



A Publication of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited

SEPTEMBER, 2011 VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

Restoration, Improvements and Preservation through Research and Projects

PRESIDENT'S LINES

BY KYLE AMUNDSON

I hope everyone had a great summer. We are looking to do a slide show of Chapter members' fishing photos at the September meeting. They should be pictures from the last year or two. Stay tuned, we will be sending out a specific email flyer shortly on where to send your digital photo files.

The DNR is offering to do a coordinated cleanup effort of tires in the Trimbelle River this fall. There are tires in the stream bed in a section of river off of County Road O, south of River Falls. In addition to a volunteer cleanup, we will need to pay the "tipping" fee to have the tires trucked away. This would be approximately \$300 and the Board will decide on this issue at our Aug. 29th meeting.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Pine Creek, Parker Creek and Plum Creek restoration projects. A special thanks goes to Randy Arnold for his coordination efforts. Throughout the summer, Randy has contacted volunteers, skillfully contributed to the projects, and provided lunch for everyone on site. Great job, Randy!

Welcome new members Nathan Anderson (Hudson), James Cumming (Hudson), Durand Sportsmen's Club, Jeff Everts (Milltown), Mark Gherty (Hudson), Justin Gillis (New Richmond), Al Kikos (Balsam Lake), Julie Mansur (Deer Park), Derrek Pedersen (Roberts), Doug Peterson (Hager City), Brett Ptacek (Centuria), Garrett Wenzel (River Falls), and George Wright (River Falls).

Winner
Bollinger Award
Best Newsletter
2010

**Kiap-TU-Wish meetings
are held at Bob Smith's
Sports Club, the first
Wednesday night of
the month. The
September meeting is
on the 7th.
Dinner begins at 6 PM,
Meeting to follow at
7 PM.**



It's almost fall, which will soon bring the end of the trout season. I can't believe that summer has flown by so quickly. It seems to get shorter and shorter each year. And that's saying something, since the summers of my youth seemed to last approximately four days. School would end in early June, and in what seemed like a few scant hours, the dread of the impending Return To School would completely envelope my brain. The dread was a constant reminder that I was not a fan of school, but it also served as a reminder that I needed to get out, have fun, and enjoy the seconds of freedom that I had left. Now that I'm old, the dread isn't quite as palpable as it was back in my younger days, but it still rears its ugly head every once in a while. Especially on beautiful, warm sunny days, just like today, where everything seems fine until I realize that nightfall sets shortly after 8, which is much earlier than it was just a few weeks ago. Yes, early nightfall makes me realize that I need to get out and enjoy nature while I still can, before nature is completely covered in five feet of snow like it was last winter. I will try to get out and get a lot more fishing in during the next month, and I employ you to do the same. If you just can't seem to get yourself jumpstarted, maybe leering at a few photos of wild outdoor scenery and big beautiful trout might do the trick. It couldn't hurt, could it? If you think that might be just the jumpstart you need, head on over to Bob Smith's for the September Kiap-TU-Wish meeting, where big fish, and beautiful scenery photos will be shown. You can even show some of your own, if you'd like. An email will be sent shortly telling you how you can do just that, if it hasn't already been sent. Keep an eye out for it, and then make your way over to Hudson on Wednesday, September 7th. Dinner starts at 6PM, and the meeting will commence at 7. Hope to see you there.

Have a great month!

MIDWEST FLIES SCORE IN THE WEST

BY MICHAEL ALWIN

I was introduced to Montana fishing in the seventies and again in the eighties by my friend, Ron Crete, now a cattle rancher in Detroit Lakes. While fishing out west I came to love the western flies like the the Wulff dry flies and the Stimulators. Of course my favorite is the Royal Stimulator for good and obvious reasons, but that's another story. (Who wouldn't like a fly with that name?) No, the story here is that flies developed right here in our backyard were the most effective out west.

We made our obligatory trip to the local fly shop just as any right-minded tourist would do and came away with a small supply of dry flies and some good advice about when to use them. And we did use them and they did catch a few trout for us. However, as soon as we switched to flies we brought with us we started catching way more fish. There are no secrets so here's the list.

Several years ago I caught my largest Brown on Rock Creek on a little wet fly we call Skip Wet, a slight concoction that Skip James concocted a few years ago. A pinch of Hare's Mask, a little Krystal Flash for a rib and a couple of turns of speckled hen hackle and you've got it. I think it caught the heaviest Brown this trip, too. Put a tungsten bead on the front end of Borger's red/brown nymph, add a flash back epoxy wing pad and you've got Murry Humble's Tung Head Red/Brown Poxyback Nymph. That's a lot to say and, mercifully, the trout don't care but they kept eating that fly like there was no tomorrow. For a trailing fly, try Harry's Havoc, a Hare's Ear nymph with the addition of a grouse feather and a tungsten bead. This fly caught almost as many trout even though it was smaller and fished behind the Red/Brown. Finally, when you need a little extra size and weight you'd have a hard time beating Bob Nasby's Whiskey Nymph. We've updated it a little and call it the Tung Head Flashback Whiskey Nymph and believe it'll catch anything.



CONFESSIONS OF A HEX ADDICT

By GREG OLSON

Hi, my name is Greg.... and.... I'm a Hex addict.

It started off innocently enough. For the first couple summers, I merely flirted with the idea of fishing the Hex hatch. I hung around a northern Wisconsin canoe launch, and asked the incoming or outgoing fishermen if the hatch was going off. The response was always: too early, too late, too windy, too much water, too cold, phase of moon wrong, etc. No one mentioned the strain on their families, the lack of sleep, the fantasizing at work. But with no bugs coming off, I wasn't tempted to stray from the shore... not yet.

The Hex is short for *Hexagenia limbata*, the largest mayfly that we have in Wisconsin. It is about the size of a dragonfly and hatches around mid June to the first week of August in silt covered, slow runs of some rivers.... at night, in the dark. It is also the only hatch that allows one to fish for 20+ inch browns on a dry fly.

This year, however, the cold spring pushed the Hex hatch on the river that I targeted back to the 4th of July weekend. The hatch was going off and I was on vacation. The temptation proved too much to resist.

Shortly after my friend Mike and I pushed away from the bank, we found a likely looking run, and took to shore. The deep water with a soft bottom prevented wading, and our fellow "brothers of the angle" fished from canoes, duck boats, or even float tubes. Although we were an easier target for the hordes of mosquitoes, we chose the increased mobility of fishing from the shore versus staying in the canoe.

Fishing the Hex hatch is angling reduced to the use of a single one of your five senses, that being sound. Standing there fishing emerger patterns, waiting for the big event to begin, the light slowly left the sky. We became aware of the buzz of mosquitoes, which seemed to build to a deafening hum if you concentrated on it. This is not recommended, since it will drive you to madness. The hatch would begin every night around 9:45 pm, right around the time when the whippoorwills would start to call out.

Soon the Hex mayflies began drifting down like toy sailboats. The browns began to slash the surface, taking the bugs with a slurp that sounded as if someone was throwing bricks into the river. We quickly cast our flies to just above the loud noise. If we heard the slurp again, we set the hook, and if all went well a heavy brown would begin bulling toward one of the many tree snags in the river. More often than not our lines sailed back at us. Either we struck too late due to unseen slack, the fly didn't reach the intended target, or with so many bugs on the water, the fish picked a natural instead.

At some point, the spinner fall started, which we determined by quickly sweeping a flashlight beam downstream. So, we changed flies. The heavy action lasted for around an hour. We used 5 wt rods, but others were using up to a 7 wt, in order to steer the large fish away from snags. Targeting a single fish that was repeatably rising in a single spot proved to be more effective than giving in to the impulse of covering the entire river with casts, even when the hatch got really heavy and the slurping was coming from everywhere. With the difficulty of casting in the dark and the sheer numbers of bugs on the water, the numbers of fish caught were not as good as one would expect from so much fish activity on the surface. Still the fish brought to the net were big and fat, some topping the 20 inch mark.

The bulk of the activity lasted an hour, and after another 45 minutes we took down our fly rods, packed up the canoe, and paddled back upstream. Fishing the Hex hatch is a unique experience mainly confined to Wisconsin and Michigan trout rivers, although the Mississippi and some lakes can also have strong Hex hatches. During his initial scouting trip, Mike spoke to a fisherman from the Black Hills of South Dakota, who was spending his week's vacation chasing the Hex hatch, and had been doing so for over 20 years straight. Mike asked him why he didn't head to Montana, which was closer to home. He gushed that there was nothing in fly fishing that compared with Hex fishing. The big bugs and big fish, all in the dark, had gotten in his blood and he wouldn't think of exchanging it for a week on the Madison.

We, too, will definitely be back next year and have already begun planning. With all the action occurring in the pitch dark, it's been too easy for me to close my eyes, hear the whippoorwill, the whine of mosquitoes, and the sploosh of a large brown trout.





CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB:

WWW.KIAPTUWISH.ORG



DON'T MISS THE SEPTEMBER MEETING!!!

The end of summer brings us the September Meeting. Come see your old friends and find out what everyone's been up to.

Wednesday, September 7th

Dinner at 6PM

Meeting at 7PM

The deadline to make submissions for the October issue is Wednesday, September 21st.
Thank you!

