



AMERICAN  
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NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2008

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We would appreciate your comments on this electronic version of the NC Chapter Newsletter. Please send all responses to Jerry Finke ([jerry.finke@ncwildlife.org](mailto:jerry.finke@ncwildlife.org)).

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**President's Message**

My year as President is slipping by at a surprisingly rapid pace. It's hard to believe that it is already time for the June newsletter. So far my list of accomplishments as President is unfortunately much shorter than the list of unfinished items I had hoped to tackle. One of the more important items to be addressed this year is to begin planning for the 2010 Spring Meeting of the Southern Division. Speaking of time slipping by, February 2010 will be here before we know it. The first step is to select a location for the meeting. We are currently looking at several options and hope to establish a contract with a local hotel very soon. I would like to thank Lawrence Dorsey for gathering information on potential options. The Spring Meeting typically has an attendance of about 400 people and consists of technical committee meetings, workshops, 1 ½ days of technical sessions, and a couple of socials. Organizing and hosting a meeting of this size is truly a group effort. In the coming months we will be recruiting individuals to assist with the program, posters, local arrangements, budget/finance, registration, fundraising, audio-visual, continuing education workshops, etc. I am proud to say that in the past whenever asked, the chapter has always stepped up, and the 2010 Spring Meeting is no exception. It is time to once again raise the bar when it comes to putting on a meeting and show the rest of the Southern Division how it is done.

*Christian Waters*

## Environmental Concerns Committee

Reductions in natural stream flows are largely due to municipalities, industry, agriculture, and other obvious users. However, less apparent are “users” like this pond on a small stream in the Broad River watershed. The trickle of water coming into this pond on that hot August day in 2007 was not returning to its channel via the overflow, which is the only outlet. The contribution of small impoundments to reduced stream flows may be appreciable, particularly during droughts, given how numerous and widespread they are in North Carolina. Governments will eventually need to consider this along with water withdrawals if water needs are to balance availability and if fishery productivity is to be maintained long into the future.



*Small pond on stream in Broad River watershed.*



*Stream flows into pond.*



*But no stream flows out of pond.*

As noted in the March 2008 Newsletter, the ECC is in the process of finalizing a letter to Governor Mike Easley that encourages implementation of effective water conservation efforts to protect fishery habitats in North Carolina. Although the drought may be easing in the east, it is persisting in the west. And, it is a decent bet we will not have to wait long for the next. So, while you are hopefully having a good summer, don't forget about the value of the water you use and cut back where you can. And, share your knowledge regarding the importance of water availability to fishery resources when opportunities arise.

*Submitted by Dave McHenry, Environmental Concerns Committee Chair*

## News from around North Carolina

### ***Retirement Announcement – submitted by David Cox, NC WRC***

Long-time fisheries biologist Scott Van Horn will be retiring from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Scott's career with the commission spanned 33 years. Most of that time he was the lead reservoir biologist in the piedmont. In recent years Scott took on the task of supervising the Aquatic Wildlife Diversity Program. His leadership and guidance within the Division of Inland Fisheries will be sorely missed. Please join us in thanking Scott for his long and valued service to the citizens of North Carolina. Scott can be reached by phone at (919) 528-9886 ex.5 or at [scott.vanhorn@ncwildlife.org](mailto:scott.vanhorn@ncwildlife.org). Details of a retirement celebration for Scott will be posted to the chapter website as soon as details become available.



*The chapter recently awarded Scott the Distinguished Service Award.*

***C.W. Watson Award, Announcement for Nominations, forwarded by Dave Coughlan, Duke Energy***

Nominations are being sought for the 2008 Clarence W. Watson Award. This annual award will be presented at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas from October 11-15, 2008.

The Clarence W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given in the Southeast and is presented to the career individual who, in the opinion of the Award Committee, has made the greatest contribution to wildlife or fish conservation during the previous year or years. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, I&E, wildlife management, fish management, teachers, and students. Preference is given to nominees in the Southeast.

Nominations should be submitted in the format shown below and should include complete information on the candidate's background; i.e., education, training, noteworthy accomplishments, and particularly, the achievement(s) for which the nomination is being made. The nomination should include, but not be limited to, a description of the accomplishment(s), application in the state and region concerned, time involved, and the amount of aid received from associates.

Selection will be based on specific accomplishment(s) and other information included in the letter of nomination. Nominations should be sent to: Dave Rizzuto, Tennessee Wildlife

Resources Agency, 200 Lowell Thomas Drive, Jackson, Tennessee 38301, [David.Rizzuto@state.tn.us](mailto:David.Rizzuto@state.tn.us) as soon as possible, but not later than August 1, 2008. Electronic submissions are encouraged.

**Nomination Format**

- I. Background Information
  - A. Name
  - B. Birthdate
  - C. Education
  - D. Employment History
- II. Accomplishment(s)\* and application of accomplishment(s) upon which the Award should be made
  - A. Problem or opportunity with which nominee was involved.
  - B. Action nominee took to solve problem or capitalize on opportunity.
  - C. Results (accomplishments) of nominee's actions.

\*The C.W. Watson Award may be given for accomplishing a single item or a series of different non-related items. But the award is given to a nominee who has contributed the most to any of the appropriate areas of fish and wildlife conservation. Emphasis is on contribution, not tenure. Those making nominations are requested to insure that they explain clearly what was accomplished and how it contributed.

***North Carolina Wildlife Federation Scholarship Grants Available, forwarded by Joe Hightower, NCSU***

Each year the North Carolina Wildlife Federation makes 6 scholarship grants of \$1,000 each to students enrolled and attending an accredited NC college or university full-time. These students must be majoring in the areas of wildlife, fisheries, forestry, conservation or the environment. Three scholarships are for graduate students and three for undergraduates (including 2-year programs). Need is a factor, and a good record of scholarship and extra-curricular involvement is considered heavily. Applications must be postmarked by August 15<sup>th</sup>.

Go to

[http://www.ncwfcapital.com/NCWF\\_Scholarship\\_Application\\_2008.pdf](http://www.ncwfcapital.com/NCWF_Scholarship_Application_2008.pdf) for additional information.

## Spotlight on Students and Young Professionals

**Troy Thompson, District 6 Fisheries Biologist I, NC WRC** –Troy was born and raised in Collinsville, VA, a small town just outside of Martinsville, VA. He spent most of his spare time hunting and fishing in a three-county area of Virginia known as “the moonshine capital of the world.” In 1993, he graduated from Fieldale-Collinsville High School knowing that he wanted a career in fisheries or wildlife management. After two years at Patrick Henry Community College, Troy transferred to Virginia Tech. After being told that there were twice as many wildlife graduates as fisheries graduates, but the same number of jobs for each, he did the math and decided on a career in fisheries. In May 1998, he graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Forestry and Wildlife with a concentration in fisheries and began working as a technician for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries in Forest, VA. It took him three short years to realize that working ¾ time with no benefits was not the career apex he had in mind when he left Virginia Tech. In August 2001, he began graduate work at the University of Florida in Gainesville, where he studied habitat selection of largemouth bass.



Upon graduating in December, 2003, Troy and his soon-to-be wife Natalie moved to Anson County, NC. After stints as a carpenter, aquaculture consultant, community college instructor, and fisheries technician, he began work as a Fisheries Biologist I for the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission in April 2007 and is finally enjoying the career he envisioned back at Virginia Tech. *Submitted by Lawrence Dorsey.*

### **Michael Fisk, MS Student, NCSU**

Blackwater has run through Michael Fisk’s veins since his upbringing on the banks of NC coastal rivers. He was born in Wilmington on the Cape Fear River, then his family moved upstream to

Castle Hayne on the Northeast Cape Fear River when he was 10 years old. There’s a little salt in his blood as well, stemming from marine fishing trips with his Grandad and Dad along the Cape Fear Coast. His early days of boating, fishing, hunting, and other outdoor activities with his family sparked an interest in all aspects of nature. Unlike many fishery biologists, Michael sought out and developed his knowledge of plants, animals, and their interactions. If you’re afield with him, you’re likely to learn something about plants, herps, birds or other wildlife, as well as fish and aquatic invertebrates.

Michael attended Laney High School in Castle Hayne, the same school where another well-known Michael attended and played basketball — “Air” Jordan. However, Michael Fisk chose football as his high-school sport. He played well, and went on to compete at the college level at Elon College on a football scholarship. After he completed his freshman year, he decided that football was not his passion and took a break from school to work in construction on Figure 8 Island. He then heard about the NC State Fisheries and Wildlife Program, and went on to attend college there and completed his Bachelor’s degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences. During summers as an undergrad, he took advantage of many field opportunities in Fisheries and Wildlife. His first two summers, he was a technical assistant on two different bird projects with the NC Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. He then joined Tom Kwak’s team of students studying introduced flathead catfish in NC rivers, first as a volunteer, then as a research technician. After the flathead catfish research project was completed, he joined Patrick Cooney and some of Kwak’s other grad students to study the ecology and management of Puerto Rico stream fishes.



*Michael Fisk loves suckers! — a Carolina redhorse collected on the Pee Dee River, May 2008.*

During Michael's service as a research technician, he completed several graduate-level classes, and then during the fall of 2007, he began pursuing a Master's degree in Fisheries and Wildlife at NCSU advised by Tom Kwak. His thesis research is on the reproductive ecology of the robust redhorse — a recently rediscovered fish that was lost to science for over 100 years. Michael is studying the species in the Pee Dee River, downstream of Blewitt Falls Dam. Michael's research is a cooperative effort among the NC Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and Progress Energy to assess how a minimum flow regime may affect the fish. His intensive field research will build on the knowledge already gained by chapter members Ryan Heise, John Crutchfield, Wayne Starnes, and other members of the Yadkin/Pee Dee Technical Working Group of the Robust Redhorse Conservation Committee.

Michael's home life is full — he lives with his wife Martha and their two dogs (of mixed breed) and one cockatiel (that's a bird!). When he's not chasing redhorse on the Pee Dee River, Michael enjoys fishing, hunting, birding, hiking, canoeing, gardening, and international travel. Once he completes his Master's degree, he would like to stay in the southeastern US and be employed in fisheries or nongame aquatic sciences. We're all looking forward to what the future will bring Michael and his contribution to our community of fishery scientists. *Submitted by Tom Kwak.*

## Meetings of Interest

Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, Montreal, Quebec, July 23-38, 2008

<http://www.dce.ksu.edu/conf/jointmeeting/>

Workshop: "Managing Ponds and Small Impoundments: Everything from the Classics to the Latest Hits", Collinsville, VA, August 6, 2008

<http://faculty.virginia.edu/vcafs/>

AFS 138<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Ottawa, Canada, August 17-21, 2008

<http://www.fisheries.org/afs08/>

Flow 2008, Interdisciplinary Solutions to Instream Flow Problems, San Antonio, Texas, October 7-9, 2008

<http://www.instreamflowcouncil.org/flow2008/index.htm>

62<sup>nd</sup> Annual SEWFA Conference, Corpus Christi, Texas, October 12-15, 2008

<http://www.seafwa2008.org/>

## Valuable Links –

The American Fisheries Society Home Page offers a wealth of links to assist you in your fishery endeavors. Information on ordering AFS books, public outreach, annual meetings, chapter links and joining the AFS can be found at

<http://www.fisheries.org/>.