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MO Fishing

The Newsletter of the Springfield Chapter of the
Missouri Trout Fishermen's Association

Formed in 1972 to serve all fishermen in the Springfield area

July 2022

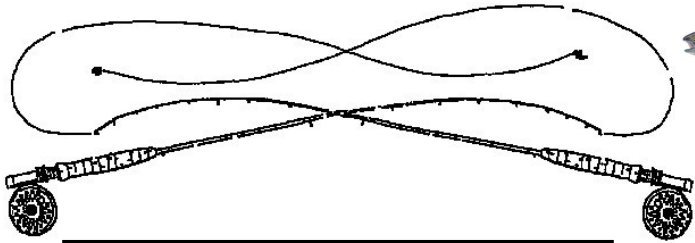
Volume 16 No.07

**The July Get-Together is on July 7, 2022, at the Library
Center at 4653 S Campbell Ave, Spgfld,
Community Room B from 6pm to 9pm**

2022 is the 50th anniversary of the Springfield Chapter of the Missouri Trout Fishermen's Association

Chapter Business:

The Springfield Chapter will be the host chapter at the 2023 MTFA-State Council Derby. It will be a busy weekend for the organizer staff starting on Friday night and won't be over until Sunday afternoon. The Springfield Executive Committee voted at its meeting last month to authorize \$625.02 for three motel units at the park for the staff on Friday and Saturday nights. That vote was announced at the group meeting and notification that the vote to finalize that budget item would take place at the meeting on July 7, 2022.



Insect-O-Rama

The Missouri Dept of Conservation will once again hold the *Insect-O-Rama, Fun With Bugs* program on Friday, August 12, 2022 from 6:30pm to 9:30pm. MTFA-Springfield will demonstrate fly tying, talk to kids about how insects in various stages of metamorphosis are an important source of food for most fish. Some of our flies will



be “fantasy flies” tied on safety pins.

More information will follow.

Bob Randall



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The guest speaker for July is Ron Ward. He will discuss the lakes and dams of the white river system and provide information to understand and improve your ability to fish the tail waters of Table-rock, Taneycomo and Bull Shoals lakes. Ron will discuss flows and generations from these dams and clue you in on information from the U.S. Geological Survey to plan your next trip.

Kim Schultz

We will be tying flies and socializing the first hour. Bring your fly tying stuff. The fly tying class will learn how to tie fantasy flies in preparation for the Insect-O-Rama.

Don't forget to bring some items for the raffle.

The Branson Fly Tying Rendezvous:

This is a chance for everyday fly tyers to get together *to socialize, tie some flies, and tell some lies*. The Branson and Springfield Chapters of the Missouri Trout Fishermen's Association will have this one day event at the Branson Lions Community Building on July 30, 2022. You don't have to be an accomplished tyer to participate. There are no fees to tie and entrance is free. Plan to come to Branson and tie on that day. Mark your calendar. We will be tying 9am to 5pm but the schedule is not rigid. Food will be available for purchase at the Lions Club lunch counter.



**Raffle Tickets
\$5.00
On July 30, 2022, this
hand carved and
painted Brown Trout
will be raffled off.
Donated by**

Yes, we will have a few raffles and auction items to help cover our expenses.

Contact me if you think you would like to tie with us.

Dennis Stead, (417) 380-3687 or dmstead@aol.com

Lions Community Building

1015 D. State Highway 76, Branson, MO

Fly Tying Classes: Since the last newsletter, we've tied the 56er, Red Hot Chili Pepper, scuds, sowbugs, and several different midges. Participants: Scott and Cindy Edwards, Jean and Jon Smith, Dick and John Owensby, not pictured: Mike and Mason Suttmoeller, new members Chris and Emily Diggons. Mentors: Bill Huyett, Rod Pennington,

Mark Schumacher, Todd Christell, John Dozier, Dennis Stead,

Bob Randall



Rumors about Bennett Spring State Park fishing: stories about poor fishing, good fishing, low stocking numbers, a one-time stocking of thousands, fish washed out to the Niangua, remodeling in the hatchery, bringing stock trout from other hatcheries, and finally how it will be a year and a half before the fishing will be back up to par at BSSP.

Get the answers right here from the pen of the HMWIIC (that stands for Hatchery Manager What Is In Charge):

Bennett Spring is in the midst of a major multi-year hatchery renovation. This is a 3 year, 3 phase project of which the end result will bring new life to the antiquated hatchery. There are over 30 different line items that engineers and consultants have been tasked with investigating and finding solutions for during the project. This includes water supply/flow, water treatment, raceways design, water recirculation and hatchery flood protection. Work began last fall after season. We are currently through Phase 1 and have concluded all investigations and data collection of current hatchery layout and operation. This phase wrapped up shortly before opening day and we are currently moving through Phase 2 which is architecture and design. This phase takes into consideration all previous recommendations and provides design solutions to upgrade and improve our hatchery. This should wrap up this fall at which point the project will be ready to go out for bid so we can enter Phase 3, Construction. It is estimated that the construction will take approximately 2 years to complete.

First and foremost, we need to provide security to the hatchery. This applies to our fish stocks as well as our hatchery staff. The major component of the renovation will be the new hatchery water intake. This will look very similar to the intake screen at Roaring River. It will self-clean and will eliminate the need for staff to stand waist deep in water, raking clean the screens during floods. It will also insure that a debris-free flow of water is maintained for our fish not only during floods, but year round. This will be amazing for Bennett. We have been operating without any screen or type of debris filtration since January of 2020, when our hatchery intake screen was deemed unsafe and was removed from operation.

This leads me to address some of your concerns.

We are currently “remodeling” the hatchery. Therefore, ***it was determined that all our hatchery fish stocks would potentially have to be moved offsite to not only keep them safe,*** but also out of the way during construction. This is why many of our raceways are currently empty. We kept around 100k stockable trout on hand over winter and used those fish to begin the fishing season at Bennett. Most of the “Bennett” fish have been stocked out this season as of June 1st. We have since taken delivery of stocking size trout from Montauk hatchery and furthermore all of the fish you catch for the remainder of the 2022 season, 2023 season and beyond will come from Montauk until we are back in full operation.

We will continue to hatch eggs and raise trout fingerlings to about 4” during our normal fall spawning season. These fish will be harvested and trucked out to Montauk or Shepherd of the Hills for grow out to help supplement the cold-water hatchery system. So far this year we have raised and shipped out over 400k fingerlings from our hatchery building. These fish can’t be kept onsite due to the removal of our intake screen. So, if you see trucks coming and going, you now know where they are headed. The hope is that

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fishermen will not see many impacts from all the work that is happening during construction the next couple years. We will have empty raceways, and I realize this looks very different than normal, but we will always have some fish on hand to maintain operations and park stockings.

As I stated above, [starting June 1st this year, the stocking fish going into BSSP are coming from Montauk hatchery](#). For the first 3 months of this season we utilized fish that were raised onsite here at Bennett. Hopefully, there is not a noticeable difference in fish between the parks, but there likely could be. I am told that the fish coming in from Montauk are the same fish they are stocking in their park. Since renovations are slated to be complete in late 2024/early 2025, Bennett will be getting fish from Montauk hatchery or possibly other MDC hatcheries until that time when we can go back into production here.

Fishing conditions and stocking numbers..... [Fish are stocked at Bennett much the same as the protocol is at the other parks](#). Bennett by far gets more fish stocked within its stream than the other parks because we have much higher attendance or tag sales, than the other trout parks. Stocking is completed nightly March 1-October 31 and is solely based on avg. tag sales over the last 5 years or so. So far this season we have stocked out over 130K trout at Bennett. For the first few months of this season we have averaged well over the 12.5" length that we shoot for. Currently this week, the fish from Montauk we are stocking from is averaging 12.3" long.

As you know, [the spring branch has been greatly impacted by flooding this year](#). During the second week of March we had our first significant flood, several small rises since, followed in May by the 3rd largest flood on record (9.79 feet) and as such, the water seems like it has been off color nearly all this season well into June. This has greatly impacted fishing success for many visitors. I have been told there are a lot of fish hanging in deeper water than usual. The May flood was significant and changed the stream quite a bit. So much so, we have not had to cut aquatic vegetation at all this season until this past week. Much of the vegetation was ripped up and washed downstream during the floods. The streambed is changed as well in many places. It is apparent that it also moved many fish from Zone 1 down into lower zones and ultimately the Niangua River. I have heard more good reports of fishing on the Niangua river this year than I have in the past 7 years I have been here at Bennett, including a lot of good brown trout photos. It will take some time, but the carryover fish in the park zones will slowly gain in numbers as more fish are stocked.

I hope this answers some of the questions you and others may have concerning Bennett Spring. Change is always hard at first, but in the end, [the improvements we get at Bennett will help us to make it better than ever before](#). There may be some growing pains along the way, but I hope everyone will remain patient and supportive as we work through the next couple of years.

[As always, I have an open door policy and welcome anyone to stop by my office at the hatchery and have a chat. You can also reach me at 417-532-4418 x1062](#)

[Tight lines- Ben Havens, Bennett Spring State Fish Hatchery, Fish Hatchery Manager](#)

The June 2nd meeting had a very good program about the Crane Creek fishery. Shane Bush, the Fisheries Management Biologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation. He oversees fishery management at Table Rock Lake, Taneycomo and Crane Creek. We had good attendance with 24 members and guests present.

Shane is one of the snorkel swimmers who actually gets in the water and counts fish. He showed us some wonderful underwater videos. All of us were fascinated and amazed with both the numbers of fish and

how anyone could not only count the trout but distinguish them from other species. If you've ever seen a huge flock of moving turkeys in a field you've tried to count them and you know how difficult that can be.

Shane helped us understand the Conservation Area layout with the Upper and Lower tracts, as well as the tract inside the City of Crane and the new tract south of Crane. He showed us graphs including seasonal and sectional water temperatures and numbers of fish per mile. The population has gone up recently as the water levels

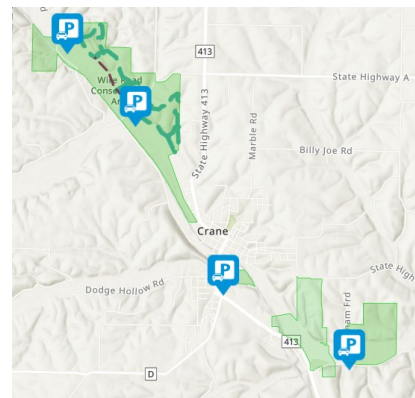
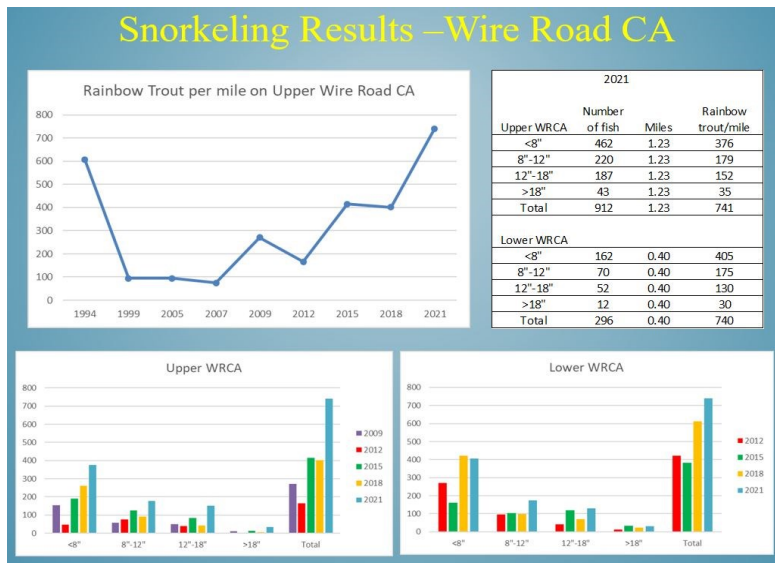
have increased. This has helped keep the temperatures low and kept the creek from drying out in places. Check out the graph, in 2018 there 400 trout per mile on the upper tract. There were over 700 in 2021.

Many things were of interest during the program but one fact that seemed to catch everyone's attention was a photo of a fine McCloud rainbow tucked in under an overhang on the edge of the creek. Shane pointed out that there are places where the bank can be undercut by several feet offering great cover for trout.

Shane also discussed some of the conservation efforts of MDC for the fishery, including a section of stream location manipulation. The following year, a flood completely filled in the old stream bed with gravel and relocated the manipulated section. Since then, the vegetation has moved in and repopulated the area, providing natural stabilization of the bank.

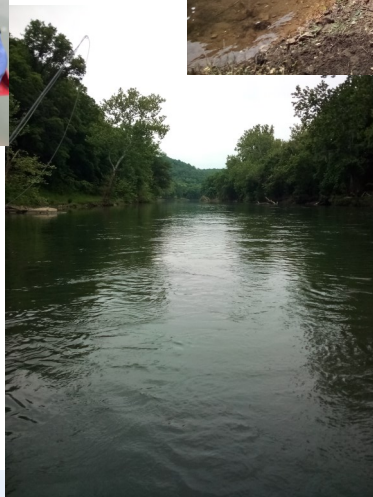
If you missed this program, you lost a good opportunity to understand this part of the Blue Ribbon Trout Stream program.

The two fishermen in our midst who fish Crane Creek the most, John Bush and Mike Kidd, were there and we pumped them for information. When asked whether they fished the upper or lower areas most, the answer was "Yes", meaning they fish them both. John offered that he thought the specific fly used was less important than the presentation. He suggests using a fly that will get down where the fish are, requiring a movable indicator. John frequently uses a flashback pheasant tail as a dropper off the Guide's Choice Hare's ear. Mike fishes with a full sink fly line and usually ties on a fox squirrel nymph.



Fishing Reports:

Harry Morgan: Me and my grandson Daniel Crandall went on a float with Ryan Walker. Rain was in the forecast but none came. Had a good day and caught several nice fish. These are my first small-mouth on a fly and lots of fun. I think Daniel caught more but that is what it is about.



Fishing Pics Mike Kidd, June 6, Little Piney by Rolla

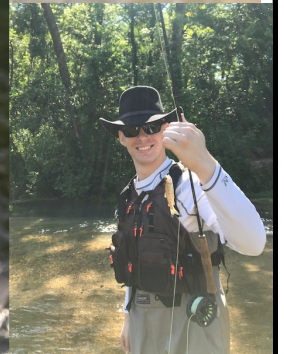
***Fished Little Piney today! Caught 18.
All small.***

***Here is what I use to catch wild trout.
Fox Squirrel nymph and Little Piney trout.***



***Squirrel nymphs and
wispy's .***

***I fished the Little
Piney with Kyle
and his dad and
we all caught
wild McCloud
rainbows
on fox***

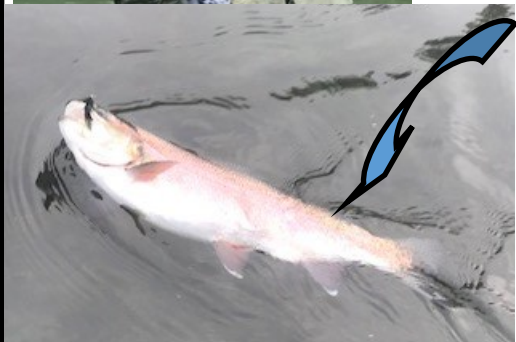


Personal best at Little Piney

***I caught my biggest wild rainbow at Little
Piney on fox squirrel nymph.***



***And Even
Better: 20 inch
rainbow with 11 inches
girth on sculpin at
Taneycomo on July 2,
2022***



***July 3, Caught
some nice trout on
black leeches to-
day on Taneycomo***



Fishing Reports:

Bob Randall and Harry Morgan, 6/20, Niangua River above Bennett Spring confluence. First time fishing here. We each caught smallmouth. Only fished an hour and a half. Went to Bennett Spring, didn't do well and it was too darned hot. Left early.



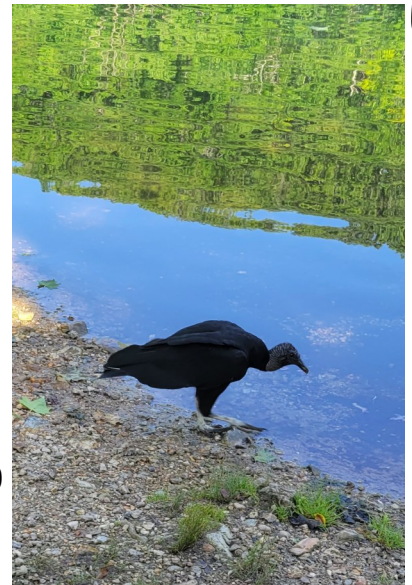
Dick Solomon, 6/23, Fished Bennet today with Keith and Myrna Coffey. According to the charts they released 900 fish last night. Don't know where but the fish were far and few between. I waded the outlet stream and I seen two fish but I know there were more. I caught 1 ten inch on a red San Juan worm. Keith didn't catch any at the Gut Hole so we moved up to zone one where we caught between 10 and 15 between both of us together. Putting it plainly it isn't worth the drive anymore for me at 4.50 a gallon and catch some little fish, I can do that at Crain Creek. The fellow that sold me my tag said and I quote, we're getting nothing but mediocre fish and probably won't be getting any better until around 2024 maybe later 2023 when we open up our rearing tanks and after spending several million dollars to upgrade our system.

Bob and Jax Randall, 6/27, Branson Kid's Fishing Pond at Eiserman Park. After giving consideration to going trout fishing at BSSP, I took my 8 year old grandson fishing instead. He lives in Branson. He was doing well and when he got to number 9, he began dreaming about catching his 10th fish and how that was going to be a big milestone. Then after 10, he began thinking about his next goal. He caught 17, all total, five of which were catfish and would have been keepers. He insisted on having his photo taken with all 17 fish.



Fishing Reports:

Rod Pennington, 6/21, BSSP, Had a couple of early morning appointments change so bailed the office work and went to Bennett, Tuesday last. Arrived a little before the open and took my usual drive through the park. Not many rods out for this time of year. Only a couple of cars above the dam to the island, a few scattered to the spring. A couple of folks below the dam to the bridge and a few scattered to the bend. Maybe a car or two every 50 yards to the bridge. Reminded me of a great winter fishing type day.



Water was up a moving a bit. Terribly off color with a milky appearance and lots of small debris in it. Difficult to see below 4 foot and impossible to see many if any fish. Started between the dam and the bridge with a floating line and number 12 wooly. Might have had two grabs that first 45 minutes. Did not see any fish on with any angler that first hour. The trout proved to be on the bottom. I used the Kim Schultz White Bass fishing method. Changed to the intermediate sinking line, placed the rod tip on the bottom and striped small wet flies, cracklebacks and woolies. Didn't seem to matter what was used the trout

grabbed at it. Fished on down to the whistle bridges over the next 2 hours. Ended with 12 released, a few that got away before heading back to the office at 10:00. Noticed one other Angler have a good amount of success about 50 yards above the whistle Bridge casting to the far bank with a soft hackle set up shallow.

Not a lot of time on the stream but a great morning!

Russ Doughty, 6/26, Good friend, Tyler Williams, and I took his boat out on Taneycomo Sunday. Fishing was slow, but we both managed to get about 6 apiece. He got so desperate he resorted to throwing a jig on a spinning rod.

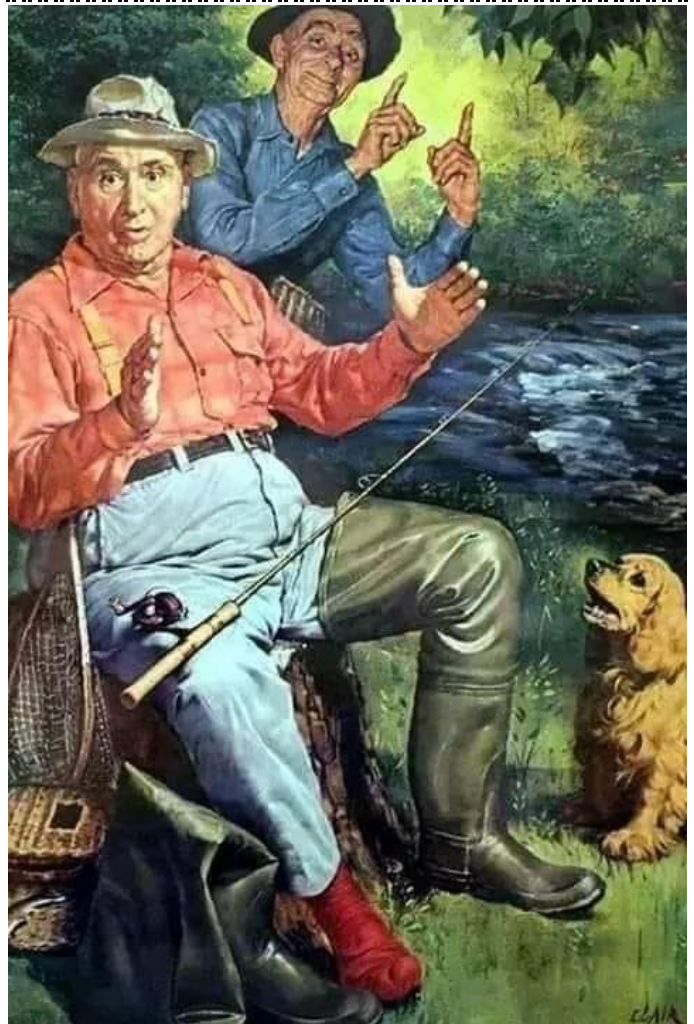
Fishing Reports:

Kim Schultz, I spent four days camping, hiking and fishing Roaring River State Park with my daughter (Jenn) and two grandkids (Des, Fiona). I drove down the afternoon on Sunday June 12, 2022 to set up camp and pitch two tents. I reserved Campsite 139 which is near the stream with good access to the water. Jenn and kids came down later that day, we finished setting up the shade shelter, hiking a trail along the stream, getting in a swim and setting a blaze a campfire. The next morning, after breakfast we took to another trail called the Devil's Kitchen trail which is another trail exploring unique rock formations. The 1.4-mile Devil's Kitchen Trail has multiple caves and a rock outcrop that reportedly was a hideout for Civil War guerillas. The trail proved to be challenging with steep inclines, temperatures in the nineties and a six year old letting everyone know her legs hurt. After the hike, we refilled our water bottles at the CCC lodge and spent some time at the play ground. Jenn, Des and Fiona went back to the water to swim and float the lazy current of Roaring River and I had an opportunity to fish. The fish were eager to take an elk hair caddis on top or down stream under the water, some of the trout were over sixteen inches and twenty came to hand for several hours of fishing. The kids left late afternoon and I stayed two more nights. Tuesday, I spent the entire days in the water and kept a few trout for dinner. A friend, John Mihavevich came down in the afternoon to fish with me and we did find a few cooperative trout, they did not take the caddis and I found a larger fly, an eleven point sculpin # 8 took fish out of the deeper runs. John left late afternoon and I prepared the trout in a frying pan over potatoes, the trout were pouched over the heat of the cooking potatoes. When the potatoes were brown the trout are ready to eat. I went back to the water after dinner and fished until the horn sound at 8:30 PM, I finished the day with a dozen to hand. On Wednesday, after breakfast due to the heat slowly broke camp, packed the gear. I sat in the shade enjoying the view and left Roaring River after noon. Overall, It was a good four days, did not enjoy the ninety degree days but did find wet wading in the shade to be very comfortable. I have already reserved the same campsite in July with the coaxing of the grandkids for another four days of camping, hiking and fishing.



From Jim Rogers at BSSP:

The water at Bennett has cleared considerably. The flow is near normal also. We are getting reports of success on the following flies. Stripping Olive Crackle backs. Drifting olive scuds size 14-16 and even some fish top water on size 18, 20 Griffith Gnats. Not many fishermen between 7:30 and noon. The weather is cooperating and the park is beautiful this time of year.



Water levels:

Roaring River water level: [National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service](#)

Taneycomo water level: [National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service](#)

Bennett Spring water level: [National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service](#)

Older newsletters through 2007 are archived here: <http://www.mtfa-springfield.org/news-events/newsletter/newsletter-archive/>

If you would like to submit an article for the MTFA newsletter, please put MTFA NL in the email subject line and send to Bob Randall: bobbyleensandy@gmail.com

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