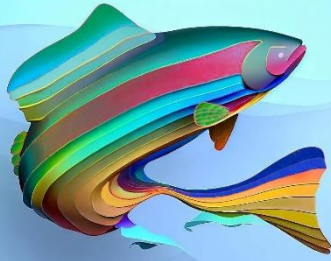


**WINCHESTER  
TROUT UNLIMITED**



**CHAPTER #638**

# Lateral Lines

**The Monthly Magazine of Winchester Trout Unlimited  
Chapter #638**

Would they have enough if all the fish in the sea were caught for them? – Numbers 11:22 (NIV)

**October 2024**

**Volume 29, Number 10**

### Winchester TU Meeting Schedule

The next Winchester TU Meeting is set for  
Thursday, 3 October 2024  
7:00 PM  
Laurel Ridge Community College  
Science & Health Professions Building  
Room #145

### Project Healing Waters Monthly meeting

Wednesday, 9 October 2024  
Agenda to be announced later  
RSVP Required

### BarFly

The next Winchester TU BarFly  
Wednesday, 16 October 2024  
7:00 PM at Escutcheon Brewing Co.  
142 W. Commercial Street, Winchester

**For complete calendars, please see  
Winchester Trout Unlimited – Page 17**



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Bill Prokopchak, Newsletter Editor  
(540)722-2620 (voice only)

**John Davidson is the Featured Speaker for the  
Annual joint meeting of Winchester TU and  
Northern Shenandoah Audubon  
Laurel Ridge Community College  
Science and Health Professions Building, Room #145  
7:00 PM, Thursday, 3 October 2024**



photo courtesy of The Freshwater Institute

**John Davidson, PhD,  
Senior Research Scientist  
Freshwater Institute**

John Davidson is a Senior Research Scientist at the Freshwater Institute will be this year's featured speaker at the annual joint meeting of Winchester Trout Unlimited and Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon Society. Dr. Davidson is responsible for designing and managing research projects, writing grant proposals, and disseminating results through peer-reviewed publications, industry articles, and conference presentations. He has authored more than 50 research articles and has received a number of awards for his research papers.



## Bud on the Run: 14 September 2024 Report

The next workday is set for Saturday, 5 October 2024

at 9:00 AM weather permitting.

**Bud will notify the Redbud Regulars of any changes to the plan.**

by Bud Nagelvoort

photos by Bill Prokopchak



## Constructing “Dave’s Drop”

After months of effort by the Redbud Regulars, the structure we are calling DAVE’S DROP is finally complete.

Dave VanBenschoten, one of Winchester TU’s most colorful characters, died a number of years ago, and the TU team named a Redbud structure in his memory. That structure washed away in a flood.

Dave’s Drop is a new structure in Redbud Run in remembrance of Dave and all the years of hard work he contributed to conservation efforts on both Chapel Run and Redbud Run.

**Top:** Fred places rocks under the north crosslog section of “Dave’s Drop” to focus the flow toward the middle of the stream bed.

**Right:** Terry and Fred roll a 300 pounder toward the south crosslog of “Dave’s Drop.”

**Below:** Bud selects a rock for placement in the new structure.



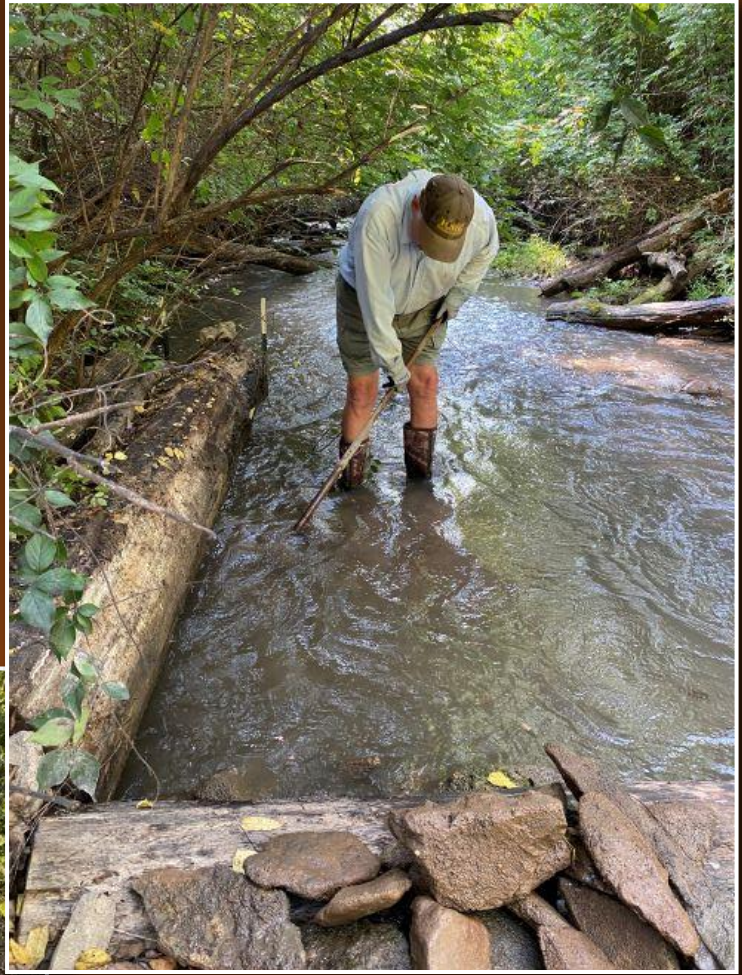
After a week's postponement due to a visit from Oregon from my oldest son on the scheduled date, a good crew appeared at Redbud on Saturday, September 14, for Big L's Bagels and 15 minutes of wild fish stories before getting underway for two hours of work at the latest Trout habitat enhancement site. With Terry's lead, Bill, Clark, Bob, and Bud finished work on what is now being called “Dave's Drop” in honor of Dave VanBenschoten who passed on several years ago. (Dave was our number one rock roller for years. We are pleased to continue to hear from his wife from time to time.)

“Bud on the Run” continues on the next page.

## Bud on the Run -- continued

The work at this session involved providing a rock base through the 2-foot-wide notch at a low enough level to avoid upsetting the flow through Clark's Notch, creating the pool immediately upstream.

Terry and Drew had secured rocks for this purpose at last month's work session from a downstream location.



**Top:** Clark manages the flow along the north bank erosion-management structure that is part of the down-stream section of Dave's Drop.

**Left:** Terry muscled a rock for the new structure.

**Below:** While the crew toiled upstream, Bud worked to clear a fallen tree, the trunk and branches of which will form new structures on Redbud Run.

After extensive eyeballing and debating, Terry made the appropriate modifications of the flow level through Dave's Drop.

From there, Terry and Bill proceeded to deepen the potential pool immediately downstream from the edge of the flow to the bank protection log along the north bank.

Bob, Clark, and Bud worked downstream to clear fallen tree limbs and other debris where one site may be suitable for the installation of an inverted V structure while several more sites offer opportunities for bank protection and notched log structures.



“Bud on the Run” continues  
on the next page.

## Bud on the Run -- continued

Stay tuned.

Before the next event on October 5th, we may all need to make a special trip to Montana to rescue Bill from those giant Rainbows he plans to encounter.

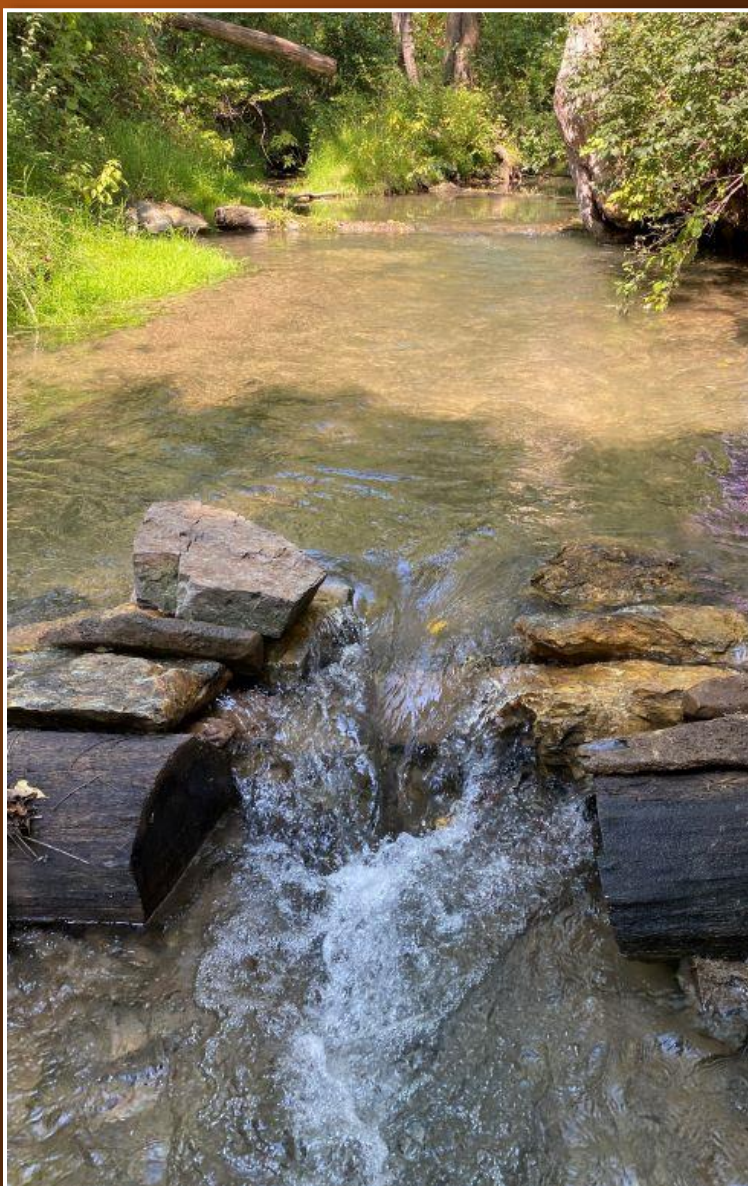
Tight lines and singing reels.  
Bud.



**Top:** Bud taxes his Stihl chainsaw as he clears a downed tree from Redbud Run. This tree will find new use in future structures built by The Redbud Regulars.

**Left:** At the end of another work session, Bob gathers hardware from the day's labors for storage until the next work session.

**Below:** Dave's Drop is complete with adjustable flow so that we can monitor the depth at Clark's Notch immediately upstream. The goals are to have well oxygenated water, sufficient depth for fish to hide, flushing of sediment that can interfere with reproduction, and erosion mitigation along the north bank.



# SEPTEMBER WAS EXTREMELY BUSY FOR WINCHESTER PROJECT HEALING WATERS

by Wayne White  
photos this page by Mike Smith



September was busy for Winchester Project Healing Waters. Starting with its regularly scheduled monthly meeting, followed by a Ladies-only fishing outing, community outreach, and culminating at the Leetown Trout Hatchery, Veterans and volunteers remained decisively engaged with a fun-filled and rewarding slate of activities.



Burr Tupper, Dave Harrelson, Dan Soper, and Michael Hart led the fishing instruction, fly-tying class, and casting clinics on Wednesday, 11 September, at the Shenandoah Lodge. The classes were extremely beneficial and timely for the fishing outings at Cool Spring and Leetown.



**Top Right:** Dave Harrelson, foreground, advises the group to prepare their materials for tying an elk-hair caddis.  
**Above:** Volunteer instructor Mike Hart (l) shows Tony Fuller how to gauge the amount of line needed to get a fly to its target.  
**Right:** Jeb Stewart assists Christine Nelson with correctly tying in elk hair on the Caddis fly.

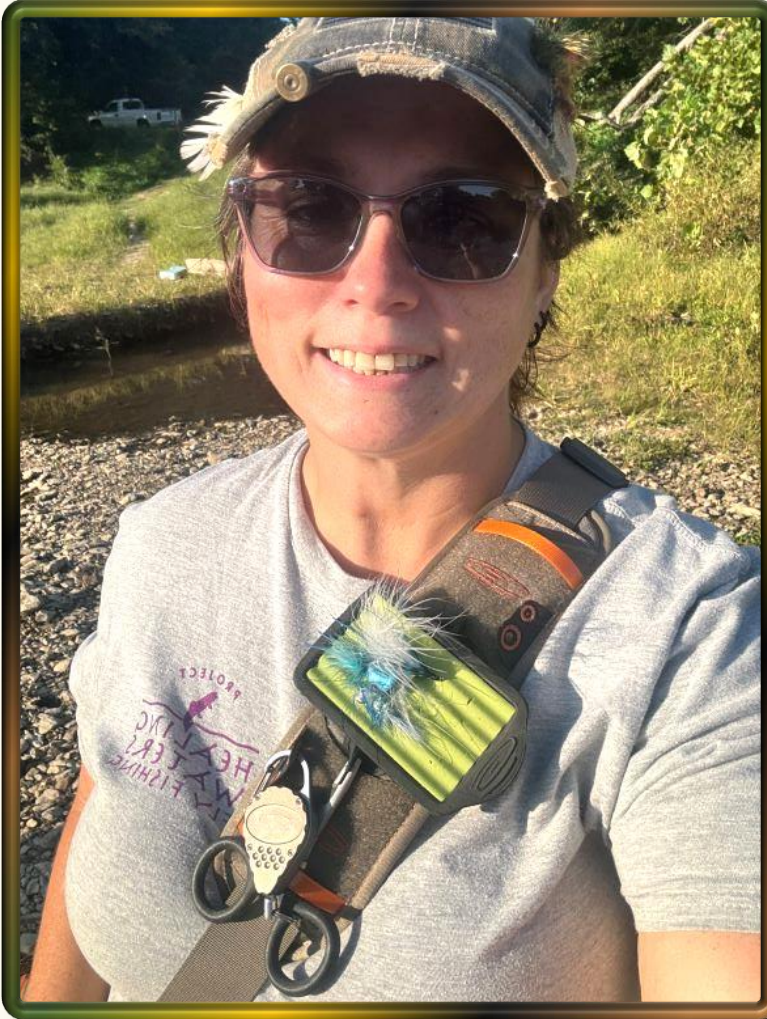
“Winchester Healing Waters” continues on the next page.



EST. PROJECT 2005  
**HEALING WATERS**

# **BUSY MONTH FOR PHW**

## **Ladies-Only Fly Fishing Outing**



On Thursday, 12 September, Mary Weiss led a team of volunteers in supporting the first annual Winchester Healing Waters and Winchester TU Ladies-Only Fly-Fishing outing at the Shenandoah University River Campus at Cool Spring.

This was a cooperative effort between PHW and WTU to introduce new women anglers to the art of fly-fishing and provide an evening of camaraderie for the ladies. The picturesque setting and beautiful warm late summer evening were perfect for learning to cast for Shenandoah's Smallies.



**Above:** Tamara Smith couldn't help capturing herself in a selfie on the river fishing with friends!

**Right:** Mary (r) gives Karen Trueblood (l) some tips on a roll cast for a weighted streamer during the Ladies Only event.

Photo by Wayne White

**Below:** Wayne's last cast hooked this beautiful Catfish!

Photo by Wayne White

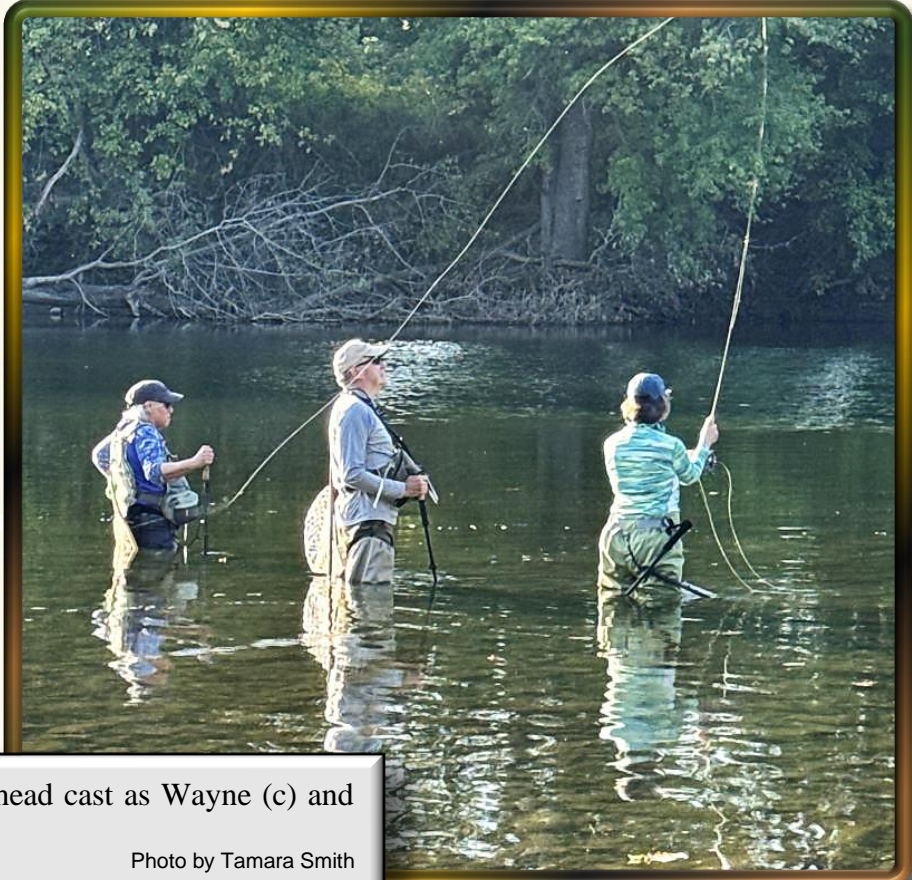


**"Winchester Healing Waters"** continues on the next page.

## Ladies-Only Fly Fishing Outing -- continued



EST. PROJECT 2005  
**HEALING WATERS**



**Right:** Karen attempts a long haul overhead cast as Wayne (c) and Mary check her technique.

Photo by Tamara Smith

**Left:** Burr (r) and Heather Wright survey the river for rising fish!

Photo by Tamara Smith

## BUSY MONTH FOR PHW

### Winchester PHW Veterans and Volunteers Supporting the Third Annual Lake Frederick Veterans Day Picnic

On Friday, 13 September, Winchester PHW Veterans and Volunteers supporting the Third Annual Lake Frederick Veterans Day picnic along with the Lake Frederick community and local Winchester dignitaries were entertained by the US Marine Corps Drum and Bugle Corps at the opening ceremonies for the event. Mike Hart, Michael Smith, Gary Myers, Robert Kilby, and Jeb Stewart coordinated the set-up and organization of our information booth, which included fly-tying demonstrations by Dave Harrelson and Erwin Casto and fly-casting demonstrations and instruction led by Burr Tupper. Mary Weiss provided full photo documentation of the day's event and activities.



The US Marine Corps Drum and Bugle Corps entertained the crowd at the Third Annual Lake Frederick Community Veterans Day picnic.

Photo by Mary Weiss

Big hungry feisty Trout greeted the Winchester Veterans and volunteer guides at the Leetown Trout Hatchery on Saturday, 14 September. Frank Roach, Fishing Area Coordinator at the hatchery told the anglers the cool evenings and cold water kept the fish "happy," and to expect good action! The healthy Rainbows, Brookies and a few Large-mouth Bass did not disappoint as everyone put fish in the nets. Likewise, there were many "long releases, otherwise noted "gentlemen's/ladies" releases to entertain the anglers and to keep the fish healthy to fight another day!



## Barbara's Books

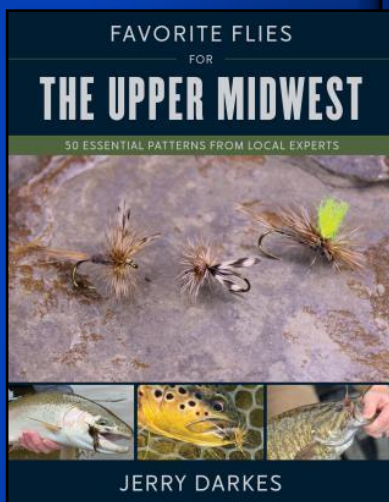
Compiled by Barbara Gamble

### ***Favorite Flies for the Upper Midwest: 50 Essential Patterns from Local Experts***

**Author:** Jerry Darkes  
**Hardcover:** 144 pages  
**ISBN-10:** 0811774201  
**ISBN-13:** 978-0811774208  
**Publisher:** Stackpole Books  
**Publication Date:** 19 November 2024

This new entry in the Stackpole Favorite Flies series covers flies for the Upper Midwest -- Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. This area has fishing that is very different than the rest of the Midwest (Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois), and Jerry Darkes leads anglers through it.

The Favorite Flies series pulls together fifty important (either from a historical or fishing or both standpoint) flies from a particular region, tied by anglers with close ties and local knowledge of the place. Each fly featured in a spread that includes large, easy to see image, recipe, tying notes, and a supplemental image or possibly a few tying steps if a technique needs to be illustrated.



This book, though not a tying manual, showcases important flies that work well on the water for a given area and a fishing/tying resource and tribute to the region.

Jerry Darkes is a fly tackle sales rep, instructor/guide, and writer based in northern Ohio. He has over four decades of fly-fishing experience in both fresh and saltwater and is recognized as an expert on Great Lakes steelhead and warm water fly fishing. He is also a member of the Scott Fly Rod and Scientific Anglers Pro Staffs. Jerry was the first "fly fishing only" guide on Ohio's Lake Erie tributaries and helped to pioneer many of the fly patterns and techniques used today.

Sources: amazon.com and the publishers

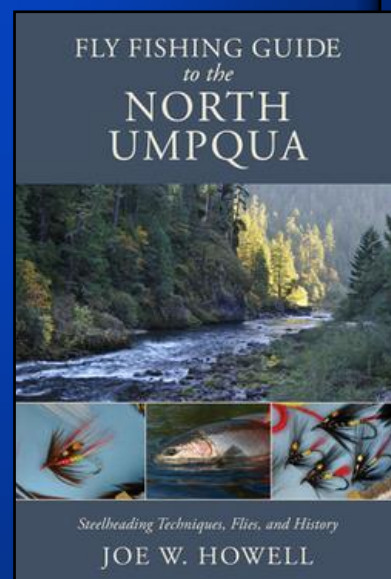
### ***Fly Fishing Guide to the North Umpqua: Steelheading Techniques Flies and History***

**Author:** Joe W. Howell  
**Paperback:** 224 pages  
**ISBN-10:** 0811775305  
**ISBN-13:** 978-0811775304  
**Publisher:** Stackpole Books  
**Publication Date:** 19 November 2024

The North Umpqua is a National Wild and Scenic River and a legendary steelhead and trout destination. This complete, pool-by-pool guide to one of the most famous steelhead rivers in the United States, written by local legend Joe Howell, includes detailed information about access, techniques, timing, and fly patterns.

Joe W. Howell has lived along the North Umpqua for 42 years and was a fly-fishing guide and owner of The Blue Heron Fly Shop for 30 years.

He is a fly designer with many of his popular patterns sold by Umpqua Feather Merchants and has been featured in countless books and articles. He received the Oregon Council of the Federation of Fly Fishermen's Fly Tyer of the Year award in 1992.



Sources: amazon.com and the publishers



## Nathaniel Hitt, Biologist and Brook Trout Guru

Featured in the *Garden & Gun Magazine's* "The Wild South" on YouTube

Dave and Eddie go deep on one of their favorite species: Brook Trout. Their guest is Nathaniel "Than" Hitt, a researcher with the Eastern Ecological Science Center in Kearneysville, West Virginia. Hitt discusses threats to the fish (the only native Trout of the southern Appalachians), as well as signs of hope -- and ways in which anglers can provide important data to help ongoing studies. Click on the [yellow](#) link below.

[Brook Trout with Dr. Nathaniel Hitt on YouTube](#)

Wild South credits:

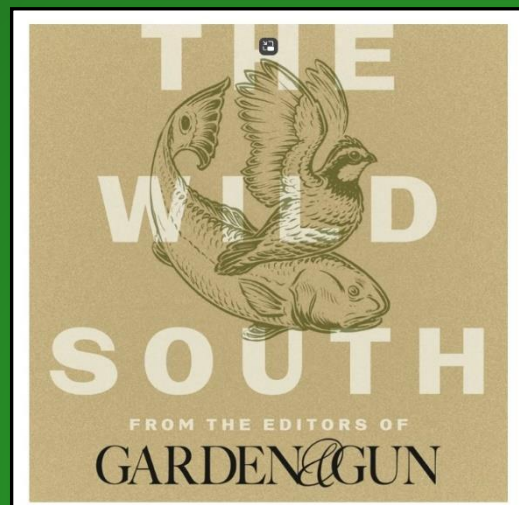
Producer and editor: Christine Fennessy

(<http://www.christinefennessy.com/>)

Music: Woody Platt and Bennett Sullivan

Artwork: Lars Leetaru

Transcripts editor: Katherine Jarvis





**Winchester TU Monthly “BarFly” Events  
Wednesday, 16 October 2024 and  
Wednesday, 20 November 2024  
both events at 7:00 PM  
Escutcheon Brewery, Commercial St., Winchester, VA**



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.

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



**Clockwise from upper left:**

- Winchester TU’s youngest fly tyer, Jack, designs his own flies.
- Dave works on a size 18 fly.
- Luke’s “Bronze Goddess” streamer.
- Luke at the vise tying another “Bronze Goddess” streamer.



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



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Mike’s Article on Priority Waters**

While on the road and resting by driving eyes, I read another fantastic edition! Keep it up. Especially liked Mike Smith’s article on Priority Waters.

Fred B.  
Lake Frederick, VA



## Trout in the Classroom: Brookie Egg Delivery Day is Almost Here



Brookie Egg Delivery Day will be here soon.

We have 15 schools and the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum participating this year.

Two schools are in West Virginia: Martinsburg, & Paw Paw; three are in Clarke County; three in Shenandoah County; one in Warren County, and seven are Frederick County and City of Winchester.

### What is Trout in the Classroom?

Winchester Trout in the Classroom (TIC) offers students of all ages a chance to raise Brook Trout in a classroom setting and then release them into a nearby stream or river. Caring for the fish fosters a conservation ethic in the students, and the act of walking to a streambank and directly releasing the fingerlings into the water makes a concrete connection between caring for the fish and caring for the water.

Because TIC brings nature into the classroom, it allows students to develop a personal bond and sense of conservation ethics that are at the core of TU's mission.

Students better understand the value of their local fisheries when they have seen the Trout life cycle up close and personal in this way.

For this reason, TU staff and volunteers in 35 states are involved in more than 1,500 TIC projects.



## Virginia Council Trout Unlimited (VCTU) News Win a Fly-Fishing Trip to "The Outpost" on the Upper Nushagak River, Alaska



The Virginia Trout Unlimited Council is offering a fly-fishing trip to raise funds that will be donated to the Virginia TU chapters for their outreach, education, and conservation efforts.

Go to [www.virginiatu.org](http://www.virginiatu.org) for more information.

Or go to

<https://go.tulocalevents.org/vctu2024fundraiser/Campaign/Details>

Or use this QR code with your mobile phone to buy your raffle tickets.



# ANGLER REFLECTIONS



## That Time I Built a Tailwater (and other strange manifestations of “Adipose Fever”<sup>1</sup>)

article and photos by Michael Lawler Smith

I once had a lovely spring-fed Trout pond. Just outside of Lexington, Virginia. I was the proud owner/operator from early June 2002 until the waning days of summer in 2015. In many ways it was a dream come true. In a few ways (happily, only a few), it offered occasional episodes of “be careful what you wish for ...”

The very briefest retelling of how I got to Lexington and how the Trout pond came to be goes like this: in 1999, I contacted a realtor in the area. Find me a cabin, please. On a Trout stream. The search began.

The realtor was great; the customer, clueless. In late 2001 the realtor found a property that managed to coincide serendipitously with the customer’s capricious tastes. A cabin? Nope – a house.

A Trout stream? No, again. A pond. A crystal-clear pond fed by a deep unyielding spring. The realtor had read my mind perfectly.

So, did I actually build a for-real tailwater?



Water clarity — and *chara* — on full display. Lower right, at the deepest part of the pond, the grass carp are resting — a task for which they showed boundless talent. Some rather intimidating Trout loiter to the left, near the surface, poised to embarrass any approaching angler. The pond owner eventually learned there was little need to run aeration in the cooler months. He often repaired to the pond house to read ... or plot against the heron.

Yes. But it was smaller than you might expect. I built it, winter into spring, 2012. And it functioned exactly as I planned ... until it couldn’t.

But I have to crunch a decade of pond ownership, its high and lows, triumphs and challenges, to better prepare you for what resulted.

Let’s start with what I knew about ponds when I purchased this retirement Shangri-La. If you had asked immediately after my acquisition, I would have been a self-confident font of factoids. After all, I had been writing about ponds, lakes, rivers, and fisheries for resource agencies for more than three decades by that point. I knew my stuff.

But stuff is just stuff. My “knowledge” turned out to be the proverbial view from 30,000 feet.

The very first (and rather immense) question before me: could this indeed become a Trout pond? After all, what I was working on was the very scantest of anecdotal evidence: the person from whom I bought the property almost immediately tried backing out of the deal. His final argument to dissuade me? “You know, this pond *never, ever* gets warm enough to swim in!” I dug in. I wanted that property all the more.

It would give me the perfect field lab to try to carry out a fever-dream I’d nurtured since grad school: what would it take to make an otherwise ordinary pond into a Trout pond? I went to graduate school up in Wisconsin. It wouldn’t have been an insurmountable task at that latitude; but even there, the DNR recommended a big spring – for even a small pond.

My Lexington pond was perhaps a quarter acre. The spring that fed it emerged from a limestone bluff about a 100’ above the headwater cove. The pond had been built in 1984, by the property’s developer and first owner, the late Pete Brown, a retired Virginia State Police detective with whom I became friends. Pete affirmed the temperature profile of the pond. When I shared my wild-eyed notion about stocking Trout, he paused and reflected a moment. “Trout, you say? Hmm. Wish I’d thought of that!”

<sup>1</sup> “Adipose fever” a playful coinage to describe how purportedly rational adult human beings can become utterly beguiled by those enticing *Salmonids* -- the Brook, Brown, Rainbow, and Cutthroat Trout. Perhaps Salmon anglers suffer from it, as well. A large group of *Ictalurid* fishes, we are told, also have adipose fins. Whatever. That would likely be a tropical disease.

“Angler Reflections” continues on the next page.

# ANGLER REFLECTIONS – CONTINUED

Pete was an important component of my first decade of rural life and pond ownership – one of the best and most memorable.

The decade also featured: crystal clear water, *chara*, muddy water, Trout hauling, visitors both welcome and otherwise, grass carp, and a particular great blue heron that I came to quite nearly personify as the “Feathered Malevolence.”

Okay, so how did all of the above components interact? Let’s start with the water. It was clear. (At times heart-breakingly so -- as when an 18” Rainbow would zoom nearly 20 feet and pause an inch away from the #20 Griffith’s gnat, and then slowly fin backwards). It emerged from the ground at 52 to 54 degrees year-round, never much more than 100 gallons per minute, and almost never less than 30 gallons per minute.



Tabula rasa. The blank slate for the tailwater project, February 2012. View to the west, my orchard and mountain skyline of Rockbridge County.

Nice, but kind of a pipsqueak as springs go in karst country. One reason the pond was so clear was because Pete had created Nature’s perfect petri dish for the culture and luxuriant growth of *Chara*. Google it. Please. It is an algae, articulated to appear like a vascular plant. Summertime visitors always commented: “Oh, you sure got a lot of seaweed!”

My very first pond “management” lesson was attempting to control the chara. I tried chemicals. The chara rebounded. I tried pond dyes. If chara could snicker, it surely did. I tried mechanical harvest. Chara had the last laugh. You see in attempting to remove it, even a small portion broken off can restart and replicate the entire beast. The only apt comparison is the Sorcerer’s Apprentice sequence in Disney’s *Fantasia*, wherein the chopped and splintered magical broom reconstituted itself instantly and hauled evermore buckets of water. But Mickey Mouse (the apprentice) was lucky – the Sorcerer arrived to sternly correct the dilemma. I eventually learned to “live with” the chara. And at length, it seemed to behave.

Yet another adversary in the “learning decade”: a four-foot tall (though it always appeared taller) biped with an insatiable appetite for fish, especially stocked Trout. My local Audubon friends always gushed excitedly when they visited: “Oh, look at that magnificent great blue heron!” I did not quite share in their thrill. Early on, the creature earned the sobriquet *Feathered Menace*, the most apt descriptor I could come up with.

Just how smart was this bird? You’d never believe me. What would you call a person who can work the Sunday New York TIMES crossword puzzle in less than five minutes? In ink? Yeah. Cover that critter in feathers, and you’ve met *Feathered Menace*. I swear it surveilled my pond dawn to dusk. More than once, I caught it in a mocking “fly by” as I loaded the 100-gallon tank into the bed on my old four-cylinder, two-wheel drive, compact pickup to acquire a fresh load of Trout for the pond.

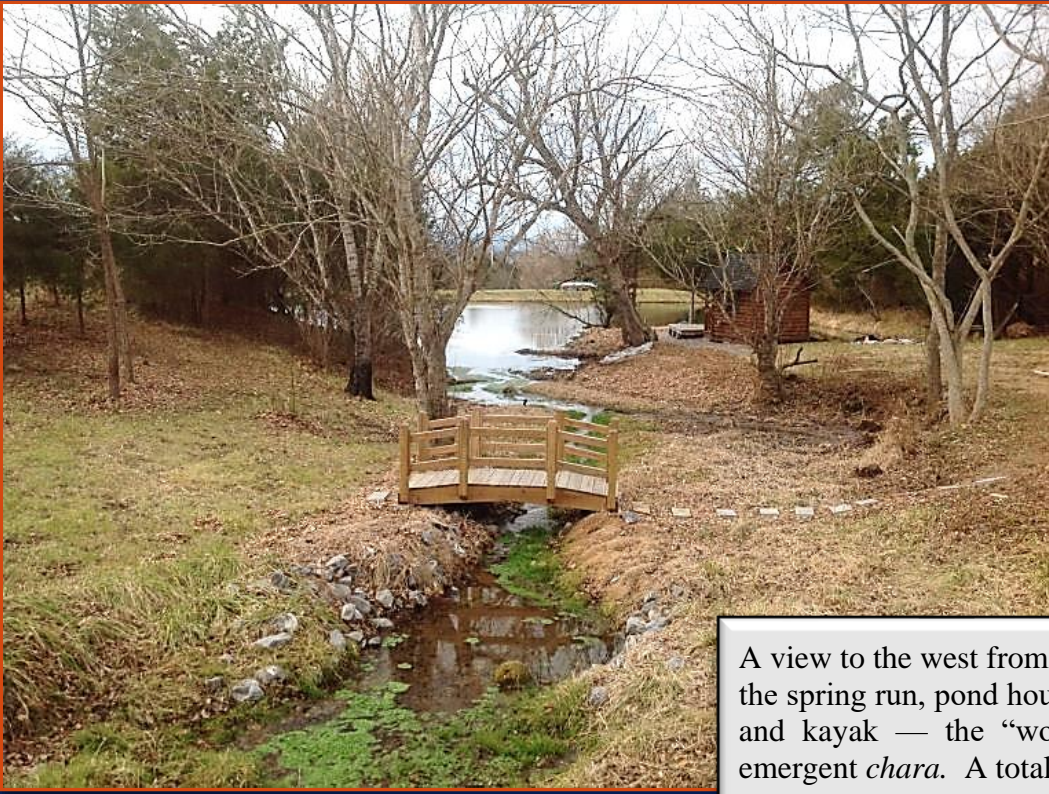


Trout hauls were always precarious and fraught outings. The hatchery I favored was only about 30 miles away, but “off the beaten path.” On the flank of a mountain, in fact. The goal was to try to make the delivery leg of the trek in 45 minutes or less. Any longer, and the Fates would start playing pranks with the aerators or my truck’s electrical system ... or both.

Early phase construction, February-March 2012. The basic sinuous course of the tailwater is already visible. Construction pace: full speed ahead! Replacing fence boards? A different timetable applied

“Angler Reflections” continues on the next page.

# ANGLER REFLECTIONS -- CONTINUED



A view to the west from the bluff above the spring, show the spring run, pond house, and the “dock” for the canoe and kayak — the “work boats” deployed to combat emergent *chara*. A totally winless navy.

Flinging the very last Rainbow (and they were almost always Rainbows; other Trout species were tried from time to time, but their outcome is the stuff of another tale) from the truck’s tank was always a moment of relief and delight. Both of which were short-lived. Inevitably, Feathered Menace would swoop low, in taunting approval, and glance at his menu.

My “crystal clear” pond suffered from mud, too, from time to time. The fish always fared better than I. The mud resulted from a neighbor’s construction and landscape endeavors. In time I had to accept that ponds could get muddy. It happens. My dudgeon cleared the water not one second sooner than acceptance did.

Okay, tailwater time. What on earth hatched this crazy idea? At the time I would likely have offered a very George Mallory-esque “Because it is there!” That answer would have satisfied me. Normal people would reasonably expect a bit more. What was actually “there” was a marshy, weedy, gloopy morass of cattails, with a trickle running through it. To be sure, the pond’s outfall, via an 8” PVC pipe, had long since hollowed out a surprisingly deep plunge pool that almost always harbored a nervous bass or bluegill sucked down and swept in during a high-water event. But beyond the plunge pool: weeds, weeds, and more weeds.

The cattails of January are far less formidable than the cattails of July. They were gone in a trice ... sort of. After I had brushed and cleared both banks of the drain creek, the idea began to show itself more clearly. The first light bulb to glow above my head – I needed to build a bridge. How else to get my riding mower from the orchard side of the flow over to the “picnic” grove I had envisioned? And soon enough there was a bridge (gratuitous boast time: I actually had the foresight to measure *in advance* how wide the bridge should be to accommodate the mower!).

Then came the fun part. In my slightly obsessive readings about ponds, lakes, creeks, and rivers, I had come across the marvelous term to describe that sinuous and continuous line of deep water in a stream: *thalweg*<sup>2</sup>. Let here be thalweg! I lined both banks with weed cloth; ordered up a truckload of small pumpkin-sized rocks; scavenged a stock of old boards and cedar trunks from my shed and woodlot. And the happy road to thalweg was underway.

You probably figured by now that I was the kind of kid who played in creeks. A lot. And long before I ever owned a proper fishing rod. Creeks caught me, early on, and never released me.

The project came together in mere days, not weeks or months (those latter two time periods better describe how long I could put off fixing broken fence boards).

The end result was a rockbound series of gentle “S’s” – my “tailwater” accepting its flow from the plunge pool and coursing it, back and forth, beneath hand-built undercut “banks.” Little spaces and clearings were carved out in the rocky areas for plantings and volunteer greenery alike (save for cattails, of course). It looked good. Mostly.



An array of ‘heron-proof’ netting devices. Calm yourselves, dear bird lovers: the heron missed not a single meal.

“Angler Reflections” continues on the next page.

<sup>2</sup>“*Thalweg*.” Now, there’s a word you don’t hear every day. I hadn’t seen the word in print since my undergrad hydrology class. – The Editor.

# ANGLER REFLECTIONS -- CONTINUED



My homemade Trout-haulin' rig. The manufacturer of the tank apparently has a Winchester presence. The writer reached out to query if they had fitted lids for these tanks — expecting perhaps a brochure or two in reply. Nope. The legal department responded and made it clear that if there were to be a cap, it would be *their* idea, thank you very much. The implication was clear: sloshing water would be fate, henceforth.”

Some channels were too narrow to allow easy fish passage. They served more like chutes. But that was fixable. The lower most pool had a tendency to get a bit stagnant. And weedy. But within a week, somehow, it had become home to a very territorial little green sunfish. That was kind of a small thrill.

As spring progressed, the tailwater's greening proceeded on a pathway to appearing “natural.”

From my first spring Trout stocking that year, I withheld six smallish Rainbows and carefully planted each in what I thought was an appropriate tailwater reach. Over a matter of days, it appeared exactly half the Trout agreed with my choice for them; the other half either vamoosed ... or had encountered the Feathered Menace (aka FM).

Indeed, ol' FM seemed to have studied my efforts and accorded his approval. My interactions with him by this time had progressed (regressed?) to the point where I posted a “game cam” adjacent to the tailwater's plunge pool. FM's appearances were far from mere cameos. You'd think he had scripted the movie himself. And, alas, I mean “movie” quite literally.

I had set the cam to movie mode. Instead of stills. How I rue that decision! While I have numerous “QuickTime” movies of not only FM enacting his best FM, I have footage of undercut-bank-dwelling Rainbows darting forth to intercept pelleted chow (you were expecting *Beat's* mayflies perhaps?). But woe is me: QuickTime as a viable format expired years ago; and the still images therefrom are grainy as a sandbox (as was QuickTime itself, truth be told).

In my remaining time in Lexington, my tailwater behaved well. Its banks were relatively easy to keep groomed. The maintenance was pretty minimal, and I reworked the wooden channel chutes to more natural looking riffles. Because you never outgrow your need for riffles.

FM prevailed whenever the mood overtook him. And chara established a token foothold in the last and slowest-flowing pool. I was pretty happy with the project. True, it never became a *coldwater* tailwater.

By June 2012 the last Trout would expire from the heat. But I had indeed already plotted a Phase II — to acquire and submerge 1” inner-diameter plastic tubing from the spring source, down the length of the floor of the pond, up, over, and down the pond standpipe to drain cold spring water directly into the plunge pool and thus the tailwater below. The year-round tailwater. The hydrology and physics seemed plausible (to this fevered mind, at least): but the cost quote for the tubing was, well, eye-watering.



Looking east to the spring during the height of summer. The spring flow lessened in July and August, but temperatures were always cool. Most summers found the Trout gathered in the cove where the spring run entered the pond. The pond owner installed a seasonal canopy that, while unsightly, proved somewhat effective against avian predators. A supplemental aeration system was installed in later years after an outbreak of “gas bubble” disease (nitrogen super-saturation) plagued some Trout.”

“Angler Reflections” continues on the next page.

# ANGLER REFLECTIONS – CONTINUED

## ANGLER REFLECTIONS – CONTINUED

There was something else “eye-watering” in my life at that time. But I had great trouble coping with it. My “because it is there” flippancy aside, I was actually in mourning. It took me considerable time to fully admit to that conclusion. Years, in fact.

Only about six months before my tailwater effort, I had found out the true cause of why and how my very favorite local Trout stream had fallen to ruin. It had sickened me and angered me. And I felt pretty damn powerless about it all. Hence, the “busy work” of plotting and plodding and enacting of the tailwater fantasy. It was diversion, in more ways than one.

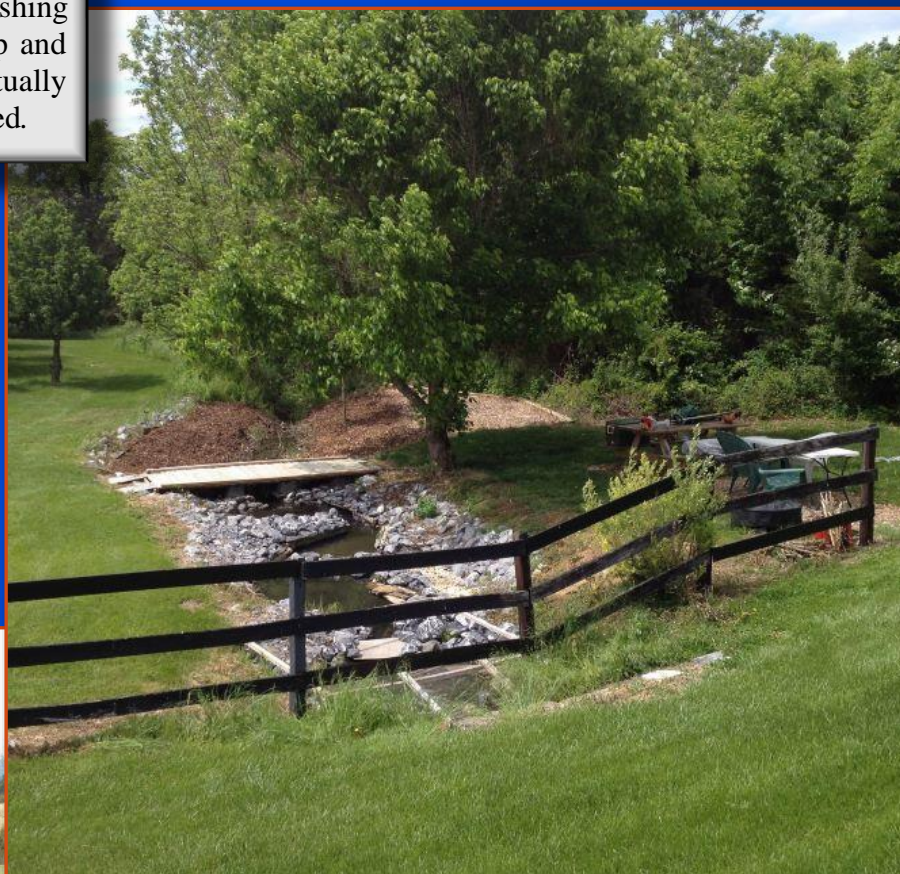
Even now, some thirteen years later, that favored stream remains impaired. Its prospects for being repaired slip inexorably away. I may write about that much loved Trout stream someday. I cannot even attempt to do so today.



The completed ‘tailwater,’ Spring, 2012. The pond had just received its first stocking of the year; and six little Rainbows now dwelled in their new downstream home. As spring progressed plant life thrived; the Trout numbers declined by exactly half. By late June none remained. But green sunfish (probably progeny of the pond’s hybrid Sunnies) were eager to claim every niche the tailwater offered.”

Early summer -- the little picnic grove, right, served as focal point for VMI Fishing Club picnics, and two Project Healing Water fishing events. Local friends were eager to help and support all such occasions. Note: eventually even broken fences wound up getting fixed.

I miss my tailwater days. I miss my pond. I miss my friends from that era. The pond enriched me far more than I could have hoped. It introduced me to Project Healing Waters – and happily my meager pond could host two of its fishing events. And it also served as the site of the annual VMI cadet Fly Fishing Club’s annual picnic, the recurring little gala that brought about the picnic grove.



And yes, some days I even miss ol’ FM. I harbor kinder thoughts now toward his species, and a measure of grudging respect. I mean, heck, any bird that can do NYT crossword puzzles ...



The author’s good friend, Ed Bradley, of Roanoke shows off a substantial Rainbow. The author had to coax him to keep it. Ed is normally a catch-and-release angler.



## Poet's Corner:

### Poems selected for the angler

#### Down by the Pond

from

*Now We are Six*

by

Alan Alexander Milne

1882-1956

England

Illustrator

Ernest H. Shepard

1879-1976

England



Ink wash portrait of A. A. Milne  
by W.M. Prokopchak after a photo  
by Emil Otto Hoppé

Public domain poems by A. A. Milne and works of  
art by E. H. Shepard courtesy of Gutenberg.org



#### Down by the Pond

*I'm fishing.*

*Don't talk, anybody, don't come near!*

*Can't you see that the fish might hear?*

*He thinks I'm playing with a piece of string;*

*He thinks I'm another sort of funny sort of thing,*

*But he doesn't know I'm fishing—*

*He doesn't know I'm fishing.*

*That's what I'm doing—*

*Fishing.*

*No, I'm not, I'm newting.*

*Don't cough, anybody, don't come by!*

*Any small noise makes a newt feel shy.*

*He thinks I'm a bush, or a new sort of tree;*

*He thinks it's somebody, but doesn't think it's*

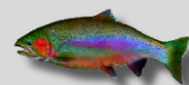
*Me,*

*And he doesn't know I'm newting—*

*No, he doesn't know I'm newting.*

*That's what I'm doing—*

*Newting.*





# 2024 - 2025 Calendar of Events Winchester Trout Unlimited

See also  
<http://winchestertu.org/>

## Thursday, 3 October 2024 – Keep your calendar open

7:00 PM – Winchester TU annual joint meeting with Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon at Laurel Ridge Community College  
The featured speaker will be from  
**The Conservation Fund Freshwater Research Laboratory.**

## Saturday, 5 October 2024 – Tentative Winchester Trout Unlimited

9:00 AM – Redbud Run restoration work session  
Bud will contact the “Redbud Regulars” with details about time and place.

## Wednesday, 16 October 2024 – Winchester Trout Unlimited BarFly

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

## Thursday, 7 November 2024 – Keep your calendar open

7:00 PM – Winchester TU monthly meeting

## Saturday, 9 November 2024 – Tentative Winchester Trout Unlimited

9:00 AM – Redbud Run restoration work session  
Bud will contact the “Redbud Regulars” with details about time and place.

## Wednesday, 20 November 2024 – Winchester Trout Unlimited BarFly

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

## Thursday, 5 December 2024

There is no Winchester TU monthly meeting in December.

## Saturday, 7 December 2024 – Tentative Winchester Trout Unlimited

9:00 AM – Redbud Run restoration work session  
Bud will contact the “Redbud Regulars” with details about time and place.

## Wednesday, 18 December 2024 – Winchester Trout Unlimited BarFly

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

## Thursday, 2 January 2025

7:00 PM – Winchester TU monthly meeting

## Saturday, 4 January 2025 – Tentative Winchester Trout Unlimited

9:00 AM – Redbud Run restoration work session  
Bud will contact the “Redbud Regulars” with details about time and place.

## Wednesday, 15 January 2025 – Winchester Trout Unlimited BarFly

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



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.

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