

# The Newsletter of The Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association

WWW.CTFLYFISH.ORG

October 2023



## From the vest of the President



Our September meeting featured Peter Jenkins owner of the Saltwater Edge in Middletown R.I. His presentation covered everything you need to know to improve your chances of hooking and landing a False Albacore on a fly rod.

Now is the time was his mes-

sage. Peter tried but was unable to get this drone video of blitzing Albies attacking Bay Anchovies to play that night so here is the link to the video. It gives you a birds-eye view of the teamwork Albies use when feeding on a ball of bait. It should help your decision making when you encounter this situation. You can also search Albie Project to learn more about the tagging program Peter talked about. (Drone video link)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=infnN7LLb10>

On Thursday 9/14 CFFA members teamed up with FVTU members for an outing with Veterans enrolled in the Newington chapter of Project Healing Waters. The destination for this outing was a warm water pond in Litchfield CT. We had a great day and a great turnout for this event. The veterans fly fished for whatever lived in this pond during the morning, enjoyed a good lunch and returned to the pond after lunch. Our next adventure will take them fly fishing in Salt Water at Short Beach in Stratford on 10/12/23 followed a few weeks later and by



Fly Tying at the American Legion Hall in Newington from 10am to noon on October 26.

Our upcoming October meeting will concentrate on fly fishing for Smallmouth Bass. These fish are a great warm water gamefish that eagerly attack flies and put up a great battle once hooked. Our recent unfavorable summer water temperatures affecting our trout streams make these fish the perfect target to get your fly fishing addiction treated when trout aren't an option. Come to our next meeting and learn where, when and how to catch them.

Gary



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**Paul Dinice will be our speaker for Oct. Program will be Fly Fishing for Small Mouth Bass on the Housatonic**

This is an under appreciated fishery. Learn about the behavior of 'smallies' and how it can assist you in catching this great game fish. Many believe that pound for pound this is the strongest fresh water game fish available. I'll cover fishing tactics and techniques, best times to fish for small mouth bass, and the flies to use. Fishing for this species is just a whole 'lota' fun and can assist you in improving your fly fishing skills and knowledge of the Housatonic River.



## First Trout

By Carl Ochnio

October 2023

The intention of this article is to take one back in time to the moment you landed your first trout.

Before I rattle on about my experience, I ask you to look back and recall your first trout. How old were you? Where did you latch onto it and what species of trout was it? Do you remember the rod and reel you were using and who you were with? Take a moment to do so before reading any further. Hope it brings back some great memories. I have a feeling many readers will have wonderful recollections of that remarkable day.

***“When you catch a fish, you are off and running.” Joe Humphries***

There are sports or activities requiring very little up-front investment of time, yet still provide enjoyment to the novice. Miniature golf is an example. All that is needed is some friends or family, a colorful golf ball, a putter and a lighthouse to shoot through. Instant good times.

There are other activities or pursuits where the learning curve is a bit steeper. To have fun, it takes time to just master the basics. Yet somehow a particular activity gets under the skin of the participant. They return for the second time, and then stick with it. When you think about it, it is quite amazing anyone continues to play golf or tennis after the initial outing. I think fly fishing can be added to this category. What exactly brings someone back for the second outing? Furthermore, what was it that brought you back to try fly fishing for a second time?

During a recent adventure to New Mexico’s San Juan River Quality Waters, I stopped in a fly shop and guide service that also offers accommodations at a great rate for the budget fisherman. Why I felt the need to stop in is pretty typical. I really didn’t need a thing, but can usually manage to find something to purchase and at the same time pick up some intel on river conditions.

As I was checking out, the young store clerk started to chat me up. As our conversation progressed, he asked me about my “first time.” You’re probably wondering where this is leading? Well, he did not ask me about my first car or date. He asked this older guy if I remembered



catching my first trout. A rather innocent question that allowed me the opportunity to unpack a flood memories.

So, here is my story. Out of pure embarrassment the only person I ever shared this event to is my bride. In order to catch that first trout, I also told my mom a tall tale.

I grew up in a mid-sized industrial and manufacturing city in southern New England. Our house was next to a very large city park with ponds and streams and a large tract of land that was the town landfill. I considered these areas a vast wilderness needing to be explored. In those days, kids spent a lot of time outside, unlike today where youngsters have so many things that can keep them inside.

Back then, our family’s piece of cutting-edge technology was a rotor or directional antenna that picked up the three basic networks, not the 500+ plus that we have access to today. I think my dad spent the money and risked climbing up on the roof just so he could watch boxing on the weekends. Of course, there were no computers to keep us busy. We were up early and outdoors.

Today’s world of technology can really put a grip on children as well as adults. I recall the first nice day of May a number of years ago when I was out doing spring yardwork in the lower forty. All morning I witnessed a steady flow of minivans making their way up the long driveway to our home. I saw ten-year-old kids unloading equipment from the vehicles and then entering our home. I waved to mom’s and dad’s as they left the property and wondered what these kids were up to.

Around noon, I made my way up to the house to have lunch and went up to my son’s bedroom. I opened the door and was stunned to find five or six kids and a massive number of computers, monitors and wires taking up the entire room. I swear if the FBI were aware of the situation, they would have shut the operation down and taken the boys in for questioning. I said hello and asked what they were doing. The response was they were playing computer games. They actually had all the computers networked and were competing against each other.

I was kind of disappointed. It was a magnificent day and they were not outside soaking it in. When I mentioned this, I will never forget the response I received. One of the boys looked up and said matter-of-factly, “Yes, Mr. Ochnio, we know and have the window open” as he pointed to it. I recall simply closing the door, my shoulders slumped and wondered about this future generation.

Since I was that age, times have certainly changed. I recall being outside at first light and having to be called in at night. Like many families we had one car. I don't recall my parents hauling me around to get me to places. We walked to school; I think everyone walked. I attended a neighborhood elementary school and I don't think I ever saw a school bus in front of it. Today when you pass a school, there are a ton of buses lined up and waiting to be loaded and a separate area for parents in their cars waiting to pick up their children.

Back then, we walked, until we got bikes. Then the whole world seemed to open up. Prior to getting my first bike, I was limited to fishing places I could walk to and those waters were not exactly teeming with fish. Once I had wheels, I began pleading for permission to ride to a local pond which was much larger and hopefully home to larger fish. After enough pestering, I was given the okay to make that trip and was rewarded with steady catches of blue gills, perch and catfish. It was pretty exciting, for a while.

Then I got wind of a pond that held trout. Outside of magazines, I had never seen a trout, but I knew they were beautiful. It seems a local civic organization in the next town stocked a pond with trout for an annual fishing derby. The fact that the pond was located in the "next town" was going to be an issue. The other problem was the roads to this potential trout paradise were much busier with traffic. If I asked, I knew I would never receive permission to make that ride.

So, the plan I came up with was to tell my Mom I was going fishing, which was technically accurate. I just never revealed where I was planning to go. The urge to not reveal the whole story and to go on an adventure for the chance to land a trout seemed well worth the risk.

I made that ride, picture Beaver (aka Theodore Cleaver) and was off to a new adventure. I was going trout fishing. I successfully made my way to the pond and went out to a point on the far side. The point offered a shallow shelf and then the water dropped off pretty quickly. I tossed my bobber and earthworm out and watched it intently. It was pretty exciting. I was actually fishing for trout.

Behind me three older kids came along the bank. I was approximately ten years old and I would have guessed they were twelve or thirteen and much bigger. I heard one of them say, I could not fish there. Being pretty naïve, I replied that I was okay, thinking they were worried about my safety.

Then my bobber sank and I felt a tug. I had hooked some-

thing. In the excitement, I never heard one of the kids who came up behind me and sucker punched me. I stumbled into the shallow water while they ran off laughing and warned me to never fish there again.

Feeling a bit humiliated, I retrieved my prized Zebco rod and reel from the water. I started to gather my line and discovered that there was still something tugging on it. I pulled hard and there was a brief battle and then I landed my first trout. A beautiful rainbow. The colors were stunning, seemingly exotic. Much more vivid compared to those catfish I had been catching.

***"The choices we make dictates the life we lead"***

*Danny De Vito*

*Renaissance Man, 1994*

I am still thrilled for the memory of that first rainbow trout. Looking back, I'm not proud for telling a whopper to my mom. Yet, despite this rather rocky start, I was hooked. Now, over sixty years later, this angler is still hooked and it seems every fly-fishing trip still brings out the boy in me.

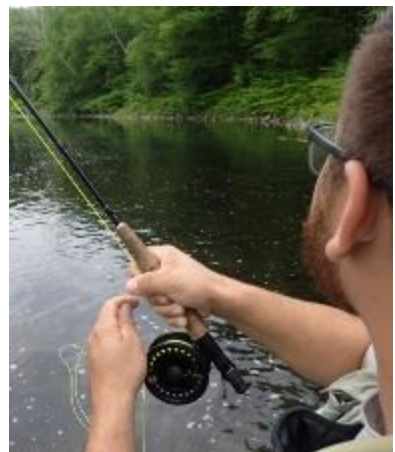
**Optimistic Postscript** – Early one morning last spring, I hiked down a drainage to wade in one of my favorite pools. It is not a long walk, but there is just enough distance to discourage most anglers. Additionally, it is not an exceptionally productive pool. I regularly get fish out of it, but one has to work at it. I am attracted to the spot as I rarely have to share it with anyone else.

After a half hour walk, I broke through the thick riverside brush only to find two anglers in the pool. I was somewhat dismayed. What a way to start the day. Then I noticed the age of my competition, which I guessed to be about twelve years old. They had fly rods and waders. One angler was positioned at the tail of the pool and the other up at the head. I said hi, and might have mumbled a few words under my breath such as, "Why aren't you guys at home playing video games?" or something to that effect.

After some thought, I quickly adjusted my attitude. I could not remember running into two young and budding fishermen like this in quite a while. I wished them good luck and moved on. It's completely unfair to think of all our youth as "indoorsmen or women."

There is hope!

Some more pictures of members and paintings!  
For everyone to see. Always looking for pictures  
from our members and I know people have  
them on their phones!



Club member Al the fish man Sonski went out to get dinner for his wife and himself! Nice fish!

Bellow is Jimmy Buffet this picture and quote was sent from Carl Ochnio in an interview he once said "I wish I could play guitar like Eric Clapton, but maybe he wishes he could Fly Cast Like me"

RIP Jimmy Buffett



My Friend Ben Bilello who you have seen at our fly tying night as well as our show had a nice trip to Canada Salmon fishing!



Black Thread Frenchie  
Tied by Paul Dinice  
[TightlinesFlyFishing.blogspot.com](http://TightlinesFlyFishing.blogspot.com)

### Paul's FLY OF THE MONTH Black Thread Frenchie

**Hook:** Hanak H XC 400 BL size #16 or Jig Hook of Choice.

**Bead:** Silver Slotted Tungsten 3.0 mm 1/8" or size to match hook size.

**Body/Thread:** Black UTC Ultrathread 70 Denier.

**Tail:** Coq De Leon Pardo 4-6 fibers.

**Rib:** Brown Semperfli Tying Wire 0.2.

**Coating:** Body & Ribbing coated with UV Resin.

**Collar/Hot Spot:** UV Orange Ice Dub.

Tying instructions & video on how to tie this pattern can be found at <http://tightlinesflyfishing.blogspot.com/> . If you have any questions about this fly or would like to submit a Fly of The Month I can be reached at [pdinice@frontier.com](mailto:pdinice@frontier.com) .



## Yosemite fishing hiking trip from Steve Douville

Hiking backpacking Trip in Yosemite & my 6' 2 wt. Fly rod.

Last minute call from a friend in Ct. he and his wife were doing a 7 day 48 mile, with about 10,000 feet of up & down backcountry trip in Tuolumne Meadows. The trip was to hike into the grand canyon of Tuolumne , then visit 10 lakes area.

So with one weeks planning I flew out to Sacramento Ca. To meet Keith & Sue, they had most of the gear, I just needed my backpack, clothes (not many) my old lightweight down sleeping bag, and off we went.

The hiking was strenuous for me with rain the first day but on day two at our lunch stop I caught my first native rainbow of the trip. This was just a crazy idea to bring my fly rod along, I have been living in SC for the last 7 years for family reasons & no cold water or trout within hours from our house. We decided were staying in SC, so now I have the itch back for chasing trout.

Back to the trip I got to fish in some tiny creeks 3 times during the hike, and the Tuolumne river twice we hiked along for 4 days. I caught 9 trout mostly amazing wild rainbows and a few browns & one fish I'm not sure what it is .. tiny with brown looking spots but (Big Black Spots - any help identifying this fish would be great.

Steve Douville

Thanks Steve for sending this to us looks like a beautiful place!  
Editor



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The Newsletter of The Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association

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