



Coop Nursery Sponsor Grant Program

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and Commissioner Donald Anderson, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Somerset County Sportsmen's League, Inc., for its generous donation of \$1,000 to the Commission's Cooperative Nursery Sponsor Grant Program.

Be assured that this donation will be used by one of the many cooperative nurseries to upgrade their nurseries, purchase needed equipment, and make general improvements of their nursery operations.

We certainly value your keen interest in public aquaculture ventures both large and small and your sincere desire to help the nurseries that make up these operations.

Again, thank you for your generosity. Please accept my sincere gratitude for your contribution to a worthwhile program. It is because of you that Pennsylvania has the best fishing that there is to offer.

Sincerely,
Peter A. Colangelo
Executive Director

Wild tiger trout

While reading the "Mail" column in the January/February 1998 issue, I was intrigued by a letter from Bill Bohonek, from Pittsburgh, who caught a tiger trout from Meadow Run in Fayette County. He asked the Commission how this hybrid might have been introduced to the stream. Mr. Bohonek's question was answered by Thomas

Greene, the Commission Coldwater Unit Leader, who replied that this trout, a hybrid between a brown and brook trout, was probably released into the stream from a commercial hatchery.

I am a biologist for a consulting firm, and I have been participating in fisheries investigations similar to those conducted by the Commission for 19 years. I took particular note of the timing of my reading Mr. Bohonek's letter and seeing the tiger trout photograph

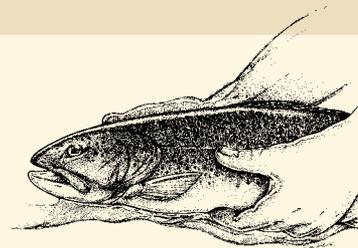


because, in what might best be described as "deja vu all over again," I had just seen my first "wild" tiger trout. It was captured by electrofishing and subsequently released back to a small coldwater stream in Monroe County. It was undoubtedly spawned in the stream (as opposed to a hatchery) because of its small size (5 inches) and bright coloration. Mr. Greene mentioned in his reply that the Commission on rare occasions encounters tiger trout in streams that hold both brown and brook trout populations. My study stream contains a naturally reproducing population of brown trout (about 90 percent of the trout community there) and subordinate populations of native brook and wild rainbow trout.

We reported our fish to Mike Kaufmann, Commission Area 6 Fisheries Manager, who told us that he had seen tiger trout in the wild only on three occasions. Although I have seen the hatchery version before, I never expected to find a wild one. Mr. Bohonek caught something truly unique in the wild.—*George M. Christian, Oley, PA.*

"Writing Readers" comment

I phoned your office today relative to the "Writing Readers" column in the May/June 1998 issue ("Pennsylvania's Wild Brown Trout," by Richard Brett). I found the article interesting and quite informative.



I have been away from small-stream trout fishing for several years. Mr. Brett rekindled my interest in this endeavor. He mentioned using a small ultralight fly rod, but he doesn't define the terms. I would like to discuss the purchase of a new rod for this type of fishing. I haven't bought a fly rod for small streams and small flies since I bought a 7-foot, 5-weight glass rod some 20 years ago. So I figure Mr. Brett, having recently made such a purchase, might be willing to provide some practical insight and recommendations in this regard.—*George A. Lubert, Patton, PA.*

I may sound prejudiced here, but my only recommendation is a 1-ounce, 7-foot, 4-weight fly rod. The 1-ounce is a full-flex-action rod. With this rod I can cast tight loops under tree limbs or cast very gently to trout in pools and flats. Its 7-foot length is short enough to work canopied mountain streams, but it is also long enough for line control. The 4-weight double-taper line I use is easy to control. With lighter lines the wind is a big factor, and heavier lines spook the trout, so this is a comfortable medium.

I also tie my own leaders with the help of the man I respect the most in fly fishing, Mr. Joe Humphreys. He recommends a butt section of no more than .017, then .015, and so on to a tippet of 5x or 6x; so my leaders are 7½ to 9 feet. I use my system on every fly project I hit. I've even taken this system on the Yough River a few times, fishing over depressions full of wild rainbows 12 to 14 inches long.

I'm a nymph fisherman, and I also own a 9-foot rod I never use except on large waters. Even on windy spring days, nymphing without strike indicators, I use the 7-footer.

To be fair, there are several companies out there that have fine ultralight systems. If you want the most excitement out of fly fishing, purchase an ultralight system.—*Richard Brett.*

Purple loosestrife

First, as a transplanted Wilkes-Barreian, I can't tell you how much I enjoy your magazine, the only magazine I read cover to cover, and it's getting better with each issue.

The purpose of this letter is to talk about that "flower" you featured in your July/August 1998 issue (after I read the issue I gave it to my teenagers, and then, well, it's gone with the wind). I was very disturbed and concerned about its spreading, but living in Brooklyn gives one few visual reminders. Last week I went to upstate New York to visit my kids in camp. When I saw my first bunch of those "flowers," I told the car passengers all about them and how these plants choke our wetlands. While traveling all over upstate New York, we saw literally valleys of them, starting by the drainage ditch by the roadside, along every roadside, and stretching as far as the eye could see! Every mile got me madder and madder as I pointed them out to the kids. "Look-more and more!" I kept yelling. If you think



Pennsylvania has a problem, New York is unbelievable! I still can't get over it—my kids wanted us to get out and pull some out, but I explained to them that the plants need to be totally uprooted. Those hours of driving kept the image so vivid

in my head about all the wetland life being pushed out or destroyed. I am not an ultra-ecologist, but *something* must be done about these plant leeches.

Your article (as far as I remember) did not mention any action that will be taken by you, the state, or some coordinated action with other states like New York.—*Marc L. Minkoff, New York City.*

The article "Purple Loosestrife" that appeared in the July/August 1998 issue was reprinted from a pamphlet of the same name. The pamphlet was produced in cooperation with federal, state, and local government agencies, and private concerns. For more information on purple loosestrife, contact: PA Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry, 2301 N. Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110; 717-772-5209.—*Ed.*

Falling Spring Branch

I read with interest WCO Jan Caveney's "Notes from the Streams" item in the September/October 1998 issue. Having seen (but not fished) the storied chalk streams of England and having fished the beautiful Falling Spring Branch outside Chambersburg, I can say that Falling Spring does very closely resemble England's famous trout streams.

During a trip my brother and I took to Falling Spring Branch early one crisp October morning a few years ago, the trout were especially wary and the Spring Branch was magical, as always.

The Commission, private property owners and the trout clubs should be commended for maintaining and preserving such a wonderful stream.—*Ron Caimi, Waterloo, IL.*

Green Weenie

Charles R. Meck's article in the November/December 1998 issue, "My Five Favorite Wet Flies," was excellent, even though the specifications for the flies were missing. Four of the flies were standards, so the missing tying instructions were no problem.



What are the tying instructions for the Green Weenie? I have never seen this one before and would like to tie some.—*Colton P. Wagner, East Norwich, NY.*

This effective pattern is easy to tie. Start with a 3X or 4X size 10 or 12 long-shank hook. Use chartreuse, green, or yellow thread. Just wind fine chartreuse chenille on the hook. Build a head of thread.

To weight the fly, place 15, 20, or 25 wraps of .015 lead on the hook shank. For even more weight, add a beadhead. You can use the differently colored threads to color-code the flies according to how they're weighted.—*Ed.*

Whitefish?

I recently read an article on whitefish. Could you please tell me if this species was stocked in Pennsylvania? I would also appreciate any additional information you may have available. What does it eat? Is it migratory? Which game fish

does it compete with, and how large does it get (growth rate)? Is the whitefish stocked in any areas of the state? I frequently fish the Youghiogheny River upstream from McKeesport and would like to know if there is any chance of my catching one.—*Fred Mains, Somerset.*

Several species of whitefish occur throughout North America. The two species living in (Lake Erie only) or near Pennsylvania waters are the lake whitefish and the round whitefish.

Lake whitefish occur throughout Alaska and most of Canada south into New England, the Great Lakes basin (including Lake Erie), and central Minnesota. They have been introduced in northwestern United States (Montana, Idaho, and Washington). The Fish and Boat Commission does not stock lake whitefish in Pennsylvania. Therefore, there would be no chance of catching a lake whitefish in the Youghiogheny River. Lake whitefish are limited to lakes and large rivers. They are bottom feeders, and their primary foods are amphipods ("freshwater shrimp"), mollusks, and insect larvae. They sometimes feed on fish eggs and small fish. Lake whitefish commonly reach lengths from 18 to 31 inches and weights of 2 to 7 pounds.

Round whitefish occur in Alaska, parts of Canada, New England, and the Great Lakes basin (absent from Lake Erie). The Fish and Boat Commission does not stock round whitefish. Round whitefish can be found in the same habitat as lake whitefish, and they feed on the same items as the lake whitefish. They can reach a length of about 22 inches.—*Gary A. Smith, Commission Area 8 Fisheries Technician.*

Satisfied customer

You are to be congratulated on the beautiful job you have done with this magazine. I look forward to receiving it for the rest of my days! It's wonderful!—*Kenneth G. Davis, Dallas, PA.*