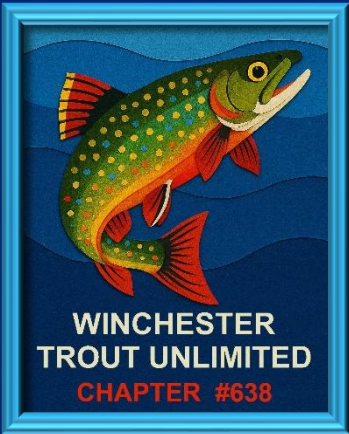




Celebrating  
31 Years of  
Lateral Lines

# Lateral Lines

Monthly Magazine of Winchester Trout Unlimited  
Chapter #638

The waters nourished it, deep springs made it grow tall.... – Ezekiel 31:4 (NIV)

September 2026

Volume 31, Numbers 9

### Next Winchester TU Meeting

Thursday, 3 September 2026, 7:00 PM  
Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick, VA

### Winchester TU Priority Waters Meeting

Thursday, 3 September 2026, 6:00 PM  
Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick, VA

### Project Healing Waters Monthly meeting

Wednesday, 9 September 2026, 6:00 PM  
Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick, VA

### BarFly

The next Winchester TU BarFly  
Wednesday, 16 September 2026  
7:00 PM at Escutcheon Brewing Co.  
142 W. Commercial Street, Winchester

### For complete calendars, please see

Page 11 for Winchester Project Healing Waters

Pages 7 for Winchester Priority Waters  
Field Days

Page 21 for Winchester Trout Unlimited



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Bill Prokopchak, Newsletter Editor  
wilpro@comcast.net



photo courtesy of Virginia DNR

## Winchester TU & Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon Announce the Speaker for our Annual Joint Meeting at Laurel Ridge Community College

Mark your calendar for the  
Annual Joint Meeting on  
1 October 2026 at  
Laurel Ridge Community College.

Brad Fink is a Coldwater Fisheries  
Biologist with the Virginia Department of  
Wildlife Resources.

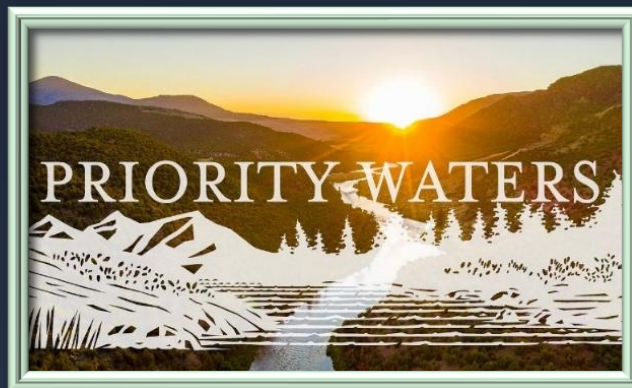


# Winchester Priority Waters

## Part 1 of 2

### August Afield: Air, Hot & Humid - the Work: “No Sweat”

by the Winchester TU Priority Waters Team



The Priority Waters team had a full agenda to address on Wednesday, 5 August 2026. So full, in fact, the team opted to convene at 7:30 AM at their usual gathering place, the Riverton Plaza Target parking lot. The earlier start was also a nod to the weather forecast: warm, humid, and a chance of scattered showers. The 5 August crew comprised team leader Mike Makufka, Tedd Gimber, Dave Juth, Will Ponder, John Prescott, Luke Robins, Nick Skorup, and Mike Smith.

The job list for the day: water quality data (temp., pH and dissolved oxygen) for all six sites, plus the remaining barrier assessments on lower Little Passage Creek in Mudhole Gap within the National Forest.

**Left:** Mike Smith checks for a successful data transfer from the HOBO data logger to the software on his phone. This site, LPC 4, had apparently sustained a malfunction at some point in May.

photos this page by John Prescott

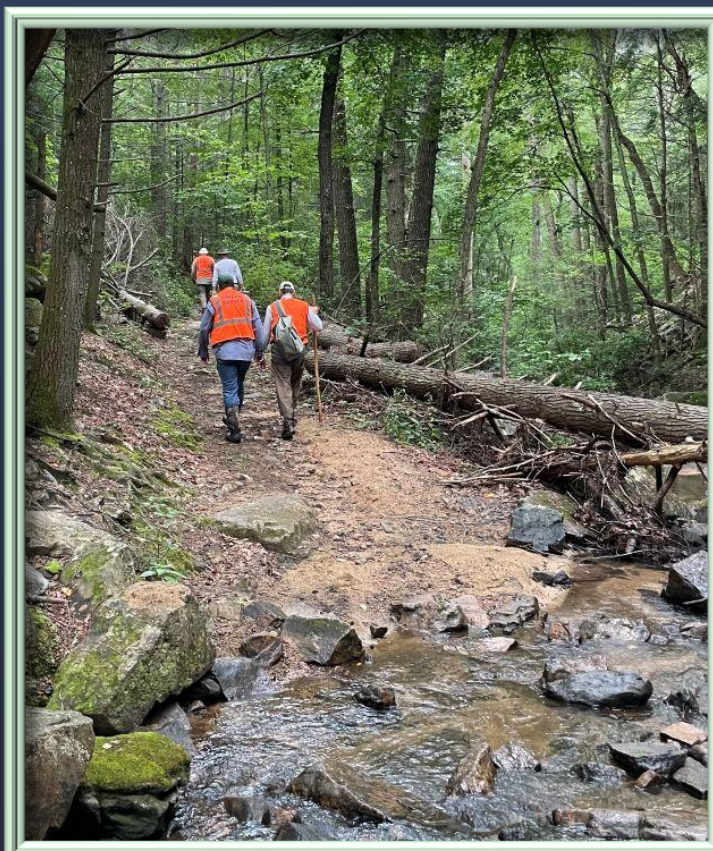
**Below:** Luke Robins, Tedd Gimber, Nick Skorup, and Will Ponder head to the lower reaches of Little Passage Creek to conclude the barrier assessment phase on the creek within the National Forest boundary. A surprise would await them.



The team arrived at the Mudhole Gap parking area shortly after 8:30 AM and split into two four-person field units. Tedd Gimber, Luke Robins, Will Ponder, and Nick Skorup parted with the overall group for barrier assessments downstream from the lowest data site, LPC4 [Little Passage Creek 4]. Their goal was to conduct assessments at the Forest Service's pre-identified sites #12, 11, 10, 9, and 5.

This endeavor would lead them about a mile downstream. When they rejoined the water quality crew at LPC 4 approximately an hour later, they reported that all sites assessed as potential barriers were in fact natural ford areas – unsurprising, given that Mudhole Gap is a trail very popular with both mountain bike enthusiasts and horseback riders.

**“Priority Waters” continues on the next page.**



# Winchester Priority Waters

## Part 1 of 2

### August Afield -- continued

One finding that *did* surprise the barrier crew: a “swimmin’ hole.” Quite a deluxe one, at that. Not only was there sturdy interlocking stonework, the “pool’s” crafters had installed a heavy-duty plastic pond liner.

While the putative swimmers may have enjoyed their aquatic sport free from the fear of stubbed toes, the environmental impact of their endeavors is not insignificant. The liner could severely upset life cycles of benthic fauna, while the interlocked stone dam might preclude any seasonal fish passage (like for spawning brook trout).

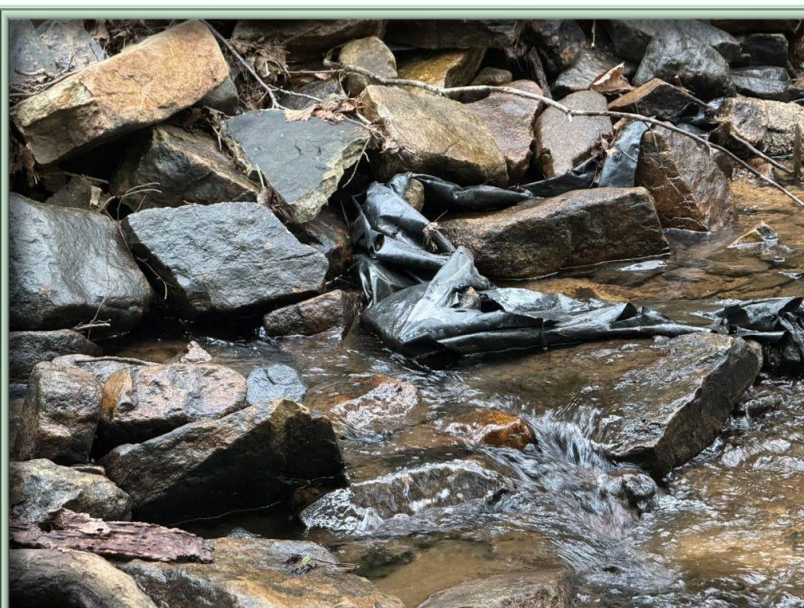


**Left:** Nick Skorup and Will Ponder survey the surprise “swimming’ hole” along lower Little Passage Creek. The construction obviously required considerable effort.  
photos this page by Tedd Gimber



**Left:** A closer look at the illegal dam. This type of barrier can block fish passage — especially brook trout movements to spawning areas.

**Right:** Close up of the heavy duty plastic pond liner in the swimming hole.



“Priority Waters” continues  
on the next page.

# Winchester Priority Waters

## Part 1 of 2

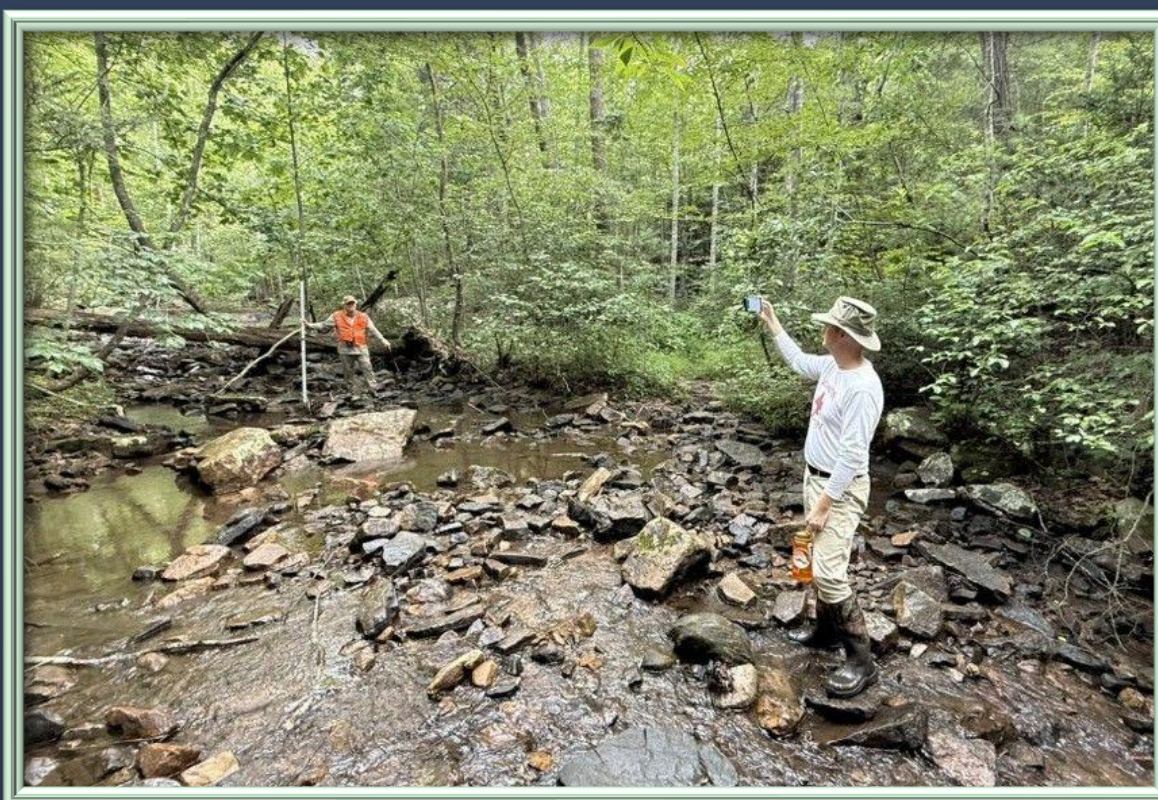
### August Afield

#### -- continued

Meanwhile, the water quality testing team collected their requisite data at sites LPC 4 and 3 and awaited the barrier team at the parking area. From there, the united team motored up to the headwaters reach of Little Passage Creek, above Strasburg Reservoir, to LPC 1, arriving at 11:00 AM.

The data logger did its best to evade the portion of the crew that “knew exactly” where it was. The “keeper of the GPS” coordinates decided to relieve them of their confusion and walked them to the precise pool (thereby affirming the superiority of GPS readings and the ongoing deficiencies of the team’s lingering Luddites).

Conversely, the team had a surprisingly easy task in locating the LPC 2 data logger. Team “memory” worked in this case: “It’s right by the large tree.”



**Top:** Mike Smith, Mike Makufka, and Dave Juth conduct a dissolved oxygen test via the modified Winkler method at LPC 4 in Mudhole Gap. Temperature, pH, and oxygen were all acceptable.

photo by John Prescott

**Middle:** Luke Robins (l) and Will Ponder conduct a barrier assessment on the lower reaches of Little Passage Creek.

photo by Tedd Gimber

**Right:** John Prescott maneuvers to obtain a pH reading at LPC 3. All pH readings obtained this field season have fallen within safe parameters for brook trout.

photo by Mike Smith

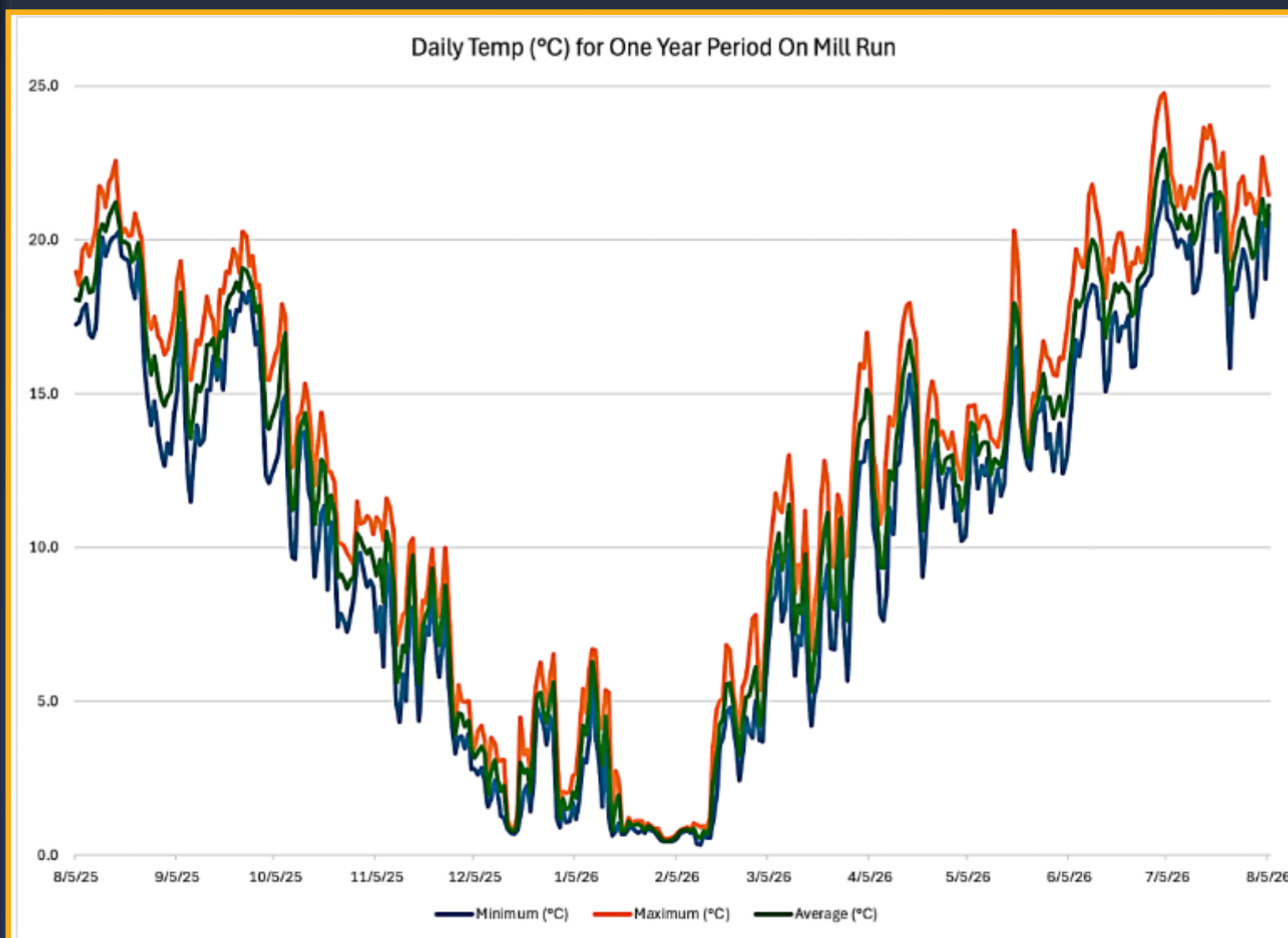


“Priority Waters” continues on the next page.

# Winchester Priority Waters

## Part 1 of 2

### August Afield -- continued



This is how the data logger saw its year on Mill Run. Yes, some scary spikes in the heat waves this summer. The hope is that the evening cooling each day sufficed to hold the natives through the worst episodes. The electroshocking of May and June demonstrated the fish had already faced challenges in earlier drought summers.

The team moved on to Mill Run, arriving at 12:50 PM. The upper site showed troubling water temperatures (almost 70° F) and reduced flow, yet its data logger was sufficiently deep to reduce fears it may have surfaced in the intervening months.

The lower Mill Run site shared similar temperatures and also the same unexpectedly high dissolved oxygen readings (more on this momentarily).

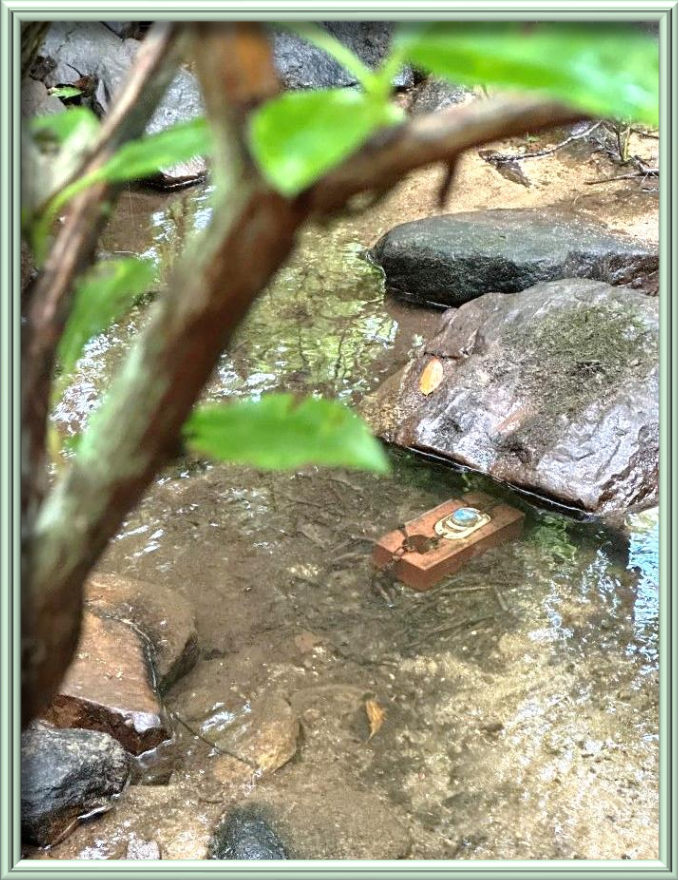
Overall, the six data loggers offered temperature graphs that were not surprising: peaks in late afternoon, dips in the predawn hours. Both streams appeared to have approached the danger threshold a time or two during the most brutal heat waves of the summer. But temperature recovery seemed suitable for both streams. The pH readings likewise were consistent with earlier data sets. The most obvious divergence from early data occurred with the dissolved oxygen readings. While the crew is now both competent and confident in its field use of the modified Winkler method as practiced with the Hach test kit, all were surprised by the DO results that showed oxygen levels seemingly well beyond saturation for the stream water temperatures. A discussion at the Priority Waters meeting the next evening, 6 August, offered a consensus view that possibly a “shortcut” in one critical final stage of the field test may have prevented sufficient time for a key chemical reaction process to fully play out. The group also concluded that while oxygen numbers were unduly high, they nonetheless demonstrated a consistency across sites, suggesting DO had likely never dipped to levels unsustainable for trout life.

**“Priority Waters” continues on the next page.**

# Winchester Priority Waters

## Part 1 of 2

### August Afield – continued



**Lower Right:** Mike Smith reaches for the data logger chain at the upper Mill Run test site. The group had expressed concern that this logger may have been the most likely to become “high and dry” during a drought. Its data suggested otherwise.

photo by John Prescott

**Lower Left:** Luke Robins, foreground, and Will Ponder check rocks near the upper Mill Creek site for aquatic invertebrates. They observed caddis.

photo by Mike Smith



**Top Left:** The “elusive” data logger at site LPC 1 was hiding in plain site. The collective memory of the crew couldn’t compare with the accuracy of the GPS coordinates. Funny how that works.

photo by Mike Smith

**Top Right:** The locked gate on the Forest Service road up to Strasburg Reservoir and the Priority Waters two upper test sites on Little Passage Creek. A daunting array of locks, but the team figured it out!

photo by Mike Smith



“Priority Waters” continues on the next page.

# Winchester Priority Waters

## Part 2 of 2

### August 2026 Meeting

The Priority Waters meeting on 6 August 2026 was attended by Bob Fish, Tedd Gimber, Mike Hart, Dave Juth, John Prescott, Luke Robins, Mike Smith, and presided over by Mike Makufka. The June meeting minutes were accepted and adopted without corrections. Mike M. opened discussion on the preceding day’s field activities and Tedd Gimber was able to share with the group additional highlights of the barrier assessment activities in the lower reaches of Mudhole Gap. He pointed out that, thanks to the efforts the preceding day, all initial stream barrier sites offered by the Forest Service had now been visited and formally assessed. The only remaining barriers were those to be identified on downstream private reaches of the creeks.

The group discussed the possibility of removing the “swimming hole” with Mike Makufka noting that we have Forest Service permission to remove such structures; others added that it would be desirable to have at least one Forest Service official on hand lest the group encounter the dam constructor(s) who might not understand the illegality of their earlier effort. In follow up to the 6 August meeting, the team concurred with Tedd Gimber’s emailed recommendation that a field day, 9 September, be devoted to removal of the structure.

**Mike Makufka called attention to future scheduled field activities:**

**Dates Scheduled for Winchester Priority Waters 2026 Field Work**

| <u>Date</u>                             | <u>Activity</u>                                    |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 7 Oct 2026                              | Water Quality Monitoring and/or Barrier Assessment |
| 2 Dec 2026                              | Water Quality Monitoring and/or Barrier Assessment |
| Plus schedule some woody debris surveys |                                                    |

Mike Smith queried whether it might be possible to have either Dawn Kirk or Seth Coffman assist in the group’s habitat assessment efforts that look toward the possibility of large woody debris placement. The group agreed that habitat assessment would be best for late fall after all foliage is gone from trees.

Mike Makufka focused on two action items from the meeting in June: the “elevator speech” for use with private landowners, which Tedd had drafted. All agreed Tedd had done an excellent job and discussion focused on the best time and approach to meet with landowners. The group decided that further guidance and input was needed to identify influential landowners, Tedd indicated he would reach out again to Pete Dalke of Friends of the North Fork, and Mike Hart suggested he may also have a key contact in the area.

Mike Makufka reminded the group that we should develop a summary presentation of activities to date regarding our two Priority Waters streams, that we have been given at least fifteen minutes for a presentation at the next Virginia Council TU meeting to be held 19 September at Graves Mountain Lodge. Mike Smith will take the lead on drafting the report, with guidance and input from Mike Makufka, Tedd Gimber, and Luke Robins.

Mike Makufka asked the group about what we may need from or should ask of Dawn Kirk and Seth Coffman. Tedd replied that he had started compiling a request list, one that included procedures for removal of the old USGS gauging station along Mil Run near its crossing with the Massanutten Trail. Mike M. indicated he would follow up with Dawn about that, as well as about a large woody debris survey. Tedd said he would contact Pete Dalke not only about Little Passage Creek landowners but also to invite him both to our next meeting in October as well as our 7 October field day. Mike Hart said he would reach out to his friends in Fort Valley to find a point of contact among Little Passage Creek property owners. Tedd committed to posting a message on the trout Unlimited Leaders Forum to see if any other chapters have documented their work on Priority Waters (He did – and all who replied indicated interest in what **we** are doing!).

Mike M. had indicated he would seek out Seth Coffman to see if he could join us in our late fall habitat assessment efforts and possibly provide further guidance on the removal of the USGS structure. Alas, we have since learned Seth has left TU to join another conservation organization – we all agree he will be greatly missed. His contributions to our chapter, and to TU across the Commonwealth, have been nothing short of extraordinary.

The Priority Waters meeting concluded shortly before 7:00 PM.



# WINCHESTER HEALING WATERS

by Wayne White



## PHW PART 1 OF 2 HEALING WATERS PARTNERS WITH BOULDER CREST HELPING FAMILIES FIND RELAXATION ON THE WATER



Family members and Winchester Volunteers captured the first Healing Waters fly-fishing outing at the Boulder Crest pond, on Saturday, 1 August.

Photo by Zeriah Grieg

Extending the therapeutic value of fly fishing, Winchester Healing Waters is offering fly fishing classes for military and first responder families at the Boulder Crest Foundation facility during family Rest and Relaxation stays.

Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains on 37 acres, the Boulder Crest Foundation in Bluemont, VA, is home to Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) and is the global leader in developing, delivering, studying, and scaling PTG-based programs.

Searching for a solution for veterans and first responders struggling with PTSD, Ken Falke, a retired US Navy Special Operations Explosive Ordnance Disposal veteran, founded Boulder Crest over a decade ago. The result is a new approach to train combat veterans, first responders, and their families to turn their struggles into strength, called PATHH — Progressive and Alternative Training for Helping Heroes.

<https://bouldercrest.org/about-boulder-crest/locations/boulder-crest-virginia/>

“Winchester Healing Waters Part 1 of 2” continues on the next page.

# WINCHESTER HEALING WATERS

## PHW PART 1 OF 2 BOULDER CREST – CONTINUED

When the foundation is not holding its core Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) programs for military veterans and first responders, it offers families of those heroes a variety of therapeutic and recreational activities, along with local attractions to explore together. The Boulder Crest and Healing Waters missions mutually support each other and provide an excellent opportunity to support and sustain the healing journey for those who served.

During two recent R&R weekends in August, a small team of Winchester volunteers taught family members basic fly-fishing skills and took new fly anglers fishing on the property's pond. After an introduction to the fly rod, some practice casting, fly selection, and a quick course in knot tying, the novice anglers were ready to put their new skills to the test in search of some eager feeding bluegills and largemouth bass.

Although there was much to learn, the new fly anglers adapted quickly to the techniques and were excited to land their first fish on a fly rod.



**Above:** After introducing the anatomy of the fly rod, Jackson Dierberg (r) explains the difference between the fly line and leader to Rachel Bailey and Dakota Smith as he helps them string the fly rod before their casting practice.

photo by Wayne White

**Left:** Gary Bailey (r) learns from Phil Stevens how to properly display your first catch of the day for the camera. Gary netted many more of these beautiful bluegill.

photo by Wayne White



“Winchester Healing Waters Part 1 of 2” continues on the next page.

# WINCHESTER HEALING WATERS PHW PART 1 OF 2 BOULDER CREST – CONTINUED

The Winchester Project Healing Program will continue to support these events this fall as needed. The number of sessions will depend on the family and their interest. We encourage Winchester participants and volunteers to support these events when possible. If interested, please contact the Winchester Program Leadership.

For reservations at a Boulder Crest Family R&R weekend, Military Veterans and First Responders who would like to reserve a cabin at Boulder Crest for an R&R weekend at no cost may register at

<https://bouldercrest.org/program/family-rest-reconnection/> .

**Above Right:** Claire Bailey, Chesterfield, VA, proudly displays her very first fish caught on a fly rod. She made the cast, presented the fly, hooked, and landed the bluegill in masterful fashion.

photo by Gary Myers



**Above:** Fran McVeigh gives 10-yr-old Katie Tobolski, Chesapeake, VA, some finer tips on preparing for the next cast while her dad Tom (c) talks about fly selection with Steve Kelly (r).

photo by Wayne White

**Left:** After learning some basic casting techniques, Cole Bradshaw keeps a watchful eye as Katie Bailey practices a basic pick up and lay down of line.

photo by Wayne White



# WINCHESTER CHAPTER SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2026

by Wayne White

## PHW PART 2 OF 2



# PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2026

current as of 14 July 2026

### September

4 – 6 -- Winchester Fishing Outing at Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation, Halifax, VA. Winchester has an allocation for 8 participants.

9 -- Monthly Meeting Wednesday, Rachel's Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

12 -- Winchester Fishing Outing at Leetown Hatchery, Kearneysville, WVA.

14 -- Vets Center, Falling Waters, WVA, Monthly Meeting 6:00 – 7:30 PM

19 -- Capon Valley Bank 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Veterans Salute Celebration and Car Show at the Back Seat Event Center, 104 Full House Drive, Winchester, VA 22603.

26 -- Fly-Tying at Jake's Bait and Tackle, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

### October

5 -- Vets Center, Falling Waters, WVA, Monthly Meeting 6:00 – 7:30 PM

14 -- Monthly Meeting Wednesday, Rachel's Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

17 -- Fly-Tying at Jake's Bait and Tackle, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

21 -- Double Spur Outfitters. Winchester Fishing Outing at Cedar Creek, Star Tanery. Limited to six participants and six guides

27 -- Rose River, Winchester Day Fishing Outing, Rose River Farm, Syria, VA – Six participants and six volunteer guides.

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703-650-8696

# Barbara's Books: From the Archives

Series created by Barbara Gamble

## Fly Fishing Evolution: Advances Strategies for Dry Fly, Nymph, and Streamer Fishing

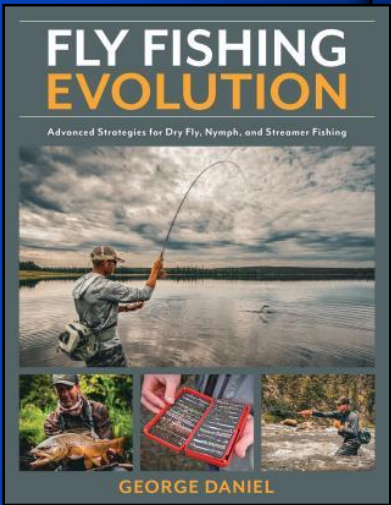
Author: George Daniel  
Hardcover: 240 pages  
ISBN-10: 0811738760  
ISBN-13: 978-0811738767  
Publisher: Stackpole Books  
Publication Date: 1 November 2023

Complete breakdown of the mono system (arguably the best way to control your drift when Euro nymphing)

- Jigging streamers for tougher trout
- Author's top patterns for dry fly, nymph, and streamer fishing

The sport of fly fishing is constantly changing -- fish are getting tougher to catch on many streams, tools and tackle are improving, and new materials are being introduced into the fly-tying world that can help you create more-effective patterns. As these different aspects of our sport change, fly fishers need to evolve as well -- if they want to catch more fish.and

In this book, George Daniel discusses cutting-edge strategies for nymphing, dry-fly, and streamer fishing gleaned from his own on-the-water experience and insights from other top anglers around the country.



He covers everything from basic equipment and favorite fly patterns to proven rigs, casting approach, and common troubleshooting scenarios, and he includes his best tips to help your fly-fishing game evolve to the next level.

George Daniel is the author of the bestselling books *Dynamic Nymphing* (978-0-8117-0741-1), *Strip Set* (978-0-8117-1297-2), and *Nymph Fishing* (978-0-8117-1826-4), and a contributing editor for *Fly Fisherman* magazine.

He is director of the Joe Humphreys Fly Fishing Program at the Pennsylvania State University. He is also the owner and operator of Livin on the Fly, a fly-fishing educational/guide company based near his home in Beech Creek, Pennsylvania. George conducts fly-fishing seminars and clinics across the country.

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

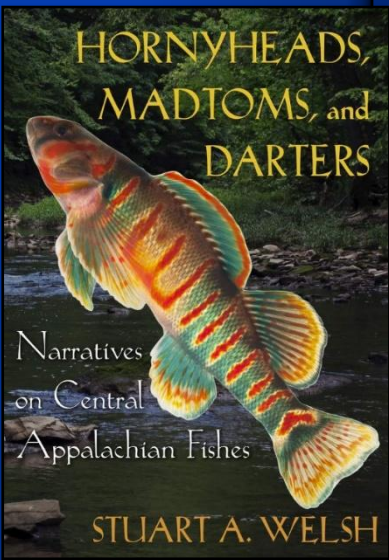
A collection of essays on nature, naturalists, and the natural history of fishes in central Appalachia.

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-author of *Amphibians and Reptiles in West Virginia*



Sources: amazon.com and the publishers

# My Trout Fly Box

## GFA Hopper (General Foam Attractor)

article and photos  
by Burr Tupper



Mary and I will be fishing on the eastern slopes of the Rockies in Alberta, Canada in September. Much of the fishing there is done with dry flies and one of the recommended flies for that time of the year is the GFA Hopper.

The GFA Hopper (General Foam Attractor), was created by Walter Wiese in Montana, but would fish well in Virginia for both trout and small mouth bass. It is simple foam-based grasshopper/cricket dry fly tied on a 2X-long hopper hook (sizes 6-14) with a peacock herl underbody, 2mm craft foam, elk-hair wing, and rubber legs.

GFA Hopper pattern is designed to float well, be visible in broken water, and to offer a realistic profile for trout looking to eat grasshoppers or big stoneflies. It can be tied in many different colors. I personally like brown, green, and yellow as my foam base. This is also a great fly for a hopper/dropper set up.



### Materials List (Standard Recipe)

- Hook: 2X-long hopper hook (Dai-Riki 1280 or 280), sizes 6– 14 or equivalent
- Thread: Tan UTC 140 denier or 6/0
- Underbody: Peacock herl
- Body: 2mm craft foam (tan or natural for hoppers; dark foam for cricket)
- Wing: Bleached elk hair cleaned and stacked
- Hot Spot/Sighter: Bright craft foam or fluorescent Antron yarn,
- Legs: Medium striped round-rubber legs
- Adhesives: Super glue or Hard-As-Nails.

### Tying Notes

- Foam segmentation and proper proportions are key for realism and floatation.
- Elk hair adds buoyancy and stability.



“My Trout Fly Box” continues on the next page.

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

5, 6

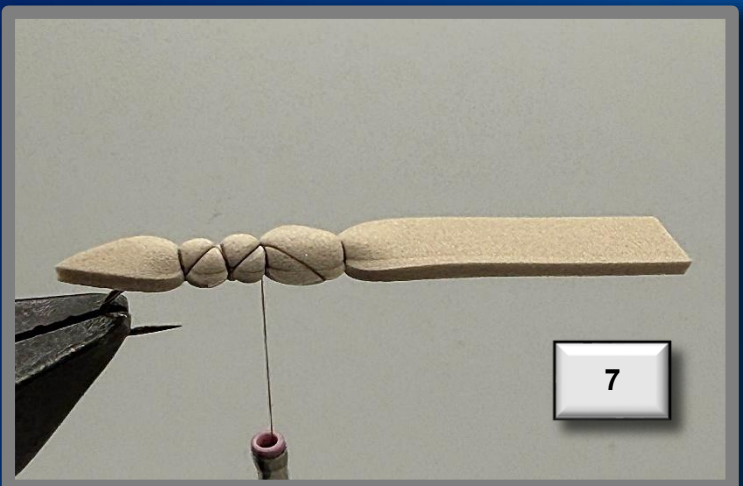


### **Tying The Hopper**

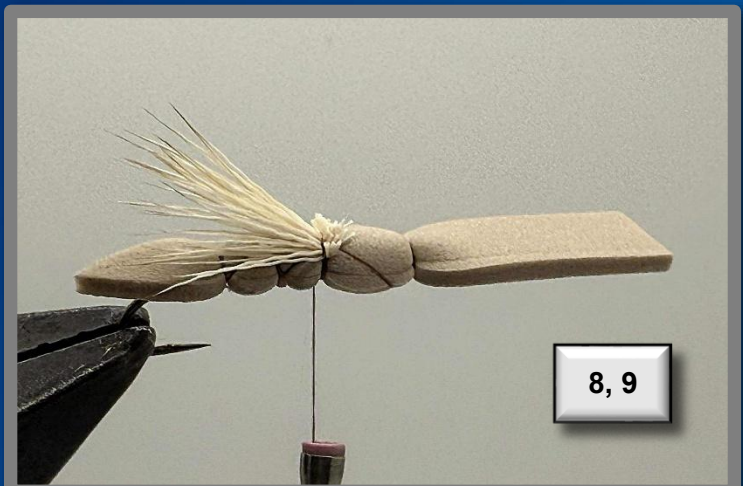
1. Place the hook in the vise, pinch the barb of the hook, and tie the thread on a slight way behind the eye of the hook.
2. Take a few wraps back toward the hook and snip off the tag.
3. Tie on 3-4 strands of peacock herl and bind the herl down on the hook as you wrap the thread back to just behind the hook point.
4. Wrap the herl forward to just behind the eye of the hook and cut off the excess herl. Tying hint: Keep the herl behind the thread as you wrap forward as this helps keep the herl together.
5. Cut a length of the foam 3-4 inches, just slightly wider than the width of the hook. Taper the back end of the foam with curved scissors or a lager fingernail clipper.
6. Extend the tapered end of the foam a hook gap beyond the hook and secure the foam with 3-4 wraps of the thread.
7. Apply super glue to the top of the herl and wrap the thread back creating three segments and then wrap the tread forward to just behind the first segment.
8. For the wing, take a small clump of the elk hair, clean out the under fur, and place the hair in a stacker.
9. Place the stacked hair on the third segment to create the wing just short of back end of the foam and secure the fur with several tight wraps.

**“My Trout Fly Box”  
continues on the next page.**

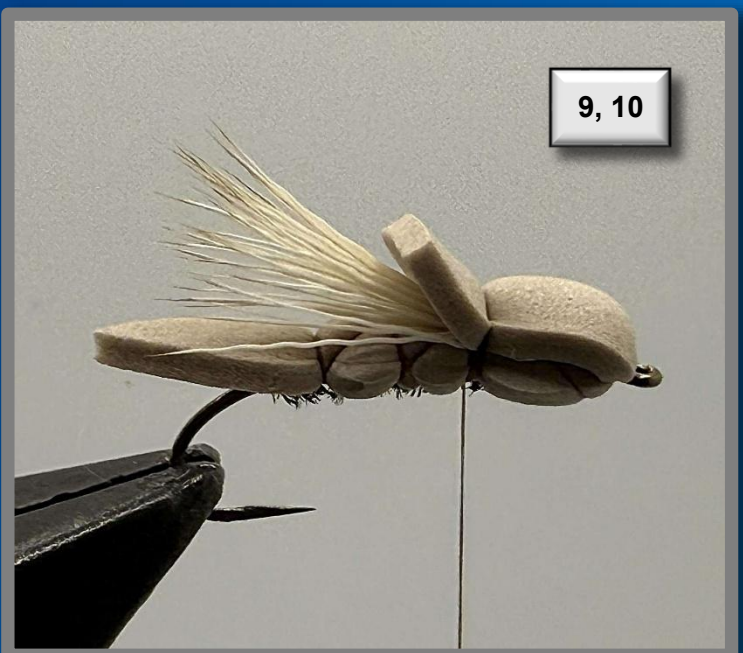
7



8, 9



9, 10



## My Trout Fly Box -- continued

### Tying The Hopper (continued)

10. Put a little super glue on the segment and pull the front part of the foam rearward, secure with a few wraps, and snip off the foam leaving a small tab.

11. To make the fly more visible to the angler, tie in a small piece of brightly colored foam.

12. Take a single length of rubber legs and cut it in half for two sets of legs for each side of the fly.

13. Tie them on the fly and move the thread behind the eye of the hook and whip finish.

14. To complete the fly turn it over in the vise and apply a small dab of glue to the wrap, securing the legs and the whip.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Why fish hoppers?

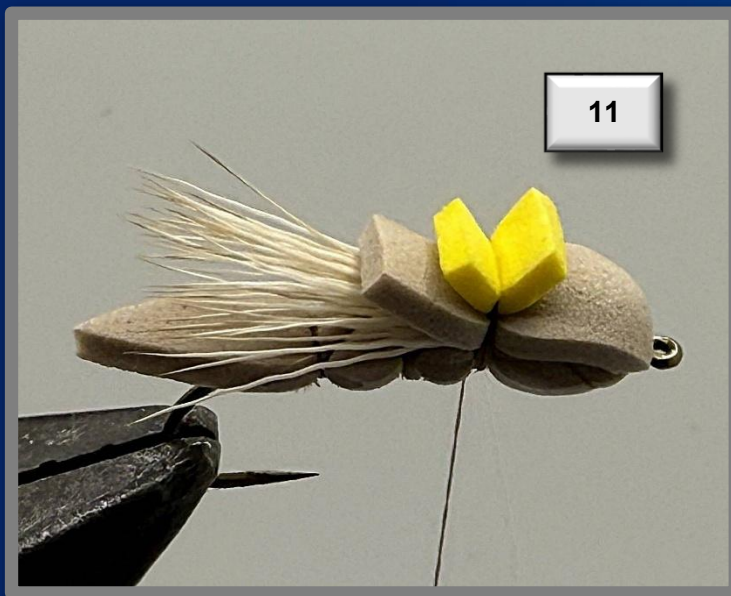
**High Visibility** – a #6 hopper is much easier to see for you and a fish than a size #18 Parachute Adams. It is like watching a strawberry vs a cheerio float down the river

**Floatability** – Fishermen like hoppers because they seem to float forever without getting waterlogged. This is even more true with hopper patterns tied with foam.

**Great for hopper/dropper rig** – using a small nymph or trailing dry fly can be a great set up with many days the fish hitting the dropper or trailer.

**Trout and other freshwater fish love to feast on hoppers** and will go into a frenzy when hoppers are available. This is usually August through mid-September depending on where you are fishing.

**Final Note:** If the hopper is floating through fast water or a riffle let it float. In slow water skate or twitch your hopper a bit. This represents a hopper that has fallen in the river and is trying to escape.



# ANGLER REFLECTIONS



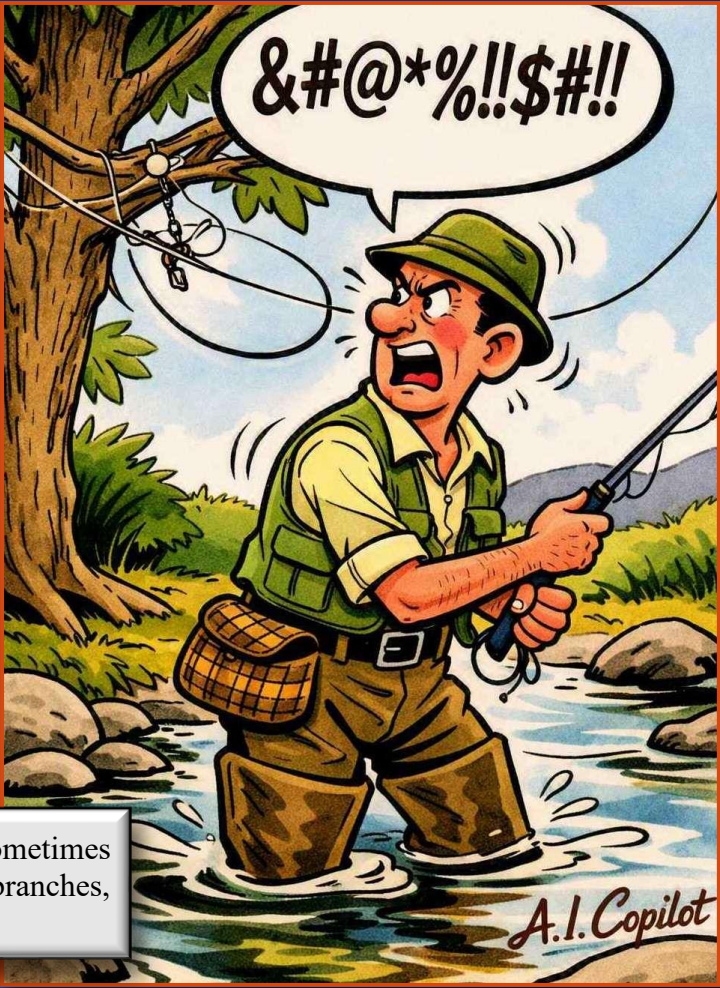
## Conversations with a Fly reflections

by Nick Brognano  
photos by Nick Brognano  
unless otherwise noted

As a former member of the Bar, I have had way too many conversations with way too many people and objects. In courtroom settings I have spoken to Jesus, judges, and jailbirds. In less hallowed but close by and connected venues I have, on irritable occasions, conversed with walls, chairs, and even urinals, all when in a legally frenzied state.

In fly-fishing I have sometimes harshly criticized trees, branches, and rocks. There are probably a few other things I have communicated with, but I can't recall all of them. Nevertheless, I know, without a doubt, I have never conversed with any of my hand-tied, fly-fishing flies, nor has any other artificial insect ever talked to me, until a few days ago.

"In fly-fishing I have sometimes harshly criticized trees, branches, and rocks."



Before I explain what occurred recently you may ask why bother tying a fly for fishing purposes when you can buy one dirt cheap and significantly better looking? The question is an excellent one which I frequently ask myself. Incidentally, I also make wine and ask myself the same question when making it.

My best answer is both wine making and fly tying put me in a place I want to be and quietly speak to me. Wine making takes me back to old, treasured family moments while the other significantly adds anticipated excitement when I am flyfishing and trying to trick a Trout with a fly I alone made. In both, I am also mixed with feelings of pride and humility and accept the fact that nothing is perfect. Now, allow me to explain what transpired recently:



"Wine making takes me back to old, treasured family moments...."

A while back, I sat down to tie a fly and test out the vise I recently purchased. The last fly I tied was a size 14 spinner and it was a rare beauty. I was ecstatic. I tied five of them and gave them to my grandson for Christmas.

That night its image lodged in my head, danced in my dreams, and even spoke to me. "Look at me, see my well tapered body, inviting tail, and voluptuous wings. Why, with the correct presentation I can hook any hungry Trout."

**"Angler Reflections"**  
continues on the next page.

# ANGLER REFLECTIONS -- CONTINUED

"I could not argue with the Sparkle fly as my eyes willingly obeyed and followed the enticing insect. If I hadn't seen the hook, I would have done something stupid. My God, I haven't had a dream like this in years! Oh, how I wanted to be a Trout.

When I woke up the next morning all I could think of was that phenomenal, gorgeous fly. Such an early morning focused mental state only happened to me once before.

I was about 15 when I fell in love with Camille. We spoke on the phone for hours one night. I was so lovesick with Camille that the following morning I brushed my teeth with Brylcreem, (a popular men's hair cream in the last century that was sold in a tube) instead of Colgate toothpaste. Both tubes had the same red and white coloring and were lying side by side on the sink. I was not going to let that happen twice. Not at my age and not over a bug anyway.



"When I woke up the next morning all I could think of was that phenomenal, gorgeous fly."

*A.I. Copilot*

Nevertheless, a talking fly is an unexpected treat in the art of fly tying. I asked a few old fly-tying friends if they had ever experienced such a dream. None of them did, but they were all overly interested and wanted to know more. They asked what pattern I used to tie the talking fly. With a raucous laugh they invited me to speak before a large group of fly tyers. I got suspicious and decided to keep my mouth shut for once. I have witnessed people taken away for saying a lot less.

At some point during the day Fred called and asked if I wanted to fish for Trout with him and Mark on Wednesday. We made plans to meet and try our luck on nearby Passage Creek. I decided to tie some flies for the trip. Spinners are probably not the best fly to use this time of year, but after what I experienced a few days ago it was a no brainer. So out came the vise and everything else required to reproduce the talking fly. I am an average fly tyer who rarely feels pleased with the results, but I enjoy the art and challenge which is why I have more stuff than I will ever use. In other words, I have been hooked. So, instead of watching a football game I will tie a few flies.



"I was so lovesick with Camille that the following morning I brushed my teeth with Brylcreem ..."

*A.I. Copilot*

"Angler Reflections" continues on the next page.

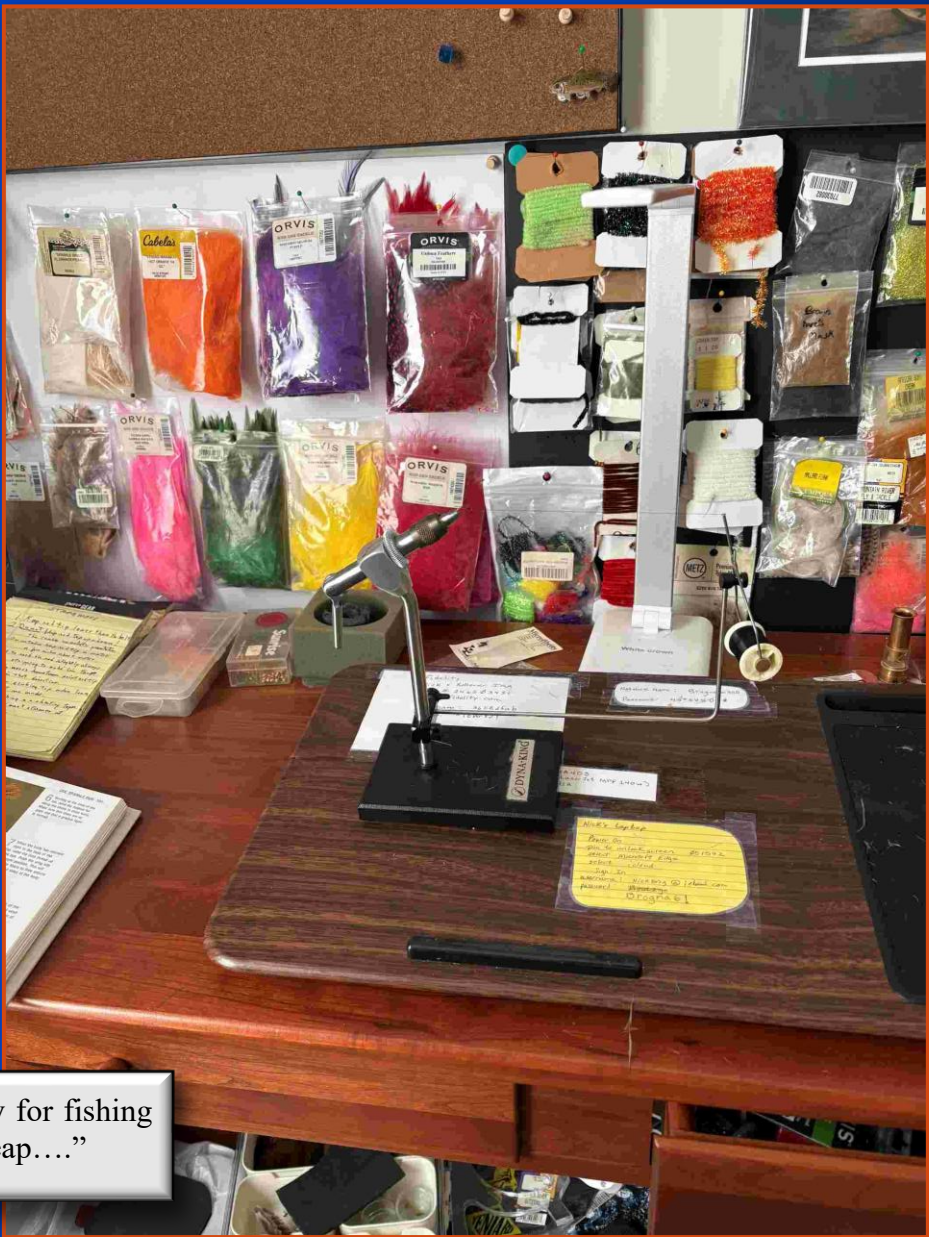
# ANGLER REFLECTIONS -- CONTINUED

I usually start with a glass of my homemade wine, some cheese, a few olives, and slices of salami. It is a pleasing and tasty ancient family dish that my wife disapproves of. In no time, it can place a person in an enjoyable dimension where your head can feel adrift. I know too much cheese, olives, and salami can be “no good for you” (as my mother used to say) so I keep the bottle close by.

Someone once said, “Silence is one great art of conversation.” That is exactly what I thought when I inserted the size 14 hook in the jaws of the new vise. There the hook sat, captive, all naked and lonely, displaying all four body parts: shank, eye, gap, and barb. “Please quickly dress me,” it silently pleaded. I hurriedly began wrapping the nude shank with black thread. With that done an obvious sweet and soft “Thank you,” was conveyed. Incidentally, bugs do communicate. Some can be very noisy while others sort of whisper to each other. The insect I was tying leaned more toward the quiet type. Nevertheless, with my dual hearing aids I could hear it speak to me in more ways than one.

A fly needs a tail, so I tied a few delicate fibers for a fine-looking, eye-catching, train. Maybe it was the wine working but I thought I saw the hook’s “up eye” briefly turn and glance back and liked what it saw. I sat in silence as I began to sort out the selected materials. I could sense the presence and glee of old man Geppetto looking over my shoulder as I began to put the materials together.

Putting the tail on was easy but the body was more challenging, and I noticed my old hands shaking a little when I put my glass of vino down. I hope I can duplicate that unique tapered body I said to myself as my mind accidentally but conveniently drifted back to sweet Camille, my first teenage love. I quickly stabilized my mental state with a sizeable, aggressive bite of provolone before I set about my next intriguing task. I waxed the thread and twisted the dubbing around it. That was easy.



“...you may ask why bother tying a fly for fishing purposes when you can buy one dirt cheap....”

I slowly began to wrap the dubbing. The wraps were perfect and pleasing. The tapered body was exactly as it should be. It looked as if a happy, delightful, petite, young lady had slipped into a well-fitted beautiful dress. No words were needed. The hook’s “up eye” again said it all. Now for the collar of feathered hackle to supplement the gorgeous form. When I finished, I noticed the tail move up and down giving its approval. The proportions looked perfect. Now, for the final touch, the all-important wings, the crown of glory.

While it is true, all the fabric and feather body parts make a fly, it is the stand-up wings that are the most splendid and say so much more. The self-motorized, translucent, delicate wings make a spinner soar and proudly shout out, “look at me, look at me, I can fly, who else can do what I just did?”

An entomologist can explain the transformation of an insect in most technical terms, but such expertise is not required or necessary to appreciate the final phenomenal transformation, be it a caterpillar to butterfly or larvae to a spinner. It is all a part, albeit, small in comparison to nature’s numerous daily wonders. Miracles that speak to us in our individual and special ways.

All one must do is look beyond and listen intently.



# Winchester TU Monthly “BarFly” Events

Wednesday, 16 September 2026, 7:00 PM  
Wednesday, 21 October 2026, 7:00 PM  
Wednesday, 18 November 2026, 7:00 PM  
Wednesday, 16 December 2026, 7:00 PM

Escutcheon Brewery  
Commercial St., Winchester, VA



See you at the next  
Winchester TU BarFly.

The Winchester Chapter of Trout Unlimited (WTU) will gather 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.

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

All participants under age 21 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.



Crittermite  
by Luke Robins  
photo by Luke Robins



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks, Bill:  
I always enjoy the Winchester TU newsletter. Things are pretty dry out here. We did have a group of Vets attend a National Park Trust event with Colorado PHW programs this past weekend. They were to fish the Back Canyon of the Gunnison but I have yet to hear how it went.  
We have done Reservoir and Lake fishing over the past 2 weeks since the creeks/ivers are so low.  
all the best, Paul Wilson

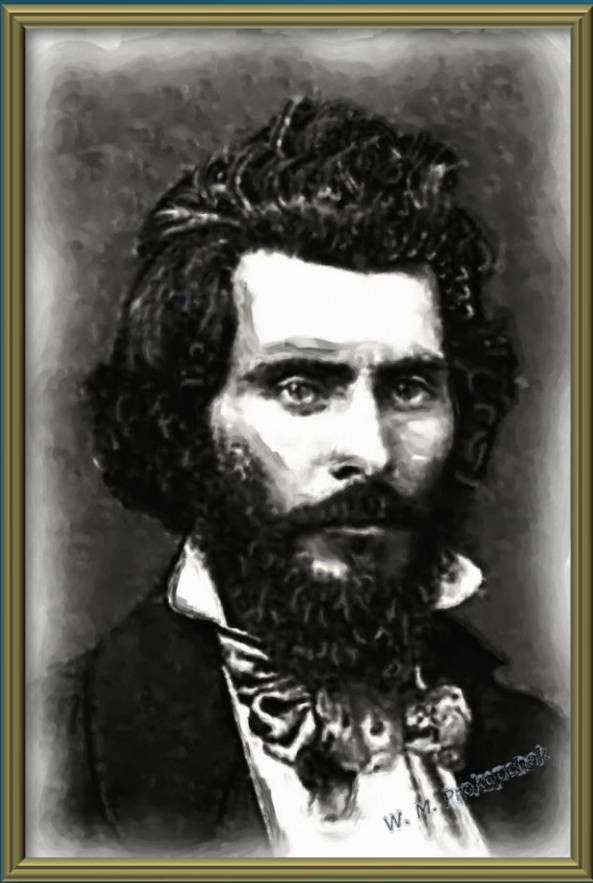


Poet's Corner:

Poems selected for the angler

Come to the  
River's Side

by *John Rollin Ridge*  
*Cherokee Name: Cheesquatalawny*  
*(Yellow Bird)*  
1827-1867  
*Native American*



John Rollin Ridge  
Ink wash by W.M. Prokopchak © 2026  
This ink wash portrait is based on an  
anonymous daguerreotype taken circa 1850.



Come to the river's side, my love,  
My light canoe is by the shore,—  
We'll float upon the tide my love,  
And *thou* shalt hold the dripping oar.

Methinks thy hand could guide so well  
The tiny vessel on its course;  
The waves would smooth their crests to thee  
As I have done my spirit's force.

How calmly will we glide my love,  
Through moonlight floating on the deep,  
Or, loving yet the safer shore,  
Beneath the fringing willows weep.

Again, like some wild duck, we'll skim,  
And scarcely touch the water's face,  
While silver streaks our way shall mark,  
And circling lines of beauty trace!

And then the stars shall shine above  
In harmony with those below,  
And gazing up, and looking down,  
Give glance for glance, and glow for glow!

And then their light shall be our own,  
Commingled with our souls! -- and sweet  
As those bright stars of Heaven shall be  
Our hearts, which then shall melting meet.

At last we'll reach yon silent isle,  
So calm and green amidst the waves;  
So peaceful too, it does not spurn  
The friendly tide its shore that laves.

We'll draw our vessel on the sand,  
And seek the shadow of those trees,  
Where all alone, and undisturbed,  
We'll talk and talk as we may please!

And then thy voice shall be so soft,  
'Twill match the whisper of the leaves,  
And then thy breath shall yield its sigh  
So like the wavelet as it heaves!

The world might perish all, for me,  
So that it left that little isle!  
The human race might pass away  
If thou wert left me with thy smile!

Then, to the river's side, my love,  
My boat is waiting on its oar—  
We'll float upon the tide, my love,  
And happily reach the other shore.

# Calendar of Events

## Winchester Trout Unlimited

See also  
<http://winchester.tu.org/>

**For the complete Winchester Project Healing Waters calendar, please see page 11 of this newsletter.**

**For a calendar of Winchester Priority Waters field days, please see page 7 of this newsletter.**

### September 2026

#### Thursday, 3 September 2026

6:00 – 7:00 PM Priority Waters monthly meeting  
Rachel’s Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick

#### Thursday, 3 September 2026

7:00 – 9:00 PM Winchester Trout monthly meeting  
Rachel’s Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick

#### Wednesday, 9 September 2026

6:00 – 9:00 PM Project Healing Waters Monthly Meeting  
Rachel’s Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick

#### Monday, 14 September 2026

6:00 -- 7:30 PM Vets Center, Falling Waters, WVA, Monthly Meeting

#### Wednesday, 16 September 2026 – Winchester Trout Unlimited BarFly

7:00 – 9:00 PM – Escutcheon Brewery, Commercial Street, Winchester

### October 2026

#### Thursday, 1 October 2026

6:00 – 7:00 PM – Priority Waters monthly meeting. Location TBA

#### Thursday, 1 October 2026

7:00 PM – Winchester TU annual meeting with Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon at Laurel Ridge Community College. Featured speaker is Brad Fink, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources Cold Water Fisheries Biologist

#### Wednesday, 14 October 2026

6:00 – 9:00 PM Project Healing Waters Monthly Meeting Wednesday,  
Rachel’s Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick

### November 2026

#### Thursday, 5 November 2026

6:00 – 7:00 PM – Priority Waters monthly meeting. Location TBA

#### Thursday, 5 November 2026

7:00 PM – Winchester TU meeting

#### Wednesday, 18 November 2026

6:00 – 9:00 PM Project Healing Waters Monthly Meeting Wednesday,  
Rachel’s Kitchen, Lodge, Lake Frederick



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 all 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.

