

# **Lateral Lines**

The Monthly Journal of Winchester Trout Unlimited Chapter #638

Fishing: "The washing machine of the mind" -- Henry Winkler, The Fonz

October 2023

Volume 28, Number 10

# **5 October 2023, Winchester TU Meeting** 7:00 PM

Laurel Ridge Community College Science and Health Professions Building Room #145

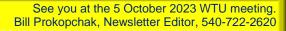
Dinner before the meeting 5:30 PM at Italian Touch, Middletown

### **Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing**

The next Winchester PHW meeting 6:30 PM at the Lake Frederick Lodge Thursday, 12 October 2023 Please note that this is a one-time change from the normal PHW meeting day.

#### BarFly

The next Winchester TU BarFly Wednesday, 18 October 2023 7:00 PM at Escutcheon Brewing Co. 142 W. Commercial Street, Winchester

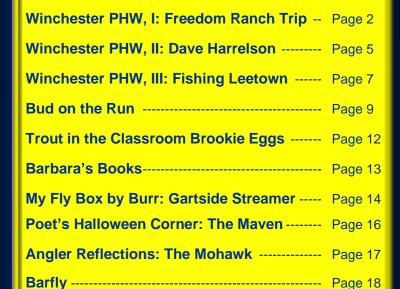












Winchester TU & PHW Calendar ----- Page 19

Joahua Kincaid, WTU Featured Speaker---- Page 1

# Joshua Kincaid is Winchester TU Featured Speaker

# Laurel Ridge Community College

Science and Health Professions Building, Room #145

7:00 PM, Thursday, 5 October 2023

Dinner before the meeting 5:30 PM Italian Touch Restaurant 7603 Main Street (Rt. 11), Middletown, VA.



# Joshua Kincaid, PhD, is Professor of Environmental Studies and Geography.

Josh will talk about the importance of large woody debris in streams. Woody debris in streams play important roles in stream ecology, erosion, and sediment storage, and there has been a great deal of research on this over the last decade.



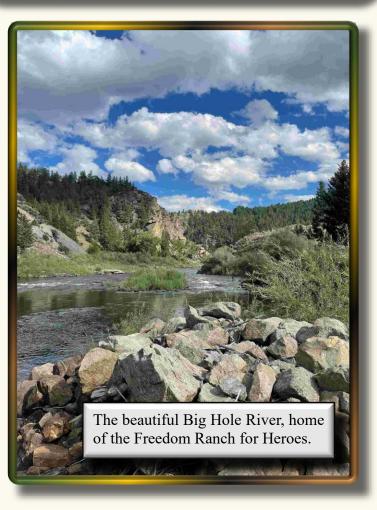


# MY TRIP TO FREEDOM RANCH: A SPECIAL TIME FOR CAMARADERIE & GREAT FISHING

by Logan Williams

#### Winchester PHW Program Lead's Note

Logan Williams was medically discharged from the Army in 2021 after serving eight honorable years as an infantryman and joined the Winchester Healing Waters Program earlier this year. He is currently a student at Shenandoah University and lives in Martinsburg, WVA with his wife Alexandra. When he's not attending class, Logan heads up the Student Veterans of America (SVA) organization at Shenandoah University. In that role, he also participates as a member of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Community Veterans Enterprise Board (CVEB). As an active participant in the Winchester program, he was selected to attend the Virginia region week (Healing Waters Trip #14) at the Freedom Ranch for Heroes in Wise River, Montana from 22-26 August. Logan shares his thoughts and reflections on his recent trip to the Ranch.



#### Many Thanks to Project Healing Waters!

I'm privileged to participate in Project Healing Waters. It's been about a year since I began attending the Winchester Program after having met Wayne White at a CVEB meeting. At that time, I had been out of the Army for about a year, which today feels like a good long while ago.

I'm thankful to Wayne White (Program Lead) and Phil Stevens (Assistant Program Lead) for getting me involved in the program and allowing me the opportunity to go to Freedom Ranch. I can't forget all the excitement leading up to it. Although every step of the process was seamless, I would be a liar if I said that I was not nervous about going.

But with the help of Dan Soper, a PHW program volunteer, we found the perfect remedy for my nerves and anxious urgency. Dan is not a doctor, but his prescription of fly fishing proved to be the remedy I needed. I can't thank Dan enough for all the lessons and patience he provided me on the water, building the fundamental fly-fishing skills that I would apply at Freedom Ranch. Especially learning all those knots.



#### My Travel to Freedom Ranch

My wake-up call on the day of travel was 3:00 AM. No way was I going to be late for my 6:30 AM departure out of Dulles. I had just enough coffee for the hour's drive and found my parking spot at the airport. I took a picture of the parking spot and made my way to check in with a smile on my face. That picture wouldn't matter. After I returned from the trip, I spent 30 minutes at the "right spot" but in the wrong airport garage.

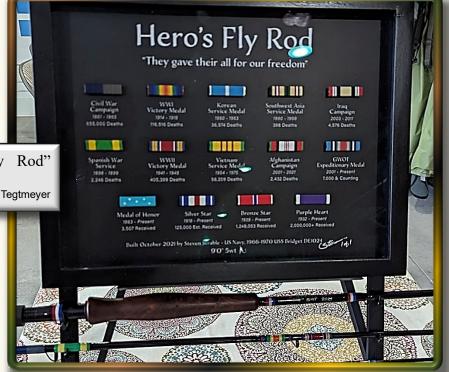
# MY TRIP TO FREEDOM RANCH

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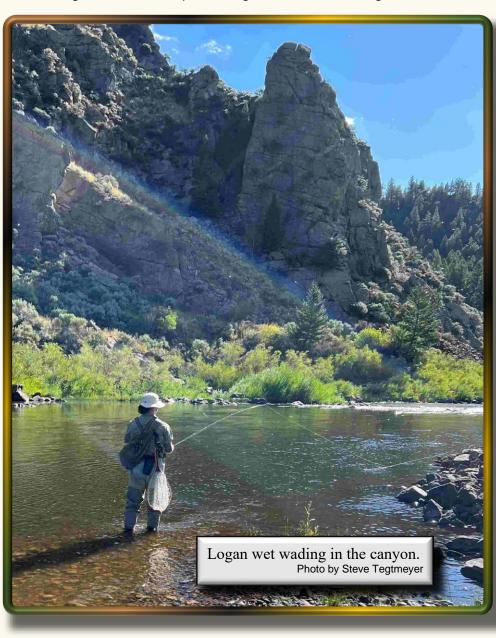
Steve Strable's "Hero's Fly Rod" display at Freedom Ranch.

Photo by Steve Tegtmeyer

It was very easy to find other Veterans on their way to Freedom Ranch. The first clue was what we wore – all of us sporting Healing Waters hats or shirts. On each connecting flight, we grew in numbers until our trip lead wrangled the group together. I began to appreciate our group more on the drive to the Ranch.



We made some personal connections; some of the group had already met others during past Project Healing Waters Virginia trips and program meetings. Two of them served in a past command team, two were submariners, and another had served in one of my previous units. This appreciation continued to grow throughout the trip, most notably when sitting around the fire pit sharing our stories and laughter at the end of each day.



# Getting Settled and Ready to Fish!

After arriving at the Ranch, we participated in a casting clinic and then selected and gathered our sized equipment, like waders and well-worn boots, which we stored in our assigned-by-name lockers.

I checked the fly box and bag and was happy to find damp flies. It was important for me to recognize the veterans who had come here before me since they had walked the same journey, worn the same boots, and fished the same waters while feeling the same things.

As I stepped back to digest this moment, I realized we all organized our lockers dress right dress without notice or intention. At that moment, I knew that I was right where I was supposed to be, and we were all eager to hit the water.

We gathered for dinner in the room lined with waders, boots, and fly rods rigged for practice casting, I noticed this sleek black frame with familiar ribbons and one hell of a decorated fly rod. (See photo above.)

I had no idea that it was the humble creator himself who set up his display to share with us at dinner. The "Hero's Fly Rod" is a great work of craftsmanship and patriotism. Hearing Steve Strable, who designed and built the display, describe all the research that went into the project and its intention was very special. It was a tribute to the ones who gave it all or have not yet returned and that made me silent and grateful. This was another sign to me that I was in the right place.

"My Trip to Freedom Ranch" continues on the next page.

# MY TRIP TO FREEDOM RANCH -- continued



#### On The Water and Fishing!

After breakfast on the first day, everyone was uniformly outfitted with plenty of anticipation, and we traveled to a canyon section of the Big Hole River. As I reached the water, I noticed there was a lot of activity on the opposite side of the river. I used every tool I had to put the fly over the fish activity, but time after time, the current would take my line and drag the fly away from my target. Carefree fishing under the Montana sun -- after a fresh rain -- led me to believe I should make a water crossing. I also hadn't caught anything yet. That's probably all I need to say, and I will spare you the details, but I took a healthy dunk. The second dunk that day for Trip-14 and not the last.

The wade fishing was challenging but my fishing buddy and I had better success over the next two days on the float trips. On the first trip, we caught 27 fish, and we netted 18 on the second day. My largest fish was an 18-inch Rainbow. I could have stayed on the boat and fished all day, even if my shoulders would have let me. I had a lot of repetitions casting the fly rod, and our guide, Chris, gave me concise and precise instructions to help me put the fly on target and set the hook.

### My Reflections on One Great Experience!

As a new fly angler, I really enjoyed learning and hearing everyone's opinion on their time on the water. They all really helped me with putting together all the pieces of my fly fishing that needed attention.

Now that I'm in college, around a different generation and culture, I value the moments of clarity shared with other veterans even more. Comparatively, there's no misunderstanding or social judgment when you are around your peers. We all started to share more and have side conversations about fishing and our times in the service.

I'm grateful that outside of the military, I have more access to myself and choice. I had a lot of difficulties during and after my medical retirement, but this experience has widened my perspective, and what I've returned from. It is a confirmation that this is where I'm supposed to be now.

I'm grateful to the people of Project Healing Waters and Montana for their hospitality, passion, and commitment to all of us, especially knowing previous veterans received the same treatment. The moments at Freedom Ranch will be carried with me throughout my life.

I recognize my growth as a fly fisherman in addition to my individual development, reconnecting with aspects of myself completely understood by those who have served and sacrificed for each other and this country. Our service had results that have permanently alerted us to how we navigate the world.

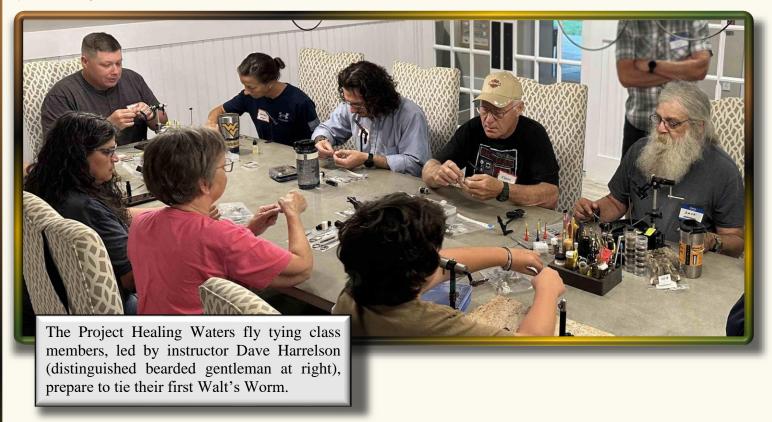




# DAVE HARRELSON

# TEACHES AT WINCHESTER HEALING WATERS

photos by Mike Smith





**Above:** Phil Stevens (r) assists a tyer in preparing a dubbing loop.

Left: A tyer learns the art of dubbing.

"Dave Harrelson Teaches at Winchester Healing Waters" continues on the next page.

# DAVE HARRELSON TEACHES AT WINCHESTER HEALING WATERS

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**Left:** Drew Patterson advises Heather Wright about dubbing.

**Below:** Dave Harrelson makes a point about fly-tying technique to PHW tyer Christine Erin.

**Bottom:** Fly tying mentors Phil Stevens, Dan Soper, and Gary Myers (from right to left, standing) look on as tyers finish their Walt's Worms."







# WINCHESTER PHW FISHES LEETOWN

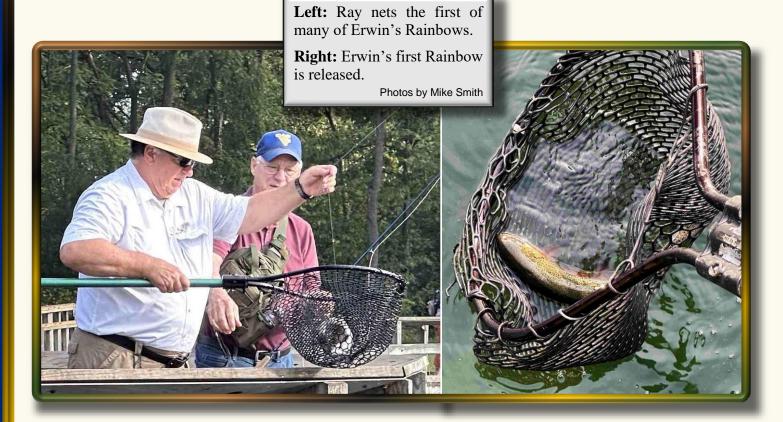


photos by Mike Smith and Wayne White

**Right:** Phil briefs the participants and volunteers on safety around the pond and the landing and proper release of the fish.

Photo by Wayne White







"Winchester PHW Fishes Leetown" continues on the next page.

# WINCHESTER PHW FISHES LEETOWN

# -- continued



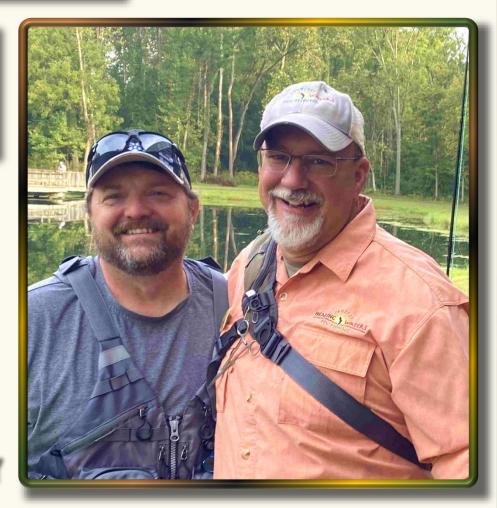




Top Left: Erwin prepares to net a nice Trout for Ray. Top Right: The Scoop... Left: ...and the hoist Photos by Mike Smith

**Right:** These guys were all smiles before they even started slaying those Leetown Rainbow lunkers on the Pat's Rubber Legs yesterday!

Photo by Wayne White





# WINCHESTER PROJECT HEALING WATERS OCTOBER 2023 CALENDAR

Status: We currently have 28 Veteran participants and 38 volunteers.

**Thursday, 12 October** -- Our next meeting is <u>Thursday</u>, 12 October, in Rachel's Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick, 6:30-8:30 PM. This is a one-time change from our normal meeting day. <u>Note this is a one-time change to our regular monthly program meetings</u> which are usually held on the second Wednesday of the month at the same time and place.

**Saturday, 7 October** – We will have an information booth at the Community Veterans Day Celebration hosted by the Capon Valley Bank, Stephens City, on Saturday, 7 October 2023, from noon to 5 PM in the vicinity of 5511 S. Main Street.

**13-15 October -- River Bound** (Lebanon, VA) Warren Dudenbostel is scheduled to attend. Jackson Dierberg will guide.

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Project Healing Waters
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Phil Stevens
Assistant Lead, Winchester Program
Project Healing Waters
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# **Bud on the Run: September 2023 Report**

### The next workday is set for Saturday, 7 October 2023 at 9:00 AM.

### by Bud Nagelvoort

photos by Bob Fish, Bud Nagelvoort, & Bill Prokopchak

On 9 September, four Redbud regulars showed up for the scheduled work session with some unusual circumstances in the background.

While Terry, Bill, and Bob, along with yours truly, appeared at the Seipel pasture gate at 9:00 AM, regular rock roller Clark Thomas could not make the event due to a leg injury suffered earlier in the week. But strangely enough, Clark's absence was not significantly missed due to unusual circumstances!

Why, you say, would an unkind statement like that be made? Well, the explanation lies in Clark's observation that the work session should have been scheduled for the first Saturday in September.

(That's usually the way the scheduling works out because the work session usually is the Saturday after the regular monthly TU meeting, but this year the Thursday before the first Saturday in September was still August!

As it turned out, Clark and I were able to add an element to the work at Redbud by visiting the construction site at Stevenson on Saturday afternoon of the <u>2ND of September</u>. We picked up about 300 pounds of the filler-size rocks (baseball size and smaller) we needed for the work session on the 9th!



"Bud on the Run" continues on the next page.



### **Bud on the Run -- continued**

To top off this story, the very heavy wind one day later did exactly what we had been hoping. It blew huge quantities of leaves into the stream that filled in the smaller gaps in the double sycamore trunk logs/rock structure and raised flow in the stream so that it had to pass through a notch in the top of the smaller log.

That flow now produces a waterfall of several feet and of sufficient power to deepen the head of the pool to the benefit of large Rainbows we expect will establish themselves there.



**Upper Left:** With more water flowing under and around the crosslog, Bill fills the double-sycamore joint with small rocks while Terry plans the next operation.

**Above:** Bud also works to slow the flow of water under the crosslog.

**Left:** Having hauled bags of rocks, Bob now places the rocks along the bank to mitigate erosion.

"Bud on the Run" continues on the next page.

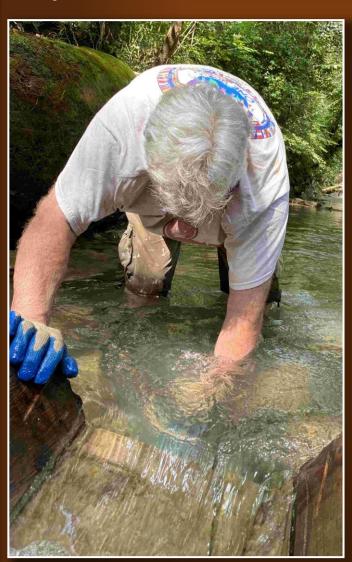
# Bud on the Run -- continued

There is only a trickle of water coming under the juncture of the two sycamore logs after the recent winds and rains.

We already have many rocks of various sizes on top of our south bank close enough to where we need them.

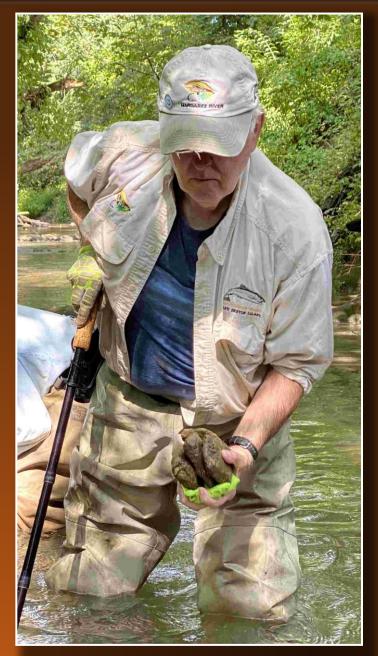
If all goes as scheduled at the 7 October 2023 work session, the plan is to use boulders already stored high on the south bank to protect the south bank of the pool just below the new structure.

Depending on rock size, we will likely need to drag into place by cable the bigger boulders. Should all be thrilling as usual.



While I haven't looked closely yet, I know the south bank from the upstream end of the big sycamore to a point somewhere close to the log end at Boyer's Bog needs bank protection with fish cover.

At the same time, the north bank needs a good look from the bank end of the notched log to a point somewhere related to the end of new, additional protection of the south bank with cover.





**Top Right:** Bob hauls smaller rocks to the upstream side of the crosslog.

**Above Left:** Terry examines the flow of water through the notch.

**Above Right:** More small rocks!

"Bud on the Run" continues on the next page.

# **Bud on the Run** -- continued

Beyond this work at Bill's Big Fish pool, there may be possibilities for something at the downstream end of this pool to narrow it with a notched crosslog to dig another deep pool along Boyer's Bog, which started to occur with the ugly inverted V that washed out.

Late message evening of the 6th as usual if change of plans. Tight lines, Bud





**Top:** Low but steady flow through the notch after the September work session.

**Left:** After a few weeks of natural leaf debris accumulation, the flow through the notch had increased dramatically.





# **Trout in the Classroom (TIC) News** Brookie Egg Delivery Photo courtesy of Monica Grabowska

Winchester TU members will deliver Brookie eggs to the Trout in the Classroom schools and museums on Wednesday, 4 October 2023.

It all gets started at 10:00 AM in the parking lot of the Martin's grocery store in Stephens City. Winchester TU volunteers will pick up eggs and carry them in carefully wrapped packets to the TIC locations where teachers will have cold-water fish tanks ready to receive them.

Lisa LaCivita is coordinating the Brookie egg deliveries again this year.

### **Barbara's Books**

### **Compiled by Barbara Gamble**

# **Streams of Consequence:**Dispatches from the Conservation World

Author: Lorne Fitch Paperback: 232 pages ISBN-10: 177160669X ISBN-13: 978-1771606691

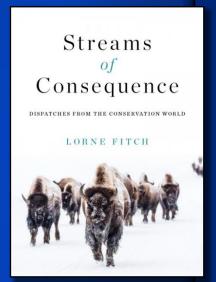
**Publisher: Rocky Mountain Books Publication Date: 17 October 2023** 

A collection of essays highlighting the splendour and diversity of the landscape of southern Alberta.

Streams of Consequence weaves together a bit of "ecology for dummies," a cross-section of stories and essays on Alberta's biodiversity riches and treasured landscapes, and a backdrop of selections on conservation issues. These are stories of the land and of Alberta's plants, fish, and wildlife told through the voice of a biologist with decades of experience on the front lines of conservation efforts. Through stories, metaphor, and allegory, basic ecological principles are made clear, ecosystems are described, and our human role in stewarding these natural treasures is revealed.

Infused in these "dispatches from the conservation world" is the special magic of biology, taking mute organisms at a variety of scales and understanding their lives and habitats so that they have meaning and a connection to us.

The role, the unstated objective of biologists, is to remind us, unceasingly, that it is only in our minds that we live apart from the natural world.



These stories have power to engage and educate, to help create and sustain an ecologically literate constituency that knows and cares about Alberta's wilder side. Readers can look back on the changes, weigh their significance, and think about where we came from, where we are today, and where the trend might take us if we choose one road or another.

There are some rocks heaved at our economy-centered, consumer-driven world. Scattered between them are the acts of altruism, of caring, of forethought, and of stewardship. These are rays of hope amid dark clouds threatening our very existence.

Lorne is a professional biologist, a retired provincial fish and wildlife scientist, and a former adjunct professor at the University of Calgary. He is also the co-founder of the riparian stewardship initiative called Cows and Fish.

For his work on conservation, he has been part of three Alberta Emerald awards, an Alberta Order of the Bighorn Award, and a Canadian Environmental Gold Award, with additional recognition from The Wildlife Society, the Society for Range Management, the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists, the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and the Alberta Wilderness Association. Lorne lives in Lethbridge, Alberta.

Sources: amazon.com and the publishers

### Hornyheads, Madtoms, and Darters: Narratives on Central Appalachian Fishes

Author: Stuart A. Welsh Paperback: 320 pages ISBN-10: 0821426109 ISBN-13: 978-0821426104

Publisher: Ohio University Press Publication Date: 17 October 2023

A collection of essays on nature, naturalists, and the natural history of fishes in central Appalachia.

A nature lover's paradise, central Appalachia supports a diversity of life in an extensive network of waterways and is home to a dazzling array of fish species. This book focuses not only on the fishes of central Appalachia but also on the fascinating things these fishes do in their natural habitats. An ecological dance unfolds from a species and population perspective, although the influence of the community and the ecosystem also figures in the text.

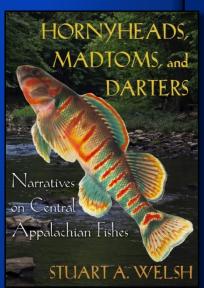
Stuart A. Welsh's essays link central Appalachian fishes with the complexities of competition and predation, species conservation, parasitic infections, climate change, public attitudes, reproductive and foraging ecology, unique morphology, habitat use, and nonnative species. The book addresses a selection of the families of central Appalachian fishes, including lampreys, gars, freshwater eels, pikes, minnows, suckers, catfishes, trouts, trout-perches, sculpins, sunfishes, and perches.

These essays often refer to the works of naturalists who contributed to our knowledge of nature during previous centuries and who recorded their discoveries when science writing was less concise than it is today. Although many of these works are nearly forgotten, these early naturalists built a strong knowledge base that supports much of our current science and thus merits reexamination. Most people are not scientists, but many have an interest in nature and are, in their own way, naturalists. This book is for those people willing to peer beneath the water's surface.

"Several states have field guides to fishes that help identify species. Stuart A. Welsh's book takes the reader to another level by way of his personal experiences with some of the area's most fascinating species. This exceptionally readable book will appeal to professional biologists as well as lay naturalists."

—Thomas K. Pauley, co-

—Thomas K. Pauley, coauthor of Amphibians and Reptiles in West Virginia



"This book will help the average person understand and appreciate these enigmatic animals via fabulous photos and illustrations, and a mixture of soft and hard science."—Daniel Cincotta, fish biologist, West Virginia University and West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

Sources: amazon.com and the publishers



# My Trout Fly Box Gartside Soft-Hackle Streamer

article and photos by Burr Tupper

Two of my favorite tyers are John Barr and Jack Gartside. These two men have developed many of the flies that are standard in in my fly box.

The Gartside Soft Hackle Streamer is one of my favorite streamers for all species of fish, freshwater or salt. It can be tied in many colors and sizes to suit the occasion.



#### **Gartside Soft-Hackle Streamer Variations**

I am sure that many of you prefer to fish for Trout, but like me you may end up fishing for Bass and Panfish here in the upper Shenandoah Valley. When fishing for Smallmouth Bass one of the most effective flies for me is the Gartside Soft Hackel streamer.

The instructions that follow are for a single-color soft-Hackle streamer, but you can tie this streamer in many color combinations, using several blood marabou feathers wound on together (for a blend) or separately to create a layered effect. Use your imagination. But remember, this is a very simple fly to tie. I like to use blue guinea hen for the collar when fishing for Smallmouth Bass and the mallard flank collar for Trout.



Photo #1 -- Attach thread approximately one eye-length back from the eye and wind thread approximately eight turns of thread to the rear. Tie in one or two strands of Flashabou.

**Burr's "My Trout Fly Box" continues on the next page.** 

### **My Trout Fly Box -- continued**

#### **Gartside Soft-Hackle Streamer**

- Hook: Any streamer hook size 6-2/0
- Thread: Color to compliment the overall color of the streamer
- Tinsel: Pearl Flashabou
- Hackle: Blood Marabou wound as hackle (Marabou should be 2 to 3 times the length of the shank
- Collar: Mallard flank feather wound on and folded as hackle just in front of the marabou. (Other feathers such as teal, guinea, or pheasant can be used for different effects. I often use a blue guinea feather for Smallmouth bass)
- Head: Thread to compliment the overall color of the streamer.

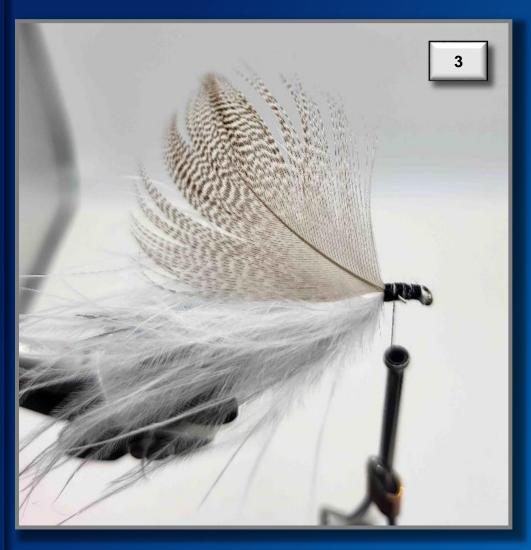


Photo #2 -- Select a blood marabou feather with fibers or barbs sufficiently long enough for the fly you want to tie. Strip fibers away from the thicker part of stem near base and cut stem at point at which it drastically tapers from thick to thin.

Place marabou feather on top of hook shank (concave side down and just in front of tinsel, tie the trimmed feather down at what is now its BUTT (not by the tip). Wind hackle forward around the hook shank, brushing the previous turn to the rear. When wound on to your satisfaction, tie down feather and trim excess. (Comb or brush out any tied-down marabou fibers, if any.

Photo #3 -- Select a mallard flank feather (or other suitable feather) with a thin stem and fibers long enough to flow back over the marabou wing to approx. 1/2 to 2/3 its length. Strip fibers away from thicker part of stem and tie feather in at the point at which the stem noticeably narrows.

Tie this feather in NOT BY TIP but BY THE BUTT. Lay the feather flat on top of marabou "wing" concave side down. Trim excess. Because the stem of the mallard flank feather is flat throughout most of its length, you must — before beginning to wind the feather — move the stem off to a right angle (away from you) so that when you wind the feather you are winding on the flat of the stem and not on its sides.



Having done this, wind and fold the feather so that its barbs flow smoothly over the marabou and do not stand out "spider-like" and willy-nilly from the shank.

You may find that you have to twist the feather slightly as you wind so that you continue to wind on the flat of the stem.

Several turns of mallard feather are usually sufficient to make an attractive collar. Trim off excess and form a neat, tapered head. Coat with cement when finished.

Editor's Note:

Remember to fish with barbless hooks or bend down your barbs, especially when catch-and-release fishing.



# Poet's Corner: Halloween Edition

Poems selected for the angler



A *LATERAL LINES* Halloween tradition, we are happy to present this Steelhead spoof of the Edgar Allen Poe classic.

### THE MAVEN

also known as EVERMORE

by Bill Prokopchak

with apologies to Edgar Allan Poe and his masterwork, "The Raven"

Once upon an evening dreary, while I angled, weak and weary, Having many a quaint and curious thought of ancient fishin' lore, While I casted, mostly placid, suddenly there came a rasping, As if someone gently gasping, gasping just along the shore. "Tis some angler," I muttered, "gasping just along the shore. Only this, and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak October,
And each falling, dying leaf wrought its ghost upon the shore.
Eagerly I wished for rises; sadly, I had only misses
From my Prince Nymph came but sorrow -- sorrow for the lost
"Big Thor" --

For the rare and radiant Steelie whom the anglers named "Big Thor"

Famous here and **Evermore**.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of the leafy curtain Thrilled me -- filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before; So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating "Tis some angler's heavy breathing, gasping up along the shore Some late angler is retreating, splashing on the slip'ry shore; This is it and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer, "Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore; But the fact is I was casting, and so gently came your gasping, And so faintly you came rasping, rasping up along the shore, That I scarce was sure I heard you" -- here I looked back at the shore:

Nothing there and nothing more!

Deep into the leaves I'm staring, long I stood there wondering, fearing,

Doubting, thinking thoughts no angler ever dared before; But the silence was unbroken, and the rippling water gave no token.

And the only words there spoken were the whispered words, "Big Thor?"

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the words, "Big Thor."

"It's the wind," I said, "and nothing more!"

Back into the creek I'm turning, all my soul within me burning, Soon again, I heard the rasping somewhat louder than before. "Surely," I said, "that is something in the woods behind me, surely; Let me see, then, what is hidden, and this mystery to explore -- Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery to explore; -- It's the wind and nothing more!"

Turning here, I grabbed the branches, parted them with heart a flutter,

In there stepped a stately **MAVEN** from the path upon the shore; Not a bow or curtsey made she; not a minute stopped or stayed she:

But, with look of lord or lady, stood upon the rocky shore --Stood upon a rock so steady there upon the rocky shore --Stood, and stared, and nothing more.

Then this **MAVEN** so beguiling got me somehow into smiling, By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance she wore, "Why's your face so drawn and deathlike, you," I said, "are surely spirit,

Ghastly grim and ancient **MAVEN** wandering on the evening shore Tell me what your preferred name is on this evening's rocky shore!"

Quoth the MAVEN, "Evermore."

Much I marveled this young spirit to her speaking thus so plainly, Though her answer's little meaning -- little meaning that it bore; Ever blessed ghost I'm seeing standing there upon the shore -- Ghost or beast upon the rocks, just standing there upon the shore, With such a name as "Evermore."

But the **MAVEN**, standing lonely on the rocky shore, spoke only That one word, as if her soul in that one word she did outpour. Nothing further then she uttered -- but I say, I shook and shuddered Then I scarcely more than muttered, "On this evening, hope you'll leave me --

I am trembling as I stand, and I am hoping she will leave me."

MAVEN then said, "Evermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken, "Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store Caught from some unhappy angler who struck out on river's water Broken tippet, shattered rod, oh the burden **MAVEN** bore -- Till the dirges of her hope that melancholy burden bore Of **Ever, Ever -- Evermore**."

But the **MAVEN** still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Then my wading staff I pointed at the ghostly bore;
Then, at once I started thinking, I betook myself to linking
Thinking unto thinking, thinking what this ancient ghost of yore -What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt odd angler's ghost of yore
Meant in croaking, "**Evermore**."

There I stood engaged and casting, but no Steelhead was I catching

To the ghost whose eyes of fire burned into my Steelhead lore; The **MAVEN** and I stood there blinking, my eye on indicator seeking

On the indicator's color peeking as it floated down the river, But with daylight growing dimmer and no lamp light, I did shiver Ghostly **MAVEN** did, then, whisper, "**Evermore**."

Then, I thought the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer

Swung by spirit **MAVEN** for whose foot-fall splashed upon the shore,

"Wretch," I cried, "Fish God has sent you -- by your spirit he has sent you

Respite -- respite and amnesia from the memories of Big Thor. Help me, **MAVEN**, kindly spirit to forget the lost Big Thor!"

Quoth the **MAVEN**, "Evermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! -- prophet still, of ghost or MAVEN! Whether tempter sent or tempest tossed you on this creek so Desolate yet all undaunted, on this Steelhead land enchanted -- On this stream by horror haunted -- tell me truly, I implore -- Is there -- is there tell me truly -- tell me -- tell me, I implore!

Of the Legend of Big Thor."

"Angler!" said I, "thing of evil! -- prophet still of ghost or MAVEN!

By the heav'n that bends above us -- by the Steelhead we adore -Tell my soul with sorrow laden if the ancient lore be true,
Will I catch the vaunted Steelhead whom the legend calls
Big Thor?

Hook the rare and radiant Steelhead whom the ancients named Big Thor?"

Quoth the MAVEN, "Evermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, ghost or fiend!" I shrieked aloud "Get thee back into the forest on this night of Halloween Leave no mem'ry as a token of that specter I have seen! Leave my wishes un-fulfilled and get you back upon the shore! I know I will never land the Steelhead that the old folks call

Quoth the **MAVEN**, "**Evermore**."

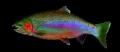
And the **MAVEN**, never moving, still is standing on the shore On the rocky shore, she stood there right upon the Erie shore; And her eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming, And my lamp light o'er her streaming throws her shadow on the shore;

And Big Thor now from the shadows swims so near as ne'er before

"Can I catch him?"

Quoth the  ${\bf MAVEN,\,"NEVERMORE!"}$ 

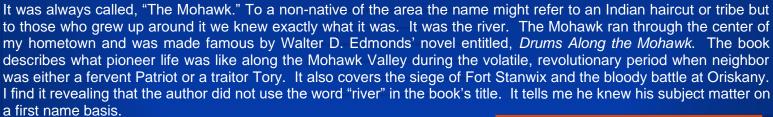
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# ANGLER REFLECTIONS

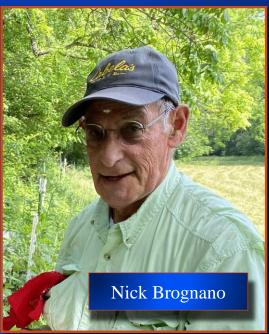
### **Fishing The Mohawk**

by Nick Brognano



The five Leatherstocking Tales written by James Fenimore Cooper describe much of the same dangerous Iroquois country during an earlier time of the French and Indian War. Hawkeye and Uncas (*The last of the Mohicans*) became popular global characters in the folklore of the North American frontier. Back then the Mohawk served as an important navigational way between Albany and Central New York State. Later it was used as a vital water source for the highly successful Erie Canal system. Historically, the Mohawk has played a significant part in the colonization and mercantile development of a young and rapidly growing nation.

As a young boy growing up within walking distance of the Mohawk, none of this knowledge excited me as much as the name itself and the wild imagination it would stir up in a young boy's mind. Its name was the same as the Indigenous People that lived along its eastern banks centuries ago. The Mohawk People were part of the Iroquois Confederacy which initially consisted of five "Nations": the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and later (1722) the Tuscarora.



The Mohawk were the First Nation and were the most "Warlike and Mighty." They were the "Guardians of the Eastern Gate." It was always so easy to visualize Indians, with a few head feathers sticking out of their hair, paddling their birchbark canoes on the fast-moving water. To me, they were a fascinating people who could hunt, and fish better than any white man could ever hope to. I believed their senses were superior. I imagined Indians could hear and smell almost as good as the animals they hunted. They could read signs in the wild that others couldn't even notice. How I wished I could be like an Indian!

The part of the Mohawk that I remember well was a waterway that in some places ran deep while in other places was not quite knee high. Where the water ran slow and shallow it looked murky or cloudy. It never dried up and sometimes in the spring would cause serious flooding. River street was appropriately named since it often was the first victim to high water from the Mohawk. Perhaps that is how it got its name and why River Street became home to so many Italian Immigrant families. No one else would live there and rent had to be within budget. As kids we would sometimes ride an old, tough, inner tube from Delta Dam downriver to the East Dominick St. bridge in East Rome. It would take the better part of an afternoon to reach the bridge.

Whenever the high school football team defeated its hated rival a half day off from school would be granted. The students would march to the East Dominick Street bridge carrying a makeshift wooden coffin. The coffin, depicting the other team colors, would be set ablaze and dumped over this very bridge into the Mohawk. The rivalry was so intense, as I recall, that we would have gladly substituted a member of the enemy side in place of the coffin, or placed him in the box, if we could ever capture one. Even the high school yearbook had a Mohawk connection. It was named "De-O-Wain-Sta," which means "Great carrying place." This referred to the portage the Indians named between the Mohawk and Wood creek. Writing about all this takes me back to those youthful fun filled days always causing me to wish for more. Certainly, tubing the Mohawk with friends was always enjoyable but there was something far more exciting the Mohawk offered, which is the real purpose of this narrative.

As a youth, I could ride my bike to several fishing holes. Back then, I used worms as bait. Trout was the main species caught. It was always a proud and happy moment to bring home a string of Trout. Sometimes a Walleye, Bullhead, Perch, Carp, or Northern Pike would get hooked. It wasn't until seventh grade that I began to use shiny metal to attract the hungry Trout. The spinning rod became my favorite companion. Summertime with no school was about as close to paradise a boy with a bike and fishing pole could imagine. As a kid, I would much rather fish than play baseball or go to school, not necessarily in that order. One part of the Mohawk, just below the dam, ran alongside a state fish hatchery. On April 1st, opening day, an annual event would take place. Fishermen would crowd the riverbank opposite the hatchery and compete. The hatchery would usually dump in Trout at that spot, and it often resulted in drawing more anglers than the number of deposited fish. I know all this from years of personal experience.

Sometime later, when I became a dad, I would take my young son, Brian, fishing. The base of Delta Dam was always a popular spot for big Carp. Sometimes my brother Jim would also take the kids there to fish. To hook a young boy onto fishing, it is most important that he does not get bored. I never had to worry about that because we would see schools of big Carp swimming in the shallow water. It was the level of excitement I would have to contend with, forget about boredom!

"Angler Reflections" continues on the next page.

# ANGLER REFLECTIONS

### Fishing The Mohawk -- continued

Even today, as a middle-aged man my son still gets excited when recalling those fun filled moments using corn as bait. We laughed recalling the time his young companion decided to play with stones and took his eye off his fishing pole only to later cry when a Carp grabbed onto his bait and swam off with the pole and reel.

Today, I live far away from that old Mohawk but whenever I go back, I always fish it. I generally fish anywhere from the old steel bridge just below the dam to the point where the water empties into the Barge Canal near Whitesboro Street. I have advanced from the spinning rod to the fly rod. I have caught Trout in every part of the Mohawk and know it well. A few years ago, I hooked a nice Brown at the Ridge Mill spot using a prince nymph. I released it only to hook it again the next day using the same fly and at the same spot! Once at the Chestnut Street bridge I saw rises all over but could not hook anything until I found the correct size Adams dry fly. I remember going down in size three times before finding the winner. I went on to quickly hook at least a dozen after that. It has always been fun to fish the Mohawk. Here, I should mention that I practice catch and release unless I get lucky (which doesn't happen often) and land a trophy.

Incidentally, on the stream, I can be a very patient fellow and to date have not given up hope on landing the prize.

As many memories as I have accumulated over the years fishing the Mohawk, the most unforgettable occurred a few years back when I was knee deep in water with my fly rod. I now live in Virginia and had driven about 450 miles the previous day and was looking forward to trying my luck on the water I had fished as a kid. I had been fishing several hours just downstream from that same old concrete bridge on East Dominick Street I mentioned earlier. There was no one around. It was a beautiful summer day, and the weather could not have been better. I had caught several Trout within sight of the church I had been married in and in which my three children had been baptized. It was all so very serene and nostalgic fishing all alone. It was on a Saturday around 7:00 PM when the quietness was pleasantly broken by ringing church bells. The bells were announcing the time for the Angelus. The music and the setting could not have been better. I stopped flinging the fly rod and stared at the nearby church steeple, the source of the heavenly music. I reverently stood there and absorbed as much of the melody and moment as humanly possible. I stood frozen until the bells stopped ringing.

That musical moment and personal place struck deep into my soul and in an instant all my youthful and carefree memories fishing the Mohawk came together. This was my home, where I was born, and lived my formative years, and, although I had been away a long time, I knew I had never really left. This old man was having an epiphany moment. I then gave thanks, to that divine gatherer of anglers, for placing me here and reminding me to stop and reflect on my surroundings and what it all meant to me.

I then realized why I come back each year and fish the Mohawk. Catching Trout is only part of it. In some innate way I want to reconnect with the past and keep in touch with this ancient Indian waterway even if it is in my own imagination.

It is all its history and my attachment to it that makes the Mohawk so very different from the many other streams I have fished. Other places with their sky, high, mountains and crystal, clear, water may appear more scenic and can be something to write home about, but no other can stir up in me such heartfelt memories and feelings and no other is named the Mohawk.

### Winchester TU Monthly "BarFly" Event Wednesday, 18 October 2023 at 7:00 PM Escutcheon Brewery Commercial St., Winchester

The Winchester Chapter of Trout Unlimited (WTU) will be gathering at Escutcheon Brewing in Winchester to offer anglers and **non-anglers** in our area the opportunity to learn about Trout Unlimited and to tie fishing flies.

We hope all of you can attend our monthly "BarFly" at Escutcheon Brewery.

# No fly-tying or fly-fishing experience is necessary.

Please invite your friends. We hope to introduce more folks to the Winchester TU chapter and support a local business that supports WTU. Anyone under age 21 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.



### 2023-2024

# Calendar of Events Winchester Trout Unlimited

See also <a href="http://winchestertu.org/">http://winchestertu.org/</a>

#### **Reminders**

#### October 2023

- ✓ Wednesday -- 4 October 2023 Trout in the Classroom Brookie Delivery Day. 10:00 AM -- Meet at the Martin's Grocery Store parking lot, Stephens City
- ✓ Joint Meeting of Winchester Trout Unlimited and Northern Shenandoah Audubon Society 7:00 PM, Thursday, 5 October 2023

The featured speaker is Joshua Kincaid, PhD, Professor of Environmental Studies and Geography at Shenandoah University

The meeting will be at Laurel Ridge Community College, Middletown, VA

5:30 PM -- Dinner before the Winchester TU meeting at The Italian Touch Restaurant, 7603 Main Street, (Rt. 11), Middletown, VA.

- Saturday 7 October 2023 9:00 AM Redbud Run workday
- Saturday 7 October 2023 Noon to 5:00 PM Redbud Run workday
  Winchester Project Healing Waters will have an information booth at the Community
  Veterans Day Celebration hosted by the Capon Valley Bank, Stephens City
- Thursday -- 12 October 2023 -- 6:30 PM Monthly Project Healing Waters meeting

  This is a one-time change from our normal PHW meeting day.
- Wednesday 18 October 2023 -- 7:00 PM BarFly at Escutcheon Brewery

Editor's Note: Please see page 9 of this newsletter for more details about the Winchester Project Healing Waters schedule.

### November 2023

- ✓ Winchester Trout Unlimited Meeting This is the "Annual Meeting" required under our bylaws. 2 November 2023 -- 7:00 PM
- ✓ Saturday 4 November 2023 -- Redbud Run workday -- Time to be announced later.
- **✓ Wednesday -- 8 November 2023 -- 6:30 PM Monthly Project Healing Waters meeting**
- Wednesday 15 November 2023 -- 7:00 PM BarFly at Escutcheon Brewery

### **December 2023**

- **✓**There is no Winchester Trout Unlimited Meeting in December
- **√**Saturday 9 December 2023 -- Redbud Run workday -- Time to be announced later.
- Wednesday 13 Dec 2023 -- 6:30 PM Monthly Project Healing Waters meeting
- ✓ Wednesday 20 December 2023 -- 7:00 PM BarFly at Escutcheon Brewery



The opinions expressed in *Lateral Lines* are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of Winchester Trout Unlimited or Trout Unlimited National.

All water sports, including fishing, and stream restoration activities have inherent dangers. Participation in <u>all</u> Winchester Trout Unlimited activities is at the participant's own risk and participants agree to hold harmless Winchester Trout Unlimited and its members. A responsible adult must accompany all minors.