

The Salmon Run

March 2011

A publication of the Saco River Salmon Club



Saco River Salmon Club, P.O. Box 115, Saco, Maine 04072
Visit our website: www.sacosalmon.com

From the President's Corner

By RJ Mere

The hatchery is humming along thanks to dedicated volunteers. The 15,000 parr are doing fine with very little mortality. A nylon mesh net is suspended over the large tanks to prevent the parr from jumping out but last week three parr found the smallest of an opening and made their kamikaze leap out of the tank and onto the floor. Unfortunately none of the volunteers were around to rescue the three but we did notice how big they have grown in the past 90 days. The obvious question is why did it take 90 days for us to see the size of our parr? As much as possible, we don't handle the parr growing in our hatchery. We keep the lights mostly off or very low unless we need to clean and take water samples. Feeding, oxygenating the water and even some of the cleaning is automated. Finally, the entire inside of each tank is painted black. We are creating ninja salmon!

We were a bit disappointed with the low number of eyed eggs we received this year. Instead of the 400,000 we were expecting, we received 150,000 (we have the capacity to raise 1.2 million eggs). Mother Nature did not cooperate with the egg production this year and we can only hope for better numbers next year. The eggs we did get were produced over a five week period. Some of you who work in or manage your own hatchery would not be surprised that some of our eggs hatched and that we are proud collective parents of roughly 20,000 alevin right now.

Response for the call for volunteers has resulted in adequate numbers but we need to see more Club members sharing the workload. The hatchery, taken as a whole, is complicated but the jobs are broken down to simple tasks and where we have a large membership the work could be easy and quickly done if more volunteers stepped forward.

Schools involved in Fish Friends Program are now coming to the hatchery to pick up their eggs. Classrooms in seven schools in York and Cumberland County will watch their salmon eggs hatch and grow through development to the fry stage. Busloads of children will arrive at our hatchery in late April to tour the facility and to hear about and ask questions about Atlantic salmon.

Elections are coming. The next Club business/social meeting is March 16, starting 6pm at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Saco. We will have another one of Lynne's great

meals and then have the officers' elections. The list of nominated officers and directors follows later in this newsletter. Following the elections our guest speaker will be Jeff Knapp. Please join us on Wednesday, March 16, at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Saco. Also, please email Garry Kasten by Monday, March 14, if you plan to attend so we can order the correct amount of food. info@sacosalmon.com

Ed Fortier gets us thinking of fishing later on in this issue. His study on the wet fly is convincing me to head for the vice and tying up a few dozen patterns.

Elections

By Dan Bonville

The following names are suggested by the Nominating Committee for officers and directors for May 2011 to May 2012:

President: RJ Mere

Vice-President: Dick Neal

Treasurer: Jim Black

Secretary: Carol Granger

Directors:

Steve Berry, John Blunt, Dan Bonville, John Burrows, Rey Dussault, John Franceschina, Garry Kasten, Dan LeBlond, Harold Porter, John Redman, Nick Sibia

Honorary Directors:

Dave Bean, Al Hodson, Art LeBlanc, Skip Paolini, Jack Parker, James Sulikowski, Mark Woodruff

Nominations may come from the floor before the membership vote.

Jeff Knapp to speak to Club

Our last speaker came to the meeting with flair; Abigail Carroll is an en-

trepreneur who created Nonesuch Oysters in Scarborough. As soon as she arrived she headed for the kitchen and started to shuck about four dozen of the freshest oysters one could ever dream of. Some members were in seventh heaven, slurping down oysters like kids in a candy store.

Abigail talked about her methods of raising oysters, marketing, and her idea of starting a group of individuals and businesses to form Saco Bay Clean Waters Initiative. The latter sounds like a huge project and it is, but there are many in the coastal communities within Saco Bay who are willing to get started. With proper partnerships, organization, and funding Saco Bay can finally be rid of pollution. Coastal communities would benefit for generations to come. Thanks, Abigail.

Jeff Knapp is our guest speaker for our March 16 meeting. Jeff is an avid sportsman and his name is synonymous with bamboo fly rods. Antique collector and storyteller, we are all in for a treat. This is our last business/social meeting until our Annual Banquet and then we don't meet again until September. Let's see some familiar and not so familiar faces at the March 16 meeting. Bring family, bring friends, and Directors, please bring some sweet items to finish Lynne's catered meal!

Membership drive 2011

By Garry Kasten

Approximately 60 members have not renewed their memberships for 2011. Please reconsider renewing your membership to support our club for 2011. If you have any questions about the status of your member-

ship, please e-mail me at gkasten22@msn.com Memberships can be renewed on our website at www.sacosalmon.com It is not necessary to fill out an application if none of your personal information has changed. Just use the PayPal link or mail a check to the Saco River Salmon Club, PO Box 115, Saco, ME 04072 and I will update our data base and send you an acknowledgement for your membership and contributions. Thank you!

Membership update

By Garry Kasten

As you all know, the Saco River Salmon Club is an all volunteer non-profit organization. As of February 28, 2011, we have 176



members and 117 volunteers who continue to contribute to the club by volunteering their valuable spare time.

Treasurers Report

By Garry Kasten

As of February 28, 2011, we have \$6578 in checking and \$10,350 in CD's and savings which have to be reserved for hatchery

improvements. January to May are the most expensive months to operate the club. Please send in your club dues and hatchery donations ASAP to help support our club and its objectives.

The Banquet Committee

By Jim Black

The Annual Banquet is fast approaching and we will soon be enjoying a great meal with fun friends and guests. This year's banquet is on April 30, a Saturday. We are just beginning to work on the details and you will soon hear about more of the special event. We are looking for a few members who will help with getting this banquet organized. Please contact us at info@sacosalmon.com

The Committee is putting out a request for donated items for our auction at our Annual Banquet. Already some interesting items are coming in: Tools, art work, and fishing gear. Please help us make this a successful event. At the end of this issue you will find a sheet of Grant's Camps at Kennebago raffle tickets. Please print them out on your printer, fill them out, and send them to us with the appropriate funds. The venue this year is the same as the last several years: Pier 77 will host our event, Saturday, April 30. We will post a webpage on our website for you to select your meal preference, purchase banquet tickets and raffle tickets. For those who do not have access to our website, there will be more information included in our April issue of The Salmon Run.

Oldies But Goodies

By Ed Fortier

The first fly pattern ever tied attempting to deceive the wary trout was tied back in the third century after Christ, along the banks of the Astracus River in Macedonia. The prey was the brown trout and the fly was tied to imitate a specific insect (locally called a Hippourus) and named the Red Hackle. It was a wet fly and the typical rod used was six feet long (obviously midge rods are not something new) and the line the same length. It was the birth of fly fishing and the wet fly.

And like all newborns, this single wet fly grew and through the years developed into a family of hundreds of different types and colors, from the brightest colorful attractions to the more subdued natural imitations. It remained the most popular fly for centuries and even after the streamer and the dry fly made their appearances there still remained a cult of wet fly anglers who fished no other method. It was not uncommon for them to fish three to ten wet flies at a time; a smorgasbord of choices for the choosy trout. But it was during the 1950's and 60's when intense studies of entomology were being published and so much emphasis was being placed on nymph fishing that the wet flies began to disappear from the fly wallets.

No doubt nymph fishing can be a very productive technique and since the nymph is usually fished near the lower depths of the stream, other than at hatch times, it is being fished where the trout inhabits and where he obtains 80 to 90 percent of its food which I think contributes so much to the effectiveness of the nymph. But a nymph is a nymph, and that's the only insect it imitates other than being taken for a stonefly at times. Several patterns like the Hare's Ear and the Pheasant Tail do imitate several different species of nymphs, but it is still only imitating one form of life; at one stage of life. This is where I think the wet fly has it over the nymph.

A list of what a wet fly can be taken for is endless. It could represent a small newt or minnow, a drowned mayfly or spinner, an emerging mayfly, caddis pupae, even some small stoneflies, and by clipping the wings to a stub, you have a nymph or emerger pattern. A dozen different patterns in various colors running from size ten to eighteens and twenties along with a weighted pattern can prove to be the difference in a poor fishing situation.

Just this past season there were several browns surface feeding on some flat, delicate water and after many refusals with midge dries and small nymphs, I finally figured out they were feeding on ants. Not having my terrestrial box with me, I recalled reading in "The Complete Fly Fisherman" that Theodore Gordon said that a Leadwing Coachman wet fly can pass for the ant. I clinched a size 18 Leadwing on, and greased the 6x tippet up to three inches from the fly, and proceeded to take a few trout, not all of them, but better than what I had been doing.

Another incident took place on the Housatonic River in Connecticut, where a sizable brown was feeding on some small spinners. I rarely carry any spinner patterns so, lacking them, I tied on a size 18 Blue Wing Olive wet and again greased the leader and had the pleasure of watching the brown roll gently into the fly just before I set the hook; another case of the wet fly providing the solution to a problem.

Whenever I start fishing for the day, if I don't see any surface feeding I will usually begin with a soft hackled Hare's Ear weighted. The size of the fly depends on the water conditions, but I want the fly near the bottom and if I need to add a split shot I will, but avoid it because of the casting difficulties. On a Sunday morning this past season, my son and I spent three hours fishing the Kennebec below Shawmut Dam and took sixteen browns between twelve and fourteen inches, all on one fly; the weighted soft hackled Hare's Ear, size 14. Some took on the dead drift and few on the soft swing we used. There were four other anglers on the water and they took four fish between them; I give all the credit to the Hare's Ear.

The soft hackled wet flies, especially the partridge series of orange, yellow, amber, and green are such enticing looking flies and I have found that whenever a caddis hatch takes place, I reach for one of these flies first rather than my box full of caddis imitations. If the trout are feeding on the pupae usually one of the soft hackles works.

The standard wets have also proven themselves through the years; the Light Cahill, Blue Wing Olive, Pale Evening Dun and such. All have their seasonal times when they are most effective. A good selection of wets would consist of the standards as well as the soft hackled patterns in the full range of colors, from the larger sizes to the minute. Not many anglers carry size 18 and 20 wet flies, yet these can be deadly especially later in the season with low, clear water conditions.



This multiple impression that the wet flies portray is the big advantage they have over other fly styles. There's nothing wrong in trying to increase our odds when it come to fishing for trout; heck they win out enough as it is. Most of us already practice this optimum advantage thinking in our dry fly fishing, being that the most popular dry pattern is the Adams, and yet it doesn't represent anything specifically. But it has form and with the grizzly-brown hackles throws off the impression of several species of mayflies, but still only one form of life, whereas the wet fly implies many different life forms.

I guess one of the little added charms of fishing a wet fly is knowing it is the first and oldest fly pattern in existence, and among the thousands of patterns available today, has stood the test of time and is still productive.

Club Trips for 2011

By Dan Bonville

There are some changes that will effect where we will have our Club trips this year so please check this listing in each issue of our newsletter and our calendar page on our website. Please call Dan, 207-625-7693, unless otherwise indicated:

March 4-6, Ice fishing: The first Club trip will be to Belgrade Lakes Four Season Cottages for large bass and very large Northern pike. Estimated cost is \$35 per person, per night, plus a small contribution to the food requirements.

May 21-28, Trout and salmon fishing: Steve Berry's camp on Moose River.

June 2-5, Trout fishing: Upper Presque Isle Stream, Prestile Stream, and Number 9 Stream, in "The County". We will be staying at Arndt's Aroostook River Lodge and Campground.

June 10-12, Trout and salmon fishing: Rangeley and Eustis area. Accommodations TBD.

Date TBD, Muskie Tournament: Fort Kent. We will stay at Lake View Campground in St. Agatha ("Ah-GOT")

July, Date TBD: Largemouth bass and trout fishing and picnic: Bonney Eagle Lake, Buxton, at Dan LeBlond's camp.

July, Date TBD: Striper fishing: Hills Beach, Biddeford, at RJ's cottage.

July, Date TBD: Gold Panning and trout fishing: East Branch of the Swift River and surrounding rivers: Coos Canyon Campground.

October 1-8, Cast and Blast for salmon and partridge: Steve Berry's camp on the Moose River.



Submit your short article for "The Salmon Run." General interest stories, recipes for fly tying or foods are welcomed. Send to RJ Mere, 9 York St., Kennebunk, ME, 04043 or email to rjmere@gwi.net

Application for membership
Saco River Salmon Club
"Dedicated to fisheries restoration"

Date: _____

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Where did you hear about us? _____

Individual Family Student Senior Life Business
\$20 \$30 \$10 \$10 \$300 \$125

Dues: _____

Hatchery Fund Contribution: _____

Total Amount Enclosed: _____

I WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS :

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BOARD OF DIRECTORS | <input type="checkbox"/> NEWS LETTER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HATCHERY OPERATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> HYDROPOWER ISSUES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STOCKING | <input type="checkbox"/> LEGISLATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC RELATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> MEMBERSHIP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CLASSROOM INCUBATORS | <input type="checkbox"/> EVENTS & PROGRAMS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FUNDRAISING | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER |

Please add my name to the volunteer e-mail list so that I receive information regarding volunteer opportunities at the hatchery.

Remarks: _____

Mail to: SACO RIVER SALMON CLUB, P.O. BOX 115, SACO, ME 04072

Phone: (207) 282-6985

Website: www.sacosalmon.com

Email at: info@sacosalmon.com