



CONEWAGO FLY FISHERMAN NEWSLETTER

Spring 2011

www.flyfisher.com

www.worldfishingforum.info

Rob Bennett 717-677-4272 Eugene "Guido" Macri 717-762-9750

email: gene@flyfisher.com; gene@eugenemacri.com

Published by E. Macri Aquatic and Environmental Scientist and Riverkeeper



Stocking and Meetings

April 1st Stocking And Meeting. Stocking at 9:00 a.m. Meet at Hemlock Parking Lot. Lunch to follow at Apple Bin at noon. Club Meeting After Lunch; Dinner to follow after 6:00 p.m. Tom Leedy will have another deep fried turkey for dinner. You are encouraged to bring separate side dishes. No charge for staying over night at the lodge. Pending stream analysis we may also stock in May. Will notify by posting on www.worldfishingforum.info on further stockings.

Our Addresses and Contact Info

Rob Bennett
Box 594
Arendtsville PA 17303
717 677 4272 Home
717 253 4547 Cell

conewagobob@yahoo.com

Gene Macri
Box 877
Waynesboro PA 17269
717 762 -9750
gene@flyfisher.com

Dues

Some of you have not paid your 2011 dues. Please realize that we make no money on this club! In order to continue the proper scientific work and maintain our fishery this must change. We will fill openings until we reach our quota. We limit the number fly anglers in the club to protect the fishery. Our club's annual fee has hardly been raised in a number of years. The club below charges at least \$2500.00 and the club above charges in the neighborhood of \$5000.00 and we charge less for a better fishery. In order to keep the stream properly maintained in a proper scientific manner we need to raise fees to meet our needs. The fee this year will be \$495.00 if paid by January 1, 2011. After January 1, 2011 the fee will be \$600. Fees will only slightly increase and stay relatively stable for long time members. New members will have a different fee structure.

Nymphing Instruction and Seminar

Rob and I are planning a nymphing and instruction seminar sometime in May on a Saturday. The seminar will consist of techniques, methods, and tactics on fishing the Conewago with nymphs including some entomology lessons and equipment selection too. Furthermore, we will also concentrate on fly selection, droppers, and individual instruction with each angler. We will include a light lunch, and you may stay overnight at the cabin for free. The cost of this seminar will be only \$85.00. We need at least 6 and no more than 12 fishermen. If interested please let us know as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements. Let me know by email (gene@flyfisher.com) or call 717-762-9750. Sorry but only members can attend this seminar at this special reduced price.



My Fly Fishing Websites

www.flyfisher.com
www.worldfishingforum.info
www.limestoner.com
www.flyfishingforbrooktrout.com
www.flyfishingforbrowntrout.com
www.yellowbreechescreek.com
www.letortspringrun.com
www.fallingspringrun.com
www.bigspringcreek.com
www.aquaticinstitute.com
www.eugenemacri.com
www.pennflyfishing.com
www.pennflyfishing.com/forum
www.riverkeeperflyfishing.com

**Guiding and Instruction
Available**

THE HISTORY OF THE CONEWAGO FLY FISHERS

BY

ROBERT BENNETT

Fred Johnson came aboard as our stream biologist early in 1991. As an employee of the PFBC, he'd always liked the Conewago. He offered his services and had some ideas toward a different management style for it. He called me by phone, and developed a fishery with wild browns, wild rainbows, and Brook trout from the ponds and later Green Springs.

In the early 90s (1993 to 1995) Fred introduced spring spawning rainbows (500 to 1000 fingerlings) each October. Club members reaction was mixed to the idea of rainbow trout. In early 1997 Mark Sturtevant, a guest from Chambersburg told me he'd caught a beautiful "wild looking rainbow" of about 8 inches. I'd imagined seeing one up in the rocks while feeding some trout pellets to the fish there, then Fred Johnson called one night to report "the most satisfying catch I ever had." It was a 9 inch spring spawning wild rainbow we've had them ever since.

Fred would visit the stream and pond's monthly and send me a creel report not using a creel or keeping fish of course. He would fish the entire length of the least water with the old fly rod, Pflueger reel, patched up waders with a walking stick for tied to his vest with twine. Members would ask about the old hobo fishing our water and it was invariably Fred. His leader was homemade usually with 6 to 8 connection knots as shock absorbers, and a red yarn indicator which attracted the Brook trout.

Fred died on Christmas Eve four years ago, but interviewed several stream biologists, looking for a successor. "Here's the guy you want," he told me and gave me Gene Macri's phone number and address. Gene been at the Conewago ever since, and we are fortunate to have him.

We still have three club members from our first year. These charter members are Jim Gilford from Frederick Maryland, Len Andrews from Gettysburg, and Fred Foltz from Gettysburg. You probably recognize Jim for all his efforts on Big Hunting Creek. Len flew photo recon flights over Hanoi back in the 1960s and 1970s, dodging Sam missiles as big as telephone poles. Fred is a retired minister and catches more than his share of trout.

My first trout in club waters was a wild Brown that took a number 14 Royal Wulff on June 1, 1993. I was not a fly guy when the club began, but since fly fishermen were the guys who'd paid to catch and release and protect the trout Conewago Angler's Club (our old name) was a fly fishing club only. Thus, I watched fly fishers there for several years before giving it a try myself. As a novice fly fisherman I moved onto fishing the Adams, the Woolly Worm, the terrestrials etc. I had a lot of fabulous fly casters to watch and learn from. I can testify that catching that Brown on a dry fly pretty well diverted, changed, and ruined my life. Now I drive down the roads looking at the waterways and runs instead of watching where I am driving. I mourned the endless droughts and I rejoiced when we got rain. My son used to fill up the rain gauge in the yard so dad wouldn't gripe about no rain. I believe that like some of you guys, I watch the Weather Channel when I watch at all.

I've kept daily fishing diaries from the last 20 years we've had in the club. If there is any interest maybe I'll include excerpts in subsequent newsletters.

The Old Fishing Shack



Conewago Fly Fishers

Streamers for Spring Fishing in The Conewago

by

Eugene Macri

Streamer fishing in the Conewago is very productive if you do it properly. This brief article will give you the basics of Spring Streamer Fishing. First of all you'll hook and land more fish if you use a longer rod. I recommend at least 8.6 feet for a 4, 5, or 6 weight line depending upon the volume of water in the stream. Second, you want a fairly stiff or at least a medium dry fly action rod. Too soft a rod will not only make you miss strikes but will also hinder you in throwing the flies accurately because in most instances you want weight. Yes, our third point is use enough weight to get the fly down.

You can catch trout on streamers with a variety of techniques and methods but you'll hook more fish and get the fly deeper by casting upstream. Do not use too long a cast because the you'll snag up too much. That's why you want a longer rod it affords more control of where you cast the fly, control the drift, and your ability to strike. You can also throw across stream and down or directly downstream. Some days the fish may want a standard across the stream and drift and the fish will hit the fly on the turn. Directly downstream will work too some occasions. However, hooking percentage will drastically be reduced on downstream fishing. In all cases contrary to what you may have seen on television or read about, you want the rod pointed down at the water!

Fly selection in the spring can be anything that you want however, here's what I always try: 1) Woolly Buggers, beaded, bullet head, and regular 2) Matukas, 3) Maribous (red, white, yellow, black and combinations) and 4) Black Ghost, Grey Ghosts, Standard Bucktails etc. Why do I use these four basic types of patterns? Because each pattern tells me something about the fish and their behavior. If they hit Woolly Buggers it usually means they will chase something. If they hit Maribous they can be tricked into hitting by rage or competition. If they hit Matukas or regular streamer or bucktails that usually tells me they are feeding on bait fish! Remember that with Woolly Buggers and Maribous that you can fish these flies upstream and drift with little or no retrieve just like a nymph and they will really catch a lot of fish too. Sometimes fly anglers fish the flies too quickly so vary your techniques.

Trout Stream Ecology and The Conewago by

Eugene Macri

There is more nonsense written about trout streams, trout fishing and how to take care and restore these streams than probably any other subject that I can think of. In fact, most of what you read, or hear or see from fly anglers, some biologists, and state DEPs or DNRs and fishery agencies is incorrect. Furthermore, these broad broom approaches have done more damage than anyone can imagine.

From fish intelligence to behaviors of trout to proper stream management for the most part is without scientific merit. Every fly angler and some fisherman think they are an aquatic or fishery scientist. Would you want people off the street assisting your heart surgeon? Then why do we think that fly anglers understand what's going on in the ecology of a stream or river?

One of the things that I have learned and have been humbled by it is that we as humans don't really understand systems! We think that we do but we really don't. I recommend Dr. Nasem Taleb's book *The Black Swan* for all those who are so certain about systems from Economists to Scientist in their predictions!

Every stream is a bit different. In the case of the Conewago we manage what we can. We can control the stresses on the fish other than environmental ones. We must play it by ear for the most part with our eye on the stream. We have more large wild brown trout over 20 inches in 2 1/4 miles of water than the famed Letort Spring Run in over 5 miles of water. It comes down to understanding the system and then managing, maintaining, and manicuring it to the best scientific principles available. Hopefully, we will be able to continue this success despite the floods and droughts which we cannot control.

Pond Fishing

Pond fishing does not come with your membership. It is restricted to special arrangements made with Rob or Gene. Do not drive to the pond and fish without these arrangements. We have found dead fish from members who violated rule. The value of such large brook trout in our pond is usually only found in places like Canada so we must maintain proper handling and fishing to protect from abuse, however unintended. Questions Call Rob or Gene.