



NEW MEXICO TROUT

Newsletter

Oct-Nov 2012

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Friends,

Winter has arrived and NMT activities have begun to pick up to help you fill the winter hours with thoughts of fishing when our fingers don't freeze in the chilly water. Our regular monthly general meetings have reconvened on the second Tuesday of each month, officer nominations and elections are in process, and memberships renewals are soon due. Club volunteers are planning participation in the Bob Gerding Show, a Fly Fishing Film event, and of course, our annual Conclave. If you want to help with any of these events, please contact me. Your support will be greatly appreciated, and will help you get into the spirit of fishing!

C'Ya,
Pat Mileschosky

Conservation: Beaver Promote the Health of Coldwater Streams

by Ron Loehman, Conservation Chair

Over the past several years I have been watching the progress of an example of natural riparian restoration on the lower Rio Guadalupe. The section in question is below the Gilman Tunnels and is characterized by a downcut stream channel with just a narrow band of willows along the banks that can provide shade to lower water temperature. Due to the downcutting, the area along the stream that was once flood plain now contains only upland plants such as Apache Plume, drought tolerant grasses, juniper, and Siberian elm.



In spite of the apparently poor habitat for them, there are beaver in this part of the Guadalupe. I've never seen one, but there is ample evidence of their presence in the chewed off stubs of coyote willow and occasional stashes of branches pushed into a muddy bank. Property owners further downstream report that beaver at times come all the way down to feed on their trees at night. Russian olives seem particularly attractive. Until the past couple of years, however, there has been no sign that the beaver have been applying their well-known hydraulic engineering skills to modify the stream.



Starting about three years ago I began to notice that one of the streamside trails that I hike was occasionally flooded. Since this was in an area separated from the stream by at least a hundred feet of really dense Apache Plume growth I didn't immediately explore the cause and instead just started using a detour. Over time, the flooding has become more extensive and more permanent. The vegetation in the flooded area has changed significantly over time. Where before it was dry and brown it is now lush and green. Willows have sprouted up

where none were growing before. There are hummocks of some of the tallest side oats gramma grass that I've ever seen. The area clearly is transforming to a marshland. The apparent cause is the beaver, but since the area is fairly inaccessible it was difficult to tell for certain.

About two months ago I decided to find out how this change was being accomplished. Because thick vegetation in the wet area made it nearly impenetrable, I put on my waders and entered the stream well below and made my way upstream. As I walked up the Guadalupe I began to see where small side channels dug through thick streamside vegetation were returning water to the river from some sort of upstream diversion. The returning water was clear and cold. Because of the river gradient and the downcut banks, it was hard to imagine how beaver could get the water four to five feet uphill to the marshy area, so I began to suspect some sort of human intervention. However, I underestimated the beaver.



Eventually I rounded a bend and saw an amazing sight- a chest-high beaver dam. The beaver had accomplished the water diversion by raising the river level upstream

of their dam by about four feet. Above the dam they have dug outlets that run the water out of the stream and through a network of channels that flow down parallel to the river, creating the marsh. The water depth above the dam is only a little greater than below, so the dam is retaining about three feet of sediment. It seems unlikely that the dam was built in only a single season. I suspect the beaver have progressively raised the dam height over several years until the water level was high enough to begin their diversion project.



None of these observations about beaver is new and I'm sure that they will seem old hat to many of you. It has excited me because I have been able to see their work gradually unfold to produce amazing results in a relatively short time. The beaver will do what they have evolved to do if we just let them get about their business. So far I haven't seen evidence of increased numbers of trout, but it may be too soon. That stretch of the Guadalupe doesn't have many fish because of high summer water temperatures, low

amounts of cover, and probably limited food sources. The beaver engineering should improve all of those characteristics.

In conclusion, here is a short summary of some of the ways beaver benefit cold water streams.

- Beaver dams raise the water table and promote riparian vegetation growth.
- Overhanging willows and other riparian vegetation provide shade and lower water temperatures.
- Riparian vegetation supports insect life, which is food for fish.
- Beaver dams retain sediment and reduce turbidity downstream.
- Beaver dams and associated marshes retain, slow, and disperse seasonal runoff water, which promotes aquifer recharge and keeps streamside springs flowing longer..
- Beaver ponds provide food and shelter for fish and other aquatic wildlife.

Support Your Local Beaver!

NMT Elections

The annual election of officers for New Mexico Trout is imminent. The officers to be elected this year are President and Secretary. The term of both officers is 2 years. Descriptions of the officers' duties can be found in our Bylaws, published on our website (newmexicotrout.org). Call for nominations and ballots will be sent out by email and will be due in December. Please participate in this important activity.

Thanks!

NMT Board of Directors

Been There Done That

by Pat Milesosky, NMT President

About fifteen years ago I gave up on television. With the exception of college football I found very little worth watching on TV. All of the good sitcoms had gone the way of the buffalo. Everything had to be politically correct. Ugh! To pass the time and relax I started reading, especially during the winter when the days are short and the nights are cold.

The authors I enjoy are what Bob Widgren calls "hair, teeth and eyeballs" writers. Hair, teeth and eyeballs flying all over the place. Tom Clancy was the beginning, followed by Vince Flynn, Brad Thor and Lee Child (Jack Reacher). All provided good stories. Eventually I read all the author's offerings, in some cases twice, and looked for others. Not finding any, I remembered a few of the flyfishing authors that I had read many years ago. The best in my humble opinion is John Gierach who penned several entertaining books describing his fishing travels and travails through the years. As luck would have it, I still have a few of his books and started reading "Death, Taxes and Leaky Waders".

One of the short stories is "The Big Empty River". As I read, the description of the river, the Henry's Fork, became oh so familiar. John described his first trip, running to the fabled Henry's Fork with an unstrung fly rod. My initial trip started with a barely controlled walk into Mike Lawson's Henry's Fork Angler shop to buy a three day permit, several killer flies and then a mad dash to the river just in time to hear the first thunder clap and look up to see the first bolt of lightning zip across the dark sky. Now it is a given that standing in a body of water waving a nine foot graphite rod in the air while lightning



Henry's Fork, courtesy Idaho Tourism

dances in the sky ain't the smartest thing to do, so Tom Hablitzel and I hot footed it back to the car and watched as our first day on the Fork went south. If only we had just looked up in the sky before we bought our permits we would have saved that day's fees. Oh well, we had a severe case of tunnel vision and the Henry's Fork was at the end of that tunnel.



John talks of the moose that frequent the river and I thought back to that first trip when a moose came out of the trees behind me and began snorting loudly. It didn't take me long to understand that I was standing in the exact place that he was going to cross the river. It also didn't take me long to vacate that spot

either. If you're not aware... moose are BIG animals and they are very used to getting what they want, when they want it.

Later in the story, John describes fishing the famous Green Drake hatch to very large sipping trout. My first time fishing that hatch saw me shaking as I tried to put one of those big flies in a feeding trout's lane, then ripping it away from the slow take of a huge rainbow. Needless to say, he disappeared after that rookie mistake. As luck would have it, several other trout quit feeding for the same reason. My shaking only increased with each fish and increased to earthquake proportions when I hooked and landed the first rainbow.

Tom and I fished the Brown Drakes in the evening as John describes. Those bugs seemed to be the size of small sailboats in the fading light. Easily seen far upstream I would follow the float of one which would be ignored by several trout feeding in the same lane and then nailed by a fish twenty yards farther downstream. HUH! Turns out different fish were keying only on one type of bug, a spinner, cripple or an emerger, and ignoring all others. Trying to figure that out as the sun fades away will make you nuts!



Trout Sipping - Photo By: Louis Cahill

And then there were the whitefish. I would spend precious time working a fish who would finally take my offering only to net a whitefish. Yeah they were big scrappy fish, but they were not big scrappy trout! Ask me what the "Montana handshake" is and I'll explain the demise of more than a few whitefish.

Reading the rest of the story brought back a flood of great memories. The subsequent trips with Mike Maurer, Mike Cieslak and others were outstanding. Like I said... been there, done that.

My current read is "Bonefishing" which was written by Randall Kaufmann many years ago. Why this book? As retirement would have it, my family (Patty, Brian, Katelyn, Audrey and Landon) will be spending Christmas in the Bahamas. While everybody has to return to their jobs here in Albuquerque after the holidays, I will be staying for the month of January, possibly February and maybe, just maybe, March, April, May and June. Then I can say... been there, done that also!

Membership Renewal

Bob Widgren, Membership Chair

It's that time again...time to renew your New Mexico Trout membership. NMT's memberships are based on the calendar year; January to December. There are a variety of levels of membership:

- Regular - \$30
- Family - \$35
- Junior - \$15
- Lifetime - \$500
- Individual sponsor - \$60
- Business - \$150
- Corporate sponsor - \$250



Note: If you have already received your 2013 membership card or are a NMT Life member, you do not need to renew. If you're not sure, email us at newmexicotrout@gmail.com.

You can join or renew your membership in two ways: send in payment with a membership form, or online through the NMT PayPal account (you do not need to have a PayPal account; we accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express).

Follow this link for information & renewal: [Membership Renewal](#)

We would appreciate your effort to pay online as it will be 'The Green Thing To Do' and will save money in our mailings, postage and printing costs. Thank you.

Active members regularly participate in a variety of educational activities that include:

- Monthly meetings
- Annual educational conclaves
- Fishing clinics and fly-tying workshops
- Conservation & habitat protection and enhancement projects

All of these sessions provide opportunities for members to get together. New flyfishers meet more experienced fishers. People find others with similar interests. We welcome your renewal and thank you for your continued support.

After you have renewed, your 2013 membership card will be mailed to you.

Fly of the Month - Drowned Turkey

Fly and photo by Hans Weilenmann
Used by permission

Hook: Kamasan B175 #14
Thread: Benecchi 12/0, black
Rib: Polar Flash, gold, graduated
Body: Turkey barbs, black
Wing: Turkey slip, black, folded
Veiling: Llama mix, olive - very sparse
Head: Ostrich, black, twisted around tying thread



More flies by Hans are at

<http://www.danica.com/flytier/hweilenmann/hweilenmann.htm>

More NMT patterns at <http://newmexicotrout.org/archives/category/fly-patterns>

Meet the Board

Ron Loehman, Conservation Chair

Ron Loehman's position as Conservation Chairman for New Mexico Trout is allowing him to combine his life-long interests in the outdoors, fishing, and conservation of natural resources. He particularly appreciates the opportunity to coordinate the work of the Club's enthusiastic volunteers and to see all the good they achieve. Ron retired as a Senior Scientist from Sandia Labs two years ago, but still maintains his faculty appointment in the Chemical Engineering Department at UNM. His favorite trout streams are the more remote parts of the Guadalupe, San Antonio, East Fork, and Cebolla that require some hiking to reach.



Calendar

Fly Tyer's Roundtable

Every Monday, 7:00pm excluding holidays

Sandia Prep Lab classroom

The Flytyer's Roundtable brings new and experienced tyers together to exchange ideas, techniques and materials.

NMT General Meeting

11 Dec, 7:30pm

Commons building of Sandia Preparatory School

<http://newmexicotrout.org/get-involved/meetings>

Bob Gerding Outdoor Adventures Hunting & Fishing Show

8-10 Feb 2013

Manuel Lujan Center - Expo NM

<http://bobsoutadv.com/>

Fly Fishing Film Tour

22 Feb 2013

Location and details to be announced

NM Trout Conclave

2 Mar 2013

Sandia Preparatory School

Featuring Landon Mayer and Pat Dorsey

Calendar also on NMT website at <http://newmexicotrout.org/calendar>



"If, as I suspect trout, fishing is somewhat of a disease, then it is also somewhat of a therapy in itself."

~Tom Sutcliffe M.D.~

NMTrout Business Sponsors

Yearly business membership entails the sponsor to a link and an ad in the NMT Newsletter. Contact the membership chair for more information if you or a business owner you know would like to become a sponsor.

[Land of Enchantment Guides](#)

[M & W Bar Ranch](#)

[Los Pinos Fly Shop](#)

[Rio Costilla Park](#)



[San Miguel River Products](#)

[Charlie's Sporting Goods](#)

[Cimarroncita Ranch Retreat](#)

About Us

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 education of the public about trout fishing and the value of trout habitats. New Mexico Trout is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization, and we welcome your tax deductible contributions.



Comments/Suggestions

If you have comments or suggestions about the Newsletter, or an article you would like to submit, please email to newmexicotrout@gmail.com. Articles will be considered based on suitability, general interest and succinctness (please limit content to approximately 500 words). Deadline for the next issue is 1 Dec.