

Mending Lines

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July—September, 2014

UPCOMING EVENTS

2014

July 27

Club Outing
St. Joe River
Mottville, MI

August 6

Board meeting
6:45

New Haven Moose Lodge
1480

Aug 23-24

Club Outing
White River

September 3

Board meeting
6:45

New Haven Moose Lodge
1480

September 18

Club Meeting

Classic Cafe

7:00 PM

Members Favorite Cold Water

Flies

October 1

Board meeting
6:45

New Haven Moose Lodge
1480

October 16

Club Meeting

Classic Cafe

7:00 PM

Rex's Reelings

Summer is finally upon us. It's been a long long winter. Now it's time to get out and get those lines in the water. I've been hearing stories of lots of bluegill and re-dear being caught this spring. We are also coming into smallmouth primetime.

I would like to thank everyone who came out to the Little Elkhart outing in June. 15 club members came out to fish this great little river. Even with the rains in the days prior to the outing the river was very fishable. I personally caught two nice healthy Rainbow trout. We also enjoyed a nice cookout at the pavilion in the park at Middlebury, with Jerry Hohla and Rick Hinton providing brats and hotdogs and several other people contributing side dishes, including Janet Carlson bringing her great homemade cookies. I would encourage any of you to get up to the Little Elkhart and check out the work Mike Beachy and LECTU have done to make this stream a beautiful and thriving fishery.

I also want to encourage all of you to come out to the annual outing to Mottville, Michigan on July 27th. This is a very nice place to hold an outing and has always been well attended in the past. There is plenty of space for numbers of people to fish. The river is very easy to wade and the fish are nearly always willing to bite our flies. We will have a cookout again in the park around noon. See the club website for more details in the coming weeks.

We are also going back to the White River at Daleville on Aug. 23 and 24. We will be meeting at the same campground with several members camping for a couple of days before and after the weekend. If you weren't able to come to the outing last summer you missed a great time. There is a lot of water over many miles of river and there are smallmouth everywhere. We will be posting information on the website as time draws nearer but I encourage you to come out to this outing and learn about some of the great river and stream fishing within an hours drive of Fort Wayne. Of course a cookout is planned for around noon on Sunday. Hope to see you there.

Plans continue to develop for our clubs first annual Fly Fishing Show next March 28th. This is a big undertaking for our club and I can't thank the board of directors enough for all the hard work they are putting in on this project. I want to implore all of you to help out. We will need volunteers on Friday night to help load in the tyers and vendors, more volunteers to work the show on Sat. and again Sat. evening after the show to help the tyers and vendors load their stuff back out. I would really like to see every one of our club members participate in this project. We want to make this show a success and an enjoyable show for the participants so we can grow the show in future years. We feel the Fort Wayne market is a great prospect for this type of event and hope for a great show. Please contact one of the board members to sign up for a time slot to help. There is also more information on our website, or by email at fortwayneflyshow@3rff.org

Now get out there and fish!!!

Rex

TRFF Fly Show

Planning for the first TRFF Fly show is progressing! Vendor booths are nearly filled.

The show will be Saturday, March 28, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm at the Classic Cafe, 4832 Hillegas Rd, Fort Wane.

The board is looking for assistance to help with Friday evening setup, shifts Saturday during the show, and teardown after the show. Please contact a Board member to volunteer.

Members Favorite Coldwater Flies

Last year's November meeting topic of members favorite flies was a hit! The topic for the September club meeting is Members Favorite Coldwater Flies. Contact Curly Hodson if you are interested in providing a short presentation on your favorite cold water fly for. The fly can be for any species.

3RFF Logo Available

The new 3RFF Club Logo is available for embroidery on your shirt.

You provide a clean shirt and \$10.00 to have the logo embroidered.

See Steve Harris for more information.



Mending Lines is looking for additional member content!

Some suggestions are:

- Pictures of fish caught by members, families, friends...Look at the fishing pictures in the local papers for ideas.
- Pictures and notes from trips. Your notes do not need to be a final article. Your notes can be tuned and reviewed before inclusion in Mending Lines.
- Items for sale
- Fishing and casting lessons learned.
- Favorite Web sites
- Short Stories, Fact, or ????
- Book reviews

Please email your ideas, suggestions and articles to John Carlson, Editor

Another Successful Big Brothers/Big Sisters Outing !

On Saturday, May 17 the club hosted its fifth annual fly fishing clinic at the Parkview YMCA. The wind was blowing and there was a chill in the air but the kid's enthusiasm was not deterred. Attendees went to 3 different stations. They tied flies, looked for bugs in the pond and learned the fundamentals of casting. The day was completed when they were able to spend some time fishing in the pond, each with a TRFF mentor. Several bass and bluegills were caught. Each attendee received a tote bag with a Three Rivers Fly Fishers logo. Thanks to Bob Lowden who was the organizer of the event and liaison to the Big Brothers/Sisters organization. Thanks also to several club members who gave up their Saturday to work with the kids.



Fly Fishing the Wisconsin Driftless Area

Rex

Last fall at one of our board meetings Dan Brophy said something that peaked my interest. He asked if anyone was interested in going to the Driftless area of Wisconsin trout fishing. I had heard a bit about this area and had been intrigued with the idea and began doing some more research.

The driftless area is so named because during the last era of glaciers on this continent this particular area was not covered. Glaciers tend to “scrub” the surface of the earth, grinding the steep rock walls of the valleys carved by rivers and level everything out to a great extent. Another effect the glaciers had was to seal off the many springs that naturally appear in those river valleys. This is the thing that makes the driftless area so special for trout fishermen. The geography is rolling hills and each of those small valleys has a spring fed creek on the valley floor. As with some of the greatest trout fishing areas of the Eastern U.S. these spring creeks are ideal trout habitat. The springs keep the water cool and the limestone present in all those streams makes for abundant bug life, which the trout need to survive and thrive.

After many months of anticipation May 19th finally arrived and 4 of us, Dan Brophy, Larry Wilson, Curly Hodson and I, headed North West.



Our destination was the town of Viroqua, Wi. This town is sort of the center of the fishing culture in the driftless area. Viroqua is nice clean town with friendly people and small but thriving downtown area. It also has one fly shop, The Driftless Angler.

Our home away from home for the week was the Siddie Hollow county park and campground. This was Dan and Larry's first experience camping with Curly. I have been doing it for a number of years and knew the guys were in for a treat. After setting up our camp, sort of like a portable Holiday Inn, and having a nice steak dinner we started getting rods, reels, vests, and waders ready for our first day of fishing on Monday.

Fly Fishing the Wisconsin Driftless Area, continued

I won't go into a deep blow by blow report of the week. I will attempt to name most of the creeks and rivers we fished and how we fished them. All the places we fished were with 20 -25 miles from camp. All of the places we fished had wonderful access. Wisconsin is a "feet wet" state. As long as your feet are in the stream you are on public property. There were a few places where it was obvious that the property owners wanted to keep the crowds out of their property, but with the abundance of fishing areas available it just didn't make sense to push for a conflict with those property owners. Many of the places we fished were part of a program through the Wisconsin DNR and Trout Unlimited which leases fishing access from the property owners with free stream access and designated parking areas. The say the least, stream access was not a problem at all in this area.



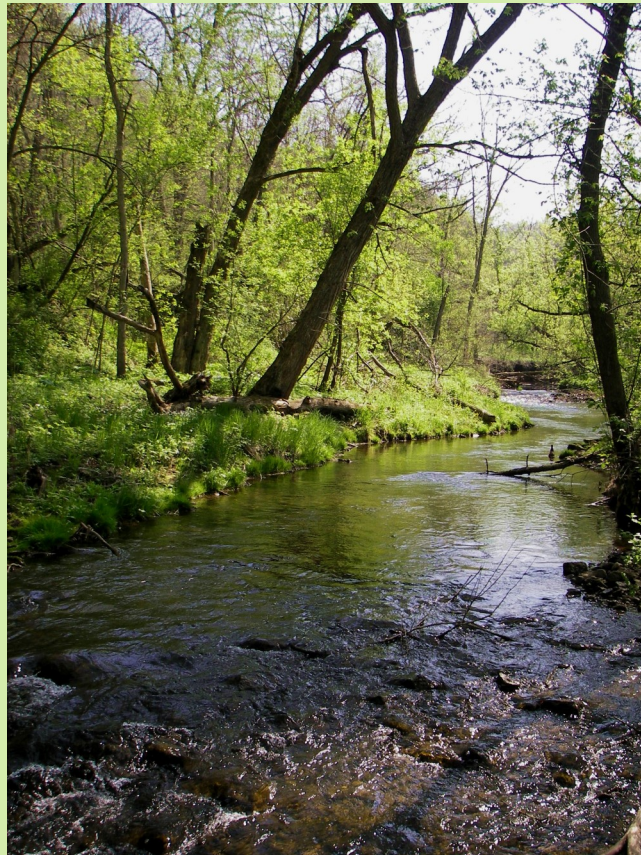
The streams we fished included, West Fork of the Kickapoo River, Mill Creek, Elk Creek, South and North Fork of the Bad Axe River, and several others. Most of these streams were no more than 20-30 feet wide and a number of them were small enough to easily cross with both feet dry. Some of the areas were under a canopy of trees which could make casting a little tight at times. Others literally ran through open pasture fields. Due to a fairly heavy rain on Monday some of the streams were slightly stained all week.

While the middle and end of May are typically a season of Black Caddis hatches that can be very prolific sometimes we never really saw any hatches of great numbers of Caddis or any other bugs for that matter. A few now and then, but nothing the trout ever seemed to key on. But we did have Craneflies. You may not know what Craneflies are, but have undoubtedly seen them. They look very much like big mosquitoes. Very delicate looking flies. This was the hot fly of the week for Curly especially. A Cranefly dry fished with a lot of action. Not the typical dry fly drag free drift. If the fly got saturated and went under, just keep twitching and stripping it.



Some trout were caught on nymphs and emergers during the week also. Pheasant tail nymphs with or without a bead, prince nymphs, IPW, and Caddis larva. All fishing was done with 3 and 4 weight rods and floating lines. Leaders of 8-10 feet and ending in 5X tippets were the choice. While we most often wore our chest waders there were almost no situations we encountered that couldn't have been handled just as well with hip waders.

All-in-all it was a very enjoyable trip with a group of guys who fit well together and had a lot of fun. I would definitely go back to this area and would be happy to help anyone else make plans for a trip to the Driftless Area.



THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

By Dennis Plank

I knew that a monster lurked close by. He wasn't hungry but would attack anything that was in his way, out of spite it seemed. Instinct made him move through the night to a spot upstream that was the home waters of his short life. The shallows slowed him down and it took great effort to move, causing loud splashing noises and then..... BUMP. He hit me hard enough to move me out of position. Then I remembered the stories of other fishermen being knocked down by these beasts. I didn't believe any of those old wives tales but, still, it was a hard enough collision that I had to catch my balance and I'm not a skinny little guy. I was lucky tonight.

It was about three in the morning and I was unable to see very well, even though the night sky was perfectly clear. We had a moonless night and the Milky Way was displaying all the stars of the Heavens making an eerie glow on the water. Not enough to see well, but enough so that you could barely make out the opposite bank and tree line. The wind was completely absent and if your headlamp was on, you could see your breath hanging in the air causing you to move out of the mini cloud just to tie on a new fly or, too often, a whole new leader.

So was another night on a river in northern Michigan. This was my second night fishing for salmon and it still felt a bit odd standing in the strong current not being able to see my fly line. I could hear other fishermen (and one fisherwoman) upstream catching and releasing salmon, brown trout and the occasional steelhead. My normal catch was four fish each night. A couple less than my fishing buddy Dan Brophy. I hate to admit it but Dan always out fishes me.

Why fish at night? Because during the daylight hours fishermen are packed together, elbow to elbow. After they went home en mass, to their hot dinner, martinis and warm beds, we went on the hunt.

The first time I hooked up on a huge salmon, I thought I was snagged on bottom. It was like the fish didn't know it was hooked at first and then after a few seconds the battle started. I held on and sometimes I would win but most of the time the fish would win. I lost count of how many hookups and long distance releases I had from the outing. Until now I had never pulled on a fish and had it swim away from me. I was using my 11 weight fly rod and a large arbor reel. The reel was loaded with a weight forward floating line connected to 10 feet of T14. The leader was 18 inches of 25 lb. Maxima with about two more feet of 20 lb. tippet and the fly was tied on with just a clench knot. The knot seemed to hold most of the time. I'm still looking for the perfect terminal knot that is easy to tie.

I was amazed when that first salmon was secure in the net because she was huge! I am used to catching smallmouth size critters. Last year I was fishing with Don Privett on a lake in northern Indiana. Don put me on two 19 inch rainbow trout and they were the biggest fish I had ever caught in my life. Thanks, Don. I'll never forget those 'bows.

(CONT)

The only real problem I had on the water, other than keeping a hook in the fish, was tying on a fly. I wear contacts and can't see well up very close so I use a magnifier clipped onto the bill of my hat. Works great all day but at night the headlamp shines on the magnifier and completely blots out everything. So, I put my reading glasses with trifocals on and fold the magnifier back up out of the way. Now picture this. I'm standing in the river, at night, head lamp on, trifocals on trying to tie on a fly and of course I have to tilt my head up to get the little sliver of trifocal that I use for close vision into position on the fly. This heads-up motion causes my lamp to shine up into the night sky, even though it is pointed down as far as it will go, and the fly goes dark. So I move my head down to shine on the fly but now it's out of focus, so I move my head up and shine into the sky. Up. Down. Up. Down. You can't move your head fast enough to illuminate the fly and keep it in focus at the same time.

Getting old is very discouraging sometimes. Next time I will use "The Larry" flashlight I just got, from Rick that will clip onto the top of my waders or something else on my chest. I haven't figured that part out yet.

My family and worm killing friends (spin casters) always ask why I don't bring fish home. We all know the pleasure of releasing a great fighting fish back into the water mostly unharmed. A fish this large and important should be given back to grow even larger and to make other fish. Don't think I would want to eat them.

Fishing in the dark was something I never thought I would try but it sure is peaceful and quiet at night. There had already been a hard frost so flying pests were not a problem. I like it. I like it even when your headlamp shines on a pair or two of eyes that are watching you from the opposite bank. Is it a deer, coyote, bear or COUGAR out for an evening meal? No. It was a couple of bear cub size raccoons wondering what was standing in the water this time of night. A pair of Raccoonzillas. Just ask Dan.

We stayed in a nice little cabin each night and both Steve and Dan brought dinners from home. Vegetable soup. Both brought vegetable soup. Now I like vegetable soup as much as the next guy but three nights in a row is a bit much. It serves me right since I didn't bring hardly anything to eat, just a really nice home-made pasta salad which neither Dan nor Steve would eat.

Thanks to Steve Harris for his mentoring and being such a gracious host. He put up with a lot of nonsense from me. It was a great trip and if I'm lucky enough to be asked back to Steve's river next year I will jump at the opportunity, but I will bring something else for dinner.

One of the members favorite flies presented at the November 2013 club meeting:

The Infamous Pink Worm

Tier: Fred Bridge

Tie it on a #16 dry fly hook for trout or a #14 heavy wire hook similar to the Mustad 3906 for steelhead and salmon.

Hook: #16 dry.

Thread: Red.

Under Body: Orange Glo Bug yarn.

Worm Body: Fluorescent Pink Ultra Chenille.

Notes: Cover shank with thread; tie in worm at rear; dub body; pull worm over under body; tie down and tie off; singe ends with lighter.

Small shot about 8" above worm, size and number to suit water conditions. You want it on or near the bottom. Fish dead drift. Takes usually are gentle as the fish just suck the worm in. If sight fishing, drop worm above to slightly to side of fish and try to stop it on the bottom, near the fish. They will move to pick it up. As good as or better than the Green Weenie and Red Hot for the past two years.



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