



NEW MEXICO TROUT

September / October 2009

Inside This Issue

Fly of the Month.....	Cover	Important Dates	4
Project Healing Waters.....	Cover	The Rainbow Puzzle	5
Letter From The President	2	Fighting The Current.....	6
Conservation Season Winding Down.....	3	Letter To The Editor	7

Fly of The Month Bubble Caddis Emerger



Hook: Standard Nymph 18-12
Thread: 6/0 (Color to match abdomen)
Egg sac & halo: Cream Antron yarn tied in La Fontaine style
Abdomen: Olive green, mustard, tan, cinnamon or peacock dub

Wing: 1mm electronics packing foam tied in tent style and anchored at hook bend with a small drop of nail glue
Beadhead: gold, brass or mercury
Hackle (antennae): Partridge- 1 wrap

Once Caddis begin appearing, this is my main fly in the early evenings in the Jemez area streams. Although it has many characteristics of La Fontaine's Sparkle Caddis Pupae, the addition of the packing foam as wings give it more the element of an emerger & an adult.

Fish it wet, up and across, dead drift, mending until it starts to swing up in the current down stream. Then give it a slight lift and hold for a few seconds before skittering it up stream in small bursts. (Henry Street of the Ponderosa Winery caught more fish on this fly last year in CO during a major Green Drake hatch than on Green Drake patterns!)

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing (PHWFF) Program

By the time you are reading this, NMT's PHW program will have completed its fourth 3-week installment of casting, tying and fishing events with participants from the Albuquerque Veteran's Administration Medical Center. We had hoped to have continuous growth in experience and capability of our participants from the start of the program back in June. However, for a variety of reasons that are unique to the participants, we essentially started over for each 3-week session. We adapted to this situation easily and each group of participants brought their own unique abilities to the program and each of them had a great time as near as we could tell. Our most recent outing was again at the Brush Ranch on the Pecos. The Brush Ranch turns out to be an ideal

location for our fishing getaways. The cost is reasonable, the fishing is typically outstanding, the access for the participants, particularly those

participants caught or hooked multiple fish, adding to the quality of the overall experience, which includes a picturesque mountain environment.



with special requirements, is very easy and the facilities are great. The Brush Ranch extends terrific hospitality to our participants and they pretty much let us have the run of the place. On the last visit, the participants were able to fish the Pecos on the property because there was no conflict with guided customers and this made for an extra special visit. Almost all

This time we had 10 participants with one volunteer for every two participants. From the looks

on their faces and the comments we received, this was a highly successful outing. One of our participants is pictured at the Brush Ranch with Dave Patton. All participants caught or hooked nice fish, a couple in the 17-18 inch range and were able to take fish on the surface and by stripping a variety of nymphs and streamers.

Letter From The President

Rudy Rios, NMT President

WOW! Sure seems like the 2009 year is just flying by. It's already September and much of the fly fishing in New Mexico is finally beginning to pick back up. Is it just me or did this year seem like it was hotter? There were so many days I sure did wish I was up in the Jemez or on the Upper Costilla getting out of the heat. Well that's behind us now and I am sure that many of us will be back in our favorite spots looking for the Brown that broke you off in the spring. I know I will. Remember to tie up some favorite October Caddis patterns when you head out.

This past summer had many of the New Mexico Trout members busy with conservation projects, youth fly tying and casting clinics, as well as helping our vets heal from old wounds, Tingley Beach and many other worthy projects.

Ron Loehman had several projects of importance with Comanche Creek topping that list. The USFS Jemez Kids Fishing Day drew over 200 kids from Jemez, Cuba, Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe, Tesuque and even as far away as Wisconsin! OK, those folks were on vacation, but had a great time too! Many of the New Mexico Trout Youth Fly Tyers Group were on hand to help with instruction on tying their own version of the woolly bugger and with casting a fly rod. Many of the youth were first timers to this event and I think after it was over all seemed very pleased. A big round of applause should go to Jo Wargo. She is with the Forest Service and made this a success.

Dave Patton has been heading up the Project Healing Waters Program and has been very instrumental in getting supplies, rods, fly tying equipment and volunteers into the program at The VA Hospital here in ABQ. Without his leadership and vision this program would have gone into the abyss. Next time you see Dave, give him a friendly handshake and big pat on the back for all the work he is doing with Project Healing Waters. He could use your help too, so email him at pattondj@comcast.net to find out how you too can support Project Healing Waters.

This year was a very wonderful year for over 50 kids who were participants in the Valles Caldera Fly Fishing Clinics, sponsored by NM Trout in partnership with the Caldera. Seven NMT volunteers gave up their entire weekend to spend helping youth and adults learn about entomology, casting, rigging, matching the hatch and how to have just a really fun time on some of the best fishing in NM right in the Caldera. Several kids were so impressed by our volunteers' skills that they came back for several visits to learn more. This is a worthy project since NMT allows the Caldera to recycle the monies generated from these clinics back into projects that support youth fly fishing on the Caldera. If you're interested in this program, contact me for more info (riosrje@gmail.com).

All said and done, this past year has been good for the minds and bodies of all conservation-minded fishermen in New Mexico Trout. The rivers flowed well, the bugs were plentiful, and the catching was stupendous. Now we have to get into the mode of the upcoming Fly Tying Symposium and the 2010 Conclave is just around the corner. If you know someone you would like to see tying at the symposium, then contact Deward Yocum dryocum@hotmail.com, me, or any of the other board members and let us know your thoughts.

I hope to see you at one of the upcoming monthly meetings for 2009-2010. Please go to the website for more info on any upcoming events.

As always if you wish to contact me about a project you feel NM Trout should be involved with, I'm at 505-730-1719 or riosrje@gmail.com.

Tight lines and Buenas Hatches!

2009-2010 NM TROUT DIRECTORS

President

Rudy Rios 505-730-1719
riosrje@aol.com

Vice President

Deward Yocum 505-866-0790
dryocum@hotmail.com

Secretary

Pat Milesosky 505-266-8904
pmilesh@swcp.com

Treasurer

Lee Widgren 505-884-7501
bobwidgren@msn.com

Policy Advisor

Jerry Burton 505-822-8309
jera10@aol.com

Publicity and PR

Andy Perez 505-975-1298
powderdayz007@aol.com

Newsletter Coordinator

Milt McConnell 505-453-5353
miltmccconnell@yahoo.com

Fund Raising

Jim Young 505-293-0674
jaynm38@aol.com

Conservation

Ron Loehman 505-265-3179
loehman@unm.edu

Youth

Rudy Rios 505-730-1719
riosrje@aol.com

Webmaster

Brian Green
newmexicotrout@gmail.com

Productive 2009 Conservation Project Season Winding Down

By Ron Loehman, Conservation Chairman

As I write this in mid September, we are nearing the end of a very successful season of conservation projects. Consistent with our charter, we provide volunteer labor and funding to support "preservation and enhancement of trout fishing in New Mexico's waters through restoration of riparian habitats". This past year we partnered and worked all over northern New Mexico with a wide range of government and citizen groups, such as the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, the New Mexico Environment Department, New Mexico Game and Fish Department, the Valles Caldera Trust, Trout Unlimited, the Quivera Coalition, the New Mexico and Albuquerque Wildlife Federations, and the Volunteers for the Outdoors. These projects usually are on weekends and they are a very rewarding way to give back something to the places that support trout and that make fly fishing such a great experience for all of us.

Highlights of the past season include:

Early April: Rio Guadalupe and Cebolla cleanup. We picked up about six truckloads of trash above the Gilman tunnels the weekend before FR 376 was opened for the season.

Late April: Capulin Creek trout survey.

With staff from the NM Game and Fish Dept., I hiked down to the bottom of Capulin Canyon in Bandelier National Monument to do an electroshock survey. The two hundred RG Cutthroat trout (RGCT) that were introduced in 2006 have increased to an estimated 2000 fish in seven miles of the creek.

Late May: Members' BBQ and project work on Peralta Creek. Working with staff from the Santa Fe National Forest (SFNF), we built a large cattle and elk enclosure on part of the creek and constructed barriers to prevent vehicle access. These structures will reduce pressure on a small population of native Rio Grande Cutthroat trout. The BBQ lunch provided by Rudy Rios was one of the best in memory.

Mid June: Rio de las Vacas restoration. We joined the NM Environment Dept. and the Albuquerque Wildlife Federation to build cattle enclosures and erosion control structures on the upper Vacas. This is an on-going project led by Bill Zeedyk that is producing a noticeable improvement in fish habitat.

Mid July: Jemez Creek trail repair and construction. We worked with SFNF staff and Volunteers for the Outdoors members to rebuild a section of the trail that was eroding and contributing sediment to Jemez Creek near the East Fork trailhead.

Mid August: Comanche Creek riparian restoration. This is the continuation of a multi-year, multi-organization project on a beautiful creek in the Valle Vidal that supports a native RGCT population. We were part of a large group directed by Bill Zeedyk that built erosion control structures, repaired elk enclosures, and planted willows.

Mid September: Valles Caldera trout census. Several of us worked with Valles Caldera Trust staff to do an electroshock survey of trout populations on the Rio San Antonio and the East Fork of the Jemez.

Everyone who has worked on these projects has really enjoyed them. The work is structured so that there are things to do for every level of physical ability. The projects are very social and they give us opportunities to meet new people, to exchange fish stories, and to get to know places we might not otherwise visit. Just about every one of our members brings a fly rod and we have a great time doing some fish sampling after the project work is over.

PHILMONT FLY FISHING

Waite Phillips, Philmont's benefactor, was an enthusiastic and accomplished fly fisherman. He spent many days, along with America's most prominent citizens, fly rod in hand, fishing the small streams and lakes of "God's Country".

You can enjoy the same quality experience at the Philmont Fly Fishing and Hiking Fellowship held each year in October.

Guests arrive on Friday afternoon. A reception will be held at the Casa del Gavilan Historic Inn hosted by the Great Southwest Council.

Fly-fishing and hiking in Philmont's backcountry will begin early Saturday and then again early Sunday. For only \$400/person, all meals, lodging and backcountry transportation to the fishing sites will be provided.

Guest activities will include a tour of the Villa Philmonte, Seton Memorial Library, Philmont Trading Post, and a walking tour of Cimarron. Housing Friday and Saturday will be in duplexes at Philmont's Training Center. Meals will be served at the Philmont Training Center Dining Hall. Fish the Cimarron River and streams in the nearby National Forest, complete with a guide.

PARTICIPATION FEE INCLUDES:

- "Welcome" Reception & Dinner
- Awards Ceremony
- Guide Service
- Food
- Use of Fly Fishing Equipment – rod, reel, some flies. These are limited so please bring your own rod and reel — 5 to 6 wt or less.)

PARTICIPANTS ARE TO BRING:

- Personal Clothing
- Waders (optional)
- Toiletry Items
- Water Bottle or Canteen
- Flashlight
- Hat/Rain Suit
- Sunglasses (polarized)

You may wish to bring your camera, a small daypack, sunscreen, etc.

The program concludes on Sunday with breakfast and bag lunch to take with you.



The Rainbow Puzzle

By Jerry Burton

The client was probably surprised when he caught a six-inch rainbow and I really got excited over it. Of course, he had been catching 15 to 20 inch rainbows all day and a goodly number of 6 to 14 inch brookies. The reason for my excitement was that the six-inch rainbow was a wild stream bred fish; unlike the larger stocked rainbows he had been catching. To me it was an indication that after years of stocking, the stocked rainbows were finally showing some sign of natural reproduction.

I have often been puzzled by the lack of natural reproduction of rainbow trout in most of our streams in New Mexico. Most streams are stocked with thousands of rainbows every year, yet it is very uncommon to catch wild stream-bred rainbows. Is the reason a lack of suitable spawning habitat? Or is it competition and predation from the stream-bred browns that do very well here in New Mexico? Perhaps the reason could be that the timing of peak spring flows are wrong and the fry are washed downstream and destroyed. It could even be that rainbow trout, which have a strong homing instinct that tells them to return to the same spot to spawn where they were spawned, just can't get back to the hatchery.

During the 27 years I have fished for trout in most of New Mexico's trout streams, I have noted examples of all of the above factors that may have been responsible for a lack of rainbow trout natural reproduction in our streams. I have noted in the Vallecitos for example, that above a barrier that has kept

brown trout from the upper reaches of the stream that the rainbows and brook trout do very well. Yet, on the upper East Fork of the Jemez, on the Valles Caldera, the browns and rainbows both seem to survive in almost equal numbers. However, San Antonio creek on the Caldera is dominated by browns. Is this a classic competition and predation situation?

I usually discount any consideration of a lack of suitable spawning habitat as a reason for a lack of rainbow trout spawning. If the brown trout can find suitable spawning areas in the fall, the rainbows should be able to find it in the spring. However, rainbows are early spring spawners usually laying their eggs in the gravel before the peak of our runoff, whereas our native cutthroats start to spawn after the peak of the runoff. This factor could explain why populations of cuttbows do well in some streams. I have noted on some small streams that have wild rainbow populations that farmers reduce peak spring flows when they divert water for irrigation. Perhaps this is the reason the rainbows are able to reproduce successfully in these streams.

Overall, in my experience, it appears that once brown trout become established in a stream it may become incapable of maintaining populations of other trout. This does not however fully explain why some of the upper reaches of a stream that is free of brown trout, also does not contain reproducing populations of rainbows even though they have been stocked for many years. Thus the puzzle.

Fighting the Current

By Rob Croft

The pursuit of fish with rod, line, and fly is rife with challenges. Challenges are common to life as well. By no means can the period we call life and the sport of fly fishing compare as equals, but the contemplative, calm, and quiet nature of fishing does lend itself to the reflection of the similarities which may exist.

The line had been hanging below me in the current for a time. The trout struck without warning, shaking me back to reality, back from my inattentiveness. Nothing had been done to deserve the catch. My mind had been elsewhere, daydreaming; focusing on the features of the distant peak, or the passing flock of geese on wing, or maybe the hypnotic sounds of the river had lulled me away.

The healthy tail water rainbow came to hand several minutes later. He was stocky, well colored, and slightly above average in length and girth for this stretch of the river. I slid him into the quiet water near a back eddy and he hesitated briefly before disappearing into deeper confines. Only then did I look up to the cottonwoods on the far bank. Their fall leaves were a deep yellow with a few already scattered about the ground. My thoughts then began to wander again, reflecting back several months previous.

In early summer, my wife's illness had struck without warning. Nothing had been done to deserve its attention. The call came in the early morning to my office phone. Michelle's speech was slurred and faltering. We rushed to the emergency room, focused attention was given to her condition, and a battery of tests was completed. Late in the afternoon, the first year resident doctor approached bedside. He proclaimed, without emotion, that she had not experienced a stroke, but that imaging pointed towards a probable multiple sclerosis diagnosis.

Fishing had always been an activity of forgetfulness for me and it became even more so once Michelle's health began to falter. I found myself on the river, nearly weekly, if only for a few hours. These weekly visits continued from the fall season into the winter months for me.

Winter was my favorite time to be out. Gone were the crowds and I could often find solitude which had become a rarity for the famed river. Winter fishing did have its challenges. The ground was usually heavily laden with snow and it collected on the felt of my wading boots without reprieve. It slowed my steps, my legs heavy, but entering the fluid river would quickly wash it away. Several hours in the current left my feet numb and my legs stiff. The wind could pickup by mid-day, biting at my hands and exposed cheeks. Midge hatches were abundant during the winter months and tying on these tiny fly patterns in the chill could be trying. The Wyoming cold stole the dexterity from my fingers, turning what was a simple task into a complex fumbling for completion.

The winter months also brought challenges for Michelle. Her speech had returned to normalcy, but right sided weakness now came in replacement. Walking became tiresome, the foot dropped, and the upper leg muscles reactions slowed due to shorted out nerve responses. The cold winter wind bit through her clothing, leaving her leg muscles tight, spastic, for days. Michelle's hands once grasped and wielded shears to trim hair. The disease now stole the dexterity from her fingers. Through pure will she gave a few haircuts to friends and family; the effort usually leaving v-shaped bloodied nips from the scissor points on the knuckles of her opposing hand.

That winter we came to realize that this illness could present many new and unexpected challenges. Each day could bring a new first, a new "short" in the nerve wiring, in which we were indeed novices at handling and understanding.

Years previous I had fished the North Platte for the first time. I was a novice fly fisherman with much to learn. My equipment was inadequate and available fly patterns insufficient for the task at hand. I entered the water in rubber hip waders. The rounded rocks were moss covered so wading was treacherous and dangerous in the hard rubber soled boots. I soon tired of the risky effort and confined myself to the bank. Moving upriver, I reached its upper narrow bounds where the water was fast, but the seams at least reachable from the shore.

I fished for some time in the upper canyon until the first rainbow of the day took at the lower end of a drift. The fish was the largest I had ever experienced on a fly rod. He immediately broke into a strong current flow and surged below, as I stood on the bank unresponsive, watching the orange backing dissipate from the reel, until he was gone, the line limp. His escape left me wanting more, but also brought with it the realization that I had so much yet to learn and understand.

Since then, additional years of experience has drastically increased my success in such situations. The proper equipment has been acquired, rubber hip boots discarded for stable felt soled wading boots. I also have learned to adapt to the fight, directing the fish away from the heavy currents if possible, and racing downstream to keep the trout from getting too far below me.

Likewise, a number of years have passed since the onset of my wife's illness. Over this period, we both have learned to accommodate and adapt to the challenges that her health condition presents to daily life. An increased appreciation for the simple things in life and for the good times has resulted. Like the simultaneous growth in my passion of fly fishing, the passing time with its accompanying experiences and challenges has left us better able to fight the currents which beat against our legs in this river called life.

Letter to the Editor

In Jerry Burton's interesting article about the Aldo Leopold note, there is a reference to a fly rod from UL&A. My guess is that he wrote VL & A. VL&A was the abbreviation for Von Lengerke & Antoine, a very well known high end sporting goods store in Chicago which was founded in 1891 and who among other things, retailed fly rods made by various makers.... some under their own label. Their old catalogs are now collectors items. They were acquired by Abercrombie & Fitch in 1929, but continued doing business under the old name until 1959. They had a prime location in downtown Chicago and I used to shop there in the early '50's when I was going to medical school.

Donald Stehr MD

COMING SOON...

The New Fall/Winter New Mexico Trout Clothing Line. Bob Day says "I know you are anxious to update your fishing habiliments" so the new line will be featured at the October NMT meeting. I understand that Cabelas has been making discreet inquiries regarding our success in having what the best dressed fisherpeople desire. We work hard to anticipate what our clientel desires so make plans now to attend the meeting and update your wardrobe with the latest creations!!!

CASH - CHECKS - VISA, MasterCard and American Express accepted





P.O. Box 3276
Albuquerque, NM 87190-3276

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ALBUQUERQUE, NM
PERMIT NO. 1616

Quote of The Month

“Adopt the pace of nature:
her secret is patience.” *– Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Editor's Note

When submitting articles for the newsletter, please remember to include a TITLE, YOUR NAME, and the DATE. DEADLINE for next issue entry is OCTOBER 31, 2009.

We prefer MSWord, but can read most any file format.
Email: miltmconnell@yahoo.com

New Mexico Trout is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of trout fishing in New Mexico's waters through restoration of riparian habitats and through the education of the public about trout fishing and the value of trout habitats. New Mexico Trout is a 501-c3 non-profit organization, and we welcome your tax deductible contributions.

