

Clear Water Journal

The Official Newsletter of the Clear Fork Chapter of Trout Unlimited

March 2004

The Clear Water Journal is the newsletter of the Clear Fork Chapter of Trout Unlimited #OH667.

Trout Unlimited is a national conservation organization with more than 115,000 members dedicated to "protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds."

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Brown Trout for Apple Creek?

April meeting will give it a hearing

You stand in a stretch of any Ohio stream that is running clear and cold over gravel beds and wonder "why not trout?"

For many member of the Clear Fork Chapter, it's a question that has been asked many times about Apple Creek.

After years of asking and prodding, the dream of brown trout in Apple Creek could become a reality.

The April 12 chapter meeting will focus on the issue and attempt to supply some answers.

Vice President Skip Nault says there are several issues, including:

1. Will the Wooster City Parks and Recreation Department issue a request on behalf of the TU Chapter and others to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to stock Apple Creek at Grosjean Park with disease free certified brown trout?

2. How can the Soil, Water and Conservation Department as well as other state and/or local agencies get involved in the project?

3. How TU, perhaps Izaak Walton that stocked Apple Creek with rainbow trout in the past, and other organizations can raise funds to finance the stocking program?

4. If successful in getting permission and raising funds, what regulations (i.e. fly fishing, catch and release only) and programs to introduce fly fishing to the public, etc, can we promote to take advantage of the stocking program at Grosjean Park?

On hand to discuss the possibility of a stocking program will be Daryl Decker, superintendent of the Parks System for the city of Wooster, Rich Pratt, president of the Wayne County Izaak Walton League, and Rachel Web from the Water, Soil and Conservation District.

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Kids on the water

Special Thanks From A Young Flyfisher

It's always nice to know that your efforts are appreciated. Here's a note from a participant in last year's youth fishing clinic.

Dear Doc Stevens:

Thank you for enrolling me in the Trout Unlimited fly fishing school.

I enjoyed learning about fly fishing, techniques of fly fishing, and how to tie knots. I took my rod into class and gave a demonstration on how to fly fish. I also showed my flies and how to tie them onto the tippet.

I hope to learn how to tie my own flies and learn more on the subject.

*Thanks again
Nick Downer*

Chapter News & Notes

Meetings ...

March 8

Presentation by Skip Nault on "Entomology: Beyond aquatic insects." Details about the steelhead trip.

April 12

Discussion on stocking brown trout in Apple Creek in Wayne County.

Present for discussion will be Daryl Decker, superintendent of the Parks System for the city of Wooster, Rich Pratt, President of the Wayne County Izaak Walton League and Rachel Web from the Water, Soil and Conservation District.

Outings ...

STEELHEAD

March 13 on the Rocky River. Members will meet at Cedar Point road near the I-X Center at 9 p.m.

Details will be discussed at the March meeting.

OIL CREEK

April 30 and May 1 & 2. As a weather alternative: May 13, 14 & 15.

Details at the April meeting. (See story on Page 3)

FLY FISHING CLINIC

The chapter is being asked for volunteers for the ODNR's flying fishing clinic, because, as Linda Keesecker says, "you all do such a wonderful job!!"

Dates are April 30, May 7, May 14, May 21 and June 4.

There will be two classes per day: 8 a.m. to Noon, and 1 to 5 p.m.

Linda will provide lunch for the volunteers – all the more reason to sign up.

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Oil Creek's Calling

By Steve Gossage

The Chapter is again making plans for the spring outing to Oil Creek Pennsylvania. This year the trip will be held the weekend of April 30-May 2, 2004. We have also set a "rain-out" date of June 14-16, 2004 in case of bad weather.

The format is the same as in the past. Come as you can, and everyone is welcome. Some members may arrive on Thursday or Friday, others cannot make it until Saturday. We will again use the Oil Creek Camp Resort Campgrounds as our meeting location. This will be the seventh time we have stayed here and we could not be more pleased with the location and facilities.

The campground is located off Route 8, north of Oil City and south of Titusville. Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-395-2045. Most of our members stay in the area of campsite 12A so you may want to ask for a campsite in this section of the campground.

On Friday and Saturday evenings, we will again be holding cookouts at one of the campsites. We keep these simple, just bring something to throw on the grill, and what ever else you want for supper. This has always been a great opportunity to exchange notes on the day's fishing and make plans for the next day.

These trips have always been very popular and we have had some great attendance. Oil Creek usually offers some great fishing with lots of public access. In addition, a beautiful paved bicycle trail offers approximately nine miles of bike riding, and the Drake Well Museum in Titusville offers entertainment for those who want to take a break from fishing. The entire family is more than welcome on these trips.



For those who may not be familiar with Oil Creek, it is a beautiful trout stream located approximately 30 minutes east of the Ohio state line and about 30 minutes north of I-80 off PA Route 8. The location we usually fish is at the Oil Creek State Park, just north of Oil City.

The stream is a fair size body of water with much of the stream being 100 feet wide. There are sections of the stream that are deep, and some where you can wade with no problem.

The Oil Creek State Park offers us over nine miles of access to the stream, all of which is stocked by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission.

The area abounds with wildlife and it is not unusual to see deer crossing the stream. And yes, on occasion, a bear.

Keep in mind that a Pennsylvania fishing license and trout stamp are required. We understand you can buy these in advance at Gander Mountain stores, or on the way at Maurer's Sporting Goods on PA Route 8, at the end of the four lane highway, north of I-80.

We will be discussing this trip in upcoming meetings and making the final arrangements.

Hope to see you there.

Promising Results from a Headwater Evaluation at Cohen Park

By Don Bearden

The stream drains approximately one square mile starting from an artesian well above West Highland Avenue and running parallel to Christmas Run Road through Cohen Park, emptying into Miller Lakes. The stream is called Christmas Run when it runs out of the Miller Lakes, but Christmas Run may get degraded before emptying into the Killbuck. The Killbuck runs into Applecreek.

This Primary Headwater Habitat (PHWH) evaluation was taken for 200 feet of stream reach between Miller St. and West Highland at Cohen Park, starting just before the park bridge near the park pavilion. The stream runs from North to South.

TU members Steven Sprout, Mike Dull, and I worked with volunteer conservationist Alan Griffiths, and Judy Smith and Ben Steiner from

OARDC.

We followed the Ohio EPA Habitat Evaluation Form to develop a score for the stream. The score predicts whether a stream meets the criteria for a Class III-PHWH Stream (cool to cold water adapted native fauna), or Class II-PHWH Stream (warm water adapted native fauna) or Class I-PHWH Stream (normal dry channel).

If we are going to develop and conserve cool to cold water streams for trout, the Class III, PHWH are critical to the trout's watershed.

Our group was eager to do a complete evaluation, even though we were hampered by leaves that had fallen and some rain and were eager to do a complete evaluation to include identifying macroinvertebrates and salamanders.

We were able to come to a consensus to estimate the percent of every type of stream substrate out of the nine substrates present. The most predominate were the boulders and cobbles and the least were silt and muck, which is a good finding, earning a score of 37 out of a maximum of 40.

The maximum pool depth was 10" for a maximum score of 30. Bank full width averaged 8'9" measured to the

first location of plants for a score of 25 out of 30. The Total score for the substrate was 92. This was a good score, predictive of a Class III stream at the 90% level of statistical confidence.

The riparian width was wide on one side and moderate on the other. We had seen the canopy over the stream in the summer and judged it to be only 15% open over our stream reach. The stream was flowing and it had good, sinuous bends per 200'. Stream gradient was moderate. The temperature of the stream was 54 F with clear water and Dr. Stephens mentioned it was cold in the summer.

The members were excited by these results. Despite the abundant leaves, 10 gilled salamanders were found that the writer judged to be Mountain Dusky salamanders. For the macroinvertebrates, we found Crane Fly larvae to be common, three Stone Fly Nymphs, and three Caddis Fly larvae were found.

Ben Stinner took specimens to the lab for latter taxa identification; extra points may be added to the macro count for the number of different Stonefly Nymphs and Caddisfly Larvae. On a previous brief visit, the writer and Ben Stinner found Mayfly nymphs after only turning over just a few cobbles.

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