

# The Salmon Run



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A Publication of the Saco River Salmon Club, P.O. Box 115, Saco, Maine 04072, 207.282.6985

## The President's Corner By Dan Bonville

A Happy New Year to you all and I hope that you and your families all had a nice holiday week.

I was visiting Bob Monroe just before Christmas and he was remembering all of the blessings that he has had during his lifetime. Bob is recovering from his last winter's stroke and though it's been a long hard haul for him and Lillian, he is thinking back fondly to all of the wonderful things he's done and places he's been, especially with the Saco River Salmon Club. His fly fishing trips to Rangeley, to Quebec, to Florida, to Yellowstone National Park, and to the Beaverkill and Farmington Rivers are foremost in his thoughts. His friends made while working in our hatchery, including John Blunt, Nick Sibilia, Skip Paolini, Harvey Patry, and all of the children that he has given tours to are right up there in his memories. Hiking with Mike Arsenault in the Katahdin region, harvesting wild grapes with Chuck Clark, and meditation on the Beaverkill in the pouring rain with Greg Kimball bring a remembering smile to his face and a sparkling to his eyes.

Like Bob, most of us have had many blessings that we too should be thankful for.

I thank all of you for being there and helping our salmon club reach its goals for everything from the general meetings, the directors and their works, to the hatchery crews and stocking work. Our outdoor programs have been a great success and many of us have had a wonderful 2005 fishing season searching for, casting to, and sometimes catching Maine's trout, salmon, bass, pike, pickerel, bluegills, stripers, and bluefish. I've been blessed over and over again this past year. Thanks, Bob, for helping me remember!

Our upcoming year is already partially planned as our 2006 calendar of events shows later in this newsletter. If any of you would like to plan a trip, work in the hatchery, help plan our annual banquet, attend one of our lessons or gatherings, or help in our stocking next spring, please call me (207-625-7693) or any of the other directors and we will count you in.

Again, Happy New Year y'all!

## December Meeting – A Time to Re-connect By Mark Woodruff

Our December social meeting was well attended making it a good time to find out what people have been doing and what is needed in the life of the Club. The evening began with an excellent meal prepared by Lynne Jackson of "On the Corner Café" in Biddeford. Dave Bean (National Marine Fisheries Service) gave an update on our egg request. He anticipated that with the need for eggs for smolt stocking in the Penobscot River we should expect fewer eggs for our fry program. Nonetheless, there will be two deliveries in February from Green Lake National Fish Hatchery totaling 500,000 to 600,000 eyed eggs.

Our own smolt program has suffered a major setback. A fish count done in November by Bob Marsh (Pine Tree Hatchery) and Dick Neal found that there were only 1,000 parr remaining. Given this small number and the uncertainty for why the losses occurred, the directors decided to release these fish as soon as possible. To give some perspective on the situation, Atlantic salmon smolt are not unlike teenagers. Both are in a very challenging period in their lives; conditions have to be just right for them to mature. I commend Bob and Dick for all their efforts to modify feeding, warming water temperatures, and keeping the tanks clean. Also, thanks to Frank Connelly, Sue Polans, and Tim Linley (MariCal) for your expert advice. We've learned from the experience.

Following discussion on the need for volunteers (see the separate article,) we had a long overdue raffle just in time for Christmas. Our president Dan Bonville was the lucky winner of a Loomis 9 foot, 8 weight fly rod. After some grumbling and accusations that the raffle had been rigged, Dan proudly and quickly accepted his prize. Fortunately for him, he repaid us with a great slide presentation of his August 2005 trip to Yellowstone Park. Fishing mostly for cut-throat trout Dan, Larry Orme, Mark Folan, and others had a great time in the park enjoying its spectacular scenery and wildlife. Dan pointed out the prohibition of guides in the park, but that nice sized cut-throats could be taken a short hike away from the road crossings where most people fish. As can be expected with any Bonville show there were many pictures and good stories of antelope, grizzly bears, mountain goats, geysers, mountains, and hard-to-get-to streams. Thanks to everyone for coming that evening. It made for a good time.

The next membership meeting will be at the Trinity Church in Saco on Wednesday, January 18, at 6pm. Our guest speaker is

Topher Brown, outdoor sports writer, Montana and Colorado guide, and L.L. Bean Fly Fishing School instructor. Topher will talk about fishing for salmon across the world.

## Dues Notice – 2006

*By RJ Mere*

It's that time of year again. Dues and hatchery donations submitted by our generous members cover about forty per cent of our annual expenses. All dues and hatchery donations are tax deductible. If you have prepaid, a '2006' or 'Life' will follow your name. If you missed paying your dues last year just send your 2006 dues. Past dues are voluntary on your part. Annual rates now range from ten dollars for students and seniors, to twenty dollars for individual memberships, and thirty dollars for students and seniors. Life memberships remain at three hundred dollars.

## Hatchery Donations

*By RJ Mere*

Voluntary donations by members and non-members comprise a vital part of our annual revenue. They come from members, nonmembers, volunteers, organizations, or just plain people who are in tune with our mission and support our unique hatchery operation. With our new supersmolt program, we need your donations more than ever. Each dues payer will receive a membership card and a hatchery decal will be sent to each donor. Will you help us? Prompt payments will help cover our heaviest operational expenses from January through June. Thank you!

## Volunteer

*By Mark Woodruff*

As we gear-up for the arrival of our eggs in February, please take time to consider how you can volunteer to the Club. Following are specific needs.

Fish Friends is one of the best ways that we have been able to spread the word about our restoration effort. The Club in conjunction with the Atlantic Salmon Federation sponsor classroom incubators in area schools and tours of our hatchery. In the past, Lionel Bouthot had single-handedly run this educational program. Since he will be stepping down from this effort we need one or more people to lead our program. The time commitment for classroom visits and tours is up to those who take the lead. Please contact Mark Woodruff (929-5300) or Mary Jo Barrett of the Atlantic Salmon Federation (email: ; phone 725-2833).

Egg picking and water quality monitoring have a perennial need for new volunteers. It is important to have several people who can volunteer once or twice a week to pick eggs. This spreads the load and keeps the incubators clean so that we have as many fry as possible for stocking in May. Please contact Mark Woodruff (929-5300) or leave a message at the hatchery (282-6985).

Hatchery maintenance is a priority for the directors. Our eggs have a good survival rate and we receive commendations

from federal and state hatchery operators for the facility's cleanliness. This has come about because of a group of dedicated people. Those interested in maintaining the hatchery can expect to volunteer for monthly work days or weekly to take care of projects that need to be addressed quickly. Please contact Mark Woodruff (929-5300) or leave a message at the hatchery (282-6985). ***Let's keep up the good work – volunteer!***

## NEWS RELEASE/COMMUNIQUÉ

**November 23, 2005**

**Interactions Between Fertile Farmed and Wild Salmon are Cause for Alarm**

St. Andrews...Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) researchers have recovered 45 escaped farmed Atlantic salmon from four streams and rivers in Charlotte County, N.B. over the past week at the height of spawning season for wild salmon. Despite Cooke Aquaculture's assurances in many news reports that the farmed salmon that escaped from their site were not mature, 43 (95%) of the salmon that ASF has recovered so far are definitely sexually mature.

"The record needs to be set straight," said ASF's President Bill Taylor. "These 100,000 plus farmed escapees recently released from Cooke aquaculture have the potential to greatly harm wild salmon, especially those that are already struggling for survival in the Bay of Fundy and Gulf of Maine rivers."

Research arrives at the opposite conclusion to comments attributed to Nell Halse of Cooke Aquaculture in N.B.'s Telegraph Journal, which indicate that "even if they were (sexually mature), there is no conclusive evidence that the spawn of farmed and wild fish would be unfit to survive." One such comprehensive research program was carried out by Dr. Philip McGinnity of the Marine Institute and Prof. Andy Ferguson of the School of Biology and Biochemistry, Queen's University, Belfast, Ireland, and released on March 15, 2003.

Entitled, Accidental and Deliberate Introductions of Farm Salmon Result in Reduced Survival and Fitness and Could Lead to Extinction of Vulnerable Wild Populations of Atlantic Salmon, their research took 10 years to complete and they examined multiple families of both first and second generation wild and farmed salmon hybrids in freshwater and in the ocean.

Dr. McGinnity and Prof. Ferguson concluded that "as a result of domestication over several generations, genetic changes have reduced the capability of farm salmon to survive in the wild, especially during the marine phase. Overall, farm salmon showed an estimated lifetime success of 2% of that of native wild salmon. In the second generation of hybrids, some 70% of the embryos died in the first few weeks."

They also concluded that "genetic changes leading to reduced survival in the wild is a feature of all domesticated salmon and trout and consequently hybrids between farm and wild fish also have reduced survival."

ASF's concerns about interactions between wild and farmed salmon are very valid. While Cooke Aquaculture has referred to farmed salmon as "cousins" of the wild salmon that relationship is very distant and far removed. Over the past 25 years, and many generations of salmon, fish farmers have genetically changed the make-up of the farmed salmon through selective breeding. The instincts needed for survival in the wild have been replaced with passivity and faster growth, characteristics needed to get them to market more quickly. Cooke Aquaculture has indicated that it will "beef up security on the sites to prevent sabotage." "This is welcome, but", continued Mr. Taylor "it is like closing the barn door after the horse has escaped."

"ASF's research team will continue our work to prevent escaped farmed salmon from reaching the spawning beds, where wild salmon are now producing the next generation that will have the genetic make-up to survive the rigors of the wild and make the long migration to the ocean and back", said Mr. Taylor. "But we do not have the resources to work on all the rivers and streams that flow into the Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy, where dozens, maybe hundreds, more escapees will enter and swim upstream."

"The obvious question is what are government and the industry doing to mitigate this environmental disaster... the public would like to know, but government continues to operate behind closed doors with no sense of obligation to report," concluded Mr. Taylor.

The Atlantic Salmon Federation is an international, non-profit organization that promotes the conservation and wise management of the wild Atlantic salmon and its environment. ASF has a network of seven regional councils (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Maine and Western New England) and a membership of more than 150 river associations and 40,000 volunteers. The regional councils cover the freshwater range of the Atlantic salmon in Canada and the United States. ASF Contacts: Sue Scott, VP – Communications or Muriel Ferguson  
506 529-1027    506 529-4581    506 529-1033

## Stories That Need Telling Chapter I

### By Al Hodson

I was having dinner at my daughter's house recently and my son-in-law's best friend, Mike, was there. When I told him the following story he said I should write a book. Here is the first chapter.

#### Partridge Hunting In Maine

For years now, each fall my cronies and I have gone up north for partridge hunting (Ruffed Grouse, for you who are "from away"). Much time is spent planning and cooking meals in advance so that we can eat well and have maximum time in the woods hunting. The night before leaving we get together to pack the trucks and we make the final check-off of the list. After this it's off to bed so that we can be on the road by 4:00 a.m. Needless to say, there is no problem meeting at the prescribed time and heading north.

Normally, we camp at the Snake River campsite on the Golden Road and are all set up by noon. Lunch the first day consists of sub sandwiches skillfully prepared by Rosa's Deli. Then, it's off to hunting. We typically hunt on foot along overgrown logging roads; the thicker the better. One hunter goes in the woods on either side of the old road bed and one in the pathway. We work hard for our birds and enjoy every minute of it! This year, because of the cold wet spring there were fewer birds than normal but we did manage to come home with enough birds for the partridge stir-fry at our annual deer camp get together on Rock Haven Lake. On Sunday afternoon when I came home there, sitting on the side of the driveway, was a fine partridge. I stopped and watched as he slowly walked across the road and into the woods. Several more times this fall we saw this bird under the apple trees and watched as he nonchalantly poked along feeding and stoking up for the long winter ahead.

Yesterday I was working upstairs and heard a loud crash. I looked out the window thinking that maybe the TV antenna had fallen onto the porch roof. Nothing was there. My wife also heard the noise and went to the porch to see what had happened. There, laying on the table was the partridge. He had flown into the window with enough force to go through the glass across the room and landed dead on the table. Needless to say there is one partridge in the freezer for next year's stir-fry. My wife said, "Now you have partridge under glass!"

## Fly Tying Meetings

### By Dan Bonville

Beginning with the January fly tying and rod making night, Wednesday January 11, 6:30 p.m. at the Saco River Salmon Club Hatchery, we will meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month throughout the winter. Bring your fly tying kits or if you're new at tying, just bring yourself and we will help you get started.

Our first guest tyer will be Don Sicard on Wednesday January 11. He will be teaching us how to tie a dry fly, the Mosquito. All you'll need is your vise, threads and tools, and we'll supply the feathers and dubbing.

We hope to have a guest fly tyer at each session and plan to key in on one particular pattern each night. John Blunt will be our tyer on January 25. We will tie the Black Ghost streamer. RJ Mere will demonstrate his favorite brook trout fly, the modified Wood Special, on February 8.

## SRSC Calendar of Trips

### By Dan Bonville

January 14 and 15: Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. Ice fishing at Steve Berry's place on Moosehead Lake. Call Dan Bonville

January/February: Ice fishing for smelts. Call Don Sicard (207-353-9433).

March 3 – 5: Ice fishing at Belgrade Lakes annual weekend at Richter's Camps. Call Dan Bonville.

# Saco River Salmon Club Newsletter

April 21 – 24: Salmon fishing on the Restigouche and Matapedia Rivers. Call Hotel Restigouche, Pete Dube (877-865-2848).

April 30: Fly Casting Day. BBQ and fly casting lessons. Call Dan Bonville.

May 19 – 21: Fly fishing the Moose River area at Steve Berry's camp. Call Dan Bonville.

June 2 – 4: Fly fishing the Eustis area, staying at Chris Bond's camp. Call Dan Bonville.

June 9 – 11: Fishing the Rangeley Lakes area, staying at Art LeBlanc's camp. Call Dan Bonville.

Early June: Fly fishing on the lower Androscoggin River with Don Sicard.

Early June: Night fishing for stripers with RJ Mere (207-985-4420).

June: Fishing stripers on the Saco River with Steve Berry and Tom DeBruin. Call Dan Bonville.

July 9: Fly fishing Rapid River at Middle Dam. Call Dan Bonville.

August: Smallmouth bass fishing on the Saco River in canoes and kayaks. Call Dan Bonville.

October: Cast and Blast in the Moosehead area. Call Dan Bonville.

## Saco River Salmon Club Membership Form

Name:

Address:

City: State: Zip:

Phone: ( )

E-mail address

*Dues are annual - January through December*

Single \$20 Family \$30 Student \$10 Senior \$10 Life \$300  
Donation to hatchery \$

I would like to volunteer in the following areas:

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors  | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hatchery Operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Stocking    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydropower Issues   | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations    | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership  |

### ***Submit your short article for "The Salmon Run."***

General interest stories, recipes for fly tying or foods, comments and suggestions are welcomed. The editors reserve the right to edit all materials. Send to RJ Mere, 9 York St., Kennebunk, ME, 04043 or email to [rjmere@zwi.net](mailto:rjmere@zwi.net)

Editors: Dan Bonville and RJ Mere

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