe of wax on the loop threads and place your dubbing inside of the loop. In the case of this leech, I am using some long synthetic fibers made for leech bodies. Spread this dubbing evenly out over the length of the loop.



Time for a new tool! Dubbing twisters come in a couple different styles, but all work about the same. The idea is that you will put the bottom of the loop in the wires of the twister and the weight of the twister will hold the loop taught. Ensure that you wrap your thread to the head so that the bobbin is out of the way. Spin the twister and the dubbing will form a noodle that is much

stronger than the conventional way. We will brush this out once we wrap it. Experiment around with the twister, you can get varying degrees of fuzz based on how tight your twist the loop. In this case I want to keep the fibers somewhat long but in place.



Once you have your loop completed, wrap the noodle towards the head, and tie off like you would any material.



Place a touch of head cement on the thread, and whip finish the fly. A bit of the hook side of Velcro or a dubbing brush can be used to comb out the fibers so they lie back when you are fishing,

Hope this one gets you introduced to the wonderful world of dubbing. We will explore some other ways to use it in the coming months. I'm happy to answer any and all questions, give a lesson, or just talk fly fishing. Don't hesitate to contact me at jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com or check out some of my current ties on Facebook at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Dave Everhart

Fly Line Density & Color

By BigSkyFishing.com

Last month we started a discussion on fly line by discussing taper. This month we finish it up with a discussion of density and color.

Well, we are almost done in our exploration of fly lines. Just a few more things to go over. On this page will cover the exciting topics of Fly Line Density, Fly Line Color and How to Decipher a Fly Line Box.

Understanding Fly Line Density

Fly line density is a very simple term to grasp, actually. All fly line density means is whether the fly line float, sinks, or just partially sinks. Simple.

A **floating fly line** is by far the most popular and versatile fly line. A floating fly line, as the name suggests, floats completely. It does not sink unless the line is weighed down. If an angler can own only one fly line, make triply sure that it is a floating one. Through the addition of weights an angler can always make a floating line a "sink-tip" line.

By contrast, a **sinking fly line** sinks - completely. How fast it sinks (known as its sink rate) is variable - depending on the sink

rate of the line. Some lines sink very fast, others very slow. The point, though, is the the entire fly line will sink - and will sink at a uniform rate. As a sidenote, the "sink rate" of a fly line will be noted somewhere on the fly box, measured in "fps" - feet per second.

Sinking fly lines are great for big water fishing, particularly lakes and saltwater. They have limited utility in an average river and are rarely used here in Montana.

Since sinking fly lines have limited utility for trout fishing, but because floating fly lines don't always do the job of pulling down nymphs into the depths of the river quick enough, a hybrid was designed - the "Sink-Tip" fly line.

On a sink-tip fly line, only the first 10 to 30 feet of the fly line sinks. The remainder of the line floats. The purpose of this line is to allow for fishing of nymphs and streamers in the depths of rivers where the current is moderately fast. The heavy line, especially if used with some additional weights, can bring a nymph down to depth quickly and keep it there.

For trout fishing, the angler will want to first get a floating fly line. Later, money and desire found, a sink-tip fly line can also be purchased for those "special situations" where the line really is needed.

Understanding Fly Line Color

Let's get this out of the way right now. During daylight hours, especially on bright days, it is *impossible* for a fly line to just "blend in" and remain hidden from the trout. When seen from the bottom of a river where the fish live, all fly line looks the same when they look upward - a long, black line snaking across the top of the water. From the bottom of the river, the color of a fly line is immaterial. From a trout's perspective, the fly line is a solid, unnatural thing that is lying on top of the water.

Because of this, the *color of a fly line for general daylight use does not matter*. The fish will see them all. As such, when selecting a fly line color - get a color that you can see easily. Take your choice, green, yellow, orange, red, pink - whatever. Pick the line that you can most easily see in the type of fishing conditions you find yourself in.

Now, during very low light conditions - particularly if you fly fish at night for bass and such - fly line color can indeed be important. Oddly, pure black isn't the best color. Few things in life are ever "pure black." Instead, the consensus is for various shades of dark brown/dark gray - depending largely on the color and clarity of the water where you'll be fishing.

Understanding Fly Line Codes

A person new to fly fishing can be forgiven for not understanding a word on a fly box. To new anglers, the codes used on the fly box make absolutely no sense what-so-ever. Yet, once you understand how they work, the codes on fly boxes are a life-saver. Here's some examples.

- **WF-5-F** : This code means that the fly line is a weight-forward taper fly line, with a weight of 5, and floats.
- **DT-6-F** : This code means that the fly line is a double taper fly line, with a weight of 6, and floats.
- **WF-7-S** : This code means that the fly line is a weight-forward taper fly line, with a weight of 7, and is a sinking

line. How fast the line sinks (it's sink rate) will be listed on the box.

- **DT-3-F/S** - This code means that the fly line is a double taper fly line, with a weight of 3, and is a sink-tip fly line. The sink rate of the fly line, as well as how much of the line actually sinks, will be listed on the box.
- **L-6-I** : This code means that the fly line is a level taper fly line, with a weight of 6, and is an intermediate sinking line. The sink rate of the fly line will be listed on the box.
- **ST-5-F** : This code means that the fly line is a shooting taper fly line, with a weight of 5, and floats.

Just remember, on fly line boxes, the taper of the fly line is the first code (DT, WF, L, ST), the weight of the fly line is the second code (1-14), and the density of the fly line (S, F, F/S) is the third code.

REEL RECOVERY EVENT FOR MEN LIVING WITH CANCER

REEL RECOVERY is a national non-profit organization that conducts fly-fishing retreats for men living with all forms of cancer. Our purpose is to help men in the recovery process by sharing with them the healing powers of the sport of fly-fishing, while providing a safe, supportive environment to explore their personal experiences with cancer, with others who share their stories. Retreats are offered at no cost to the participants and are led by professional facilitators and expert fly-fishing instructors. Reel Recovery provides all meals, lodging and fly-fishing equipment, and no previous fishing experience is required. A maximum of 14 men are invited to participate.

The Retreat Starts: 4:00 PM Sunday September 29

The Retreat Ends: 2:00 PM Tuesday, October 1

Primary Service Area: N. Carolina, S. Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia

Eligibility: Men living with cancer

To apply for this event, please fill out and submit:

Retreat Application Form

<http://reelrecovery.org/programs/application/>

Medical Release Form

<http://reelrecovery.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Medical-Release-Form.pdf>

TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM

The program has ended at our three schools for the year and all three schools have reupped for the coming year with West Alexander Middle School adding a second tank for next year to cover both science classes.

If your school is interested in joining the program you need to contact our Cathy Starnes, our TIC coordinator. The program is open to Catawba and all surrounding county schools. At the end of this newsletter is the TIC brochure with contact information. Please present it to your middle school's science teacher if you would like to have your child's school in this great program next year.

Application must be made before the end of the current school year.

EAGLE ROCK CAMP

The spring retreat was held in May this year with a slightly smaller crowd. Unfortunately, Lynn told us there were three no-shows. We



planned the fly casting for Thursday afternoon. Gary Hogue led the group in giving the group the basics and then the volunteers spent a little time helping them polish their cast followed by a trip down to the lake to catch some fish. The weather was bright sun with temperatures running up to around 90, so many of the fish headed to deeper water, but we still had some success with a few bluegill and smaller bass and one huge bass.



Lynn has a huge backlog of families waiting to attend so she is working on a permanent piece of property that will allow many more events each year. We'll be needing more help when that happens, so help our veterans and their families.

Thanks to the volunteers that helped at this retreat:



Gary Hogue, Jean McMullin, Holly Cole, Robbie Williams, Chick Woodward, Steve Anderson, Gerry Johnson

CHAPTER WEBSITE

If you have missed any of our past newsletters, they are all available on our website at <http://www.hkynctu.org/past-newsletters/>. There are several series of articles on nearby Delayed Harvest streams, entomology of the insects in our streams, and much more. The key articles are listed with each newsletter.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS INVITED

I'm sure many of you will be taking trips to Montana, Alaska, or many other places this year. Take some great photos, put some words to them and submit it to the

newsletter. Your adventure may inspire others to start planning their own trip for next year. Send it to us at HkyNCTU@gmail.com for consideration of publication.

CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE

We welcome all of our members to post on our Facebook page, however, the way it was originally set up you must be listed as an Editor to post. If you would be willing to search out and find things worthy of being posted, please let us know at HkyNCTU@gmail.com. To find our page, search for **Hickory NC Trout Unlimited**.

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Trout in the Classroom

- ⌘ Raise trout from eggs to fingerlings
- ⌘ Monitor tank water quality
- ⌘ Engage in stream habitat study
- ⌘ Appreciate water resources
- ⌘ Foster a conservation ethic
- ⌘ Understand ecosystem connectivity

environmental education

6-8



... and release them as fingerlings.



Trout in the Classroom is the result of **Trout Unlimited** (TU) vision to ensure that robust populations of native and wild coldwater fish once again thrive within their North American range, so that our children can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters. **Trout in the Classroom** (TIC) brings the importance of this vision directly to the members of the next generation, allowing them to discover it for themselves. A network of teachers, supported by local chapters of TU, pursue this goal. Hickory Trout Unlimited is one of those chapters bring TIC to schools in our area.

TIC is a unique way to teach the relevance of watersheds

Trout are indicator species; their abundance directly reflects the quality of the water in which they live. In the TIC program, students grow to care about their trout and then the habitat in which trout live. As the program progresses, students learn to see connections between trout, water resources, the environment, and themselves.



... study and care for them all year ...

How it Works:

Hickory Trout Unlimited will sponsor the Trout in the Classroom program for schools in Catawba and surrounding counties by providing the following:

Fish Tank, Filters, Coolers, Food, Supplies

A Hickory Trout Unlimited volunteer brings a trout tank to the school, sets it up and later delivers the trout eggs to the school in early autumn and works with the teacher to provide the best water quality for the fish. Your Hickory TU volunteer will check in during the school year as students monitor water quality and the condition of the trout. Then in the spring, TU will coordinate the state permitted release of the trout where the teacher and students can go on a field trip to a state park to release the trout and witness what it takes for fish to survive in the wild.

Interested...

Applications are taken any time of year but program runs September to March.

For more information or to make application for sponsorship, please contact Hickory Trout Unlimited TIC Coordinator.



Hickory Trout Unlimited (Chapter 032)

www.hikyntu.org

FACE BOOK:

<https://www.facebook.com/mwctu/>

Trout in the Classroom



Connecting Students
to their Watersheds



Trout in the Classroom is the Trout Unlimited premier educational program for students. The Hickory TU Chapter offers this program to middle schools in Catawba and surrounding counties.

Grades 6-8

Trout in the Classroom (TIC)

Teachable moments and opportunities is what it is all about for all age levels.

Trout in the Classroom is the Trout Unlimited premier educational program for students from elementary school age up to senior high school students. The program is fully supported by Trout Unlimited and the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission. Eggs are supplied by the NCWRC in the fall when classes begin and stocking permits are issued for release of the trout fry in the spring for waters approved by the Commission. Caring for the fish fosters a conservation ethic in the students and the act of walking a stream bank and directly releasing the fingerlings into the water makes a concrete connection between caring for the fish and caring for the water.



TIC TEACHER RESOURCES

Any teacher in any classroom can make TIC relevant to his or her classroom curriculum. In kindergarten, the focus can be on caring, growth, understanding life cycles, and the seasons. A high school program might explore water chemistry, the nitrogen cycle, natural resource management, and watershed geology and ecology. For this reason, TU offers an ever-growing [online lesson plan library](#). Teachers across the country share their tried-and-true activity ideas, which are arranged by subject. North Carolina Trout Unlimited has a blog set up for instructors, TU volunteers and NCWRC staff to act as a clearing house of information and expertise.

Your Hickory TU volunteers can help classes by sharing their expertise in conservation, stream restoration, fly-tying, trout biology, invertebrate identification, and outdoor sports activities.

Current Programs Hickory Area:

River Bend Middle School

West Alexander Middle School

Newton Conover Middle School

North Carolina has 84 current TIC Classroom programs operating state wide with more scheduled for 2019.