

The Newsletter of The Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association

WWW.CTFLYFISH.ORG

October 2020



Our CFFA is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. **Your invite is inside**, click on the line below that says JOIN ZOOM MEETING ! We will come on 1/2 hour before each scheduled program throughout the year. On Oct. 14. our presentation **WEST BRANCH OF THE FARMINGTON RIVER Updated in Fall 2019 with new video, photos, and content by Steve Culton will begin at 8pm but you will be able to join 1/2 hour before that or 7:30 This way you can join and be admitted gradually. We want to avoid having everyone come on exactly when the presentation begins. If you have questions write them down using the chat box on your screen. Q&A will take place after the program is complete. The presenter will read each question and answer them all if he can. ALSO we will mute all of you once the program begins to avoid distractions. You will be able to hear us but we won't be able to hear you.**



26 people came to our Septembers meeting we have room for 74 more of you, some funny story's were told many laughs were had for 2 hours. People that are never seen because of different reasons came. Much effort and expense goes into this his for you. All you have to do is turn on your computer and click. One member sitting in the dark at his campsite even came!



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This is your invite to our October meeting just high light it and click on it and it will bring you to the zoom site. Or cut and paste to your browser. Come a bit early so everyone is not trying to get on at the same time. Make sure you have downloaded the Zoom App

Topic: CFFA October Club Meeting - 8pm - Steve Culton presents **WEST BRANCH OF THE FARMINGTON RIVER**

Time: Oct 14, 2020 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83004871956?pwd=N2o3MmQ2ZVBVYVIBcjkKdzlqRTRtdz09>

From the vest of the President

Okay, we successfully held our September membership meeting via the Zoom app. This was the first with another to follow on Wednesday October 14. Our first meeting was received by approximately 25 participants. John Springer and his friend (guide) Eddie took us through the Smoky Mountain streams and rivers of North Carolina. It was very interesting to learn how they manage their resources to get the most of them. We hope more CFFA members will join us in October. We understand the Zoom format will never equal the experience of our meetings in East Hartford but they are better than nothing during the tough situation our society is in at the current time. One positive result of the Zoom format was I got to see John Chapin and Tom Corto. Both have moved out of our state for retirement. John and Tom used to be at most of our membership meetings and I have missed sharing time talking with them. Well with this format there they were, front row as always. Our CFFA thanks both of them for believing in our association enough to keep their memberships current despite their departures to new states of residency. Tom actually lives in North Carolina and is going to contact our speaker Eddie to learn where the big ones live.

As to the fishing in Connecticut our rivers and streams are dreadfully low and providing minimal opportunities to fish for trout as I write this. All I can say is thank goodness we have the Farmington River, but even that is very low due to this summer's drought and very crowded. There are always saltwater and warm water species to chase and take up the slack and from what I hear those are fishing well.

On another Zoom meeting I was a participant in for the FVTU Project Healing Water program the subject of Fly Fishing with Children came up. One participant mentioned that he may have been a little too enthusiastic and talked too much about Fly Fishing with his son hoping his enthusiasm would be shared and accepted. He was concerned his enthusiasm may have had the opposite effect and turned his son away. So I left the meeting for a minute to grab a book that was given to me by the author a long time ago. I shared this book with the group and now I share it with all of you. The name of it is [Fly-Fishing with Children](#). If any of you have the goal of teaching your children or grandchildren how to Fly Fish I highly recommend that you read this book first. It was written by longtime, lifetime CFFA member Philip Brunquell, M.D. You will not regret it and you might end up with a fly fishing son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter, nephew or niece for life.

Gary

Fly-Fishing with Children

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



FOREWORD BY TOM ROSENBAUER

Philip Brunquell, M.D.

Fly-Fishing with Children

This book...is a gem....Its precise language and vibrant voice will make you want to jump out of your chair, hug your kids, and take them fly-fishing.... Philip Brunquell never loses sight of his goal in this book: to bring parent and child closer together in a patient, loving way; to help them share an outdoor experience and develop an environmental ethic together."

Tom Rosenbauer
from the foreword

Fly-Fishing with Children is a book about love—love for fly-fishing, sure, but also love for children and love for the outdoors. If you have no children to fish with, read it as a masterful fly-fishing primer. If you have no interest in fly-fishing, it is an unusually wise text on child rearing. If you're lucky enough to be a fly-fishing parent, this is the book you've been looking for."

William G. Tapply
author of *Sportsman's Legacy*

One of the most important things that a fly-fisherman can do is pass on a love and a knowledge of fly-fishing to children. Philip Brunquell's *Fly-Fishing with Children* is a great book for teaching adults to do just that. It is clearly written, incredibly thorough, shining throughout with wit and intelligence. This book is full of caring."

Gary LaFontaine
author, *The Dry Fly*

Fly-fishing and fly-tying, in my opinion, are truly priceless and timeless gifts that can give to *any* child. Philip's skillfully conceived book is a long overdue volume that I'd dearly love to have read before I tried to teach my two sons fly-fishing. Now, I intend to use its guidance to help me more painlessly introduce fly-fishing to my young fly-fishing students...and adults."

Dave Whitlock
author, *Dave Whitlock's Guide to Aquatic Trout Foods*



Fishing Home Waters During A Pandemic

By Carl Ochnio

It's the summer of 2020 and I'm not sure if we are in the beginning, middle or close to the end of the Covid-19 crisis. It would be nice if a "pandemic timeline" was clearly visible to us on an informational sign board. The type of map you might see at a highway rest stop. The one that has a giant arrow stating, "You are here." We could then pinpoint our exact location on this unsettling journey and grasp just how much farther we need to go.

Until there is a "eureka" moment and a vaccine is approved and distributed, this is the "new normal". We have been advised to make a variety of lifestyle adjustments. Once a vaccine is given the green light, we hopefully can return to the good old days of 2019 or before. To quote Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones, normalcy, would then be, "just a shot away."

I say, a vaccine, por favor.

So far, my family and friends have remained healthy. I hope you and yours have safely navigated a path around the virus. If so, the sound advice seems to be, keep doing what you have to do, so you can do what you want to do in the future.

One of the "adjustments" I made was to cancel my annual summer fishing trip to Colorado. Since the early 1970's I have had the good fortune to have backpacked, rafted and fished the Rockies with an assortment of

characters and adventure seekers. Those early days were especially fun as we were young, full of energy and bravado. It seemed like we moved at the speed of sound and traveled far at the mere suggestion of a great place to fish. No GPS back then, just a Rand McNally road map, and a little food and gas money. We would then be rolling towards a new adventure as fast as possible in a 1960's era VW Westfalia Camper. During those times, to quote Winnie the Pooh, "We didn't realize we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun." Summer sojourns just seem so natural and customary to me. Birds and butterflies migrate, anadromous fish return to their home waters, and I am wired to travel and fish western mountain rivers and streams during the summer.

Initially, although it was a bitter pill to swallow, I'm comfortable with my decision to have stayed close to home this summer. I will always assume my decision was the right choice for a very eager, but aging traveler. Today's technology has made it difficult to put these trips completely out of mind. The reason? Those Facebook memories that continually pop up with great grip and grin photos of eye catching fish. Those updates are special, but do serve as a reminder of moments that were missed.

What has helped to ease my disappointment was receiving reports of low flows on many of the rivers in the Southwest due to a low winter snowpack and an ongoing drought. Due to the pandemic, one particular river I look forward to fishing was actually closed down to non-residents one week prior to my arrival. I suppose "someone" could have circumvented that mandate by simply requesting a rental car with a local license plate. My guess is some "diehards" might have done so, but "honestly" the thought never crossed my mind. Then the question is, "Would such a ruse be worth the risk?" If a sign warns of a minefield ahead, would you just strut across it? When you think about it, Covid-19 and mine fields are very similar in that the risk may not be apparent, until it's too late.

Millennials reading this are probably thinking, "Okay boomer" take a pill and calm down, you only missed a fishing trip. If you are a twenty something and you have to give up a summer fishing adventure till next

year, there's no problem. For veteran anglers, time is a valuable asset and missing a year is something you don't choose to give up lightly.

Here is a line from the movie Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of The Crystal Skull:

"They say as we age... life stops giving us things and then starts to take things away."

Clearly, after this year, we all might feel a little older, as a significant amount of time has been lost.

To get myself out of the occasional funk, I do catch myself frequently daydreaming of planning a longer "mega" trip during the summer of 2021. It does provide something to look forward to and only seems fair.

So for the first time in quite a while, I am, laying down fly line in southern New England during July and August. Naturally the question is, "How did things go?" Well, surprisingly, it wasn't that bad. One significant difference in fishing home waters this summer is I can't just tie on a #14 Parachute Adams and expect to bring fish to the net all day. It sure is nice to throw a line in places where you can start the day with a single fly. The only time you might replace it is when you lose it to a streamside willow or by mid-day after toothy trout have chewed it down to bare metal. It is fun to experience waters where the trout seem dumber than sticks and you feel like one of the world's top anglers. When on trips such as this, it's a good idea to request a rental with a sunroof so you can actually fit your head in the car at the end of the day.

What else did I miss by staying home? Definitely the tug of a sizeable cutthroat, but don't overlook other subtle things, such as dramatic landscapes, the sound of thunder rolling through the mountain valleys or watching a charm of hummingbirds do aerial battles at the cabin feeders. I also missed the mid-day sound of hoppers going airborne when crossing a field to get to a stream. An additional treat, the opportunity to gaze at a brilliant night sky, the steady blaze of shooting stars and the band Milky Way spread across the heavens.

This might come as a bit of a revelation, but by not traveling, I feel I spent "more time" fishing this summer. I know that seems surprising, but when traveling, an angler can spend a week or two in advance of the adventure getting "trip ready." Then on the back side of the excursion, find themselves a little slow actually getting back onto local streams and rivers. One can easily be jaded by fishing uncrowded streams filled with eager fish. It could take a few days or longer to get readjusted to home conditions. So an angler could easily lose a few weeks to a month of time on the water.

Another advantage of fishing home waters is you can pick your spots and don't "have" to fish every day. When on a destination fishing trip and after dropping some serious dough, an angler can feel compelled to be out on the water as much as possible. When traveling, there is only so much "trip time," the pace just seems hurried and the days can be long. Anglers can end up going out in inclement weather and fishing high or muddy flows, that at other times they would clearly avoid. If traveling with fishing companions, you might be reluctant just to hang around the cabin for a day to "rest up" or read a good book, as you might get some "looks" or take some playful barbs from folks you thought were your friends.

At times this summer, I did find fishing the highly pressured waters of my home state exceptionally challenging. Oh, there were plenty of fish! By August, they have probably seen a thousand flies pass over their heads and have become extremely suspicious. Often they will rise eagerly from the bottom of the river, inspect and track a presentation, reject it and appear to giggle as they once again disappear into the depths below.

I found in fishing some of these waters, I never seemed to be "ahead of the curve". River hatches seemed to change frequently. By the time I figured things out, the fish had moved on to something else. Simply put, if evening hatches were a five course meal, while I am still trying to figure out the appetizer, the fish have seemed to have moved onto dessert. I swear that at times, my flies felt as out of place as someone showing up at a black tie event in a plaid suit.

Yet, there is something very rewarding about fishing

challenging and technical waters. An angler can begin to take a very perverse pleasure in simply “teasing” a fish to the surface, resulting in an unusual sense of accomplishment. Ernest Schwiebert wrote in Remembrances of Rivers Past, that “anglers are shaped by their rivers.” Based on that thinking, our local tail water can either turn you into a much more patient and observant angler or make you completely neurotic. This could often lead to the increased use of profane language.

Overall, I have to admit the decision to not travel this summer was not as bad as first imagined. It was educational, the pace was very nice and I had the opportunity to spend much more time on the water with an assortment of friends. The question is, once this health crisis is in the rearview mirror, will I be as eager to travel in the future? At this point, I am uncertain and will just have to wait and see. To cover all bets, this winter, I am going to spend some time tying up a bunch of #14 Parachute Adams.

Just in case!

Have fun and most of all, continue to stay well!

Closing Thought:

“You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.”— Mae West



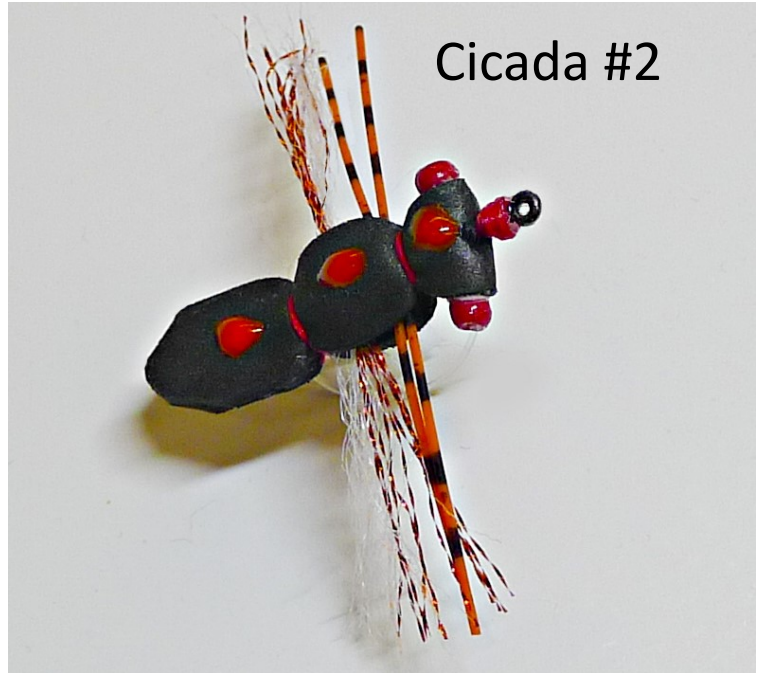
Paul's Fly Box

Tying instructions & a video on how to tie this pattern can be found at

<http://tightlinesflyfishing.blogspot.com/>



I took Chuck fishing for smallmouth. It was his first time doing this in a river. We had a great day of fishing after a great breakfast. I will be writing about how my fishing was very different this year. You have a story from a club member to read this month I am thinking many of you have a story to tell also. Editor



Bluegill caught on Cranberry Pond, a 75-acre private lake near Tolland, MA. Cranberry Pond also holds largemouth bass, black crappy and pickerel. This fish was caught early morning on a foam cicada imitation. The fly has worked well on the pond, fished both dead on the water and slow-stripped.



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