

# 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

Note: Dan submitted this back in July but we did not print a July/August newsletter. We include his copy in this month's issue of The Salmon Run.

I'm hoping that this newsletter finds you well and busy with camp, golfing, or even better, I hope you are having a great fishing season. The past two months of May and June though very wet, were some of the busiest days for many club members with several club sponsored trips up to the Moose River and over to the Rangeley and Carrabassett Valley areas. Memorial Weekend at Steve Berry's camp was one of the best fly fishing trips I've ever been on with salmon, brookies, and even a lake trout all landed on streamers and even a few to dry flies.

Art LeBlanc's camp entertained us and was great fun and fishing. My wife, Sandy, and Stella Fohlin came up with Mark Fohlin and me as did Brian and Simon Lewis and of course our host, Art. Brian and Simon had a great time over on the Kennebec River and even though it rained really hard, they and Sandy and I fished Upper Dam while Art took Mark and Stella out in his Lund on Mooselookmeaguntic and Rangeley lakes.

I presented Chris Bond with his Presidential Award while at his camp up on the Carrabassett River trip. Fred Pierce, Diane Ricciotti, Scott and Tyler Wilson, Brian and Simon Lewis, Chris, and I fished all over the area and did well up on the North Branch of the Dead River as well as on the South Branch and over on the Upper Sandy River.

We are never bored in this organization and while some of us worked placing temperature loggers on the river and streams in the Kezar Falls area, others worked cleaning the hatchery and doing other shores such as carpentry and painting. We still need an outside painting day and will get to that later in the summer. We'll put a workday notice out over the Internet. If you are interested in helping give me a call at 207-625-7693.

I actually took one weekend off from fishing to host my youngest daughter's wedding on June 17. After that, Sandy and I took the newly married couple up to the Eustis area for their quick honeymoon. Meg and Jeff fished The Chain of Ponds and Sandy and I fly fished the North Branch of the Dead River and it quickly became Sandy's new favorite trout fishing destination. She landed three nice brook trout on her 5 weight Albright rod using

small sized muddlers. Then my family spent a week at Bob and Laura Richter's Belgrade Four Season Cottages up on Great Pond. Everybody caught lots of smallmouth bass and white perch and my new Son-in-law brought his first arm long Northern pike to the boat. Bob gets our newsletter and keeps up with the club news. The club uses one of their cottages each winter for our annual ice fishing/fly tying/rod making weekends. Look for Bob and Laura's ad in future Salmon Run newsletters. We had a great week with sunny days and nights of fireworks going off from Belgrade.

On Sunday, July 9, I led three members into the gate on the road to Middle Dam up on the Rapid River. Bruce Morton, Brian Lewis, Simon Lewis, and I fished the dam pool and long pool and everybody caught salmon and trout. I fished for smallmouth bass on purpose and only caught three small fish. Maybe the population is getting smaller. I sure hope so, because the Rapid River is home to a subspecies of brook trout that can grow over seven pounds and the bass are a huge threat to the trout's future.

I'm off to Yellowstone National Park with Nick Sabilia in August and am looking forward to fishing both Yellowstone and Teton National Parks and showing Nick my "home" waters.

Our first general meeting will be at the Trinity Episcopal Church on September 20 starting at 6:00 PM with a dinner. Our guest speaker will be Dick Neal with his slide show of one of his best trips ever – his trip with his daughter to Alaska. Have a good season and I hope to see y'all soon!

## Swan Pond Brook and the Ice Age Connection By Mark Woodruff

Last year I reported, with an eye for glacial geology, on the habitat survey of Swan Pond Brook in Biddeford. This year we picked-up where we left off: Dan McCaw and Jason Overlock of the Atlantic Salmon Commission and I waded into the brook at the Wadlin Road in Biddeford. It was August 2 and the air temperature was predicted to reach 100°. We had picked a good day to be waist-deep in a 65° stream.

In contrast, thousands of years before there was a Swan Pond Brook the climate was much colder and the Atlantic Ocean reached much further inland. What is now Biddeford and Saco was below sea level, along with most of coastal New England, thanks to the immense weight of the ice sheet. The remnants of this glacial marine environment were evident during the survey. From the starting point, the brook meandered across

layers of sediments collectively known as the Presumpscot Formation. The formation – a mix of gravel, sand, silt, and clay – had been transported to the ocean by melting water from the glacier. In more recent times, Swan Pond Brook moved and sculpted the gravel and sand into a streambed that was outstanding for brook trout spawning and rearing. Though at times, our footing was made surprisingly slick by silt and clay indicative of a deeper ocean environment. Swan Pond Brook is not without its human influences – both good and bad. Not long into our trek we encountered a small pond and waste deep muck formed by a pile of granite blocks placed in the stream. The blocks could easily be moved with a come-along or winch. For now, the dam impeded fish migration particularly during low flows. However, a couple hundred yards of the dam, the riverbanks were made impenetrable by the vegetation that had grown since agricultural uses of the land largely ended during the last half-century. Thick, overhanging vegetation, sandy substrate, and plenty of woody debris were ideal habitat for the several trout we saw scooting out of sight. Eventually Swan Pond Brook made its first pass beneath South Street through a large, flat-bottomed culvert that would easily allow for fish migration. Here we returned to the heat of the day and left the remainder of Swan Pond Brook for another day of habitat surveying.

### Learning Tricks from a Senior Camper

*By RJ Mere*

It was 7:00 PM and from noon on the rain came in pelting waves. It had stopped an hour ago. I was standing in the waters of the Moose River below Brassua Dam near the sleepy town of Rockwood on Moosehead Lake. My rain gear was in the truck which was parked nearly a mile away. I was soaked. I was also hungry. The last meal was a breakfast cooked on the camp stove shortly before sunrise. Heading back to the truck, I paused at the creel census box which Inland Fisheries and Wildlife installed and considered entering the statistics of the day. I landed and released some nice landlocked salmon but my hunger pangs prompted me to forego the record keeping, get into some dry clothes, find a campsite, and cook a hearty meal.

I saw an older gentleman heading towards me. As he approached me he asked if I filled out the data card reporting all of the big fish that I caught. We laughed with the mutual knowledge that the cards are 50 percent truth at best and 100 percent lies at worst. As we shared our laugh I studied the man and in his eyes I saw decades of wisdom. He was in his early 80's and he was dressed in Simms breathable waders - the expensive kind. He was not overly loaded with fishing equipment. In one hand he held a corncob pipe with a crooked mouthpiece and a wisp of sweet smelling smoke curled from the bowl. The pipe shared the same hand with a wooden cane made of cedar root. The handle was bent at a 90 degree angle from the tapered shaft. It was polished and the wonderful grain glowed as a piece of art. In his other hand he held a Leonard bamboo fly rod. It looked as new as the day it left the rod builder's bench.

He drove from Pennsylvania to fish the numerous waters around Moosehead. He had already been in the area for seven weeks.

It was his annual trip that he'd been doing since the early 1960's. I was mentally calculating the cost of a seven week sojourn to northern Maine. There were the hotels, the meals, the hand tied flies, etc. He surprised me when he said that he was tent camping down at the Beach pool on the Kennebec River, just below the East Outlet. After some time we bid farewell to each other and went our separate ways, he to the river and I to my dinner. The campsite I stayed in the previous night was 30 miles away but the Kennebec River was only ten miles away. The Kennebec has several public campsites on its banks so, on a lark, I pulled down the dirt road to seek out an empty one and perchance to spot the gentleman's tent. As the Beach pool came into view, the bright yellow tent was the first obvious eye-grabber. It was a three man tent; room enough for a person and the gear to last a two month stay in the northwoods. The yellow fabric makes the interior of the tent glow as if one were surrounded by light. It makes finding items easy and offers a bright and cheery environment even on an overcast day. This man knew how to spend time in the woods.

The area surrounding the tent had several items that, at first impression, seemed scattered about the site. Each piece, the blue cooler with the white lid, the green water jug, the yellow water bucket turned upside down, and the folded blue tarp - all items of low cost should they mysteriously disappear - are boundary markers. These make it known to all would be neighbors that this is the area that he had determined to make his campsite comfortable to him. I didn't peer into the tent – a person's campsite is as private as his own home – but I could imagine the interior. There would be a folding sleeping cot with an inflatable air mattress on top. His sleeping bag would be unzipped to air out. The bed would be as comfortable as the one at home. Above the head of the bed a lantern would be suspended at just the right height to turn off without having to get out of the sleeping bag. A mosquito net suspended over the sleeping bag and allowed to gather on the floor keeps away the few insects that inevitably sneak in while the camper enters and leaves through the unzipped door. There had to be an overturned box – those plastic kinds – used as a table which doubles as a storage container when it's time to break camp. A water bottle will help hydrate and keep the camper refreshed during the night.

I'm sure that the older angler goes into Greenville for at least one day a week to rent a hotel room for the night. There's no reason to deny the advantages of a hot shower and some of the amenities of the comfortable life while enjoying nearly two months of fishing. Seeing this Pennsylvania gentleman enjoying the great northwoods was an inspiration to me and I hope to you as well. Camping is for everyone. Camping in Maine is the best.

### SRSC Calendar of Trips

*By Dan Bonville*

We have one club trip left this year:

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

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

Send to RJ Mere, 9 York St., Kennebunk, ME, 04043  
or email to [rjmere@gwi.net](mailto:rjmere@gwi.net)