

Mayflyer

September 2005

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The Monthly Publication of



Next
Monthly
Meeting

BACKCASTS

Canary In A Coal Mine

by Dee Lehman

Bass displaying both sex organs. Large bass seem to have sores from bacterial infections. No small bass found. Is this a sign the apocalypse is upon us? Could be...

After several years of drought and two consecutive years of high water levels, we all thought this would be the year to finally be able to fish our favorite local warm water streams such as the Conestoga River and the Susquehanna River. The levels are perfect for wading, but there seem to be some problems - **Big Problems!** Very few fish; and the ones that are there are diseased. What's going on? A cool, rainy spring, coupled with high flows for two years and abrupt oncoming of high water temperatures during and after the spawn, have stressed the smallmouth bass in the Susquehanna River. Could it just be cyclical? Perhaps, but I think there is more to it than that.

Bob Clouser, the sage of the Susquehanna, sees it this way: "It seems to me that we have a very serious event that is happening on the Susquehanna and Juanita Rivers.

1. Substantial amounts of young of the year smallmouth are dying from a fungus. I have never witnessed this event in the proportions that it was a few weeks ago.
2. During the guided trips that I have completed fishing two anglers on the Susquehanna River in the Middletown, Falmouth areas, the numbers of smallmouth actually caught and brought to boat and released were from 1 to 12 per day with averages around 4 per day.
3. The size of the smallmouth caught are from 12 to 14 inches and once in a while a 16 incher is thrown in.

4. Very few fish under these lengths have been caught or seen during any given day on the water.
5. The larger size fish (12-14 inches) appear healthy but each one has some type of parasite or infection where the body meets the tail. In some cases the entire seam showed some type of infection.
6. I have looked along various lengths of shoreline where in past time you could see numbers of all types of young fish including yearling smallmouth. After doing this several times I can't seem to locate much of anything. In fact along the Bainbridge Island on the West side of the river only one smallmouth was spotted (another 12 inch or so) No panfish; 4 suckers; and 3 carp. Years past it had some type of fish life along its entire shoreline.
7. Algae content has intensified to the extent on the East shore that it never really clears up. Plus as the day lengthens and the sun bears down on it, the algae colored water intensifies.

I think we have a very serious smallmouth problem along with the other species that inhabit the river. I also think that the problem is going to be long term and not a quick fix. A suggestion would be recreational fishing only or no kill catch and release."

The PA Fish and Boat Commission has corroborated Bob's observations on their website: "We just spent 3 days floating down the Susquehanna, We put in at Mahantango

(Continued on page 7)

Wednesday
September 21st
7 PM

Quality Inn

Program
"Chesapeake
Bay
Foundation &
PA Streams"
by
David Wise

Upcoming
Chapter
Activities

October Fest

Wednesday
October 19th
6:00 PM

Four Seasons
Golf Course
Clubhouse

"I Love
The West"
by
Frank Plucinsky



WHAT'S EMERGING!

President's Report:

by **Bob Wyble**

Fishing becomes a bit slow during the heat of summer so this seems like a good time to review projects. The exciting news is that we have evidence that brown trout are reproducing in Lititz Run. Several people have reported that they have caught juvenile trout in Lititz Run this spring and summer. However there is still a question about whether the water temperature is cold enough in Lititz Run to sustain a population of trout year round.

To help find some answers to that question we installed temperature probes called HOBOS to give us data on temperature during the summer months. Data analysis for the month of June showed that there is a significant difference in water temperature from the origin at the spring in Lititz Park to the lower reaches of Lititz Run at the Ed Hess farm.

For the sake of comparison I looked at the number of days water temperature reached 70 degrees (or higher) at each HOBOS site from the upper reaches to the lower reaches; a span of approximately 6 miles. Water temperature reached 70 degrees only one day during the month of June at the HOBOS site near Route 501. Downstream at the trout hatchery and at riparian park the temperature reached 70 degrees two days. At the lower end of Lititz Run water temperature at the Baum farm reached 70 degrees 17 days. And at the Ed Hess farm the temperature reached 70 degrees 20 days during the month of June.

We know that trout survive in Lititz Run through the summer months so apparently they are able to find pockets of cool water from springs or shaded areas. Warm water adds extra stress to trout during the heat of summer so we should all exercise good judgment and not fish for Lititz Run trout during summer heat waves.

In other projects DTU volunteers, under the direction of **Bob Kutz**, placed rocks in the Millport section of Lititz Run to create habitat for trout. Thanks to all the volunteers who gave up two Saturday mornings to roll rocks, and a special thanks to **Kevin Fausey** for going way beyond the call of duty to run the backhoe and smooth out mud tracks after other volunteers had completed their work and gone home. Thank you **Kevin**.

A meeting at the Providence Township office

was held on July 14 to update Township Officials and citizens regarding results from the aerial survey of the Conowingo Watershed. Mark Metzler, from Rettew Associates, reported that Conowingo Creek is an impaired stream and has been placed on the 303D list because of excess silt and nutrients. Once on the 303D list, the state requires that the entire watershed be assessed to determine the cause of the impairments so that a restoration plan can be developed. The first stage of the assessment was to use a helicopter to view land practices and look for sources of silt and nutrients that were entering Conowingo Creek. Mark reported that he was pleased to see many good farm practices in place utilizing contour farming and crop rotation. However, he was able to identify several areas of concern that can be rectified to reduce silt and nutrient load. According to Mark the major areas that need to be addressed are bank stabilization and stream fencing.

In the next phase of this project Mark will do fish shocking to determine what species of fish live in Conowingo Creek. We are pleased to report that several landowners have already given permission to shock sections of the creek that flow through their properties. Looking ahead we will also need to obtain permission from landowners to begin work on bank stabilization and stream fencing.

In other items of note, DTU produced a video entitled *One Stream at A Time* back in 2001. Believe it or not we are still selling copies of that video through *Science Kit*, a mail order catalog selling science equipment to high schools across the United States. This summer we needed to purchase another 100 videos to upgrade our inventory so we have copies available to sell to *Science Kit*. Apparently teachers continue to purchase copies of our video to teach concepts of environmental science. Educating our youth is one of many reasons you can be proud to be a member of Donegal Trout Unlimited. Thanks to all DTU members for your support and help in cold water conservation in Lancaster County. We need your support and volunteer labor to remain a strong and healthy organization.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS



September's Program

Chairman: Ted Downs

September's program will be held at the **Quality Inn on Wednesday 9/21 at 7 PM**. It will be an overview of what the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is doing for streams in PA's bay watershed, presented by David Wise. David manages the Watershed Restoration Program for the PA office of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF). Since 1997 CBF has helped PA landowners restore over 1100 miles of forested buffers, both with its own programs (400+ miles) and more recently by delivering buffers via USDA's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. David works out of CBF's Harrisburg, Pennsylvania office and lives on Segloch Run in northern Lancaster County, a rare gem that supports native brook trout. See you then!

Conservation Committee

by Dee Lehman

The conservation committee, which includes Greg Wilson (Chairman), Dee Lehman, Bob Kutz and whoever wishes to pitch in, has been very busy this summer...rolling rocks and making improvements to Lititz Run in the upper Millport Conservancy area; making stream improvements and planting trees along Shearer's Creek in northern Lancaster County; and working on the Conowingo Watershed Assessment and Restoration Plan. On the Conowingo project, overflights have been completed and the data is being linked with GPS mapping and ground truthing of conditions has begun. Mark Metzler, of Rettew Associates is also completing fish sampling in the northern reaches of the watershed. Committee members have met with local government officials and have met, through one on one contacts, many interested citizens of the watershed whose lands adjoin the creek. The potential for a watershed group forming in this area looks promising indeed! Check out the new "projects page" on the website and see what is happening out in the field.

Work Days On Lititz Run

by Bob Kutz

Donegal TU members made stream and fish habitat improvements on Lititz Run on two Saturdays, June 11th & June 18th. The work site was on the Millport Conservancy property downstream from Rothsville

Road. 88 tons of rock, 6 tree trunks & 100 pounds of grass seed were used to improve seven sites along the stream.

The site was initially reviewed last fall by Matt Kofroth, (board member, and Lancaster County Waterway specialist), Greg Wilson and me. Seven sites were selected for improvement and a permit for construction was issued to DTU this spring.

We gathered as many volunteers and equipment operators as we could find. We used one of our skid steer loaders, we rented a back hoe and we had the help of Logan Myers, (Millport Conservancy), and his Ford tractor to complete the project.

Matt Bazella, Harold Alleman, Kevin Fausey and Logan Myers ran the equipment, while Glen Nephin, Doc Besecker, Ted Downs, Gary Roulston, Scott Trefney, Kostas Giourtis, Chuck Elmer, Mark Celebuski and I were the "rock rollers".



Mark Celebuski, a new T.U. member and employee of Land Studies was helpful with placement of the tree trunks, as we tried to utilize his knowledge for improvement to the stream.

Now, 3 months later, the new grass is high and the structures are working beautifully. Trout immediately moved into the improved sites. High water has caused a "scarring" affect on the sites with silt removed and gravel revealed. I am anxious to see if we will have fall redd's from spawning brown trout.

There are still many more sites along this section that need attention. The stream is still too wide in some areas and it lacks fish habitat structures. Hopefully we can address these areas in the fall.

A special thanks to all who participated!

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Fly Of The Month

“Kettle Special”
Submitted by Rusty Hardiman
from www.flyfisherman.com



Description

This fly was a pattern tied the night before a trip to Kettle Creek in PA. An experimental pattern at best it proved to be a deadly, simple wet fly fished on the swing or stripped in, or tandem fished with another wet/nymph. A combination of Steelhead butt material and traditional soft hackle from a Hungarian Partridge it resembles a Caddis emerging. This pattern is unlike the usually sparse soft hackles; the wool is fuzzy which makes the body seem larger than it is. A great Spring/High Water pattern-This fly will be used for Steelhead this Fall in size 8/10 using Mustad black Salmon hooks-Can't wait!!!

Recipe:

- HOOK:** Mustad 9671 #10-16.
THREAD: Brown 6/0.
UNDERBODY: Lead wire.
BODY: Chartreuse depth ray wool.
HACKLE: Hungarian partridge soft hackle.

Tying Instructions

Pinch the barb of the hook. Wrap the thread base from the eye to the rear stopping above the hook point. Tie in the laser wool. I tie in the wool along the shank to just behind eye. This lends to a smooth body. Make tight wraps of the wool. Tie off behind the eye. Tie in the feather. I tie in the tip. Wind forward, pulling the fibers back as you go. Trim the stem. Pull the fibers rearward-building a small head. Whip finish, lacquer, and go fish it! (lead or copper wire on shank is an option for deeper water)

James Kuhn, C.H.A.A.

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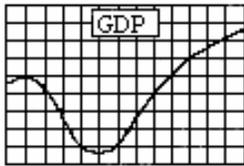
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WHAT'S NEW AT:

Lancaster County Conservation District: by Matthew Kofroth

In March of this past year the Lancaster County Conservation District was requested to develop a long-term work plan for fixing some of the water quality issues in the Mill Creek Watershed. This type of work plan is commonly called a Watershed Assessment. From now till the end of the year the Conservation District will be out and about throughout the Mill Creek looking for ways to improve the overall water quality of the watershed. To-date District staff has been touring parts of the watershed, gathering key historical data on Mill Creek, reviewing township regulations, and producing large scale maps of the watershed. The assessment will be a road map for local citizens to improve water quality and wildlife values along the Mill Creek Watershed. The overall goal of the project is to rank each watershed improvement project needed in the watershed so that funding can be obtained for that project in a timely fashion. The thing to remember during the entire process of this assessment is that the Mill Creek watershed needs some improvements to get it back to where it used to be. This watershed assessment will be a textbook for fixing the problems of today so we can focus on a brighter future.

Thus far during the Mill Creek assessment several limestone springs have been encountered that have the potential to hold viable trout populations. If we can work with the property owners around these springs and work on implementing riparian buffers and streambank fencing this would open up additional trout fishery opportunities where they presently are non-existence. Yet again, something else in our county that has so much potential if volunteers are willing to work for a unified cause.



TU National:

Free Technical Assistance Available For Abandoned Mine Drainage Projects

This announcement is to inform you that free technical assistance is available for abandoned mine drainage (AMD) projects through a recent Growing Greener Technical Assistance Grant awarded to Trout Unlimited. Since 1998, Trout Unlimited has been working through its national Home Rivers Initiative with a local watershed association and a host of other state, federal, and private partners to address AMD issues in the Kettle Creek watershed in north central PA. Using the successful Kettle Creek model of applied research, on-the-ground restoration, and community outreach, Trout Unlimited is expanding its existing network of partnerships to work on AMD issues beyond north central PA and is now able to reach out to offer free technical assistance to other groups throughout PA to address the effects of pollution from abandoned mine drainage. The types of free technical assistance being offered include the following:

1. Rapid characterization of mine drainage
2. Rapid watershed assessment
3. Conceptual design of passive treatment systems
4. Construction oversight
5. Existing treatment system evaluation and recommendations
6. Other, as treated on a case-by-case basis

In order to provide top-notch quality technical assistance, Trout Unlimited has partnered with and sub-contracted Hedin Environmental, Inc., one of the leading consulting firms that specialize in the assessment and treatment of AMD pollution. Additionally, for technical assistance requiring coldwater fisheries and habitat restoration assessments, Trout Unlimited offers the expert services of its Stream Restoration Specialist, Jim MacCartney, who works on river restoration throughout the nation.

How do you receive this free technical assistance? Easy just contact Amy Wolfe of Trout Unlimited at awolfe@tu.org or (570) 726-3118. You can also simply fill out a request form online at www.hedinenv.com.

Trout Unlimited is North America's leading coldwater fisheries conservation organization, dedicated to the conservation, protection, and restoration of trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. The organization has more than 140,000 members in North America, including more than 11,000 in Pennsylvania.

3 Month Chapter Planner

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<u>Month</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date & Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Subject</u>
September	Board Meeting	Wed. 9/14-7:00 PM	Millport Conservancy	Normal Meeting
	Chapter Meeting	Wed. 9/21-7:00 PM	Quality Inn & Suites	“Chesapeake Bay Foundation & PA Streams” by David Wise
October	Board Meeting	Wed. 10/12-7:00 PM	Millport Conservancy	Normal Meeting
	October Fest Chapter Meeting	Wed. 10/19-6:00 PM	Four Seasons Golf Course Clubhouse	“I Love The West” by Frank Plucinsky
November	Board Meeting	Wed. 11/9-7:00 PM	Millport Conservancy	Normal Meeting
	Chapter Meeting	Wed. 11/16-7:00 PM	Quality Inn & Suites	“Arctic Grayling in Alaska” by Fred Bridge

Backcasts

Canary In A Coal Mine (Continued from page 1)

and out at Fort Hunter. We were really alarmed at all the small bass fry that were dead, dying or in distress. They seemed to be starving for oxygen and all had a strange white spot on their back. Several fishermen that we came across were all questioning the same thing. It appears that we are losing all of this years hatch and that is unfortunate. Our fish pathologist has surmised that environmental stressors (water temperature) have lead to bacterial infection in smallmouth bass young-of-year. Our pathologist has isolated and observed bacteria from tissue samples we have provided him. Additional testing for viral pathogens is ongoing. Bacteria that infect these fish are typically common soil bacteria and cause disease in fish when environmental stressors (such as rapid warming) weaken fish. At some locations biologists conducting assessments note that numbers of young bass appear to be above average in density. This is good news, however in our collections we have observed about 1/3 of these fish with the disease you note. We cannot predict at what density the 2005 year class will rank. We cannot control or treat these fish for disease, so Mother Nature will ultimately have final say. We remain hopeful that reasonable numbers of healthy young bass will survive to make for an average density year class.” -Robert M. Lorantas Warmwater Unit Leader

As of this writing, the conditions have not improved, just when the white fly hatch is about to happen. What this points to is the importance of stewardship along our waterways, both cold and warm water. What we do in our yards and on our farms has a direct bearing on the water quality and the things that live in our waterways. The fish life signals problems. Too many nutrients find their way into our rivers and streams. But what can we do? Did you vote to extend Growing Greener? Do you maintain a vegetative buffer along the streams on your property? Do you volunteer with your time to help organizations like Donegal Trout Unlimited improve the conditions of our riparian environments? Like the canary in the coal mine, that signals problems in the environment, the fish have spoken.



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Mayflyer

TU Largely Disappointed by Energy Bill

Trout Unlimited (TU) today (8/8) expressed its disappointment with the Energy Bill which will be signed on Monday. Specifically, TU pointed to new exemptions from the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act conferred to the oil and gas industries as being extremely dangerous to the integrity of public lands in the Rocky Mountain West. The organization also indicated that the bill places undue pressure on the Bureau of Land Management to rush drilling applications through the approval process.

“At the very time when Congress should look at the dearth of scientific knowledge on the effects of oil and gas development on fragile fish and wildlife populations and find new ways to slow down the drilling run rampant across the Western landscape, it has instead given the industry more clearance from environmental protections,” said Steve Moyer, TU VP for Governmental Affairs. “In so doing, this Energy Bill offers a disservice to hunters, anglers and the American public at large.”

Conversely, TU was pleased with the changes made by the House-Senate Conference Committee to the section of the Energy Bill that deals with the relicensing of hydropower facilities. “While the bill makes the relicensing process even more difficult for the public to understand and participate, the final version of the legislation could have been far worse,” Moyer said. “The House version of the bill would have tilted the playing field severely in favor of dam owners, allowing them alone to develop alternatives to conditions raised in the relicensing process, effectively shutting out the voices of citizens concerned with the health of their rivers. In contrast, the conferees' bill is fair, allowing the public, TU and other partners equal opportunity to develop alternatives. We would like to extend our appreciation to several legislators who endeavored to improve the hydropower language, including Representative Dingell (D-MI) and Senators Bingaman (D-NM), Chafee (R-RI), McCain (R-AZ), Domenici (R-NM), Snowe (R-ME) and Collins (R-ME).”