



## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

February 04 6:30 Fly Tying Bray Conservation Area  
February 18 6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area

### Introduction to Fly Tying at Maramec State Park

The introduction to fly tying class brought in students as far away as Stockton. The weather once again played a role in the size of the class but that is a chance taken when offering the class in January. Eight students arrived for the class. They were excellent students following directions and asking questions. This was the first class that we had where all students managed control of their bobbins as instructed. There was discussion about steam teams, fly fishing organizations and various other classes offered by MDC and how to get involved. We tied three flies for cold water fishes and the students did a good job on all three. Todd did an excellent job as the demonstrator and instructor.





## Report from Lou

Sad news out of OK. The NOFFC has disbanded. No more Smallmouth Rendezvous. When I could go I always enjoyed the show, visiting and fishing. I will miss it.

From Walter Davis -

The Smallmouth Rendezvous was started in 2001 and has been held continuously since then (except for two Covid years). Hundreds of tiers have participated over the years. With regret, we must announce that the Smallmouth Rendezvous will not be held in 2025 nor the foreseeable future. We have been unable to recruit an adequate number of committed volunteers to continue sponsoring the Rendezvous.

Although Rendezvous attendance has remained strong, the Northeast Oklahoma Fly Fishing Club has not. The few remaining club members voted at their last meeting on January 27, 2025 to disband and therefore the club will not be sponsoring any future events. We will continue to honor the commitment that we made to the tiers and participants that all funds generated from the Rendezvous will be used to promote fishing in northeast Oklahoma. All existing funds of the Rendezvous will be donated to the local office of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife. Years ago, the northern species of the smallmouth bass was introduced into Tenkiller Lake. These fish have migrated upstream and are hybridizing with the native Neosho strain in the upper Illinois River. Using DNA analysis, the Wildlife Department has recently been working to

track the extent and effect of this hybridization throughout the upper Illinois River basin. The Department is finding that the hybrids are growing at a much faster rate than either of the pure strains. This faster growth rate is producing substantially larger fish in the river. The expectation is that the donated funds will further this research.

This has been a difficult decision for us. We just cannot continue the Rendezvous without sufficient help. We thank all of you who have participated in past Rendezvous events. You made it a success for many years. We have made many friends at the Rendezvous. We will miss you. We will be attending other regional events and will see many of you at those events.

Walter Davis

Larry Stinnett

Susan Stinnett

### **Fishing Report by Sam**

Friday, January 17, the day prior to our fly-tying program at Maramec park, I fished “the park”. I prefer cloudy days and if there is a mist or light rain so much the better. I don’t believe many fly fishermen around the state realize that “the park” has excellent olive and midge hatches. Olives are swimmers and prefer vegetation. Guess what “the park” has a ton of? If you have fished it then you know the answer. Midges, well they can live in just about anything. I have had excellent dry fly days fishing the Olives and no one else is floating dries. The bugs are in the air, the fish are rising and just about everyone else is fishing with floats and whatever is dangling below.

I realize that most of the fishermen at “the park” are not dry fly purist, but then one doesn’t need to be a purist to see what is happening on the water. When fish are feeding it’s the most obvious when it’s on top. You can’t miss it, unless you aren’t paying attention to what’s happening around you or glued to the movement of a float so much that nothing else matters, or you don’t care. Everyone has their methods and that’s fine we all don’t need to be fishing the same way and I know most of the fly fishers at the park are only part timers, but if you don’t get excited over a fish taking your fly on top then I guess you’ve never tried it, or at best did and it didn’t work for you. I must admit there is a learning curve to dry fly fishing with the cast, presentation and line management on the water and some fly fishers find that a little intimidating or too difficult. Most of the fishermen there and I guess everywhere want to catch fish and it is the only goal they have. Far too many don’t appreciate just being out and enjoying the challenge and nature. It doesn’t matter that fish are rising all around them and that it’s a good idea to adjust to what the fish are doing. There are thousands of fish everywhere and surely some of them will eat what they have especially at “the park”.

When I occasionally looked up and down the stream that day, I rarely saw any rods bent except for an elderly gentleman and one professionally looking guy that was helping a young man, perhaps his son. There were at least fifty vehicles parked there, so guessing I would assume about a hundred people fishing with thousands of fish all over and not much action. I found it strange, unbelievable.

Don’t get me wrong, I’m not a dry fly fanatic. I fish with a dry and dropper, the dry being the indicator, and sometimes with an indicator and nymph fished deep with a split shot to help get it

down when there isn't activity that indicates a hatch, spinner fall or pre hatch. I, like just about everyone that has caught a fish, like the tug. They say, "The tug is the drug", whomever they are. It was fun when I caught them with a cane pole, and I was 4 years old, and it's still fun with the flimsy little fly rod at 76.

January 30<sup>th</sup>, yesterday, it was misting, light rain and cool, like semi cold cool, not Fonzy cool. I figured it would be a good day for a hatch at Maramec, I was wrong. They didn't come off, at least not the olives. Tons of midges in the air, but not much activity on the water. The midges I saw were probably size 40. I fish some tiny flies, but not that small and besides like I said there wasn't much surface activity anyway. When I drive into the park, I like to look ahead to see how many vehicles there are ahead of me. There was One red van parked in the last parking lot. I had some things that needed attention in the morning, so I didn't arrive until 1100, but only one other vehicle? That has only happened to me a few other times and those days, it was raining or snowing and cold. All that water and no one to crowd me out. It was great. I did eventually see the other fisherman when he came up behind me as I was playing a fish. We chatted a bit and he went on up the stream. He seemed to be in a hurry and a few minutes later I heard the van start up. That was about 1400, so I had the entire park to myself for the next two hours. The fish must be getting hungry, anytime I caught a fish there were probably a hundred that rushed over to the splashing. The water turned black with the backs of fish. If you have watched hatchery fish being fed, then you know what it looks like when the pellets hit the water. That's exactly what it reminded me of when I had a fish on.

I fished a dry and dropper mostly, probably getting five on the dropper to one on the dry. I'm sure they took the dry as something that was possible to eat rather than something they recognized as food. They are inexperienced to naturals and besides I haven't seen anything hatch at the park that looks like a yellow humpy. My dropper was a size 18 gray scud with one turn of crystal flash for attraction. The fly is not weighted, it's heavy enough to sink on its own and with the dry fly above the dropper can't be heavy.

January 31<sup>st</sup>, today I had a wild hair to catch a warm water fish in a lake in January on a fly. I can't recall fishing a lake for bass or crappie or bluegill when there was ice on the water, except for ice fishing which I have done a little of with much success. When I was introduced to ice fishing, we would measure the number of fish we caught by the amount in a 5-gallon bucket. When asked how the fishing was, "about a half bucket", and the inquirer would know what that meant. I'm not saying that I caught a half bucket of bluegills, I'm saying we caught that many, because we would dump them all into one bucket. There were times we caught more than a full bucket. We used meal worms for bait, the bucket was used as a seat and to carry all the necessary things we needed for a day on the ice. Temps were usually just above zero or just a little below. I guess temps in teens or 20s would have been okay, but I never fished with them when it wasn't around zero. When a fish was caught it lay on the ice, no stringer or basket necessary. They froze stiff. When we dumped them in the sink and ran water they slowly started to move around and eventually started swimming. The first time I saw this I didn't believe it.

It was misting and spitting rain this afternoon and the wind was pushing waves on the east bank of the lake, perfect, except the lake still had ice along the edges on the south bank where it gets

some shade. I wasn't sure if I would do any good with that cold water, but what the hey you never know until you try. Cold water means slow presentation, float and marabou jig bobbing in the wind did the trick. All I had to do was cast and let the wind to the rest. Needless to say the fight of a warm water fish in water temps just above freezing isn't exciting.



**River Conditions:**

Rivers are in good condition. The Springs are still kicking lots of cloudy water with this recent snow melt. Great chance to get out there and enjoy it but don't forget the dunk bag.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

March 04 6:30 Fly Tying Bray Conservation Area  
March 18 6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area

### Report from Sam

If you fish lake Towel now would be a great time to see the structure. The lake was several feet low on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>.

If you didn't know, we have switched over to another web host. The previous host was getting too expensive. The current host had a special going on and I thought we should take advantage. Unfortunately, the program was completely different than I had worked with before. Needless to say, there was a learning curve. But I finally figured it out so now you can peek at the new website. Same address as before and if you don't know what the former address was, then I'm not going to tell you. You will have to do some searching on your own.

### Fishing Report by Sam

#### Thursday, February 6, Taneycomo

The forecast was for a high in the lower 60s, cloudy and windy. It was cloudy and windy, but the weatherman missed the temps. We put the boat in at Cooper Creek ramp with a mist and spitting light rain, and temperature at 38. Not to worry the man said lower 60s. The wind was fairly calm, and the lake had soft shallow rolling waves. Table Rock dam was generating at 40, so a little current, not a perfect current for fishing but better than no current.

We motored up the lake about half of a mile and figured on drifting back and motoring up again, but the outboard had a different thought. For some reason an outboard motor has a thirst for petrol. I, thinking I had checked it the day before apparently didn't. I told my son I would row him upstream a bit further and we would drift back down to the ramp later in the afternoon. I wasn't going to drift back half a mile and then row it back up for another trip. One drift will be all we get today.

The fish were cooperative right off the bat. My son, Michael, put about a dozen in the net in the first three hours, and probably missed or lost that many. I had yet to string up my rod, but he was having a blast, and I enjoyed watching him learn a new technique and bending a rod. The cast up stream and keeping up with the drift as it comes back to you takes a little time to connect the dots. Once he figured it out, with a little coaching, he was keeping fish hooked. About noon we stopped for lunch and to give the old man a break.

I had rowed further upstream than I thought so I told Michael that we would drift back, and the presentation method would be a lot easier. It was about this time the wind picked up out of the north straight up the lake. The current and the wind were about the same force so there were times we sat in the same spot without moving. Occasionally gusts of wind took command and

pushed us upstream. I had to row downstream to keep us moving. The catching got worse as the temps dropped and the wind picked up. I believe Michael only boated five more the rest of the afternoon. About 1500 hours I asked him if he was ready to call it a day. A quick Yes. When we had the boat loaded and ready to leave the temperature registered in the truck was 33. It was a good thing that we had dressed for the cold morning because we would have been off the lake a lot sooner if we had dressed for temperatures in the lower 60s. Layering is something I taught him a long time ago when we were hunting. I'm glad he remembers.

### Wednesday February 26 Taneycomo

My son Michael and I went to a different area of the lake on this trip, but it didn't pan out. We fished it for about three hours without a take or a thought that it may have been a take. I was having some problems with my outboard motor again so we decided to have lunch and take a look at the motor. We were close to his home, so we drove there had a quick lunch and I took the gas tank off the motor and drained it. I put some fresh gas in and hoped that it would solve the problem. The motor ran great the rest of the day and the fishing picked up when we went back down the lake and fished the same area we had fished earlier in the month. It wasn't gang busters but better than nothing. Warm temps brought out more fishermen and a lot more boats on the water this time. For every one courteous boatman that slowed down when they went by five would fly past sending waves crashing on the banks and rocking my drifter back and forth. We didn't see another rod bent all afternoon. Most of the fishermen we talked to had not caught anything or just one, so for some reason the trout were not on the feed. We put 6 in the net and probably had that many follows, but they would turn when they got close to the boat.

### River Conditions:

Rivers are in good condition. Great chance to get out there and enjoy it and don't forget the dunk bag. Just because it's 70 today doesn't mean spring is here, this is a "false spring" and we have more cold weather coming.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

April 01 6:30 Fly Tying Bray Conservation Area

April 15 6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area

## Report from Sam

The upcoming Tri-Lakes Fly Fishing Expo (<https://trilakesflyfishers.com/event/tri-lakes-fly-fishers-2025-expo-2/>) at the Benton Center in Clinton will be from 1 PM to 4 PM on Friday April 11 and on Saturday April 12 from 9 AM to 4 PM.

## Fishing Report by Lou

### You Better Belize It

Ahh what can I say? Sun, sand and salt water fishes (like bonefish tarpon and permit) VS snow, windchills hovering around 0°, more snow and a blizzard?

I was lucky enough to spend mid - February this year at The Blue Bonefish Lodge in San Pedro, Belize. Highs were in the mid 70's or so and the food was a fantastic mix of Belizean dishes! The fish of course were more cooperative with some than others. Funny how that works out. Two newbies to the lodge their first day out got a big fat goose egg, but then had a wonderful mid week day boating 40 plus bonefish. My partner in crime this trip was Sharon (our honorary western member) and we faired no better. Sharon did catch her first permit but then caught two days of big fat goose eggs. I on the other hand when I caught a goose egg went ditch fishing and had a grand old time. Mayan cichlids were the target but there were some other fish thrown in to include the smallest tarpon I have ever seen and a "Baby" tarpon of about 2'. Go figure!! I had a great time with old and new friends alike.







### Fishing Report by Sam

The weather finally changed a bit and took a trip over to a friend's lake to fish for whatever happened to be close enough to shore for me to reach with my 4 wt and a stiff breeze. I only picked up one crappie about a dozen small bass and bluegill and one nice size channel cat that probably would have gone about six pounds. All the fish I caught were in 3-5 foot of water. I tried top water at first but only got a nudge or two from bluegill too small to eat the fly, then I

switched over to a dumbbell eye but I didn't get any takes in the deeper water. The intermediate level with a slow sinking fly that was given to me by a client from Texas was the answer.



I took a trip over to another friend of mine that has a pond about an acre in size and finally found the bass on the outside edge of the moss line. As a result, almost every bass I caught came with a bonus mouth full of moss and algae. The bluegills were easier to haul over the moss but a few of them as well ended up in the moss. It was a good afternoon with about a dozen bass and twice that many bluegills. None of the bass were over 12 inches.

Every spring I make my rounds on the Little Piney and Spring Creek to check on the Blue Ribbon regulation signs. I also go over to Mill Creek but haven't so far. It's on my to-do list. Most of the signs were still up but a few had to be replaced, mostly on Spring Creek. At Lane Spring I need to replace a post that was washed away in the flood last fall. I didn't go into the campground area, it was closed. I still have to check that area out too.



These are the signs at Mill Dam Hollow. White Ribbon downstream and Blue Ribbon upstream. They are marked that way, just hard to see in the photo.

Day before yesterday I took a trip with my drift boat to the North Fork. The ramp is across the bridge if you are coming from the east. Make a sharp right turn and circle back under the bridge. When I turned to go under the bridge the road was closed. It was completely washed out from the floods last fall. I had no idea the flood had been that bad down there. The road is high off the water and banked in with huge boulders. The only way out was to back up the road to the highway. There was a wide spot along the road, so I backed into that and decided to ask the guys that were fishing if anyone was doing any good. A guy was walking back to his vehicle, so I stopped to talk to him. He said he had been there two hours and only one person had caught a fish. He said he was going further down the river to another ramp and gave me directions. I backed out the road to the highway and headed to the other ramp which was supposed to be about 5-6 miles after the twists and turns but only about two miles from the bridge by water.

The place I wanted to fish was upstream from the bridge so it took me awhile for my little 6hp to get there. I fished for about six hours and caught two of these that were well over the length limit. The photo was taken on the filet board to give you a hint as to what they were.



Caught them on the same fly and the same system I use for smallmouth winter fishing. I figured no one was catching fish so they must be in a lazy mood and not wanting to chase bait, so a slow soft presentation may be a better idea. Anyway, the only other rod I saw bent all day was a guy fishing bait that hauled in a nice catfish. The wind was starting up pretty good about 1500hrs and I was tired, so I decided to call it a day. When I turned the boat at the bridge and started downstream there were white caps blowing upstream. The trip back to the ramp was slow going because I was trying to keep the pounding of the waves on the hull down to a minimum and keep the bow lower to the water.

#### **River Conditions:**

Rivers are in good condition. Great chance to get out there and enjoy it and don't forget the dunk bag. Looks like we have more cold weather coming.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

May 06 6:30 Fly Tying Bray Conservation Area

May 20 6:00 Club Meeting at Waynesville Park and annual picnic.  
Watch for emails from Lou for the picnic information.  
Stream survey – if weather and stream flow allow

## Fishing Reports by Sam

### Grass Carp

This has been a busy month for me on the water. Everything started on April 2<sup>nd</sup> when I discovered that grass carp will eat the flowers off an elm tree. Well, they aren't exactly flowers, they are seed pods. I was fishing at a lake for bass when I saw the carp feeding. I watched them for a little while and picked up a pod they were eating off the water. I drove home and rummaged through the feathers I had and found a hen cape with about the same color. I knew I would be casting a long way and that the fly would sit flat so I tied a post on it so I could pick it out on the water. The seed pod is about 1cm so it's not a big fly.



This one was about 12 pounds

### Pickerel

Todd and I took a trip over to Blackwell to fish for Pickerel on Saturday April 12. Driving over we were expecting the lake to be muddy, and it was. There had been a lot of rain, and that lake has a tendency to be a little cloudy when it's normal. We were surprised to have the entire lake to ourselves because it was a nice morning. We figured that the best place to find would be at the head of the lake where there was a chance of some visibility. The lake, if you are not familiar with it, is shallow and weedy, especially the upper end. Todd went big and dark with the fly selection and then switched over to white and flash. He was getting good takes but not

hooking up and later decided that the 4/0 hook was probably too big for them. Todd fished until about 1400 and had to take off to catch up on some work. I stayed another couple of hours and caught one, and then had to share the lake with four other boats that arrived about the time Todd left for work. Clear skies and warm days definitely bring out the fair-weather fishermen.



Not the biggest of the day, but it was the first one, so we took the photo just in case we didn't catch anymore. If I remember right the largest one was about 20 inches and Todd caught it about 15 minutes after this one. Friendly reminder if you want to catch Pickerel, take a long hemostat or needle nose pliers and buy a jaw spreader.

The one I caught had the fly clear back in the upper throat so I had to go in from the gill to get the fly because the dang thing had lock jaw.

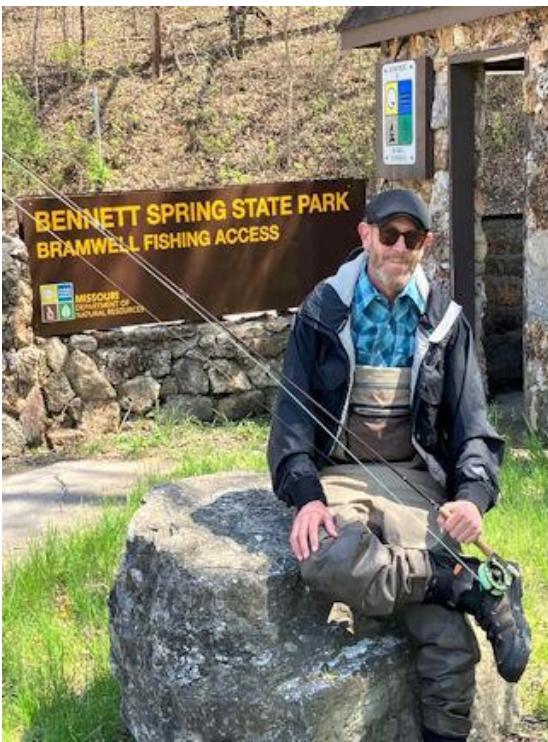
### Trout

On April 17 I met my son at Bennett for breakfast before a day on the water. We drove around the park looking at fishermen and didn't see many at all. Maybe 40 in the entire park. AND we didn't see many fish. The spring branch had recently flooded so we figured the trout must be in the river. We were limited to wading spots with the river running high, but we had the stream to ourselves. We didn't catch many but it was better than fishing in the park

We started out throwing streamers and had some follows but no takes. I switched over to an indicator and a black stone fly then decided to go for more color and put on Pat's rubber leg. That was the solution. Slower presentation and color, plus those tantalizing legs.

If you have not seen or read about the construction at Bennett, check it out.

Go online and search for "Hatchery construction photos Bennett Spring MO". Then select the MDC update link. Then scroll down to photos. The Q&A is also an interesting read. I don't see how they will have this project completed by this summer. I'm guessing November.



## Sunfish

A couple of days ago I decided to take a break from the landscaping job we are doing with the front yard. I had not fished on my friend's lake for at least a year, so I grabbed a 4wt a box of lake/pond flies, some tippet, my scissor/hemostat tool and headed out. I can't describe how great fishing was. But it was about the best I've had for a long time.

I decided to go with a double rig. Boogle Bug on top and a WB dropper. With that setup I had three doubles in the first 30 minutes. Everyone of them took the bug first and the second fish took the WB. They were all 3-4 year old largemouth with lots of spunk.



These first two doubles were about 10 minutes apart.

I worked my way around the lake picking up bass and a few bluegills every few minutes, almost nonstop. Eventually I got to where I really wanted to fish at the end of the lake where the waves were working the banks. I always prefer to fish the windy end except for when I'm sight fishing.

I guessed right and began catching a variety of fish including some white bass the owner had stocked in the lake back in the 80s. As a matter of fact, he has stocked a wide variety of species

and left them alone to work it out on their own. So here goes: Largemouth, smallmouth, goggle eye, longear, redear, bluegill, green sunfish, white bass, flat head catfish, channel catfish, grass carp, crappie, blue catfish and rainbow trout, (the lake is spring fed).

Some of sunfish appear to me to have crossed. I'd have to look up my sunfish chart and check to be sure, so I'm guessing here. His fish are all healthy and some of the sunfish are big. Bluegill, green sunfish and hybrids over 10 inches.



Bluegill



Hybrid



Hybrid



Redear



White bass

**River Conditions:**

Rivers are high so you may want to fish in ponds and lakes that didn't get a lot of the dirty runoff. OR just be patient and wait a few days for the streams to clear.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

June 03 6:00 Waynesville City Park / or 6:00 Bray Conservation Area  
Depending on river level we may or may not do a stream sample on the Douix.  
If it's a wash out we will meet at Bray.

June 17 6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area / or 6:00 Waynesville City Park  
If the stream sample is canceled on the 3<sup>rd</sup> we will try to sample on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

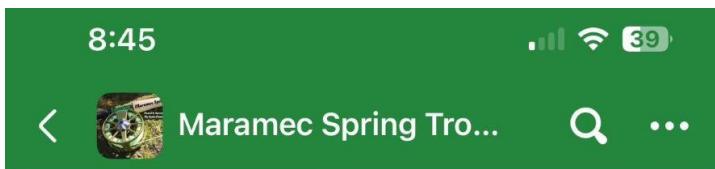
**Watch for Emails and Texts**

### Report by Billy:

Billy, Todd, and Herb attended the **2025 Kids Fishing Day** at Maramac Spring Park on May 17. The weather actually cooperated and provided the perfect setting to a perfect day. Over 500 kids ranging from toddlers to teenagers lined the upper half of the spring branch and the trout were not shy. At the end of the day the largest trout was 4.5 pounds.

FFA demonstrated fly tying and shared fly fishing tips throughout the day. Several of the participants and their parents had us look over their fly rod set up and share some pointers. Todd was able to give a casting lesson to a young fisherman that was new to the sport. We had our fly boxes full of flies on display as we tied. We were impressed with the number of kids, especially teen-agers, who showed such interest and asked such great questions. A few even offered a "trade of flies" that they had already created.

It was very encouraging to see such a great turnout of young fishermen at such a great event. FFA was invited to attend the 2026 event.



[Aj Evans](#) and [Natasha Gately-Pinkley-](#)  
Donated full echo Gecko fly rod kit WITH  
fly box filled with flies. They also were  
roving fishing helpers and helped set up  
booths

[Jacob Maples](#), [Shaun Lewis](#), and Glenn  
Jarvis- roving fish helpers, Jacob also  
helped put up booths and take down  
booths

[Roubidoux Fly Fishers](#)- showed kids and  
adults how to tie flies, gave out some flies,  
answered many questions about flies, and  
helped kids with casting a fly rod



### Report by Sam:

#### Fly Fishing for Bluegills

On Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> we (RFFA) helped MDC education director Dwight Warnke conduct a class on fly fishing for bluegills. The ten participants ranged from the elderly to a young boy. Some with experience and some without. We started with tying flies so that the class could try to catch fish with the flies they made. A fun and exciting achievement. One gentleman was an experienced tier and the rest of the class didn't have any experience tying flies. Todd led the tying while Dwight and the rest of the club assisted the tiers.





After the tying session was over we took a break for lunch and prepared for the next session on fly rod casting. Again, some of the participants had a little experience casting and some had no experience casting. It's always a challenge when there is a mix of experience and some bad habits had already crepted in. It isn't unusual for students to forget about the learned skills

when the possibility of catching fish is introduced. The best way to learn casting is on the water instead of the lawn, but sometimes perfect conditions aren't available, so you get by.



The first fish of the day was an excellent sized Crappie that was caught at lunch time on a fly that was tied earlier that morning. It was fun watching the students get excited when they hooked a fish. Several bass and bluegills were hooked and landed. Almost everyone caught at least one fish.

### Report by Sam

The 2025 Missouri Outdoor Communicators conference (May 30-June 1) was held in Pulaski County this year.

Mark Van Patten, who is a member of the MOC, suggested that they contact the RFFA for help with logistics, suggestions and information for a stream cleanup. Billy Edgar and I met with the MOC Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> after we drove to the park earlier and checked it out for their planned event. The parks were very busy, and a large section of the city park was closed to traffic.

Originally the clean crew was supposed to be 8-9 members, but it turned out to be 5, which was plenty. There wasn't that much trash to pick up because the parks were clean. Most of the trash picked up at Laughlin Park was along the road and one member dug into a root wad. All in all, there was about 7 pounds of trash with 6 pounds of that from auto parts and a 3ft piece of a steel guide cable from a telephone pole. The city park cleanup amounted to about 1 stream clean bag. And most of that bag was one volleyball.

<http://www.missourioutdoorcommunicators.org/events> This group had quite the weekend full of activities.

About 1200 on Saturday, I received a message from Marjorie, with the MOC. She informed me that we (RFFA) were going to receive a presentation from the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation and the Missouri Outdoor Communicators. The presentation is called the Generosity Award, and it comes with a cash donation to the club in the amount of \$500.00. I told Marjorie that I would be there to accept the presentation on behalf of the club.

### **Fishing Reports: by Sam**

This has been a busy month for me with graduations and birthday parties. It's cut into my fishing time. I have a friend that has a pond that is full of small bass and aggressive bluegills. He invited me out to thin the herd. Unfortunately, he also had a pond that had amassed a great deal of that slime algae. The problem wasn't catching fish it was that it took too much time to get that stuff off the fly between fish. .5 ounces of fish and .2 ounces of slime. My friend has a friend that will take all the fish I can give him, no matter what size.

So far that friend of a friend hasn't been available to take the fish that I catch, so I'm releasing them. We'll call it practice.



This was a double, which is always fun. The

popper dropper has worked well for me. Tangles occur so care is taken to make sure the dropper is aligned correctly after landing fish or if the top fly isn't sitting correctly.

I had a couple of hours with nothing to do a few days ago and the weather was right so I thought I'd run over to a small lake/large pond depending on what your interpretation of one is over the other. Anyway, it's the same body of water where I have been catching catfish on several different flies. I fished a popper and dropper starting with craw wooly for my dropper and then later switched over to an egg sucking leech. Both flies are made with size 4 3X long hooks. Isn't it amazing what a bluegill can get in that tiny mouth.



**River Conditions:**

Rivers are still running high so you may want to check the stream conditions prior to heading out for a day on the water. There may be some new holes and pockets that have washed out this spring so take caution wading, even in water you are familiar with.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

July 01 6:00 Fly Tying White Buffalo Fly Shop

July 15 6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area / or 6:00 Waynesville City Park stream sample on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Watch for Emails and Texts

### Report by Billy:

Billy shared this photo and info with me about Hog Trough crossing on the Meramec River. I had always thought that Scott's ford used to be called Hog Trough. But I was wrong. Hog Trough bridge was just downstream from where Blue Springs enters the Meramec river south of Bourbon.

Missouri "hog trough" bridge East of Steelville Route 8 ~ 1930 (colorized)  
original photo state archives: <https://digital.shs.mo.org/digital/collection/imc/id/26123/rec/>





Todd and Don were doing a good job of hauling in the bass. Don was using the new indicators he bought at the White Buffalo fly shop in Rolla, and a wet fly below that. Then he switched over to a popper. Todd brought along a large articulated streamer that was green with some red and connected right off the bat. Storm clouds and thunder ended the outing.

Thanks for the photos, Billy.

### **Report by Sam**

### **Fishing Reports: by Sam**

June is Mulberry time and mulberries means critters of all kinds are attracted to the trees. But not a lot of people realize that fish also eat mulberries. Find a tree over the water and you will find fish. I've only found common carp, grass carp, catfish and bluegills eating them, but there could be other fish eating them as well and maybe crawfish after the berry sinks. Anyway, I tied up some simple flies and went to a friend of mine's lake because I knew he had three mulberry trees planted near the edge of the lake. One of the trees is a little too far off for many berries to reach the water. And one of the trees is along a bank that is too difficult to get to for fishing. However, the third tree hangs out over the water and was perfect for trying out my flies.

I was only interested in finding out if the flies worked so I wasn't targeting any of the large grass carp he has, so I took a 5wt rod. Big mistake! The lake is usually clear enough that you

can target fish that you want to cast to. I was doing just that when one of the larger carp, which I didn't see, bolted to the fly before the smaller one could take it. Long story short it took awhile to get the fish in for the photo. I'm guessing it was about 10 pounds.



This large catfish, about 8 pounds, was caught with a small woolly bugger from a different friend's lake. I was fishing for largemouth bass that is overpopulated with small ones and, and the wooly was a dropper off a Boogle Bug. When I fish this rig, I use an extra fast 7wt to make the casting easier.

#### **River Conditions:**

Rivers are still running high so you may want to check the stream conditions prior to heading out. It seems like these past couple of months have been washouts. Almost like living out west and having to deal with the snowmelt. It's a good thing we have so many choices when we get the urge to wet a line.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

August	05	6:00 Fly tying White Buffalo
August	09	2:00 Fly tying class White Buffalo
August	19	6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area

## Fishing Report by Lou:

Brutal. That is the word that comes to mind to describe fishing this last Saturday on the White River at Cotter, AR. Oh the weather was hot but tolerable. It was the river that was just brutal to fish. The Corp of Engineers was releasing water at about 26,000 cfs the guide said as we started the morning. Later in the day he got an alert that they had bumped it up to around 32,000. If we - the guide and I - had known at the end of May when we arranged this trip that it was going to be running so hard we would have scheduled it for way later in the year. But it was Sharon's birthday and we went for it. Large fish on hoppers were on the wish list. But alas nary a top water bite was to be had.

We fished 9' leaders with 3/4" thingamabobbers about 4" from the fly line connection with tungsten bead flies tied on with a dropper about a foot off that.

Hits were incredibly fast as we found out the fish were hunkered down tight to the bottom which was about 10'-13' deep. Usually guides have to do a lot of maneuvering to avoid the hazards of large rocks and trees on the river. Not this time because they were all underwater. Sharon did score a half dozen or so; I on the other hand caught about half that and my great catch of the day was a dragonfly. I was trying to execute a roll cast and accidentally looped the leader around a dragon. The guide got it off and it became lunch for whatever fish would come up for it.

We even tried Crooked Creek just above its confluence with the White. We got a few follows but no takers and with no breeze up there quickly abandoned that endeavor.

Sharon caught the last and biggest fish of the day. I do believe I will not try doing this again at this time of year but instead stay home in our wonderfully cool Ozark streams and pick pockets.



### **Report by Sam:**

We, the RFFA, finally were successful with a stream survey that has been dodging our opportunities for the past few months. Needless to say, the huge amount of rain this year has been eagerly accepted to fill the aquifers, but it has also created a struggle for wading the waters that are fed by the numerous springs and the deluge of runoff.

The bug count was slim, and the diversity was good but not great giving back a score of 20. The good thing was the limited time we needed for the count with four of us tending the net.

### **Report by Sam:**

#### **Fly Fishing the Trico spinner fall**

It's been a year since I caught the spinner fall, as my health has kept me out of the water. But I've fished the spinners for the past 30 years so I pretty much knew where to go. However, the reliable pool where I stood/sat and waited for the fish to start sipping never happened. There were plenty of bugs in the air and the mating swarms were overhead, but for some reason they didn't fall in or above the pool and the fish didn't have spinners to eat. Missing a year on the stream, threw me a curve and I struck out.

I clipped the fly and started fishing the banks with beetles and ants. A few scrawny rainbows were caught, but nothing to get excited over. I did, however, find some very large fish in one pool, but it had difficult banks and was too deep to wade. September should make it more accessible. I will return with a 7wt instead of my 4wt dry fly rod and larger food for their menu. A night assault would be the way to go and if my body holds up I will make the attempt.

### **River Conditions:**

Rivers are still about or a little over normal for this time of year. The Japanese beetles are out and about, so rig up some beetles and find grape vines and you will find fish feeding on them as they drop to the water. Hoppers are getting bigger and you can always fish ants at this time of year. Top water fishing can be excellent with precision casting along the banks. Don't forget the Hexagenia if you are willing to do some night fishing and you know where to go.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

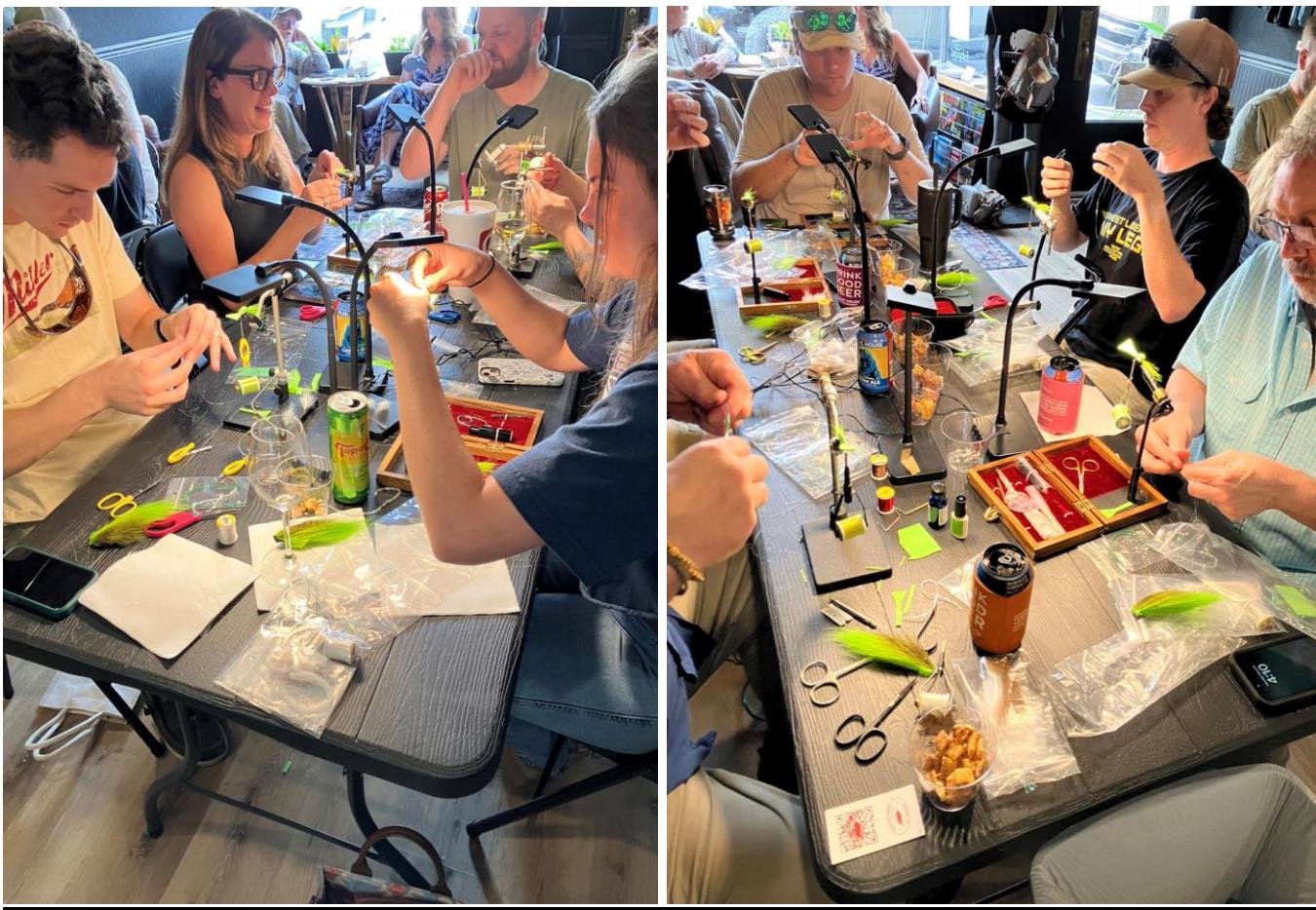
September 02	6:00 Fly tying White Buffalo
September 13	Time TBA - Fly Tying Class White Buffalo
September 16	6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area

### Report By Billy

#### Fly Tying Class At White Buffalo Fly Shop

The RFFA and White Buffalo Fly Shop in Rolla partnered up to host the first fly tying class in the shop. The event took place on Saturday August 9 from 2:00-5:00. The sold out list of participants began packing the shop around 1:00. Bill Cooper from Living The Dream Outdoors podcast recorded a great podcast with interviews from Billy and Sam from RFFA, Dan Wynn, owner of White Buffalo Fly Shop, and Donnie Conway who is on the Board of Directors of Legends Of The Outdoors Hunting and Fishing Hall of Fame. Todd demonstrated how to tie the Murdich minnow and the stealth bomber classics while RFFA members assisted the participants. The owners of the shop, Dan and Reagan Wynn provided delicious snacks and drinks for the participants to enjoy while tying. The event wrapped up around 5:00 with several fishermen and ladies headed to the streams with their new flies! The next fly tying event will take place Saturday, September 13. Online registration will be available soon at [WhiteBuffaloFlyShop.com](http://WhiteBuffaloFlyShop.com). There will only be room for 10 participants so make sure to sign up as soon as you can.





## **Catch, Clean, and Cook Adventures Fly Tying Competition Coming Soon!**

**Report By Billy**

Living the Dream Outdoor Properties hosted the first round of the fly tying competition for the 2025 Catch, Clean, and Cook Adventures on Sunday, August 17. A few talented tyers, including Billy from RFFA stepped up to the challenge, and their skills earned them a spot in the next round of competition during the big event in September that will take place at Maramec Springs Park. Just a side note, the RFFA was represented well with Billy winning the “judges choice” award for his size 12 Royal Wulff. If you didn’t make it out to the first round of the Fly Tying Competition, there will be an additional qualifying round that will take place on September 23 at Maramec Springs. Tie your best flies for the judges and see if you can move on to rounds 2 & 3 during the Catch, Clean, & Cook outdoor writers trout fishing event. If you need more info about signing up, contact Billy or Dan at White Buffalo Fly Shop in Rolla.

### **Report by Sam: “the quest”**

I had planned on committing myself to do the smallmouth slam with one fly and I was going to try to do it in four days. BUT, it took more than four days and more than one fly.

I have had to use two flies of the same pattern because I lost the original fly on the Big River, and as for the four days... well let's start there.

The first day of my quest started with the Meramec, Gasconade and Big Piney. I thought these three should be easy because I knew exactly where I was going to fish. I left the house about 1500 and I drove over to the Meramec at the Highway 8 access, I walked down to the first turn

and picked up the first, of hopefully 12 smallies, in about 10 minutes. Then I drove to Highway 28 on the Gasconade where I walked down to the little island and caught number 2 of 12. The last stream of the afternoon was the Big Piney, a river I grew up on as a teenager. I parked the fish-mobile slid on my waist high waders and hiked down the little creek bed and made one cast for number 3 of twelve. Waders are necessary to prevent poison ivy, nettle, ticks and chiggers.



Day two was Eleven Point, Tenmile Creek and the Jack's Fork. I knew where I was going to fish the Jack and 11 point, but I had never been to Tenmile creek and that's where I should have started but decided to do the eleven point first. I struck out with smallmouth on the eleven point, and I didn't try to fish the other two. Sunnies and goggle eye liked my fly, but I couldn't raise a smallmouth. Another trip south was going to have to be taken.

Day three was the Mineral fork, Joachim Creek and the Big River. The Mineral fork is a pleasant little stream with clear water and a clean bottom and some surprisingly deep holes. As with my first two trips, the sky was blue, and the sun was bright, so I concentrated on shade and aerated water and hopefully a combination of the two. About three hours in I connected to a big, and the only smallmouth that took my fly. I was really shocked at the size when I lipped this guy. I never expected to find an 18" smallmouth in this stream, maybe a 15 or 16, but then I remembered Todd hefting what he called "smallzilla" from this same stream. 4 of 12. A long walk back to the vehicle, some hydration and on to DeSoto MO for my first look at Joachim creek. The access I chose was the lower end, at the railroad park. This is a small slow stream, that I probably wouldn't have used as a target stream for the slam, but no one asked for my opinion. Anyway, I walked down to the bridge where a little dam or maybe it was a pipe caused a spillway, moving water and oxygen, with shade from the bridge. I thought this should be the spot and it was. One cast and number 5 of 12 was landed. The Big River was next and another stream that I had never fished. This stream would never have been on my smallmouth list. It's not what I would call a go to destination. But it is on the list and it's big water and deep water which is better suited for fishing out of a boat. Chest high waders were required. Unfortunately, because of the lack of clarity, I lost my quest fly, so I'll need to return to finish this stream.



Day four was the Elk River, James River and the Osage Fork of the Gasconade. I had a little delay out of the way on this trek which ate up a good deal of my early water time. My son needed a metal detector to find his car keys, so I offered mine since I was going to be in the general area. The metal detector wasn't necessary, because I saw the keys before the detector moved over them. On to the Elk. The waist highs on, I stepped into the Elk at the Pineville access and made one cast to the most likely looking spot. Number 6 of twelve. This is a nice clear stream about the size of the big piney and definitely a stream I would like to fish again. There are several floating outfitters on this guy, so I would say it gets a fair amount of boat traffic. It may be better suited for fishing in cooler weather. The James River was next on the list for the day and the access I chose was Hooten, a section I had previously fished with my son a few years ago. I'm not a fan of the James River. There are sections on the stream that are 50-80 yards long of solid rock and skinny water. Not exactly fish water. The smallmouth I hooked was by far the smallest to date on this quest. According to the rules the size of the fish doesn't matter. 7 of 12 in the bag. The Osage Fork of the Gasconade is a nice little stream about the size of the little piney and easy wade fishing. Nice clear clean water, that has its share of gar, so I stayed away from slack water. The fishing was excellent with numerous smallmouths, goggle eye and sunfish. I hooked the fish I needed within a half dozen casts, but it came off when I was getting my phone for a photo, so I made about four or five more casts and caught another one. 8 of 12. I clipped the fly, put it away and tied on a similar and fished for another couple of hours.



Day five was Tenmile Creek, Eleven Point River and the Jack's Fork River. Tenmile doesn't have much in the way of access areas and the upper end is skinny water, but there are nice, beautifully clear, shaded holes about chest deep that hold fish. It took me about 20 minutes to get the one I needed to move on. 9 of 12. To get to the Eleven Point River, I drove over to the Riverton access on Hwy 160 since it was the closest access from Tenmile Creek. I didn't plan to spend too much time there because the fishing at that location the last time I tried it was tough. I fished there for about an hour, then drove up to Cane Bluff access. The road to Cane Bluff access is long and terribly rough. It's not a road for low cars. I was fishing down to a spot I liked when a young couple walked in for a swim. The only good spot above the pool with shallow enough water for me to fish was gone. I turned around and headed up stream, but the water there was slow and deep. I caught some largemouth bass and goggle eye and almost quit and go down the river to Greer access, when I made a huge decision. Take a chance with a float set at 3 feet above the fly and cast it to the other side of the stream. That's how I lost the original fly on the Big River. I took the chance. The outfit drifted about four or five feet, I put a little mend in the line to give the fly action and the float went down. 10 of 12. Time to head to the Jack's Fork for the last stream of the day. The Jack was low and beautifully clear and there wasn't anyone else fishing at the Buck Hollow access. I walked a long way down to a riffle

above a long-shaded hole to start. It took a few minutes for me to hook a small guy and give me 11 of 12.

The quest is almost finished. The Big River is last, and I'll wait until the weather cooperates. If I can land one early, I'll fish the Huzzah and Courtois while I'm in the area.



### Report by Sam: PA

The Allegheny National Forest is a place I have visited many times. I must have fished at least a dozen different streams in this northwest part of Pennsylvania. My daughter went to college in Pa and lived there a short time, and now my granddaughter lives in Pittsburgh. My wife, Sandra, and I drove up to see my granddaughter in Pittsburgh and I took a trip north for some fishing.

The target fish was brook trout, but I also took my 7wt for smallmouth and possibly some carp. I had caught carp there on dry flies below the Kinzua dam on one trip, so I thought what the heck, maybe again. One morning before I headed north from Pittsburgh, I drove down the hill to the Youghiogheny River (Yough as it's called) for a couple of hours of smallmouth fishing. I met two guys headed out for a day on the water with bugs that looked like spotted lantern flies. They said the top water bite had been very good, and of course I didn't have any spotted lantern flies. The bug is an invasive that came in on shipping containers from Asia and first located in New Jersey. They are supposed to be hard on grape vines, so before I headed north and then again before we came home, I took the vehicle to an automated car wash. The bug is not a fly but more of a sap sucking hopper. It's a pretty insect as insects go, about a size 10 hook.



The Yough is a wide and somewhat shallow stream with a slick bottom and a solid flow. It isn't a clean river as you might guess because of the proximity to Pittsburgh. As I waded up stream I counted eight car tires, which actually provided some structure and depth. They stock trout in the stream, so the temperature is on the cool side. I struck out fishing it.

On my trip up to the Allegheny National Forest I stopped off at Slippery Rock Creek to wet a line, but I didn't stay long. As the name goes, the stream bottom is extremely slick.



It is stocked with browns and rainbows in the springtime.

I arrived in Warren PA a little later than I planned so I didn't have time to do much fishing. There were a couple of guys putting a boat in that had an electric motor set up I had never seen before. I talked to the older gentleman more than his buddy because he was the fly fisher of the two and I figured I may get more information from him than his partner. They said they only had an hour to fish because the park where the boat launch was located closed at 9 PM. I did get enough info for my next day of fishing. He directed me to the Conewago Creek for smallmouth fishing while I waited on the Forest Service office to open so I could get a map and a little more info on the water conditions. Streams were extremely low, and I didn't know which runs had enough water to fish. The Conewago is about the width of the Big Piney, but not as deep and not as fast. An enjoyable wading stream with more slick rocks. This is stud country.



I used the same fly pattern that I am using for the smallmouth slam. Smallmouth love crawfish. I caught a couple of these guys and then headed to the forest service headquarters for info on the runs I should fish.

Heading south on highway 6 I was looking for two-mile run, four-mile run and six-mile run. All three empty into the same watershed, the Tionesta. I never found the forest service road to two-mile run, so I headed up stream to find four-mile run. This was a nice compact run with some water, but not much. I drove a little further until the forest service property ended. A fence and gate told me I had to turn around. But on the gate post there was a sign that said fishing was allowed but only walk-ins. Fair enough. I tied on a beetle and started catching chub minnows. I worked up the shallow run until I found a nice deep pool created by a log jam. I switched over to a number 12 stimulator and made a cast up along the bank below the log and had a solid explosive take. I thought to myself, wow what a Brookie. But it turned out to be a brown. I was disappointed at first but thought an excellent stream born brown is nothing to hang down about. When I landed it, I really was disappointed. It was a 12 inch stocker. Apparently, it made its way up here from the creek and got stuck in this pool. I walked up and around the log jam and hooked another brown about the same size and decided to try to find six-mile run. I drove up six mile run road about a mile or so and turned around deciding to try to fish it the next day instead. I was tired, it had been a nice day and a good time to hang it up.



The following day I planned to spend a few hours on the Allegheny fishing the inside cut of the big island below Kinzua dam. The water on the inside is a little colder because of the hatchery outlet on the same side of the stream. The current is excellent for fishing, and the entire length and width can be fished with waders. The outside of the island is about 300 ft wide with a swifter current.



Inside of the big island compared to the outside of the big island. The island is about 250ft wide. After doing a little reading in my Pennsylvania Trout streams guidebook, I picked Sugar Run as my choice for another shot at Brookies instead of Six Mile Run. It was a little bit more of a trip, but I had all day to fish it. Sugar Run is in deep woods and shaded all day, so the water stays cool even at the end of summer. These little runs are fed by seeps that come in along their course and occasionally a small spring will add to the cool water. I covered a lot of ground trying to find deep enough pools to hold fish and that had good aeration above them. Brook trout prefers higher oxygen than their cousins. Every now and then when fishing the runs obstacles block the way and prevent further exploration.

Sugar Run on the left and a boulder field. Look close, water falling between the trees.



You already know that Brook trout, at least these brook trout are tiny. Usually, they are not longer than your hand. In my case that's seven inches. I didn't catch any on this trip as long as my hand. The one in the photo was about six inches. I caught two that size and the rest....well let's just say that I was catching chub minnows about the same size and some were larger.



### **River Conditions:**

Rivers are getting very clear and low, which is typical for this time of the year. Hoppers are getting big, so don't be shy about going up to a size 6 or 4.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

October	02	2:00 White Buffalo Fly Shop Ribbon Cutting
October	07	6:00 Fly tying White Buffalo
October	11	2:00-5:00 Fly Tying Class at White Buffalo
October	21	6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation Area

## Report by Billy

"A trout is a moment of beauty known only to those who seek it." - Arnold Gingrich

The 2025 Missouri Ozarks Region "Catch, Clean, and Cook" fish camp took place September 22-24 in St. James, MO. Anglers, cooks, outdoor writers, as well as podcast and radio show hosts gathered for three days of fishing, cooking, and contests. The event kicked off on Monday night with the opening ceremony taking place at Living the Dream Outdoor Properties in Leasburg, MO. Although Tuesday was stormy and rainy, the event continued without a hitch at Maramec Spring Park. The morning began with breakfast followed by some trout fishing. Later in the morning and early afternoon a fly tying competition took place. RFFA was represented by Billy Edgar and was judged by Dan Wynn, owner of White Buffalo Flyshop in Rolla. The rain finally started letting up later in the afternoon which contributed to hooking up with some really nice trout from the spring branch. We wrapped up the day with a fish fry and bonfire at the pavilion. The final day of the event began with breakfast, followed with guided fishing on both the spring branch and Meramec River. Several nice smallies made an appearance on the Meramec trips. The three day fish camp concluded Wednesday evening with dinner and awards banquet at Rich's Famous Burgers in St. James. So many memories and friendships were made at Fish Camp 2025!

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT WHITE BUFFALO FLYSHOP

SEPTEMBER 27, 2025- FLYCASTING CLINIC  
OCTOBER 2, 2025- FLY SHOP RIBBON CUTTING  
OCTOBER 11, 2025- FLY TYING CLASS

Visit [whitebuffaloflyshop.com](http://whitebuffaloflyshop.com) to sign up!

## Report By Sam

### Fly Tying Class At White Buffalo Fly Shop

The Roubidoux Fly Fishers and White Buffalo Fly Shop conducted a second fly tying workshop on Saturday September 13. The event was once again sold-out making Dan, the owner of White Buffalo Fly Shop, happy about the good turnout. Billy was the demonstrator this time around he was teaching the participants how to ty a crawfish pattern and how to tie a

Hopper pattern. Crawfish and hoppers are excellent this time of year for trout or smallmouth bass, so they were season appropriate flies. Dan and Reagan Wynn cooked up some delicious pulled pork and there were free drinks for the participants to enjoy while tying.



### Fishing Report by Sam

I finished my quest of catching a smallmouth in each of the 12 streams of the Smallmouth Slam. The Big River completed the quest and was a repeat visit because I lost the original fly there. I drove to Bootleg Access located south of Potosi on highway 21. I arrived early because I planned to walk down stream as far as possible and remain on MDC property before I strung up my rod. The water was extremely low and clear, and it was another bright sunny day causing the fish to be extra spooky with the shadow of a fly line overhead. After three hours working upstream and hitting all the deep holes I thought could hold a fish I turned around and fished back down. I accidentally found a pod of 13 to 15 inch smallmouth hanging around a tree laying at the bottom of a high mud bank. It was a hole that I passed up on my way upstream because it didn't look deep enough. I spooked them and couldn't get one interested after that.

I was almost at the spot where I started when I saw a half dozen nice smallmouth at a root wad I fished early that morning. I must have made twenty casts working the fly closer and closer to that ball of roots. Then I saw one out in the current at the tail out of the hole. I cast across the hole and let the fly drop down to the tail out and the big smallmouth moved over to take a look.

I set hard when it took the fly and then dropped the rod low and at a right angle to the stream to keep it away from the root. I hauled that sucker out of there like a pro bass angler at a tournament. It wasn't pretty and it wasn't fun; it was all business. A nice thick 16 inch olive colored smallmouth. I was relieved that it was over and that I still had my fly and that I was able to keep it out of that wad of roots.



On my way back to Rolla I drove down to the Huzzah Conservation Area just to see what it was like. I had never been there but had passed the exit route several times. It's beautiful water but an extremely heavily used location. It isn't a spot I would recommend during the float season or on a weekend. I can see me fishing it sometime later this fall and the Courtois Creek is just upstream a little ways. Another small wadable stream I have not fished.

### **Report by Lou**

I have been going around this old sun for 65 years now and have been fishing for about 50 of those. And I know my memory ain't what it use to be but I can never ever recall anyone losing so many lures in one day unless they dumped their tackle box in the lake. Alex had set the standard. And I mean he lost everything from Rapalas to Jitterbugs to plain old grubs to a hotdog he got off someone at camp and tried. Gone.

There was enough left in the tackle box I cobbled together a bait hook, a twister tail type grub in bright pink and pinched on a weight so it could be cast. I tested it for speed and caught a green sunfish then gave it to Alex to use. YIPPEE!! He caught his first and so far only largemouth bass on it!!

Sometimes it's worth it to forgo the fly fishing to help someone to catch their first \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank).



### **Report by Lou**

It is time once again for our annual Freeze Your Trout Off!!  
This is a friends and family kinda outing so bring both!! And food!!

All the particulars for your perusal -

What - RFFA Annual Freeze Your Trout Off

Where - Bennett Springs State Park

When - 22 Nov 2025 - all day

What's going on - RFFA will gather to fish at BSSP and break for lunch at noon. Meet up at the vicinity of the spring and enjoy some homemade chili and fixin's.

The club will provide all the plates, bowls, spoons, knives, etc, etc.

YOU will be asked to bring a side dish - dessert, corn chips, dip, etc., etc.

RSVP's with what your bringing and how many people will be due to Lou no later than Tying on Tuesday the 4th of November.

So far we have Todd down for cornbread and Sam will bring Chili.

### **Report by Sam**

My youngest son and I have been fishing together on a weekly basis for the past month. We meet close to where he lives near Branson or usually somewhere between here and there. It's

surprising how many creeks there are that hold fish between here and there. We aren't too particular about what we fish for, but mostly it's smallmouth or it's near relatives. I introduced him to the popper dropper method in August and now that's all he wants to fish with. Eight out of ten times they take the dropper. But there are times when they explode on the popper. Most of the time the dropper is my reduced size craw pattern or a fly that looks buggy or a minnow. The take can be a hard hit or a simple tap so there is a learning curve to knowing when to set the hook. Obviously, the hard hit is easy to recognize, but there are subtle takes that go untested, and opportunities are lost. It isn't until Michael slows down and focuses completely on the takes that he begins to hook up. Until then he is behind on the fish count. Just like my bird dogs used to be all wired up at first and running too hard to hunt well, so it is with fishing.

Slow down and focus. Fish don't have timelines to meet so I'm teaching him to fish with patience. And he is now finally figuring out that being in a hurry to make another cast gets him nowhere fast. Marinating your fly with occasional subtle movement can sometimes be all the smallmouth can stand. I've had them follow a popper several feet as it floated in the current and I've had more than my share eat the fly when it was doing nothing, just sitting there.



Sometimes the materials moving in current is enough.

#### River Conditions:

Rivers are very clear and low, which is typical for this time of the year. Hoppers can be big, don't be shy about going up to a size 4. The October caddis are here so don't forget those size 8 cinnamon caddis. October is also brown trout spawning time. If you want a shot at a huge brown, go down to Taney and put in some time hunting.



# RiverRap



November 2nd, 2025

## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

November 06 6:00 Fly tying White Buffalo  
November 18 0800 FYTO at Bennett Springs

### Report by Lou

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So far we have Todd down for cornbread and Sam will bring Chili

### Report by Billy

#### Treasure In The Ozarks

Fly Fishing in the Ozarks, especially during the fall season, is an absolute treasure. On October 17th, Sam, Dan, and Billy from White Buffalo Fly Shop and Roubidoux Fly Fishers Association completed a stream cleanup on Spring Creek. The rippling water, the falling leaves, and an occasional bird chirping provided a scenic and peaceful atmosphere that can not be passed up. If you're looking for a fly-fishing destination in Missouri that offers solitude, wild trout, and spring-fed clarity, Spring Creek in Phelps County is a strong contender. Spring Creek is designated a Blue Ribbon Trout Area from Relfe Spring to its junction with the Big Piney River, meaning the fishery supports naturally-reproducing trout and is managed for quality. The creek flows through Mark Twain National Forest, is spring-fed, and offers clear water, riffles, pools, and structure that trout favour. If you're an angler who enjoys wild trout, quiet streams,

and the challenge of fishing clear water where the fish are not easy targets, then Spring Creek is a gem. It may not offer the “easy” fishing of a stocked trout park, but for what it is, it offers a rich experience in a beautiful Ozark setting.



*“A trout is a moment of beauty known only to those who seek it.”*  
~Arnold Gingrich

### Report by Sam

Michael, my youngest, and I got together once again on an Ozark stream for some smallmouth and rock bass fishing. It was another bright sunny day, so our expectations weren’t good. We concentrated on structure and shade and had a good time with the little bass. Not many smallmouths were caught nor were there many largemouth caught, but there were several Rock Bass brought to hand. The fun about catching Rock Bass is that they are usually in pods so where there is one there is the possibility of several more. Michael caught his first double, so he was excited about that. As usually happens the first fish takes the top and the second fish grabs the bottom fly. He didn’t know that he had two fish on until he lipped the top one. If you have never had this happen to you, it’s a fun experience.



Doubled up on rock bass.

I recently caught a large Rock Bass while fishing for smallmouth. This guy was about 10.5 inches. If you look closely, you can see tiny black spots in the fins. You may have seen this before in fish that you have caught. But did you know what it was? Black spot disease appears as tiny black spots on fish skin, fins, and flesh. This condition is caused by parasitic worms.

(information from New Jersey Fish and Wildlife) Black Spot disease can affect both marine and freshwater fish. Black Spot disease cannot infect humans. Cook fish thoroughly to deactivate the parasite, parasite infection does not affect quality of the meat. Small black nodules usually no larger than 1mm appear on the skin, fins, and sometimes flesh of infested fish. When the parasite becomes encysted in the skin and muscles of fish; the fish produce melanin pigment in that area as a response to the parasite. Infestations are non-pathogenic



### **Fishing Report by Sam**

Traditionally this month's newsletter contains my annual steelhead trip with photos of those huge, beautiful chromes. Unfortunately, I picked up a bug on the way to Michigan and spent most of my time in the rental cabin in bed. The first morning it was a little chilly, 28 to be exact. Ice in the rod guides are an inconvenience and can be problem if not attended to. Counting our boat there were seven drift boats on the stream, so my buddy rowed hard and got ahead of the crowd. We passed up some nice water, but we needed the elbow room. We hooked nine the first day and netted two. I went 0 for 4 and the two netted were nothing to brag about. The second day we moved to another area to get away from the boats, but that stretch of water was a bust. It was about 1400 when we got back to the cabin and Barry, my Michigan buddy, had a sore back and neck so he decided to stay at the cabin for the rest of the day. I choked down my lunch and drove to an access area for a walk in. There is a spot at this access where I caught my first steelhead back in 06. It has always been a producer because there is long, thigh deep run with

tons of gravel and salmon spawning there. The steelhead lay in the deep holes below this run and fill up on eggs. I worked the deep pockets a couple of hours before I hooked up on a decent one that was about eight pounds, but it rolled several times, tangled up in the line and then broke off. Now I'm 0 for 5 and starting to get a runny nose and a bit of headache. Later that night I could feel it coming on and my fishing trip was over. Barry fished the same area the next day and went 1 for 2 and the following day went 1 for 2 again. He said none of the ones he hooked were as large as the double-digit fish I hooked on the first day.

**River Conditions:**

I have not been on area water for a couple of weeks so I'm sorry to say I don't know what the streams are like today. I do know that brown trout are finishing their spawn, and some hatchery raised rainbows are starting their spawn. As the air temps continue to drop the warm water fishes will begin to move to their winter holes, so they may be scattered for awhile until they arrive. This can be a challenging time to find those smallmouth.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

December 02 6:00 Fly tying White Buffalo  
December 14 9:00 Club Outing to Montauk BYOF (Bring Your Own Flies and Lunch)  
December 17 6:00 Club Meeting Bray Conservation

## Report by Sam

Replacing the Spring Creek Stream Restoration Project Sign.

The repainting of the Spring Creek Project Sign isn't worth the trouble. It's almost 35 years old and most of the letters are gone.

The sign needs to be replaced if there is enough interest from the original groups involved.

MidMO, Ozark Fly Fishers, RFFA, USFS, MDC.

MidMO and I hope RFFA would like to replace the sign. I have contacted Ozark Fly Fishers but I have not received a response.

I contacted the USFS for information on material regulations in the National Forest and if we needed a special permit. A list of the allowed materials was sent to me by the USFS and I was told that we do not need a permit since we are replacing an existing sign in the same location. I contacted Nick Girondo with MDC and he forwarded the email to the fisheries biologist with the USFS.



Before and after repainting in the Spring of 2021





August 2021



**October 2025** Most of the letters are gone and the paint faded.

Mark VanPatten told me as far as he remembers the USFS made the original sign. I am still waiting for a reply from the USFS, and Ozark FlyFishers. To Be Continued

Link sent to us by Mark VanPatten:

Check out this video from this search, Missouri stream team 20th anniversary video  
YouTube channel <https://share.google/gvSBnAlVl0qluO4fY>

### **Report by Lou**

#### **FYTO**

It was a gray drizzly day perfect for our annual Freeze Your Trout Off and even though it was cold it wasn't cold enough to run us off.

Mike caught first fish, then the next fish, then another and another and another and.....! He had the hot rod of the day! Becky caught a real nice one, although it was tore up on one side - and she was done for the day and just enjoyed the time with the boys. Speaking of boys - Jamie was working the net pretty hard while Todd was working on being the Family and Friends Ghillie. Mathew and Brandon worked on some casting and setting the hook. They each brought at least a fish to hand or net.

Another successful Freeze Your Trout Off in the books!!



Banner Time



Becky one and done



Brandon first fish



Mike had the Hot Rod of the day



Todd the Ghillie changing another fly



Shared Moment

### Fishing Report by Sam

Late Fall early winter is when I usually start fishing for Smallmouth in their winter holes. BUT, this year the water has remained warmer than usual (mid 50s) and the smallmouth have yet to visit their winter hangouts. As they transition to these winter holes they are hard to find, and they are usually scattered. It is going to take several nights of cold temps, like the one coming up this week, to get them to move into warmer water for the winter.

Week before last, I managed to catch about twenty, but I had to cover a lot of water, and it was one here and there. The largest was only about 14 inches and the rest fell between 10 and 12. I used the same pattern all day, my crawfish pattern tied to a jig head to help get the fly down. They were all caught in 8 to 15 feet of water and close to structure.

The following day I visited a friend of mine. He has a nice small lake about 12 acres that is always good for crappies in the late fall after a few days of warm sunshine on the dam rip rap. I used the same crawfish pattern I had used the day prior but with chain eyes because I was only fishing in about five feet of water. The warm sun warms the rocks, and the rocks help warm the water that helps to bring the fish up closer to the surface. I've been fishing this way for several years and I usually get home within a couple of hours with all the fish I want to clean for two or three meals.

**River Conditions:**

Streams are close to average flow, maybe on the low side of average, and colored up a bit. Good conditions for fishing.





## Upcoming Events to Note on Your Calendar

January	06	6:00 Fly Tying White Buffalo
January	15	6:00 Fly Tying Class White Buffalo
January	17	1:00 Fly Tying Class FLW
January	20	6:00 RFFA monthly meeting

### Report by Sam

We will meet with Dwight Warnke on January 06 for our fly-tying session to discuss materials needed and gather more information for the fly-tying session on January 17<sup>th</sup> at Fort Lost in the Woods. Don is the lead on this and will give us more information as he gets it.

The January 15<sup>th</sup> Fly tying class at White Buffalo will be 6:00-8:00. The last evening fly tying class at WB was a huge success. Tom Manion, a lifetime fly fisher, was a guest speaker sharing several photos and some of his philosophies about fly fishing.

Above I listed the official scheduled club meeting date and time, but I'm not sure we will need to have a club meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> since most of us will be together on the 17<sup>th</sup> and we could discuss matters then. We can decide on the 6<sup>th</sup> if we want to meet on the 20th

Photos from FYTO that didn't make it in River Rap last month



Jamie first fish of the day



A thick Hooked jawed male



Matt finally caught one

### Fishing Report by Sam

I fished Maramec park a couple of times this month when I thought the Midge hatch would be good and was not disappointed with the hatches, except for the size of the midges. Everyone knows I fish small flies, but I don't have size 50 hooks. The Midges they were feeding on were the smallest I have ever seen. The photo below was taken on the Current River. The chewed-up Zebra midge is a size 24 hook. The Midges I saw at Maramec were smaller than this Midge.



I fished over on the Gasconade one day but didn't do too well as I was fighting the wind and the waves were slapping the boat making a lot of noise. I hate to make noise when I'm fishing. Fish don't feed when they are spooked, they look for a place to hide.

Lou, Todd and I met at Montauk on the 14<sup>th</sup> for a club outing. Todd showed up with his Tenkara rod and tried his luck with some of the big brutes in the catch and release area. I took my 4wt up to the lake expecting to see trout feeding on midges while the sun was on the water. The lake

was extremely clear, but I couldn't see many fish and there wasn't any midge activity. In the past, I have fished for some big carp in that lake, but I didn't see them either. Lou showed up a little after Todd and I arrived and we all fished the catch and release area. Todd had the big ones pinned down but couldn't land them and broke off a few times. I had a good day sight fishing with a size 18 scud. It was a beautiful winter day for a picnic.



This is known as the one handed save the coffee method



Occasionally we had a dink take the fly



One of the better ones in the net



looking for more weight

### **River Conditions:**

Streams are low and clear making it excellent for sight fishing, but the sun is low in the sky so there is a limited time frame if you like to sight fish. Fishing can be tough in these conditions. I usually go smaller and thinner on the tippet.

