

# Hickory, Table Rock, High Country Trout Unlimited June 2026 Newsletter



Delayed harvest is ending until the fall and the streams in the lower elevations are warming so that they will either not support trout until they cool again in the fall or are too warm to endanger catching trout that are there. Summer is arriving and it is a great time to head up to the high mountain streams where trout can survive the year around. Generally these are streams above the elevation of 3000'. This month we will tell you places you can fish them and how to fish them.

Wildlife biologist Kinn Hodges tests these streams and has shared information about the size and number of trout in several of the streams of NC eastern Appalachian mountains. You can see his reports at the Hickory TU website at [NC Wild Trout Streams](#) and we will provide you with tips on how to fish these streams. Enjoy the summer in the mountains.

For a short video on what fishing a small high mountain stream is like, check out [NC Mountain Natives](#).

## HIGH COUNTRY TU MEETING

**When:** Thursday June 4<sup>th</sup>, 6-8 PM

**Where:** South End Brewing

747 W. King Street, Boone, NC

## HICKORY TU MEETING

**When:** Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 PM

**Where:** American Legion 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

70 Lakeside Ave, Granite Falls

**What:** Tenkara Fly Fishing

Thank you to everyone who has been contributing to items for our monthly raffle. There have been some fantastic raffle items lately and June will top them all. If you have fly fishing

items in good condition that you no longer use, please bring them to the meeting for our monthly raffle.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"I liked the way I could pick apart a small stream with the long Tenkara rod and light line, and I enjoyed the refreshing lack of clutter."  
....John Gierach*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Clean Up: Windy Hill to Conley Cheek River, June 6 @ 10:00 am - 2:30 pm** Please register for our New River Clean Up from Windy Hill to Conley Cheek on Saturday June 6, 2026 . Please meet at (36.299190, -81.468807) 1176-1486 State Rd 1169, Fleetwood, NC 28626. [Sign Up](#)

**Clean Up: Conley Cheek to Summer Haus, June 13 @ 10:00 am - 2:30 pm**, 922 Railroad Grade Rd, Fleetwood, NC, United States Please register for our New River Clean Up from Conley Cheek to Summer Haus on Saturday June 13, 2026 Please meet at 1991 Dick Phillips Rd, West Jefferson, NC 28694 [Sign Up](#)

**Clean Up: Summer Haus to Hartzog Ford, June 21 @ 10:00 am - 3:00 pm** Please register for our New River Clean Up from Summer Haus Lane to Hartzog Ford on Sunday June 21, 2026 . Please meet at 4900 Hartzog Ford Rd, West Jefferson, NC 28694 [Sign Up](#)

**Tie-a-Thon For Casting Carolinas, Casting For Hope, Reel Recovery, and Mayfly Project July 18<sup>th</sup>** at Patterson School. We will be tying Walt's Worm, Squirmy, and Egg Fly. Material is provided. If you can, bring your own tying equipment but a few sets are available. If you can, tie some flies up before you come and bring them along. If you can attend, contact Bill Jewett at [jewettwg@gmail.com](mailto:jewettwg@gmail.com).

*Note: If your organization has an upcoming event and would like it in the newsletter, send it to [HkyNCTU@gmail.org](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.org).*

## NCWRC FLY FISHING CLASSES

**6/3/2026 - On the Water Fly-fishing Experience - Marion (6:00-8:00 PM)**

**6/5/2026 - On the Water Fly-fishing Experience - Marion (9:00 AM-12:00 PM)**

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to [HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com) and let us know.

**6/11/2026 - Intermediate Fly-tying Workshop - Morganton (6:00-8:00 PM)**

**6/12/2026 - Catfishing Basics - Marion (6:00-8:00 PM)**

**6/13/2026 - Family Fishing Workshop - Marion (9:00 AM-12:00 PM)**

**6/13/2026 - Western Region Volunteer Fishing Instructor Orientation and Training - Marion (8:00 AM-1:00 PM)**

**6/20/2026 - The Fly Angler's Next Steps: Nymphing 101- Lenoir (9:00 AM-12:00 PM)**

**6/26/2026 - Basic Fly Casting - Marion (6:00-8:00 PM)**

**6/27/2026 - Beginning Fly-tying Workshop - Black Mountain (10:30 am-4:30 pm)**

### **FLY TYING DESKS DONATION**



A special thank you to Ed Shuford who donated two fly tying desks to the Hickory TU chapter. These desks were hand crafted by Larry Sain, a master furniture wood carver in Hickory and made from Orvis inspired design. Made from very good hardwood sourced from Cramer Lumber in Hildebran. Blue Ridge TU is including them for us in their annual on-line auction and at their

fund raising dinner on June 16<sup>th</sup>. You can go to the on-line auction for the table top desk at [Auction Link](#) or you can bid on the desk by attending the dinner. Tickets are available at [FundraiserTickets](#).



### **BECOME A ROCK HOPPER**



On Friday, June 5, the Delayed Harvest catch and release season ends and for most of us the annual fishing season will be over. That doesn't mean there aren't still streams with trout that are out there. Well, for some of us at least. There are many wild trout waters here in North Carolina that offer some excellent fishing. For those of us that have knees that have been replaced or are nearing Re-

placement, it is probably not an option to go rock hopping up these mountain streams, but if your knees are still in good shape, it is an excellent resource.

In mid-May, my son decided it was time he tried it out and on a beautiful Sunday he headed up around the Blue Ridge Parkway to do some rock hopping. He came home

absolutely thrilled after a 20 fish day on the creeks and relayed his story to me to share with you. Obviously, he swore me to secrecy about where he fished, but allowed me to pass on all the other information about his adventure.

As you can see in the photos, these mountain streams are a series of waterfalls and rapids between small pools the size of a bathtub to near 10+ feet wide. He discovered that nearly every pool contained a trout that was spooky, but was aggressive. The best thing of all -



was that they will voraciously attack a dry fly, the love of every fly fisherman. To fish these streams without spooking the fish you need to work your way up stream and crouch low as you approach the pool. In most

cases my son reported that there was usually an open line below the pools that allowed room for a short back cast. In each pool you had just a few casts to catch the fish before they became totally spooked and refused to venture out for the fly again. In one case he reported that on the first cast he saw a fish scoot behind a rock. On the second cast he managed to land the fly right near the rock and the fish came out and took it.

The two flies he had the most success with were a #16 elk hair caddis and a #16 light Cahill parachute. He did switch to a #12 elk hair caddis at one point and still caught fish on it. On this day most of the fish he caught were in the 3-5" range, but he did catch a 9" wild brook with beautiful colors. The vegetation can be rather tight on your hike up



the creek so you need to scale down on the size of your rod. He suggests that you look to something like a 7-8' rod in a 2-3wt. Your casts will all be fairly short. It's a tough hike up these creeks, so you need to travel light. All you need is a small pack with your tools, a few flies, some tippet, and dry fly floatant. Even though the water was still cool, he used just a pair of light wading shoes. Most of your trip will be on the rocks and not in the water.

The scenery along these streams is beautiful and the creeks he fished were near the parkway and had trails nearby. He was there early but as the day wore on, the hikers showed up. In some of the pools, their kids and dogs would be wading in the water or at least dangling their feet. When he got to one of these pools, there was no sense in trying to fish and he just continued



working upstream to one without a crowd. It is best to get to these creeks early as it just becomes worse as the day goes on. Or you may want to try to find a stream that is more remote where it is likely there will be fewer hikers. The downside of this is that if you fall off one of the rocks and become injured, there will be no one around to help you out. If you plan to do a lot more rock hopping, first be sure that someone knows where you will be and second you might want to invest in a satellite communications device that you can use to call for help. There is a variety of these devices on Amazon listed from \$100-300. They may require a service contract that you should check out before buying.



There are a great many wild trout streams that are out there for you to try and if you find one that an old timer with bad knees can fish, be sure to let me know.

One of the best resources is the Hickory TU website at [nc-wild-trout-streams](http://nc-wild-trout-streams). Kin Hodges, a biologist with the NCWRC provided information about several streams in our area that he recommended. The information on our website provides a map of the creek and results of fish surveys that include the number, breed, and size of fish that were found. The size is listed in millimeters, so if you divide the number by 25 it will give you the approximate size in inches. A second resource is the interactive trout stream map at [NC Fishing Areas & Trout Waters](http://NC Fishing Areas & Trout Waters). You can zoom into this map and find trout streams all over North Carolina and the regulations on each. Not every stream is identified on the map. In fact, one of the streams my son fished is not identified, but it does show up, so if you zoom all the way in you might find some almost virgin waters to fish.

So even though our regular delayed harvest season is almost over it doesn't give up trout season until next October. Get up into the mountains and scout out some of these streams. Most of the fish are small, but they are still a challenge and best of all you'll get to do some great dry fly fishing in warm summer temperatures and among some beautiful scenery.

# ORVIS®

## CLASSIC PRO TIP: 15 STEPS TO FISHING A SMALL MOUNTAIN STREAM

Author Phil Monahan



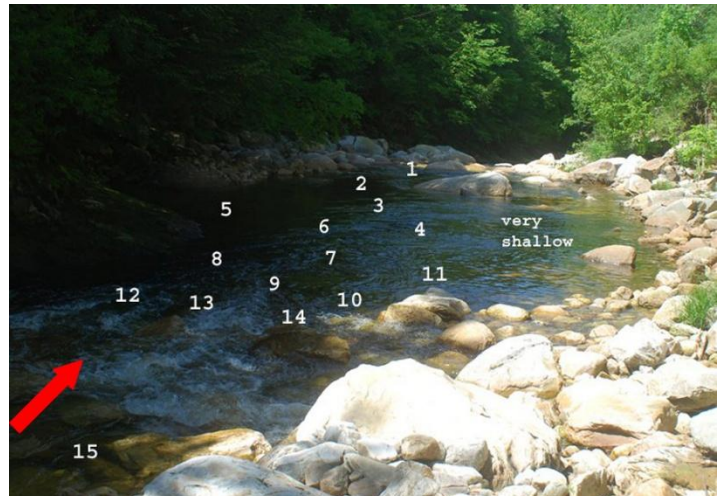
The key to catching lots of brookies from a mountain stream is to move fast and hit all the right spots.

The keys to catching good numbers of trout on steep mountain streams are stealth and speed. Wild brook trout are wary, fast, and can hide in tiny spaces. There are lots of predators that eat these fish, so they've evolved heightened senses and evasive maneuvers. You need to learn how to move and fish upstream without spooking the fish in front of you, and you want to cover as much water as possible to get your fly in front of more fish. Think *stealth* and *speed*.

Always work upstream, which gives you the advantage of approaching trout from the rear. Some folks take extreme stealth measures—crawling on hands and knees up to each pool—but if you simply crouch, avoid jerky movements, and keep your shadow off the water, you should be fine. Because you're working upstream, you can see the series of pools and runs ahead of you. Plan a course upstream that will put you in the best position to cast and avoid throwing your shadow on the water. A good small-stream angler is like a chess player, always thinking several moves ahead.

When you get to the bottom of a pool, your goal is to drop your fly everywhere a trout might be hiding (since you can rarely spot brook trout) and to do this quickly, so you can move on to the next pool. When you look at a pool, there are usually plenty of likely fish lies—under the whitewater at the head, alongside rocks, current seams, and so on. Divide the pool into a grid, and work your way upstream such that each cast leads to the next one. By starting close and planning your casts, you can keep from throwing your line over any likely holding spots before you get a chance to put your fly there.

I always work on the assumption that, because food is often scarce in these waters, if a mountain brookie is going to strike, it'll hit the fly the first time it sees it. So I don't make multiple casts to the same spot. The accompanying photo of a mountain pool shows a series of casts that would allow you to cover the water quickly. The shot is taken looking downstream. You would approach from downstream, facing the camera. The numbers indicate the order of the casts and where your dry fly should land.



The right sequence of casts allows you to put the fly in the most likely holding spots without spooking any trout. The red arrow indicates the current direction, so this photo is taken

looking downstream. The angler would approach from below (top of the photo), moving upstream.

1. Your first cast should be just above the lip where the pool drains. You'd be surprised how many fish will strike just as your fly is about to go "over the falls" into the whitewater below.

2. The "funnel" where the pool narrows, thus focusing the current and food supply.

3. The near side of the main current seam, allowing the drift to continue around the near side of the midstream rock.

4. The tailout of the main current, allowing the fly to drift into the cushion in front of the rock.

5. The near corner, where slow water meets the main current.

6. The near side of the main current in the middle of the pool.

7. The center of the main current.

8, 9, 10. Working from near to far across the top of the pool.

11. The far corner, where slow water meets the main current.

12, 13, 14. Working from near to far to hit the soft water next to the whitewater.

Cast number 15 hits the lip of the next pool upstream.

Although it takes 14 casts to cover this small pool, these are quick, short casts. You don't want to put much line of the water in these turbulent currents, and your normal drift will be just a few feet. The 14 casts shown here should take no more than two minutes. (The water on the right in the photo is very shallow, so it probably doesn't hold trout.)

For this kind of fishing, you'll want a short rod, which allows you to make quick casts in tight quarters. As much as possible, high-stick your fly through its drift, keeping the fly line off the water. When you're done with a drift, one or two drying false casts are all that are needed before you drop your fly in the next spot.



## 4 REASONS WHY WATERFALL PLUNGE POOLS CAN HOLD BIG FISH

BY KENT KLEWEIN



Targeting deep plunge pools below waterfalls for big trout.  
Photo By: Louis Cahill

**THERE ARE FEW THINGS I LOVE MORE THAN WADE FISHING A SMALL STREAM AND STUMBLING UPON A STEEP VERTICAL WATERFALL WITH A DEEP PLUNGE POOL.**

Waterfalls this size are pretty rare on small streams, but if you're lucky enough to locate one, you could very well find yourself hooked up to one of the biggest trout in the stream. Here's four reasons why I feel waterfall plunge pools are great places to look for big trophy trout on small streams.

**1. Lots of food gets washed over a waterfall, especially during high flows.**

Large amounts of food (tiny fish, aquatic insects, crustaceans and amphibians) are constantly being swept over the falls. In many cases, it provides a steady enough stream of food, that big fish aren't required to leave the plunge pool to fulfill their daily food requirements.

**2. There are usually lots of hiding places to make big fish feel safe and allow them to survive for long periods.**

During high flows, quite often fallen trees can float over the falls and get snagged; creating perfect log jams for big trout to hide in. The whitewater at the foot of the waterfall provides a protected roof, allowing trout to feed safely without being seen by predators. Constant water cresting the falls, creates a deep plunge pool overtime that provides deep water protection and enough room for big fish to forage efficiently.

**3. Waterfalls that are big and steep enough, create a natural feeding funnel for big fish.**

Migrating fish moving upstream in search of cool water, and stocked fish in search of fresh holding lies find themselves funneling into a dead end. This allows big fish to wait in prime lies to ambush trapped prey.

**4. You can usually utilize a high vantage point to help spot big fish.**

When the location permits, I regularly will access high vantage points so I can peer into the deep clear water and try to spot big fish. Just before Louis shot this photo, I had just done this and spotted a trout over 20". Unfortunately, before I could get into position the big boy spotted me and tucked under a log jam. I wasn't able to get a good presentation to the fish. It didn't pay off for me that time, but it has numerous other times in the past, and I highly recommend taking the time to scan the water before fishing when possible. If there's a big fish in the plunge pool, you can bet it's very smart and you'll probably only get a few presentations before your cover is blown. Spotting the big fish before it spots you, is half the battle, and will put the odds in your favor.

Keep it Reel,

*Kent Klewein*

**Gink & Gasoline**

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## RIVERCOURSE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Rivercourse youth fly fishing camp is being held June 14-19 at the Lake Logan event center in Canton, NC. They are in need of both chaperones and river helpers. If you are able to help contact: Jeff Sabatula at (352) 212-8788 or Ed Smith at (919) 215-5846. Housing may be available for the event support staff. For more information about the Rivercourse program visit [NCTU.RIVERCOURSE](http://NCTU.RIVERCOURSE).

## ADVICE FROM THE VISE

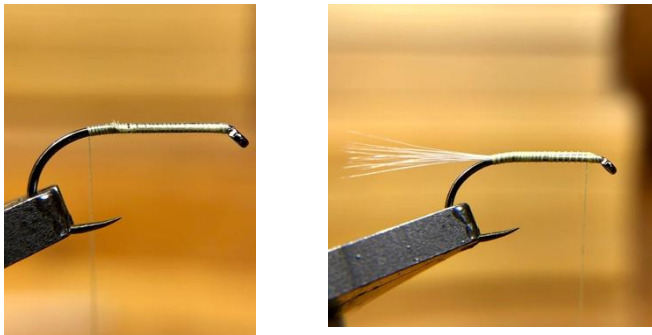
As I write this month's article, I'm listening to the very sweet sound of rain falling on the shop roof. Next to my spaniel's howling yawn, or a red winged blackbird's trill, it's one of the best sounds in the world. Maybe we will start to see an end to the drought, and we can get the water levels back to normal- or at least keeping the habitat viable.

I've seen a fair number of bugs in the mornings lately and was excited to find the yellowS- sulfurs and sallies. That also signals its time to get back to the blue lines and spend some time on the wild water. For me, that adds up to dries.



This month's pattern cut its teeth several years back on the Oconolufte one evening when the trout were nabbing an evening hatch of little yellow mayflies. The CDC wing gives it a little more visibility and a heavily hackled profile allowing it to go either as a little stone or a mayfly especially in #16 or #18. I used this pattern the other morning and brought several fish to hand.

The hook is a Firehole 419. I like the wide gap on these as I can put on a bit heavier hackle and they seem to keel nicely, keeping the business end just below the surface. Thread is yellow, and the dubbing is a pale sulfur dry dubbing., white CDL for the tailing. You can use a pair of CDC tips or a puffer for the wing, with a good stiff saddle hackle. Pretty light on the materials, and you can easily turn this pattern into an all purpose small dry by some color changes.



Dress to the bend and tie in the tailing. About a hook shanks worth for length, and enough fibers to keep the backside up in the film rather than being too sparse.



Dub the body, keeping it relatively tight, up to the eye. Tie in the CDC and using a post wrap a few times to stand it up, trim off the butt ends as close to the tie in as you can. Strip fibers off the hackle feathers and tie in the quill



From just behind the eye to the rear of the post, that's about the halfway point of the fly. The front half of the fly is getting hackle wrapped.

Wrap the hackle with touching turns to about an eye gap behind



the eye. Tie in the hackle, trim the butts and strays and form a head with thread wraps and whip finish. A couple drops of your preferred head cement and it's ready for the water.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at [Jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com](mailto:Jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com) with questions or to just talk tying. Please follow along on Instagram check out some current ties @ Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Dave Everhart

### The recipe to a good childhood



Bluegill Fishing

*Editor's note: Trout are not the only small stream fly fishing target in North Carolina. My son lived in downtown Charlotte and on the near south side of town is the Little Sugar Creek parkway. He spent some time there and caught several pan-fish. There are many small creeks in the Piedmont.*

## **LITTLE CREEKS = BIG FLYROD FUN**

By Paul DiPrima

### **Northeast Georgia Trout Unlimited Ch. #692**

I was lucky to have grown up in a fishing family and have a mother who trusted us kids to walk two blocks to what seemed like a small wilderness. A small creek meandered along the edge of the "wilderness" with homes on one side and woods and fields on the other. That creek supplied me with years of enjoyment, fishing, and learning about nature.

Horseleg Creek was a meandering, almost wild stream that in the 1950's and 60's was full of small sunfish, catfish, lizards, crawfish and snakes. Sometimes you could step across it in places yet, it had pools that were three to five feet deep. This is where I got my education in small stream fish, where they live, hide and how they feed. This little creek was where I first learned to use a flyrod in a stream.

Horseleg was a healthy stream, usually crystal clear and like most healthy small creeks, loaded with small fish and sometimes a "big-un". Logs and limbs littered the stream bottom and roots along the streambanks gave many hiding places for fish. There were old streambeds where the creek channel had moved and these isolated holes often held hungry fish.

I learned to use a flyrod fishing from a boat with my father. He taught me an overhead cast and a roll cast. Horseleg had many meanders with overhanging limbs and a few wide pools a hundred feet long. The fish normally stayed near the shore hiding in undercut banks or behind logs. The fish would also lie in the eddies that formed behind rocks and submerged logs in midstream. Limbs made an overhead cast difficult for an eight year old with a nine foot rod. I found that I could wade close to the left shore and cast sidearm if there was nothing for the back-cast to grab. A small fly was all I needed. I used the smallest popping bugs I could find and sometimes small sinking flies. I would ask my dad to find me some tiny white, yellow or black flies. The small fish had small mouths.

Ever since those early days on Horseleg Creek I have continued to fish small warmwater creeks because of the abundance of fish, their willingness to hit a fly and just because I love small creeks.

Warm weather is the best time to fish small creeks. In the cooler months the fish rarely eat. For a fly rod, short is better. I use a 2wt 6.5 ft medium action graphite rod. It is short, but long enough to roll cast in all but the densest cover and can cast 40 feet or more in some open areas. In a small stream, sidearm casts are easier with a short rod. For a fly, think small, not midge small, but remember most of the fish have small mouths. If the stream flows into a nearby river, you never know what might show up. It could be a 2lb bass, a large red breast or a crappie. My favorite flies are small, cork bodied poppers with rubber legs and a feather tail. I always trim the legs short

enough to hide under a quarter. Short leaders, 6ft or so cast easier than longer ones.

On unfamiliar creeks walk the bank downstream scouting for fish, plan your access then wade upstream. Wear dark clothes, wade quietly and watch for strikes. If getting false strikes, trim the rubber legs closer because fish will just tug the legs. If the creek has redeye bass work the fast water thoroughly, it can be rewarding.

I usually start with a yellow or white popper and use fly floatant to keep the fly and line, high in the water. I will change flies if I am not getting strikes but see fish. Give the flies a chance, just fish slow and throw as close to the banks as possible. You will usually see the water quiver or the wake of a fish coming to inspect the fly. Don't worry about a big splash when the fly hits the water, the splash can attract fish. Allow the fly to sit still. If the current is not moving the fly, barely jiggle the tip of the rod to make flies legs move. You may catch several in the same small hole. If you miss one, immediately cast to that spot again. Work each bank, then the middle. Skip long casts, they usually catch the limbs, not fish.

Catching small fish in small creeks is great fun. Catching 50 or more fish is not unusual and will improve your skills catching brookies in their tiny creeks.

Horseleg Creek was channelized for flood control in the 70's destroying meanders, shallow sandbars and fish habitats. Fishing there now, is not nearly what it used to be.



## **SHIRT POCKET FISHING**

by Domenick Swentosky



Summer is for simplicity. No waders, no jacket, no vest. No fly boxes, tippet stacks or leader wheels. No split shot or bobbers, no camera or pack. It's fishing, stripped down to the skeleton of necessity. Just the framework.

Rod, reel, leader and dry fly are in hand. The floatant, nippers and forceps easily fit in one shirt pocket, and a little extra tippet accompanies a puck of select flies tucked into another. The only other necessity is a water bottle. And on some outings, I don't even bring a landing net.

Freedom. That's the feeling. And every year, around the 4th of July, I match the mood with some shirt pocket fishing.



Austin during the cicada event.

Long ago, I learned the value of leaving things at the truck. If I carry nymphs or streamers, I'll find good reasons to tie them on, because most of my days in a season are spent under the mantra of versatility, and that habit can hijack my decisions without a thought. And to match trout with versatility, the full complement of tools, boxes and trinkets are necessary.

But without them, my mantra shifts to simplicity.

I fish dry ants on the bank line, in that nice bubbly seam that slides under low brush. I'll fish it shady or sunny, but you and I both know which one the trout like best. And if that fish won't take my fly, the next one will. This fishing is more about water coverage and lane selection than the flies themselves. It's target practice, with practiced skill to land a fly on the bank side of the merger seam and place the tippet upstream with enough slack to lend the dry a few seconds of dead drift.

Get the cast perfect the first time, or the trout will pull themselves out of position to check your fly, then turn as it drags away. In these conditions you never get a second chance.

It's technical, but fair. It's unforgiving, but fun. It's a new lesson at every undercut, and the whole thing's over by 10:30 a.m. . . . unless the Trico spinners want to fall, all at once.

With that grace, the morning is renewed, and the table is reset with another game. Whereupon I hope I brought a few Trico dries and a smaller diameter tippet to adjust the leader.

Fish hard, friends.

Domenick Swentosky  
TROUTBITTEN  
[domenick@troutbitten.com](mailto:domenick@troutbitten.com)

*Editor's note: I've taken a different approach to summer fishing. A few years ago I saw a presentation about Tenkara and purchased a rod. For my summer fishing I pack the Tenkara rod and a fanny pack. The fanny pack holds my tools, a few flies and a water bottle. I have a pair of neoprene socks that come up to my knee that I wear in my wading boots. The Tenkara rod shrinks down to 14" which makes it very easy to carry through the vegetation around a small stream. I've had people say a Tenkara rod is too long for a small stream, in most cases it is fine, but if you carry along a little duct tape you can shorten it to fit any tight area.*



## DOES CASTING TECHNIQUE MATTER FOR SMALL STREAM TROUT FISHING?

By Louis Cahill



Photo by Louis Cahill

By Louis Cahill

**You can sure catch a lot of trout with no more than ten feet of fly line, but does that mean that casting doesn't matter?**

I had this conversation recently. I was fishing a classic, pocket water stream with a friend and at some point he asked me point blank why I was catching fish and he wasn't. He was shocked when I told him the problem was with his cast. Neither of us had more than ten feet of line out of the tip of our rod.

It's a problem that plenty of beginning, and even intermediate anglers have. Even with a very short line, poor casts make for poor presentations. The problem is compounded in tight quarters where your first presentation really needs to be your best. Flailing about in close proximity to fish is generally not productive.

One of the most common casting mistakes I see anglers make, when casting a short line, is using too long a stroke. Often, anglers will do this because they are struggling to load the rod. With the head of the line still on the reel, it's impossible to load the whole rod like you would in a longer cast. The problem very quickly becomes one of line management. The long, and usually circular, casting stroke dumps the fly line on the water, making it nearly impossible to get a good drift. Especially in the conflicting current of fast pocket water.

Fixing this problem is super simple, and comes down to remembering the fundamentals of a good fly cast. Just shorten your stroke. Remember, the length of the stroke is proportional to the length of the line outside the tip top. When casting ten feet, or less, of fly line with a modern fast action rod, your rod tip may only travel a couple of feet. You only need to load the tip of the rod. This will make a nice, tight loop and allow you to deliver the fly and keep the line off the water.

In addition to making managing your line a breeze, your casts will be more accurate, which is of huge importance in pocket water. Treat every cast with respect, and focus on the fundamentals, whether you're casting ten feet or a hundred, and you'll catch a lot more fish.

Good casting technique also allows you to execute special purpose casts like reach casts and curved casts, which are great tools for the trout angler to have on hand. Again, it usually comes down to line maintenance and a good cast sets you up for success, even at short range.

So, here I am again, being your mother and telling you to practice your casting, but it really does make a difference. A few hours a week on the lawn makes a huge difference in the quality of your experience on the water. I've been fly fishing for 46 years and I still practice, in fact more than ever. After all, there is no down side to having a good cast.

**HERE'S A VIDEO I SHOT WITH MY BUDDY TIM RAJEFF, WHICH DETAILS HIS RECOMMENDED CASTING PRACTICE.**

[Cast Like a Pro with Tim Rajeff: Practice Lessons](#)

*Louis Cahill*

***Gink & Gasoline***

[www.ginkandgasoline.com](http://www.ginkandgasoline.com)

## **HELPFUL TIPS FOR FISHING IN LOW, WARM WATER**

The article below was posted in an email from Davidson River Outfitters

Over the years, I have been forced to fish for trout in some of the worst possible conditions, from high water to days that the ice freezes instantly on your guides to days that you can't feel your face because the wind is so strong. The absolute hardest fishing of all, though, is the low hot water of summer. Not only do the fish not want to feed, but you have to worry about killing them when you do hook them. The main thing to remember is that you, as an angler, have an ethical responsibility when fishing in low, warm water. Use as large a tippet as you can, so that you can land the fish as quickly as possible and get that fish back into the river to recover. If you are struggling to land a fish, then break it off, so that you don't stress it and kill it. Spend as much time reviving the fish as you spent landing it. If you spent 10 minutes (which is way too long) landing it, then spend 10 minutes reviving it. In low hot water, you should not spend more than 1-2 minutes to land any fish, regardless of its size. The other big issue in the summer is pictures; in this low, hot water, do not take the fish out of the water. It is kind of like you running a half marathon, and the very second you are done, someone is holding your head under the water. Here are some of my best summer tips:

1. Fish, like most other animals, are reluctant to feed in times of warm water or low water. They are trying to survive, so you are trying to draw a reaction or an impulse strike. Your flies should have extra life added to them, rubber legs, soft hackles, Emu feather gills, etc. The more annoying the motion of the fly, the better your chance of getting a reaction strike.
2. Trout will not move a great distance in low, warm water to feed; your presentations will have to be almost in a direct line with the fish. This may require more sight fishing and or/ multiple casts to the same area.
3. Be exceptionally careful of running waves in slow or shallow water, this will spook a fish quicker than an errant cast. Try and wade softly and gently, and take your time when getting to your fish. It is not a race to get there, and

you will be much more successful if you just go slowly and be mindful of where the fish are and how your presence will affect them.

4. Fish in any decent flow of water; this is where the trout find oxygen and food in low water. The better fish will lie directly under the fastest part of the flow, where the most oxygen is located. This requires that you fish flies that are weighted heavier than normal. Your flies should sink to the bottom rapidly and stay there as they tumble along like an injured or wounded piece of food.
5. Never underestimate the power of the terrestrial pattern, and often times larger is better. There are some large land-born insects that get blown or knocked into the river, or maybe it is how bugs commit suicide, regardless of how it got there, it is an easy meal.
6. Always take advantage of summer rains. The rain provides a burst of cool, refreshing water, which will make the fish more active. It also displaces more food that has been trapped by the rising water on the stream bank. Trout will take this time to feed aggressively until the water starts to drop and warm back up.

Below are the top 10 summer low-water patterns:

[Chubby Chernobyl size 14-16](#)

[Hot Creek Special size 10-12](#)

[Inchworms size 8-14](#)

[Fur Ant size 12-18](#)

[Fat Albert's size 6-14](#)

[Loco Beetle size 10-16](#)

[Zebra Midge size 18-22](#)

[Soft Hackle Pheasant Tail size 16-20](#)

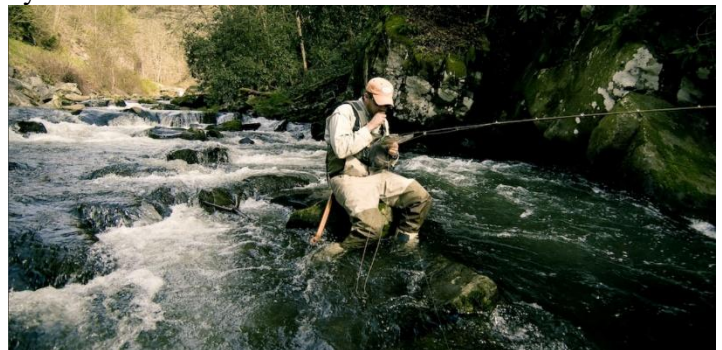
[Barr's Slump Buster size 6-10](#)

[Clouser Foxxee Minnow size 6-10](#)



## **4 TYPES OF TROUT WATER TO TARGET DURING THE SUMMER**

by Kent Klewein



During the summer I often search out water with the highest oxygen levels. Photo Louis Cahill

**Are you finding that the dog days of summer are limiting the time you have success on the water trout fishing?**

Generally, the best time to trout fish in the heat of the summer is the first and last couple hours of the day. This is when the air and water temperatures are the coolest and the oxygen levels in the water are at their highest. That being said, there are a few things you can do to help you buy yourself a couple extra hours of good fishing. Below are four types of trout water I target during the summer.

### 1. FISH THE UPPER SECTIONS OF YOUR STREAMS AND RIVERS

Targeting the upper sections of your streams and rivers during the summer often will provide anglers better trout fishing than on the lower sections. This is usually true because the water temperatures fluctuate less and are significantly cooler than on the lower. The water closest to the outflowing source will be cooler because the warm air and sun will not have time to heat the water. So during the summer, stick to fishing the first few miles of river on your tailwaters and fishing the upper sections of your spring creeks (spring creeks flow out of the ground at consistent temperatures year round).

### 2. TARGET TURBULENT WATER

Not all trout will migrate huge distances upriver to search out cooler water as long as the water temperatures do not get high enough to threaten their survival. When this is the case, trout will often just migrate to areas of the stream or river where there's higher oxygen levels. Such places will be your more turbulent water like pocket water and riffles. When the sun gets high and the air temperatures are in the 80s and 90s, I search out sections of trout water that have a drop in elevation. That's where you'll find increased levels of oxygen and the highest concentrations of waterfalls, pocket water and riffles.

### 3. TARGET HEAVILY CANOPIED SECTIONS OF WATER

Trout water that's protected from the sun by a thick overhead canopy will always hold water temperatures slightly cooler than stretches of water exposed to the sun because of the shade it provides. Try targeting these areas once the sun gets high in the sky, and you'll find the trout will be more active. It also will be a plus that you'll also be much more comfortable fly fishing in the shade and out of the sun.

### 4. DREDGE DEEP POOLS

The deeper down you go in the water column the cooler the water temperatures are going to be. If you can find deep pools in the summer and dredge them with nymphs, you usually will be able to find some success targeting the trout holding on the bottom in the cooler water. It can be tricky at times getting that perfect drift but it usually will pay off with persistence.

Try targeting these four types of trout water next time you hit the water this summer and you should be able to catch a few more fish, and extend your fishing a couple of hours before they shut down.

Keep it Reel,

**Come fish with us in the Bahamas!**

*Kent Klewein*

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## 2026 TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM RELEASES COMPLETE



From late April through mid-May we have been kept busy with the annual releases of the trout raised by the kids in their classrooms. We had five schools in the program this year. All but Burns Middle School have been in the program for several years. We wish to thank the teachers for the effort to make the program available to their students and to the students for the support they give the teachers in raising the fish.

- River Bend Middle School – Krystal Luce
- Hickory High School – Kasady Carroll
- North Lincoln High School – Jonathan Carpenter
- Tuttle Elementary School – Candace Styers
- Burns Middle School – Joseph Hord

At the release, the kids turn the fish loose into the river, wade into the river to look for what the fish eat, learn to identify the insects, learn about fly tying, and learn how to cast a fly rod. In addition at South Mountains the kids are introduced to the pelts and skulls of the animals in the park.

Five of the kids from River Bend Middle School also earned scholarships to attend Rivercourse this year by writing an essay about river conservation.

And thanks to all of the volunteers that helped with running the program and teaching events as the release:

- Fly Tying
  - Dave Dellinger
  - Bill Jewett
  - Dave Everhart
- River Insect Hunt - Park Rangers
  - Park Rangers
- Insect Identification – Gerald Klauss
- Fly Casting and program management – Gary Schnick
- Pelts – South Mountains Park Rangers
- Videography and management – Chick Woodward

Videos of all of the releases are available on the Hickory TU Website at [Home - 2026 TIC Release](#).

Everyone gets a break for a couple of months and then getting supplies for the new year and setting up the tanks will begin again in August.





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