

Naturally Niagara

Newsletter of the Niagara Chapter, Trout Unlimited Canada

Chair's Message

This has been an eventful few months for the Niagara Chapter. We completed a spawning bed with NPCA, were notified that we received a Trillium Grant, received final approval for work in Short Hills Park, ran a very successful sixth Healing Waters program, and we'll be hosting an Ontario Chapters Workshop on October 13. Luckily the Trillium Grant will fund a project coordinator and we've been able to coax Dale Hibrant back to Niagara to fill this position.

This year the Chapter hosted our Sixth Healing Waters Learn to Fly Fish program for injured soldiers. Over the years, we've created some novice fly fishers and have been extraordinarily lucky with weather. Each year we are rewarded by meeting interesting and extraordinary individuals who invariably bring with them a positive perspective on life. And while the time we spend with these soldiers is short, students and teachers bond, stories are told and friendships are made. Thanks to all who volunteer their time for this event. Looking forward to next year!

The evolution of our Chapter continues with the departure of Jeff Shook, who has been a valued member and our Treasurer for the past several years. We thank him for his service. At the same time, we welcome Brian Custers as our new Treasurer.



Healing Waters 6.0

Our Healing Waters Program continues to be a grand success. The weather once again co-operated and we had a very enjoyable day at Doug Leavens' bass pond on Oct. 3, fishing with our new soldier friends. The event began the evening before with an introduction to fly fishing and convivial meal at the Beacon Motel, our new venue for this year. Following casting instruction from Bill Spicer of The New Fly Fisher, our volunteer coaches helped the veterans hone their skills at the pond. This was followed by a wine tour at Vineland Estates Winery, and a crash course in fly tying back at the motel, headed up by Gary Kosinsky and Paul Furfinger. The next day the soldiers were bused to the Franklin Club north of Toronto, who once again opened their doors to our veterans and let them practice their new skills and new flies on the club's rainbow trout. All reports indicate this year's program was another huge hit with the soldiers, and very gratifying for our volunteers. Three volunteers of note: Bryne Emeneau from our sister Chapter, Ted Knott, came to coach on Wednesday, as did a special guest from Western New York, passionate and very skilled angler, Sheila DiTullio; Dave Forgeron of the Canadian Fly Fishing Team once again added his experience and expertise. Thanks to them, and to all our volunteers who helped with setup, food, organization, and logistics. And thanks to local sponsors, Fonthill Legion, Bass Pro, Tim Hortons, FPEtc., NPCA, and Walmart.

Spawning Bed at St. John's

This project has been on our books for at least three years, and finally all the stars aligned and we received our permits to begin work... just in time to complete the project before the autumn spawning season would have banned us from the creek. Under the direction of Kim Froehlick of the NPCA and with the invaluable input of Chapter Director of Projects, Ian Smith, our crew of NPCA workers and TUC Guelph personnel dug a trench from cold water upwellings to the stream. A flexible conduit was then buried in the trench, bringing cold water from the upwellings into the stream bed, which was then covered in pea gravel... and ideal Brook trout spawning environment.



Chapter receives \$75,000 Trillium SEED Grant

Our grant-writing team *par excellence*, Yvonne Hopkins assisted by Deanna Lindblad and Allison Graszat secured this grant that will see us develop a pilot project to engage landowners in preserving, protecting, and enhancing Twelve Mile Creek. Once the pilot project is complete, we can then apply to expand the project to encompass the entire creek and multiple landowners with a Trillium GROW grant. Our old friend Dale Hibrant has returned from his studies out west, and has been hired to oversee and manage the pilot project.



Headwaters Enhancement

We have been able to engage some of the landowners in the headwaters of the St. John's Branch recently, bringing our message of the importance of Twelve Mile Creek right into the town of Fonthill. One of several projects we are working on was to plant native species along a vulnerable stretch of the creek on the property of Leslie Bracken-Coyne. This work was completed in October by our Niagara Restoration Council partners and TUC volunteers.



Outreach Activities

We have been engaged in a number of public education initiatives since the spring. Our volunteers have taught fly fishing and tying to Scouts and Rovers in Welland and Waterdown and attended the St. John's Conservation Area opening day fishing derby, where we are encouraging catch and release fishing. Unfortunately, our display at Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival was canceled by inclement weather, but a big thank you to new member Jeremy Garrett for organizing and spearheading that effort. Next year! We continue to have a presence at Bass Pro on Wednesday evenings where our members tie flies and promote TUC.



Upcoming Events

October 13: Niagara Chapter hosts a seminar for all the Ontario Chapters of TUC at Calamus Winery from 10 to 3.

Nov. 3: Fishing day for Welland Scouts and Rovers

DATE TBA: Our long-awaited project to combat erosion in Short Hills Park is expected to receive approval this fall. **Volunteers will be needed** to install wing deflectors and soil retention mats and plant shrubs and trees. This will be heavy physical labour, and as many volunteers as possible will be needed. **Date will be announced as soon as approvals are received.**

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Newsletter Editor: Brian Green

Contributions to future newsletters are welcome.

Address all questions and suggestions for Newsletter items, photos, ideas to tucniagara@gmail.com

Check us out on Facebook: Niagara Chapter, TUC

www.tucniagara.com



Niagara Chapter,

Trout Unlimited Canada

Chair: Dennis Edell

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Membership: Donna Cridland

At Large: Al Unwin

Twelve Mile Creek: Doug Leavens

Outreach: Gary Kosinsky, Paul Furminger

Projects Manager: Yvonne Hopkins

SEED Grant Project Manager: Dale Hibrant