



Nor'East Chapter Trout Unlimited

SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

Protecting, conserving and restoring Massachusetts' Northshore coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

I cannot quite believe that Labor Day has come and gone and taken the summer with it. But here we are, heading into the fall and cooler weather. September can be beautiful, barring hurricanes and politics! So how was your fishing this summer? I can tell you a few stories about mine with my friends. But come to our meeting on September 12th and tell us your stories as well! Now we're heading into the fall, with another long winter coming toward us. We need your stories!



I had the great privilege of fishing the cinder worm hatch for striped bass in early May in Rhode Island and in mid-May on Cape Cod. The Rhode Island fishing was spotty and poor, but I had some good fishing on the Cape for a few evenings. If you've not tried the cinder worm hatch, you're missing some pretty exciting fishing for stripers on the surface in May.

I then went up to the Dennys River with Geoff Day and a bunch of NETU guys who bought that trip at our banquet, and we had three wonderful days together. The first day we fished down near the mouth of the river, catching small trout, salmon smolt, bass and sea-run brookies. The river was very low at the time. The next two days were spent paddling canoes down 14 miles of river from the dam to Robinson's Cabins where we were staying, 9 miles the first of these two days and 5 miles our last. We caught some sea-run brookies, bass and a few other species. We saw a large bunch of sea-run brookies just after we launched below the dam, and they were the largest fish we saw on the whole trip though we didn't know that then. Most of our paddling was through marshes in quite deep slow-flowing flat water in very wild and beautiful country, and then we bumped down through "bony" rapids at the end of each day in very low water. Bill Robinson, a great guide and a delightful person, said that normally the river would be a foot higher and the fishing much better as well, at that time of year. I hate to think what it looked like in August, given how little rain we've had since! My next trout trip was with Peter Vandermeulen to the Farmington River with Peter Sterndale and Phil Berkowitz from the Central Massachusetts chapter of TU (CMTU) and a mess of other people. This was Peter's and my second year doing this with them, during the sulphur hatch. The fishing was quite good, standing in very cold water surrounded by rising fish, trying to identify one's own fly among the many naturals on the water, to see when a fish came up to take it. This trip will be available to others at our next annual banquet, scheduled for 18 March 2017 at the (cont'd)

Upcoming Events

Sep 12

Rick Little "Bugs and Smelt, Favorite Flies and Streamside Musings" And BBQ dinner!!!

Mar 18, 2017

Mark your calendar:
NETU Annual Banquet
Danversport Yacht Club

Jun 16, 2017

Farmington River
Fishing Trip

DONATIONS? UNWANTED ITEMS?
Contact Bob Torkildsen if you have
any items for the raffle

Have you renewed
your TU membership?

www.tu.org

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Danversport Yacht Club! Between great food, good people, interesting conversations and fabulous fishing, what more could one want in a trip?!?

The striper fishing this season started out very well. In late May and through June, I had the best fishing for striped bass that I'd had in 6-8 years! There were lots of 10-12 inch fish, a very good sign as we've had 3 years with almost no small fish in the mix. And there were quite a few fish in the 23-27 inch range as well. My own personal catch in each of my 7-8 hour trips downriver during that month ranged between 20 and 40 fish, with 4-8 fish each day of 23-30 inches! I also hooked two fish that may have been my largest ever in the river; the first one took 250 yards of line off my reel until I got to a double nail knot that I'd not seen in my backing since I'd loaded the reel many years before where the backing went from orange to white. That knot got about 50 feet out from my rod and it failed. I hate to lose big fish from equipment failure, but that's how it is. There was no stopping that fish! I had her on for about 10-15 minutes before my line failed. It's delicious to wonder how large she actually was! I'd guess well over 40 inches, just based on her fight. The other big fish I raised grabbed my fly and boiled on the surface with an enormous splashy swirl of 6 x 8 feet in size and then turned and started off when the fly pulled out; I only had her on for 5-10 seconds or so. It was such an exhilarating experience that I have replayed many times in my mind's eye! With these very large fish, it is a good idea to strike them at least twice pretty hard at the start of the fight (which I did not do with this fish), just to set the hook into a hard jaw. In the past I've lost too many big fish for not doing this, but it's easy to forget especially in moments of such excitement!

July and August were "not June", however, quite definitely not! We had days when we got into two digits (more than 10 fish) but not very many. The water in the river got up to 76°F on the incoming tide on one of those days, which is far too warm for these fish. Now we're having some cooler

weather, the fishing ought to improve somewhat. Fall fishing for stripers can be fun! It's always "feast or famine" with the fish busting bait on the surface while terns and cormorants are going crazy. If you can get there while the activity continues, the hits are fast and furious. The torture of having the action die down as soon as you get there is also delicious, and sometimes you catch them anyway even after it stops.

But come to **our meeting on Monday, September 12th**! First, from 6:00 to 7:00PM, we'll have a nice BBQ hosted by Kenny Washburn, and then we'll hear from an interesting speaker, Rick Little of Shadcreek Flies, on "Bugs and Smelts, Favorite Flies and Streamside Musings." We've a lot of projects to discuss at our business meeting after the talk, and there are many other things going on as well. Let's set off this year on the right foot! Be there or be square...

Fred Jennings
NETU President

Photo: Fred getting ready to fish the Farmington – Peter Vandermeulen

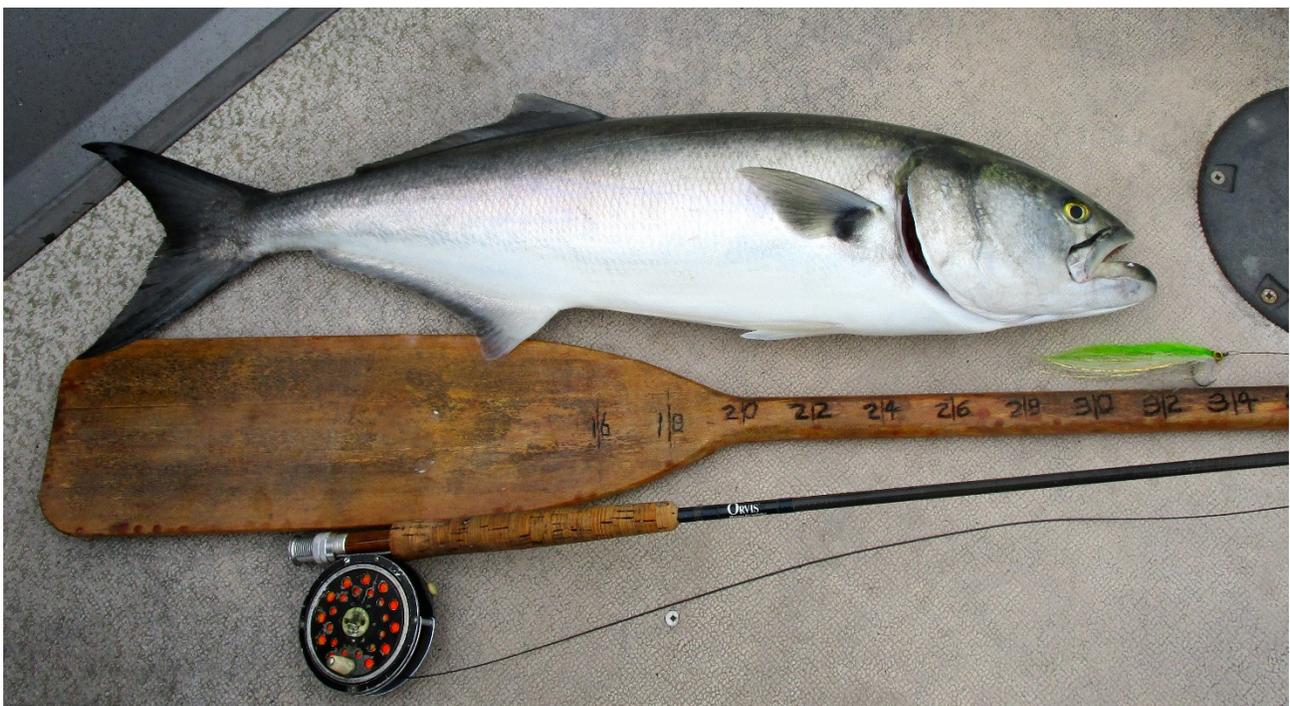


STORIES FROM MEMBERS – DAVE COHEN

In early June, TU member Larry Poirier, of Gill, and I fished the Connecticut River for American shad. Here Larry holds one of our fish from that memorable day. I've made the annual pilgrimage to Turner's Falls for more than 30 years, sometimes hitting the run near its peak, sometimes at its nadir, but this year we hit the bull's eye. When you lose track of the number of shad you've caught, you know the timing was right. -- Dave Cohen, Gloucester



I don't usually photograph my own catches, but this 33-inch bluefish, caught in July in Ipswich Bay, warranted a snapshot. Note the vintage Pflueger Medalist fly reel, a gift from my father on my 12th birthday and as reliable today as it was 60 years ago. After a decade-long decline in bluefishing on Cape Ann (I caught none last year, only one in 2014), this season proved different. -- Dave Cohen, Gloucester



GRADUATE LEVEL FLY FISHING AT THE FARMINGTON RIVER

For the last two years, Fred Jennings and I have been making our way to the Farmington River in CT. About a 2.5 hour drive from the North Shore, it actually is one of the better fishing trips to make. The Central MA TU Chapter has been putting on this trip for a few years and provided dinner and breakfast. They action of one of 3 cabins at their annual banquet and we are planning to do the same for next year – so between the two chapters we will have 6 cabins (each sleeping 3-5 people comfortably).

The Farmington is a bottom release dam controlled river and the “Wild and Scenic” section is fly fish – barbless catch and release only. In Early to mid June the Sulphur hatch is on which can be a real challenge because the fish get very picky about what they’ll take and it is extremely frustrating to stand in the middle of a pool with big fish rising everywhere and thousands of Sulphurs on the surface but they won’t take you fly no matter how close you actually try to match the hatch. Not only does the color, size and life stage (emergers or duns) seem to be important, but once you get that right, you are still one bug in the middle of dozens of others that they could hit so there is a lot of the fish taking the one right next to yours...

This year the weather was OUTSTANDING and so was the fishing. Ninety degree air temperature and 52 degree water temperature so you bake on the top and (cont’d)

Farmington River Wild & Scenic

What is the "Wild & Scenic" Designation?
In 1980, 18 miles of the main branch of the Farmington River received National Wild and Scenic River status. It is one of an 800+ rivers in New England and 100 nationwide. The U.S. Congress established the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1968 to protect outstanding rivers from the harmful effects of non Federal projects such as dams, hydroelectric facilities, and bridges.

What makes the Farmington River Wild & Scenic?
The Farmington River features natural beauty, historic sites, recreational opportunities, rare wildlife and outstanding fisheries. These values make the river a national treasure in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Protective Strategies
• The Upper Farmington River Management Plan provides a framework for promoting the river corridor by coordinated local, state and federal actions. The plan is implemented by the Farmington River Coordinating Committee whose members include the towns of Northford, Berlin, Colchester, Hartford and New Britain as well as the Farmington River Regional Association, Connecticut State Commission, National Park Service and state-of Connecticut.
• River protection through land zoning
• All federally sponsored, funded or permitted water resource projects along the NWSR require pre-approval by the National Park Service for consistency in protecting the outstanding resources for which the river was designated.

For more information, please contact the Farmington River Coordinating Committee at 860-876-8288 or visit our website at www.farmingtonriver.org.

Funding for this display provided by the Farmington River Coordinating Committee.

GRADUATE LEVEL FLY FISHING AT THE FARMINGTON RIVER

(Cont'd previous page)... freeze on the bottom. Fred Jennings was wet wading the river – which I thought was nuts (sorry Fred) and after a day and a half he admitted that it was getting a bit cold. I'm guessing hypothermia was starting to set in...

In any event, we all caught fish – not a lot – but enough to keep it interesting.



Fred Jennings. Photo by Peter Vandermeulen

The Central MA TU chapter provided breakfast and dinner and did a phenomenal job with that. Secret breakfast (you'll have to join next year to find out what's in it) and BBQ that everyone enjoyed. Peter Sterndale did most of the cooking and preparing and Phil Horowitz assisted in the effort. On Saturday evening we were joined by the members of the local Farmington River TU chapter for the BBQ and the group increased to about 15 people. The evening fishing was great and by the time night fell we were exhausted and cold – sleeping like a log in the cabins.



The local Farmington River TU chapter members. Photo by Peter Vandermeulen

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SHOWS

Date	Time	Organizer	Location and Information
Mon, Sep 12	6pm	Nor'East TU	Ipswich, MA at the IRWA



Central and NETU members.
Photo by Ian Starinovich



Peter Vandermeulen netting a fish.
Photo by Ian Starinovich

Know of any other events that our members might be interested in?
Send an email to Peter Vandermeulen, vanderm@comcast.net

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To conserve, protect and restore Massachusetts' northshore coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

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