



# LINES & LEADERS

Newsletter of the Connecticut Fly Fishermen's Association

Volume 23, No. 1

September 1995

Organized "To Preserve and Promote the Pleasures and Traditions of Fly Fishing and to Conserve Game-Fish Waters."

## SEPTEMBER MEETING

### Fly Fishing in Montana Jack Gartside

Our guest speaker for this month's meeting will be Jack Gartside. Jack is the author of several books on fly tying including, "Flies for the 21st Century." He will be doing a fly tying demonstration before our meeting, followed by a program on "Fly Fishing in Montana."

Come and see one of the most interesting and innovative tyers of *this* century.

**PLACE:** Veteran's Memorial Clubhouse  
Sunset Ridge  
East Hartford, CT

**DATE:** Wednesday, September 13

**TIME:** Fly Tying - 7:00 pm  
Program - 7:30 pm



## CLUB TRIP

### Cape Cod Fishing

**23-24 September 1995**

For full details see page 6

## From the Vest of the President



There's a new show in town, literally. The All American Outdoor Sportsmen Show will be held September 29th, 30th and October 1st in East Hartford at the new Aero Center. (P.W.A. hanger) "Practically everything that has to do with the outdoors will be represented. CFFA was invited to participate and eagerly accepted. So you know what that means. We need volunteers to man our booth and tie flies. Contact me or Larry Johnson for the details. There are some discount coupons elsewhere in this issue.

By all accounts the June trips to Cape Cod were a great success. Everybody caught fish and a lot of them. Several CFFA members collaborated on a worm pattern that the strippers could not resist. The pattern was tied and tried by Alan Gnann so, it's only fair that we call it "The Gnann Worm Fly." The Clouser Minnow lived up to its reputation. Chartreuse and white also all brown with copper crystal flash were the hot colors. Brown Deceivers, again with copper crystal flash worked well during the worm hatch. Don't miss this trip next year.

The Federation of Fly Fishers North Eastern Council "CONCLAVE 95" will be held September 22nd, 23rd, and 24th at the Sea Crest Oceanfront Resort and Conference Center North Falmouth, MA. Two club members, Mark Lewchick and Page Rogers, are giving workshops and/or programs at the conclave. Friday 12:30 to 2pm, Page is teaming up with George Roberts, author of "A Fly-Fishers Guide to Saltwater Naturals and Their Imitation." Their program is "Identifying Bait Fish and their Imitations" and will take place on the beach. This is a must for the serious salt water fly fisherman. Friday 7pm to 9pm Page has a workshop, "Tying Saltwater Fly Patterns." Saturday from 9am to 10am she is giving a program on "Fly Fishing Martha's Vineyard." Saturday from 11am to 1 pm, Mark is giving a workshop, "Basic Fly Tying." If you are going to "Conclave 95," stop and say hello to Mark and Page. Better yet, sign up for one of their programs. Some of the other presenters are Lou Tabory, Jack Gartside, J. Kenny Abrames, Ed Mitchell, Jack Fallon and more. Larry Johnson is getting together a list of people who are interested in going to "Conclave 95." Give him a call (246-0728).

Jack Springer tells me our hotline has been busy with people looking for information, but there haven't been enough people calling in fishing reports. John has to call around to the various fly shops and known fly fishing fanatics to get up-to-date information. CFFA has received numerous compliments and signed up several members because of the outstanding job John has done with our hotline. Simply put, it's the best out there. Please give John a call.

*Continued on page 6*



**Farmington River Splash** - Once again, this year's event was lots of fun. While many of our club members were fishing at the Cape, Don Rose and myself manned the CFFA table. The weather started out threatening but soon turned out to be a lovely day. Quite a few young people sat down and tied some flies. This is always a joy. I think we had more fun with those youngsters than we would have had at the Cape. Our neighbors at the River Splash were the FRAA and S&M, Quiet Sports.

Ed.

## Welcome

### NEW MEMBERS!

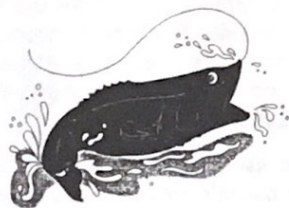
The CFFA would like to welcome our new members.

Allen Hanzich	David Prindiville
James Martin	Jim Weber
Ray Halleran	Peter Schwartz
Peter T. Susca	Scot Hills
Bryce Williams	

You folks are encouraged to participate in all the activities CFFA has to offer. That way CFFA grows and becomes more vibrant. If you have any questions or suggestions please do not hesitate to approach any of the board members listed on the last page. Your suggestions regarding the **Lines & Leaders** are most welcomed.

Ed.

### The Connecticut River Salmon Association



As of June 27, 1995, 183 Atlantic salmon had returned to the Connecticut River. 22 salmon have been captured at Rainbow dam on the Farmington, 7 have been trapped at Leesville on the Salmon River, 5 have been taken at the trap on the Westfield River. 148 salmon have been trapped at Holyoke on the mainstem. On the same date in 1994, 313 salmon had returned to the Connecticut River.

## COMING EVENTS

CFFA Board Meeting	6 Sept 95
CFFA Membership Meeting	13 Sept 95
<b>Jack Gartside</b>	
FFF-NE Council Conclave, Falmouth, Cape Cod	21-24 Sept 95
Contact John Bellows 860-526-4037	
CFFA Fishing Trip, Cape Cod	23-24 Sept 95
Contact Larry Johnson	
All American Outdoor Sportsmen Show	29 Sept-1 Oct 95
E. Hartford Aero Center (Old P&W Hanger)	
CFFA Board Meeting	6 Oct 95
CFFA Membership Meeting	13 Oct 95
3rd International Fly Tyer's Symposium, Meadowlands Hilton	18-19 Nov 95
Contact Chuck Furminsky, 814-926-2676	
Westchester Sportsman Exposition	1-4 Feb 96
White Plains, NY	
<b>CFFA ANNUAL BANQUET</b>	<b>10 Feb 96</b>

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## FISHING CONDITIONS HOTLINE NUMBERS



Willimantic River, Farmington River and Connecticut in General	664-3688 (CFFA)
Farmington River	738-7327 (FRAA)
Housatonic River	248-8616 (HFFA)
Housatonic River Flow	824-7861 (NU)

### Tradition by Mike O'Neil

I can't understand how my old home state, NY, continues to open their trout season on April 1st. It's much too early. Even Connecticut's 3rd Saturday in April proved to be nothing like spring. Cold breezes whistled through the trees and down the little Fenton River Valley, and ultimately down my neck. Uncas, the REAL Uncas - not Fenimore Cooper's dime novel Natty Bumppo chief, once owned and fished this river. I thought of him as I spent the better part of three hours drowning poor little worms in a fast running water, wondering if he and his braves ever got skunked as badly as I.



Now when I say little worms, I mean they'd not even reached puberty yet. But they were the best that the cold compost heap and garden plot had to offer. GARDEN WORMS.

Of course, I could have used a fly. I AM a fly fisherman after all. But opening day traditions are strong medicine and not to be fooled with. On opening day, I fish with my own fresh dug worms.

I could have bought worms. The day before, I tagged along with my fishing partner as he scouted out new places that said they sold live bait. Dave's a minny fisherman, and is deadly with his flatheads and blacknose dace. The place turned out to be the back room of a John Deere outlet in Bolton, out there in the country, and they had just the size minnows Dave preferred. They also offered what they called TROUT WORMS. These are not to be confused with nite-crawlers or saw-bellies. "What," I wondered out loud, "are TROUT WORMS?"

In this instance they turned out to be what my Grandma used to call ANGLE WORMS, which at the age of four I used to dig up in her Seattle garden, which she would then feed her pet goose. There is photographic evidence of this. It took me years to figure out that ANGLE WORMS were in fact GARDEN WORMS. I bet Uncas used to fish with angle worms from his grandma's garden too, but on this day he would have had better luck fishing minnows. Dave caught his limit of 5. I caught zilch. And then we called it quits.



The trudge through the soggy fields back to the car was not without its worth. The wind had died down, the small birds sang in good voice, and warming swigs of Mr. Boston Blackberry Brandy, overly sugared steaming coffee, and those big sloppy ham sandwiches awaited us. Tradition.

Now I am free to fish with a fly, and the Hendrickson's are aborning. Watch out.

#### VIDEO TAPE LIBRARY RULES

- 2 tapes per person.
- \$2 per tape per month.
- Return at fly tying classes, board meetings, monthly meetings, etc. - to any Board member.
- \$2 late fee per tape per week.
- Will only be rented at monthly meetings.
- First come first served.
- Rented after meetings at coffee table.

# Marines Rescue Roanoke River Striped Bass

By Eugene Price

It was high drama on the Roanoke River in Virginia. They called it Operation Rockfish Rescue. For the U.S. Marines it was a routine training mission adapted to a far-from-routine cause. For Curtis Donaldson and his Northeast Action Wildlife Club it was an opportunity to prove they could surmount the insurmountable. For millions of unborn striped bass it was a chance to survive.

The mission was to rescue spawning striped bass (also known here as rockfish) and other game fish that had been trapped in large potholes created by falling water levels below the Roanoke River dam near the North Carolina-Virginia border. Striped bass populations are of concern to state and federal wildlife authorities and to sportsmen. Populations on the Roanoke, and throughout the Chesapeake system, have experienced alarming decreases in recent years, and this section of the Roanoke is a major spawning ground. Unusually high water had allowed fish to reach rock-strewn areas well beyond the river's banks. When the water level dropped, the fish were trapped - right at spawning time.

Donaldson and North Carolina Wildlife Enforcement Sergeant Michael Fulkerson had seen the same thing happen in 1988, when huge striped bass, engorged with roe, turned belly-up and died in the oxygen-starved pools. This time they were determined to do something about it.

They wanted to capture the fish and release them in the main body of the river three miles downstream. But the banks surrounding the potholes are steep and rocky, making it virtually impossible and extremely hazardous to carry a rescue boat down to the pools. Hauling the fish back up the banks in huge collapsible barrels would also be a Herculean task.

Could the state's National Guard help? It had neither the equipment nor personnel available.

## Wanted: A Few Good Men

Then the idea of getting a Marine Corps helicopter to airlift the rescue boat to the ponds and shuttle the fish to safety was proposed to Third District Congressman H. Martin Lancaster by a member of the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. Intrigued by the prospect, Lancaster visited Camp Lejeune Marine Base and discussed the proposal with Brigadier General Lawrence Livingston. The general recognized it as a unique training opportunity and asked approval from his superiors.

The proposal was well received all the way up the line of command. However it hit a snag in a Pentagon legal office. A lawyer there fretted that it might be an infringement on private enterprise, noting that commercial helicopters were available for such undertakings, and

offering that the military might not want to court potential criticism.

The project was stymied, but only temporarily. Congressman Lancaster, who is also a lawyer, as well as a captain in the Naval Reserve, saw the objection as bureaucratic hogwash. He turned to his former House Armed Services Committee colleague Les Aspin (later Secretary of Defense), who agreed that the rescue was a worthwhile project. Clearance came with remarkable alacrity.

Two days after Pentagon approval, with time running out for the trapped fish, two New River (NC) Marine Station CH46 helicopters, under the command of Captain Stewart Kahler, were on the scene. With them was a Camp Lejeune helicopter ground-support team under Sergeant Gerald Simon. They were joined by Donaldson and volunteers from his wildlife club, and Wildlife Resources Commission crews under the supervision of Frank McBride, who had been assigned as project coordinator. Also involved were teams from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council, and N.C. State University. The operation was also backed up by the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the North Carolina Power Company, which operates the huge hydroelectric dam overlooking the rescue attempt.

## Battle Strategy

Air and ground crews quickly and carefully mapped their strategies. Sergeant Simon's marines studied the specially equipped rescue boat, asked about weight distribution, and secured equipment. They spread out a large cargo net and, joined by civilian volunteers, hoisted the boat over the net. They then hooked the net to the hovering two-rotor chopper and the boat was airlifted to the rocky pools below the dam. Wildlife fisheries biologists scrambled aboard the boat and moved about the pool, stunning fish with electrical shocking equipment. Volunteers from the Northeast Wildlife Club (many of whom took the day off to help), Wildlife Commission officers, and fish technicians moved in behind the boat, scooping up the fish and placing them in huge canvas buckets.

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Marines...continued from page 4

Fisheries Biologist Pete Kornegay hovered over the buckets, constantly pouring in fresh water to assure survival of the fish. When the buckets were full, the helicopter would airlift them to teams from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and N.C. State University that were waiting three miles downstream to record, tag, and release the fish in the river. Some of the fish were placed in tanker trucks to be delivered to the federal fish hatchery at Edenton.

**Success!**

The operation went like clockwork. The young marines and spectators marveled at the size of the fish coming to the surface in the small ponds. Some stripers, heavy with eggs, weighed as much as 22 pounds. In addition to striped bass, the teams also rescued largemouth bass, great numbers of huge catfish, and several walleye, which few had realized were in the river.

The rescuers worked throughout the day, often in waist-deep water, to save the bass. It was an exhilarating experience for participants and spectators.

"This was really great for everybody," commented Captain Kahler after the mission. "It was a good operation for us, letting us practice some things in a real-life situation while helping the community and saving a valuable natural resource."

He was particularly high in his praise of the ground crew. "They don't often get much kudos. They did an outstanding job under some unusual circumstances down there."

As the operation was beginning, Marine Corporal Martinez Vinson, one of the ground crewmen, told a bystander: "It's interesting. It's different. It's a challenge. We like that."

"Are you going to be able to do it?" asked a spectator. In typical marine fashion, the corporal replied, "Can we do it? Of course we can do it."

*Reprinted from Update, Saltwater Sportsman, October 1993, Volume 54, Number 10*

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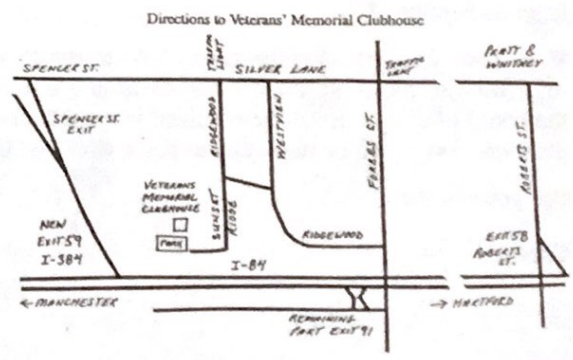
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### From The Vest - Continued from page 1

Kurt Jagielow, our hard working Environmental V.P., has been walking the Willimantic River during the summer. He's happy to report that, in spite of the record breaking heat wave and low water levels, there are still live trout in the Willi.

We still have some positions on the board that are open. Program Chairman, which I am filling right now. Call me if you want to talk about it. We need an Indoor Facilities Chairman. Currently Ed Fidrych is filling this position plus two others. If you would like to work with Ed and not be on the board, that would be fine. Gary Bogli has been running the insurance raffle virtually all by himself and could use some help at peak times. Again there's no need to be on the board. We just need some help at selected times. Mike and Lynn Stewart continue to do an outstanding job with our newsletter and have been approached by other clubs for their advice. C.F.F.A. is proud of **Lines and Leaders** and the fine job Mike and Lynn have done. Please make it a point to send them articles, fishing tips, fishing news clips, any information that you think might be useful to other fly fishermen. Help keep us Number 1.

If anybody has any suggestions on how to improve our organization, please give me a call or drop a line. Soon the board of directors will be involved in some long-term planning, and it will be important to know what you think.

See you out there!

Charles Place

## Club Trip - Cape Cod Fishing 23-24 Sept 1995



Come and join fellow club members for fishing at the Cape. Here's your chance to fish the Cape's famous kettle ponds or go fishing in the surf. The stripers were lots of fun last June. In the ponds you can find smallmouth bass and rainbow trout. We have booked a

weekend in September to coincide with the NEC-FFF Conclave!

Lodging will be at The Moorings Lodge for the nights of 9/22 and 9/23. It is first come first served. Your cost of \$93.50 per person plus tax includes two nights, two breakfasts and one buffet dinner on Saturday. If you would like to stay additional nights it will be \$25.00 extra.

Make your check payable to CFFA in the amount of \$93.50 plus tax for each person. Call Larry for total costs before you send check.

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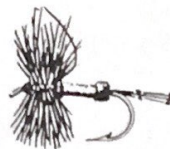
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Publicity Chairman	Ed Fidrych	342-1173	566-8241
CFFA Hotline	John Springer	664-3688	

The Connecticut Fly Fishermen's Association, Inc. is organized "To Preserve and Promote the Pleasures and Tradition of Fly Fishing and to Conserve Game-Fish Waters." CFFA membership meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May. Meetings are held at the Veterans' Memorial Clubhouse, Sunset Ridge Drive, East Hartford, CT.

"Lines and Leaders" is the official publication of the Connecticut Fly Fishermen's Association, Inc. and is distributed to its membership and allies of conservation. Business card ads may be placed at a cost of \$5 per ad or \$40 for 9 months. CFFA members may place for-sale or want ads of a non-commercial nature without charge. Newsletter correspondence should be sent to Lynn & Mike Stewart, 10 Bradley Brook, North Granby, CT 06060. Change of address notices should be sent to CFFA, P.O. Box 380260, Silver Lane, East Hartford, CT 06138-0268.

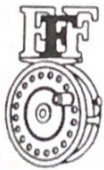


## SEPTEMBER MEETING: FLY FISHING IN MONTANA, JACK GARTSIDE - SEPTEMBER 13, 1995



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