



Trout Lines



President's Message by Mike Beachy

Trout fishermen on the Little Elkhart River have had their share of ups and downs over the past couple years. After experiencing this summer we can see how fortunate we really were for the summer of 2009.

In 2009 we had the best summer in recent history for the trout. To the best of my recollection we had only a handful of days where the temperature exceeded 90 degrees and lots of rain. The result was normal water levels and very few days where the water temperatures topped the 70 degree mark. This resulted in consistent trout fishing all summer. We observed good caddis hatches in the mornings followed by small clouds of insects hovering over the surface every evening. Trout seemed to always be on the "feed" and willing to take flies. The population of rainbows stocked by the State, which stayed with-in, the catch and release area was good and made for good numbers of trout taken on every excursion.

The summer of 2010 has been a completely different story. The number of days over 90 degrees have been too many to count. This summer's rainfall has been very sporadic and accumulatively low. The result has been low and warm water in the river. I have not observed the caddis hatches like I have in the past.

Having the water level low and clear has allowed me to observe

more fish than I was able to last summer. Spotting trout is much easier but catching them is more difficult. Most generally if you can see them they can also see you. Putting the sneak on a weary trout then attempting a stealthy presentation is difficult if not an impossible task in the Little Elkhart River with all the snags and cover.

Warm water temperatures make the trout lethargic and unwilling to feed. I have noticed an abnormal amount of short hits and tentative



hook ups that result in lost trout this summer compared to last summer's trout fishing. Warm water is also very stressful on the trout. 70 degree water approaches the rainbow trout's maximum range of survivability. I personally will not fish the river if the water temperature is 70 or above. If you catch a rainbow even when the water temperature is in the high 60's you need to take care in releasing it by reviving the trout, if it is to survive. Simply unhooking a rainbow and letting it flop back into the stream many times results in the trout swimming away only to go belly up unable to hold itself

upright due to exhaustion and oxygen depletion.

Even though Mother Nature has dealt us an unfriendly trout summer the trout are still there. I have observed many more very nice sized brown trout than I can ever remember. These trout are smart and extremely hard to catch with this summer's water conditions. I am convinced that if you are fishing a hole that is deep and dark and you are not catching creek chubs or shiners, it has a decent sized brown in it even though you are not getting takes. The bait fish are not there because they know it is unsafe. The trout are not taking your fly because they are experienced and smart. Larger brown trout are generally nocturnal feeders during the hot summer months and don't feed much during the heat the day.

If trout fishing this summer has got you discouraged don't let it get you down or write off the Little Elkhart River as a spent fishery. Fall will soon be approaching and with it cooler night time temperatures, shorter daylight hours and hopefully some rainfall. The river water temperatures will fall and trout fishing will pick up. The brown trout will soon get their fall spawning colors and begin to migrate from their summer homes to new cover upstream. It can be some of the best brown trout fishing of the year.

Deer Hunting Season 2010

PLEASE TAKE ADVISMENT!

October marks the opening of the whitetail deer-hunting season, and with that the majority of the "Catch and Release" section is deemed "OFF LIMITS" to fisherman access. It is unfortunate for trout fishermen however it is what it is.

The Little Elkhart River runs through private property for the most part. Fishermen are at the mercy of the property owners for fishing access to the river. Property owners who either hunt deer or grant hunting privileges to others do not want fishermen on their property during hunting season. A fisherman sharing the property with hunters puts deer hunting success and themselves at risk.



It is very important that during this time of year that you secure permission prior to fishing the Little Elkhart River anywhere along it's length. We as fishermen need to respect the property owners' wishes. We do not want to do anything to inflame relations with private property owners or put our life in danger by being somewhere we should not be. A fisherman trespassing has the potential to risk future access to
Summer, 2010

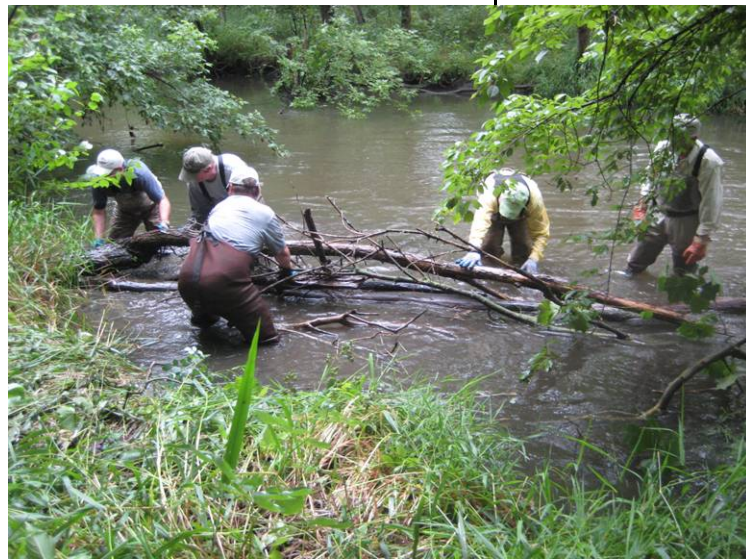
the river outside of the hunting season.

Deer hunters hunt the majority of the properties along the catch and release section of stream. The only portion that remains open to fishermen, without the need to secure permission, is the city owned property near the town of Middlebury next to Riverbend Park.

Wearing a blaze orange hat, while fishing the river, is highly recommended. You do not want to be mistaken for a big buck creeping along the river bank. Please be extremely careful.

LECTU Habitat Improvement Project 2010

The Little Elkhart Chapter completed five work projects on the river this spring and summer. The projects involved 13 different



members donating 100 man hours of volunteer efforts for the betterment of our home waters. The stream work project is the "meat and potatoes" of what Trout Unlimited is all about. It is good for the river, good for the trout and good for us. We encourage

everyone to take part in these projects even if you don't feel like you are physically able to dunk into the water and pull out logs we could use your assistance handing us tools from the bank, tossing us a water bottle or simply cheering us on. Work days are always fun and it is a great way to learn the river.

The following members gave their time and their sore muscles to work on the river this year. John Stewart, Brandon Rasler, Joe King, Dan Petry, Bob Hagan, Bob Roth, Lee Troyer, Chris Miller, Steve Mack, Clay Shetler, Don Fiwek, Wayne Andrews, and Mike Beachy.

Work accomplished this year includes:

March 27: A large pine tree was installed into the river west of CR 43 at the upper end of the Catch and Release area creating a wing deflector. The result was moving flow towards the high north bank. The increased flow pushed away the sand that had built up exposing a natural undercut bank and gravel bottom. The slack behind the tree acted like a catch for silt and sand. The diversion increased the speed by narrowing the river and created cover upstream of the tree. (5 men/ 4 hours)

June 19: A large log jam was opened just north of SR 20 upstream and outside of the Catch and Release area. The log jam had accumulated around an old growth fallen tree. The jam was so tight that the flow was hindered and beginning to widen the river destroying the banks on either side by erosion. Debris was removed and rearranged to stop erosion and centralize the flow through the deep center channel. The old growth blocking tree was sectioned to prevent future jamming without jeopardizing the trout cover. (5 men/ 4 hours)

July 17: A Large tree was removed and placed in an advantaged location on the Catch and Release area known as the "Cut Through". A meandering ox bow was being cut off by a blocking log jam causing the river to erode through the bank and back into the river on the other side. This cutting off of an ox bow occurs naturally in rivers however this one was cutting quicker due to the log jam. The end result would have been the loss of several hundred feet of productive trout water. The original log jam was removed and rearranged as part of our 2009 river work but the large log that formed the foundation of the jam was not removed and it had shifted and fallen into a cross river position recreating the same problem. Chains and a hand winch were implemented to pull the logs complete with roots loose from the bottom and placed as a current blocker in front of the cut through. The diversion redirected the main flow into the meander rather than through the cut across. Eventually nature will take its own course however the diversion should

preserve the meander for several more years by slowing the erosion. (6 men/ 6 hours)

July 31: In the area known as Tornado Bend on the Catch and Release area large logs had accumulated debris causing the river to widen and banks to erode. The debris was removed and strategically placed to prevent and reverse bank erosion and divert the main flow back into the central deep channel. Large foundation logs were then cut to prevent future clogging however enough structure remains to preserve the trout habitat and keep the deep hole. In addition waterlogged structure was rearranged upstream to centralize the flow, reduce bank erosion and establish fish habitat. (4 men/ 4 hours)

August 4: In the area known as Rainbow Run on the Catch and Release area an old clogged log jam was opened. A large old log had created a beautiful hole that was "over your waders" deep at low water level. Over the years the log had accumulated sticks and debris clogging the flow and widening the river. The impeded flow had begun to wash out a natural stream narrowing sandbar. Recent storms had toppled a tree leaving the tree top directly in the middle of the hole. Utilizing a chainsaw the tree top was removed. Debris was rearranged out from under the old log and placed above and over the sandbar to reestablish and reinforce it. Waterlogged materials were used to deflect the flow back under the old log and protect the narrowing sandbar. The old log cannot be removed or cut due to it being too submerged to get to. This is one of those spots that will require

attention every couple of years. (2 men/ 4hours)

Upcoming Events

October 13, 2010: LECTU will be traveling to Indianapolis to put on a presentation to Indiana Fly Caster Club. This is a good way to promote our chapter. The program will inform the Fly Casters about the Little Elkhart River and how our chapter is improving the fishery. Other conservation minded fishing clubs are always receptive audiences and are interested in our activities. They make good allies.

November 10, 2010: DNR fisheries Biologist, Neil Ledet will be attending the monthly LECTU meeting. Our meetings are held at the Middlebury Public Library at 7:00pm. Neil will be fielding questions about our trout waters and anything else to do with the State of Indiana fisheries. Neil is a good fellow and he is a good person to bounce new ideas off of.

December 8, 2010: Dave Arrington from LGL Associates will be presenting an update on his water quality improvement project on the Little Elkhart River. His program will be given at our monthly LECTU meeting at the Middlebury Library. Dave has been working on fencing livestock out of the river and providing alternative livestock watering sources for farmers along the river and its tributaries. Dave has done extensive studies on our river looking for point sources of pollutants followed by correcting these problems. The end results are cleaner water from pollution and sediment. Dave has recently completed an extensive invertebrate study to identify

indicator species of bug life. Dave has a wealth of information and his programs are always interesting.

Feature Fly "Olive Nymph" by Mike Beachy

Hook: TMC 9300 Standard Nymph Hook Size 12 or 14

Bead: 1/8" Gold

Thread: Olive 8/0

Tail: Olive Hackle Fibers

Abdomen: Spectrablend light olive dubbing

Rib: Gold Ultra Wire (small)

Thorax: Spectrablend Dark Olive Dubbing

Wing Case: Turkey Feather strip (pre-glued)

Flash Back: Mirage Tinsel (medium or large)

Step 1) Slide bead on to hook and start thread behind bead working thread to the rear of the shank. Tie in a clump of olive hackle fibers for the tail. The tail should be slightly shorter than the hook shank in length. Tie in gold ribbing wire.



Step 2) Dub light olive spectrablend forward in a cone shaped abdomen to about 1/8th inch behind bead. Spiral wrap gold wire ribbing in equal distant wraps over dubbing, tie down and cut excess wire.



Step 3) Attach flash back tinsel strip to the thorax between abdomen dubbing and bead. Attach turkey strip wing casing over the flash back in like fashion. Make sure the flash back tinsel and turkey strip hang straight back over the abdomen like superman's cape.



Step 4) Dub dark olive spectra blend dubbing over the thorax section to a thickness equal to the size of the bead



Step 5) Tie in an ostrich herl feather right behind the bead and make two to three wraps around behind the bead like you would do for a dry fly hackle. Tie down the herl and cut off excess.



Step 6) Fold turkey strip forward over thorax dubbing and ostrich

herl and tie off behind the bead. Do the same with the flash back material over the turkey strip and whip finish. Cut thread and cement. Sit back and admire your generic olive nymph.



The Generic Olive Nymph has been a staple fly of mine on the Little Elkhart River for several years and has taken the majority of my trout. I fish this fly like you would any nymph however it works very well dangled down current into a hole or under an overhanging bush too. I will generally strip this fly like you would a woolly buggler on the return. The Little "E" trout will take this fly anyway it is presented.

I am always amazed at how effective it has been. The browns generally hit this fly when it is fished nymph style or dangled motionless under cover. Rainbows like it moving and will hit it on the first couple of strips after hanging motionless in the current for a while.

I don't know what it is about the olive color but I have experimented using different colors but they like the olive best. I have substituted ice dubbing for spectra blend on occasion and had good success at times. It is an easy tie that I use 80% of the time on the water. I have great confidence in this fly. The flash back is an added flash that has been a good addition at times. I like the larger 12s in the spring

with higher flows or in dingy water but switch to smaller 14s in the late summer as the water levels drop and the stream clears. It is a great winter fly. This fly pattern has never disappointed me.



LECTU and Middlebury Parks

LECTU has established a good working relationship with Middlebury Parks and Recreation Department. Having the northern portion of the Catch and Release area on Middlebury City property and Middlebury's Riverbend Park as one of our major fishing access points requires us to be on good terms with the City of Middlebury. In turn Middlebury Park and Recreation Department has a stake in the success of our programs as well with the Little Elkhart River being central to many of the city's parks.

Tom Enright is the Park and Recreation superintendent and has been attending many of our meetings in order to be in tune with what is going on with the river. Tom is very conservation minded and a real asset to Middlebury.

On June 26th Tom organized a "River fest" at Riverbend Park. It included a presentation from Nancy Brown from Elkhart County Water and Soil Conservation District. She seined

the river and showed attendees a variety of invertebrate bugs (trout food). She explained how bugs are related to clean water. Nancy explained how everyone is in part responsible for the water quality and what changes they could make to improve the water quality through water run-off and erosion.

Daragh Deegan an Aquatic Biologist employed by the City of Elkhart was on hand to do a fish shocking sampling on the Little Elkhart River. Three small brown trout were captured along with a multitude of other river dwellers. "Dar" then played show and tell with the fish. He identified them and explained how each fish was instrumental to the balance of the river. He explained which fish were indicator species of clean cold water. The real gem of the sample was the brown trout. Dar related to the crowd how important and special brown trout are and how fortunate they were to live in a community where brown trout exist.

There were several other conservation groups present as were we. LECTU had a display and literature there as well as a couple of fly rods and casting targets for people to try their hand at fly casting. It was an excellent public relations opportunity and we were able to expose many non fisher people to our cause. Catch and Release fishing was a topic spoken of over and over. Non fisher persons who have a concern for Little Elkhart River water conservation love the idea. The catch and keep fishermen we spoke to began to realize the value of having a designated, relatively small area strictly for releasing trout. These protected trout are not

fenced in and are free to scatter eventually helping to repopulate depleted areas in the river.

On August 14th Middlebury Parks held their third annual kids fishing derby on a local pond. LECTU was there with volunteers acting as judges. We kept track of the number of fish each child caught and took measurements for the biggest fish. Here again it was a public relations effort on our part to get in front of the fishing public. Every child there had parents with them who saw us wearing our LECTU gear. Invariably we would get asked what LECTU is. This gave us the opportunity to promote our cause to those unaware of our existence. It is always surprising to us how many folks who reside in the surrounding area don't even know that trout fishing exists locally.

LECTU will continue to work with the Middlebury Parks and Recreation Department. It is good for both organizations.

2010 Brown Trout Stocking

On Tuesday May 11, 2010 the Little Elkhart Chapter of Trout Unlimited successfully stocked the catch and release section of the river with 500, eight to ten inch brown trout. This makes the third consecutive year that LECTU has placed 500 brown trout into the catch and release area. The plantings were placed in three different locations in an attempt to spread the trout evenly throughout the C&R stretch.

This year the total cost tallied \$1,982. The cost per trout was \$2.65 plus delivery from northern

Michigan. All the funds were raised through the Adopt-A-Trout raffle fundraising efforts by our chapter members. The LECTU officers would like to thank all those who participated in these fundraising efforts.

LECTU had entered into a verbal agreement with the Indiana DNR to allow us to stock the catch and release section for three consecutive years. Members have expressed interest in a continuation of this brown trout stocking program. At the July meeting a motion was made and a unanimous vote in favor to pursue brown trout stocking by the chapter in the future.

Efforts will soon be underway to continue the brown trout stocking program on the Little Elkhart River.

2010 LECTU Spring Outing

The Annual Spring Outing was a big success this year. We had over 50 members in attendance and rose over \$3000 for the chapter.

30 plus members took the stream access tour hosted by local member Chris Miller. A half dozen attendees took part in a guided mini fishing trip on the river, unfortunately the river was high and muddy and the trout didn't want to cooperate. Never the less they were able to experience what the river is like and gain some knowledge of techniques the locals use for them.

Tom Park demonstrated his expertise at tying soft hackle flies. After the outing Mike Beachy fished with Tom and he proved

his flies' ability to take trout despite the river conditions.

Jeff Stanifer, a former US National Trout Fishing Team member, gave the crowd a demonstration of European fly fishing techniques. It was interesting to hear and see how fly fishing has evolved in different cultures. If you thought fly fishing was already difficult enough you ought to attempt some of the European styles. Super long rods, super heavy flies and another set of specialty knots to figure out can all be a little overwhelming.

The casting course was a novel idea that could humble the most experienced fly caster. Thanks to Lee Troyer and Bob Hagen for putting this course together. This will make us all practice a little prior to next year.

Bill Myers and Leonard Gustin cooked up a lunch that was outstanding. Everyone got their fill.

Raffles were run and we are hopeful that no one was disappointed. Winners and non winners all helped to make our outing a success. Plans are being tweaked for next year's outing. If you were unable to make it in 2010 plan on attending 2011's Annual Spring Outing planned for the first part of May.

LECTU at Cabela's

A special thanks to the Hammond Cabela's. LECTU was invited to participate in Family Days at the Hammond Cabela's Retail Store a sale event with demonstrations for the entire family. This was used as a membership drive and a public relations informational event. We

will be holding a one day raffle to raise funds for the chapter too. Raffle prizes were donated by Cabela's. If you are in the Hammond area stop by the fly shop and say thanks.

October LECTU Meeting

Due to LECTU's presentation to the Indianapolis Fly Casters Club there will not be an October Meeting. We will see you at November's meeting on the 10th.



Tom Park tying a soft hackle at the spring outing



Jeff Stanifer giving a demonstration on nymph techniques at the spring outing.

Little Elkhart Chapter Officers Directory

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Get the official LECTU logo apparel on the web site. Need a hat, shirt or jacket? Why not sport your T.U. chapter logo. Proceeds go to the chapter projects and support a worthy cause



Can you spot the trout seeking cover by this log



Michael Flowers



Elkhart Stream Biologist Daragh Deegan



Can you match this?