

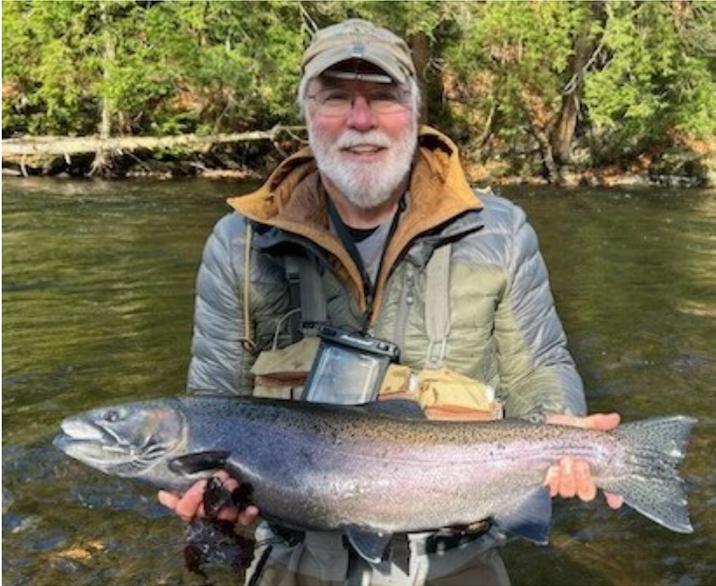
The Newsletter of The Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association

WWW.CTFLYFISH.ORG



December 16 is the meeting

From the vest of the President



Our November meeting was very well attended and went very well. Michael Day's presentation titled "Flyfishing in moving waters. Modern solution to timeless problems" was well received. This talk offered a fresh approach on classic upstream fly fishing. Michael began by defining and discussing some common problems of moving water such as presentation and fly selection. He followed this by discussing possible solutions to these problems, and a reasonable approach to an upstream presentation of all life stages of aquatic insects, in all water columns. The talk concluded with a discussion of best practices when tying, modifying and selecting fly patterns to fish. Questions and answers followed the presentation with a few questions about Bamboo Fly Rods. Michael took the time to answer all of them. To learn more, please visit his website: www.fly-by-day.com.

With the celebration of the Thanksgiving Holiday now over it is time for our CFFA to get serious about our upcoming Beginner Freshwater Fly Tying School and our annual Expo and Banquet. Our Fly Tying School begins on Thursday 1/9 and repeats until Thursday 2/20. The curriculum and the location and time of these classes can be found on our website <https://www.ctflyfish.org/about-cffa/calendar/icalrepeat.detail/2025/01/09/259/-/2025-beginner-freshwater-fly-tying-school>. This link will also give you Pete Naples contact information. You or anyone you know that is interested needs to communicate with

Pete to pre-register for the school so he can begin his process of coordinating each class. The sooner the better.

Our annual Expo and Banquet is being held on Saturday 2/1. This is our one and only fundraiser of the year so please help us make it a successful event. If you are a past vendor or know anyone that might want to exhibit at the Expo please contact Roger Plourde 860-919-3513 to acquire the details needed to reserve a table. Roger is also the person to contact if you'd like to assist the vendors getting their merchandise in and out before and after the Expo. If you want to assist in any way with our Banquet please contact Kurt Jagielow at 203-314-5871.

I thank all of our CFFA members that continue to support our mission year after year by volunteering at our various activities or by paying our yearly dues. Our annual effort to preserve and promote the pleasures and traditions of fly fishing and to conserve gamefish waters would not be possible without your contributions. I hope many of you will consider and renew your active membership. If you were a student in one of our schools last year and enjoyed what you received think of paying it forward to future students by continuing the membership you received with your class tuition. We provide a few different options to make your payment. (1.) You can make a payment in person at our December or January membership meetings or attend our annual Expo. (2.) You can visit our website <https://www.ctflyfish.org/membership> and follow the instructions for a "Mail In" payment or an Electronic payment using the PayPal link.

I wish all of you a very happy and healthy holiday season.
Gary



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On December 16 Fishing the Waters of Fairfield County with Jeff Yates NOTE THE DIFFERENT DAY For our meeting.

Jeff will lead us on a journey from the scenic native and wild trout headwater streams tumbling through the Fairfield County hills to more than 20 local stocked and holdover rivers and streams where public access makes for great days on the water. He'll also throw in one or two of his favorite saltwater spots for catching striped bass from shore. You'll leave knowing more about the history and opportunity throughout Fairfield County, but also take home some precise parking spots and access areas so you can explore on your own in the

season ahead!

Jeff is a guide, author and the national Director of Engagement for Trout Unlimited and has held nearly every volunteer TU position on the board of his local Mi-anus Chapter and the Connecticut Council. He has been fishing the waters of Connecticut for more than 30 years and has been guiding for nearly two decades. His book, Fly Fishing Fairfield County: Secrets of Suburban Streams, details the great trout fishing available in the southwest corner of the state. Learn more at www.flyfishingct.com.



I begin reading fishing reports about Salmon River in Pulaski New York around Labor Day every year. At that time of year the reports consist of the number of Coho and Chinook Salmon running up the river to spawn. Although these runs are prolific with very large fish it is what follows these fish that most interests me and my CFFA friends. They are the Steelhead Trout. Some Steelhead begin to trickle in when the Salmon begin their journey and their numbers increase as the weeks go by. When November arrives there is usually a sufficient number of fresh, strong Steelhead in the river to plan a trip around. This year's adventure happened 11/10-11/17 for most of us. CFFA member Steve Douville who resides in South Carolina arrived on 11/5 and acted as an advance scout. His reports came to us daily and they were all positive. This increased our excitement and anxiety and the days before we departed could not pass by quick enough. The night before the trip reminded me of the sleepless nights before opening day when I was a kid full of anticipation. I am so thankful I still get these feelings at my age today.

On a spontaneous fishing trip you can make a decision to go or not based on the current circumstances and the upcoming three to five day forecast. These are my favorite as I feel like I can control my destiny. On a planned fishing trip like this past trip, where we made reservations a year in advance, you need to play the cards you are dealt. This Fall Mother Nature delivered New York



Thank you Norm for sharing such a beautiful painting, a place we can all relate to I am sure.

the same drought that we have experienced here in Connecticut. We knew the flows were going to be on the low side during our ride up but we did not know the flows would drop even lower 2 days into our week long trip. When my friend Jack informed us that the flow was being adjusted from the current 350cfs down to 195cfs we adjusted our next day plans to deal with the hand we were being dealt, little did we know that this drop was going to be a benefit rather than a detriment. The lowest water we have ever fished on this river was a blessing in disguise. The greatest benefit for us was the fact that there were far less drift boats floating the river. Many guides feared damaging their boats and the need to push and pull their boats through shallow areas rather than rowing them. In fact the only section the brave few dared to float was the upper river from Altmar to Pineville. This opened up many more spots along the river for us to fish. The lower level also seemed to keep the overall number of anglers to a minimum and allowed us to wade the river easily and even cross the river to get to productive locations on the opposite side. The Steelhead also dealt with the conditions they received and gathered together in locations that offered shelter and comfort. When we found one Steelhead we usually found and hooked many. Each of us experienced a better landing ratio this year also. We all agreed that lower water level most likely had something to do with that.

All in all we had a very good trip with good weather, good friends, good food and good fishing. Kevin who took our CFFA Fly Tying and Fly Fishing classes last winter was there for a few productive days and Steve had a happy ride back to South Carolina. Ron and I made reservations for the same week next November. I will not be doing a rain dance prior to the trip.

Gary

Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association Inc.

FLY FISHING EXPO & BANQUET

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2025

featuring Author Bob Romano

Bob Romano and his wife, Trish, have owned a camp in the Rangeley Lakes Region of western Maine for nearly forty years. Using the rivers and streams of western Maine as his literary canvas, Bob captures the unique experience of fishing in a part of northern New England where it's not unusual to encounter a moose or black bear, perhaps an otter or mink, while working a streamer through thigh-thumping rapids of pristine rivers or a soft-hackled wet fly across the fog-covered surface of a backwoods pond.



His latest book, *RETURN TO RANGELEY*, is a novel set in this region of the country where the native brook trout are as large as you'll find south of Labrador and the landlocked salmon, originally introduced in the late 1800s, have long since gone wild as they continue to leap through the surface at the prick of a hook.

Bob will be providing a program for the Expo that will highlight the Rangeley Region's favorite fly patterns. As entertaining as he is informative, Bob will take you on a tour of Upper Dam, as well as the Magalloway, Kennebago, Cupsuptic, and Rapid Rivers while describing the fly patterns favored by the region's local guides and its prominent fly tyers.

Whether expert or novice, young or old, if you've fished, or ever wished to fish, in country where the brook trout are as wild as the moose that trod the river banks, you'll enjoy Bob's program.

For online reservations & more info: CTFlyFish.org

Nomads Adventure Quest, 100 Bidwell Ave, S. Windsor, CT

EXPO

9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

\$5 admission

Children under 16 FREE

- Presentations
- Fly Tyers Row
- Vendor tables

BANQUET

Bucket Raffle & Presentation

\$55 per person

5:30 p.m. Cocktails & Raffle viewing

6:30 p.m. Dinner, Presentation, & Drawings

Reservations: CTFlyFish.org OR

Phil Apruzzese: (860) 489-4319 - pjapruz@aol.com

RSVP by January 27, 2024

Open seating or reserved tables of 8

Fishing Private Water

By Carl Ochnio



Recently, I received an invitation to fish on a river located on private land. I had never fished in private waters before, at least not legally or with permission, so this would be a new experience for me. I may have ignored a few signs in my youth and slipped on-

to some golf course ponds or city reservoirs. I can comfortably admit to these indiscretions now as the statute of limitations has surely passed. I mention this to highlight the tempting allure of private waters and the lengths a young angler might go to cast a line in such coveted spots. Additionally, I can say that our local golf course groundskeeper, despite his best efforts, was never quite agile or quick enough to catch up with the clever and determined neighborhood kids who enjoyed fishing.

I regularly work out at a local fitness center to maintain my hiking fitness. I often encountered another regular there, and our interactions were simple, consisting of a friendly greeting or a simple head nod. One day, he said, "See you tomorrow." I responded, "No, I won't be back until August because I'm going to Colorado to fly fish." To my surprise, I discovered that he also was a fly fisherman. From that day on, our conversations often started with a simple "been out lately?" and grew significantly longer.

As it turned out, Mark owned a large tract of property on a beautiful river in the eastern part of the state and said he would "have me out someday."

It's always enjoyable to unexpectedly meet another angler who shares your passion for fly fishing. These encounters can be especially rewarding at events you feel obligated to attend. Recently, I had to be out of town for a family event during the peak of our fall salmon season. I had started the season off successfully, enjoying some exciting battles with these majestic fish. The weather conditions and river flow had been ideal, so it was somewhat disappointing to have to take a few days off for a trip down south.

As fate would have it, I struck up a conversation with the passenger next to me on the flight. It turned out he was a guide from Michigan. I often use my noise-canceling headphones during flights to watch movies, listen to podcasts, read, or zone out. However, in this case, the John Gierach book on my tray table must have piqued my travel partner's interest. It turned out to be one of the most enjoyable flights I've ever had. We engaged in lively conversation from takeoff to landing, and I'm sure we annoyed some passengers around us as we hardly paused to take a breath during our discussion.

That moment I eagerly anticipated finally arrived when Mark, my fitness center partner, called to ask if I could come out and fish his river the next day. A recent survey of Connecticut waterways conducted by Trout Unlimited rated this river as the highest in the state for its aquatic health. With the river's excellent reputation and the opportunity to fish on a section of private land, I knew it was an opportunity I couldn't pass up.



The following day, I eagerly loaded up the fish mobile and followed the directions I had received to meet him at his home. We slipped into our waders and boots and soon walked the bank and scouted the river together. As we walked along, he pointed out all the productive spots, runs, honey holes, and structures he had placed in the streambed over the years to enhance the fish habitat.

As the sunlight faded at the end of the day, the bugs began to emerge, and we set up our rods and started casting. We had a fantastic night, marked by a significant Sulphur hatch as insects swarmed the surface. A nice fish rose in the middle of the pool, and I made my cast. The rainbow trout took the fly on cue; it was game on. This moment felt special, but I couldn't shake an uneasy feeling. I felt a bit out of place. As if I were doing something wrong, I half-expected a groundskeeper to jump out of the woods, shaking his fist, and yell, "You kids, get out of there!" Some memories are hard to shake.

As the sunlight faded and we walked back to my SUV, he

told me that now that I was familiar with the water, I was welcome to fish on the property anytime I wanted. It was an unbelievable gesture. However, as soon as he finished speaking, I thanked him for the generous offer but told him I would return only when invited and if we fished together.

I don't want to seem overly noble, but I know my tendencies. If I didn't set this self-imposed limit right away, I worried that someday, after too many visits, he might suggest I take some time off to rest his trout and the river. In the long run, I knew this approach would benefit everyone involved.

What a great evening this turned out to be! I can't wait to return. My host mentioned that June's White Cahill hatch is amazing.



Lady Beaverkill is a comfortable little cabin located within a private RV campground overlooking the upper Madison River Valley in Cameron, Montana. The cabin is

an ideal base camp for one or two guests looking to explore the area, fish the Madison River and other nearby famous trout waters, or simply relax and recharge in Big Sky Country. The West Entrance to Yellowstone National Park is located just 40 minutes southeast of the cabin. I put this in for Darby as I know this area and will be here this summer and people ask me where I go. Fall is a great time keep that in mind www.ladybeaverkill.com /

Last months speaker Ben Bilello wrote an E book about Salmon fishing in Connecticut if you have any interest in what he showed and explained to you check out his book. [benbilello.com /salmonflies](http://benbilello.com/salmonflies)



Polecat Panfish Fly

Hook: Mustad 3906b or Nymph Hook of preference Size #6 & #12.

Thread: Black 6/0.

Weight: .015 Lead Wire, 15 to 20 wraps.

Tail: Black Marabou.

Legs: Round Rubber Legs.

Under Body: Wrapped Yellow Chenille.

Fly Back: Black Chenille.

Tying instructions and a video on how to tie this fly can also be found at <http://tightlinesflyfishing.blogspot.com/> . If you have any questions about this fly or would like to submit a Fly of The Month I can be reached at pdinice@frontier.com .



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 9 am - 1 pm
 Farmington Community Center
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 Admission: \$2 - AGES 16 & UNDER FREE
 Save! Date Saturday, January 11th

Questions? - Call BN Case at 866-678-7245. In the event of dangerous weather conditions, visit www.ftu.org for updates on this event.



While fishing the Shetucket River I ran into Matt Devine and his crew shocking to see how the Salmon are doing this year. They check for Bird marks, hook marks and tag numbers. I found this very interesting. The data will be released next year.



I want to thank Matt for sending me some pictures to share with everyone. As you can see everyone is smiling. If you stop and think about it what else can you do so cheaply all year long?



Lines & Leaders

The Newsletter of The Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association

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