

# *Antigonish Rivers*

**Christmas Edition 18/12/2021**

<https://www.antigonishriversassociation.ca/>

<https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishRivers/>



*Photo by Mark Dort*

## *President's Message*

As 2021 winds down, I'd like to start with a *big shout* out to all our volunteers! Preserving the environment can be a tough battle. Antigonish Rivers Association continues to improve the quality of the watersheds and enhance cold water habitats in the Antigonish area.

The spring online auction was a huge success and exceeded our expectations, \$7,100 was raised. We also updated the WEB page updated; check it out at: <https://antigonishriversassociation.ca/>

Last winter, we hired our first full time employee and over the summer, our four-person River Restoration Crew was able to restore six kilometers on the upper Brierly Brook. They also surveyed and maintained the existing 250 structures throughout the watersheds, installed and monitored 20 temperature loggers in six rivers. ARA also installed erosion control structures along two sections of the South River, one section was done using a combination of armour rock and root wad technology. In early November we worked with Inland Fisheries to successfully collect brood

stock on the West River.

ARA installed five fishing line recycling receptacles provided by the Berkley "Clear Your Gear" program. During the summer and into the Fall, we were able to provide work experience for two students studying Environmental Technology. For 2022, ARA is working on an accessible parking lot, picnic shelter, floating dock and ramp at Cameron Lake.

In last years letter, I talked about the excellent fishing in the Antigonish area. Not only do we have excellent fishing, ARA, is also fortunate to have a dedicated, hard working group of volunteers. This group does everything from notching beaver dams, collecting brood stock, producing newsletters, cutting trails, providing space for meetings and fly tying ... you get the picture. ARA has also received technical and financial help from the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, and a grant from the Town of Antigonish for work on the James River. All the above would not be possible without *you*, the *members* of ARA who support this organization!

To sum it all up... 2021 was a Big Year for ARA!

From the Executive, Board Members, and myself, thank you.

*Merry Christmas*

*Tim Handforth*

*President*

*Antigonish Rivers Association*



*Mark Dort photos*



## **Antigonish Rivers Association**

*ARA Executive*

*2020-2021*



**President:**

Tim Handforth

**Vice President:**

Malorie Crispo

**Treasurer:**

Sandy MacLeod

**Secretary:**

Leo Callahan

**Past President:**

Nicholas MacInnis



## ARA NEWS

### ***Biennial Wild Atlantic Salmon Dinner and Auction***

Like all anglers we move forward with optimism. Our Dinner and Auction is scheduled for Saturday, Oct.15 2022. The venue is booked, rain is predicted during the week and salmon runs will be spectacular. So plan ahead and book the weekend in Antigonish. As in the good old days we will try and fill the weekend with salmon angling and fly-tying related activities.



The Dinner and Auction is our major fundraiser and we have big plans for 2022 and beyond. The Dinner Committee with the leadership of Dinner Chairs Gerry Doucet and David MacNeil is setting out to keep members connected, to increase awareness and to raise funds for the ARA.



### **Winter Online Auction**

We had a lot of positive feedback from our online auction in 2020 and the funds raised were critical in carrying out a very busy and productive field season. As you continue to read about his year’s work please keep in mind that the seed money for all of this comes from our fundraisers so thank you for your support,

We are hoping to start the online auction the last of February and run into the first week of March.

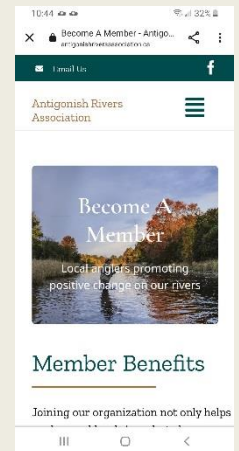
If you have items that you would like to contribute please feel free to contact Gerry Doucet, Tim Handforth or myself.



### **Membership**

Director Don Wescott continues to lead our membership drive. In an effort to make it easier to renew and remember we our moving to a calendar year for membership renewals. Our new website provides a number of options and lots of information so if you wish to renew your membership or want to become a member check it out.

<https://antigonishriversassociation.ca/>



### **Tree Planting**

The ARA had a productive session planting trees along the banks of the lower South River. The tree planting is part of our ongoing project on South River with our partners [Fisheries and Oceans Canada](#) and the [Nova Scotia Salmon Association](#) and [Adopt A Stream](#).

A big thank you to all who turned out. This is part of our much larger project with NSSA’s Adopt A Stream so check out Nick and Amy’s report in this newsletter.





*Also check out Nick's overview of the river restoration YouTube.*





### ***Beaver Dams***

If you spent any time along the rivers in Antigonish County this fall then you noticed that the beaver population is doing quite well. In normal times this perhaps isn't a huge issue but with so little water this fall there were serious concerns about whether salmon could make it upriver and over or around these dams. Director Gerry Doucet did the leg work to get the necessary permits. Gerry, President Tim and Phil Zwicker then went to work notching a few dams. If you have tackled a beaver dam then you know this is no easy task!



### ***ARA Fly Tying***

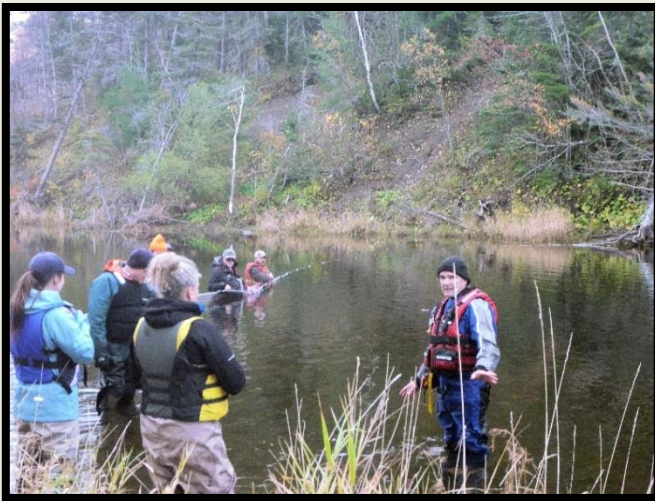
Fly tying for all skill levels will return in January. Free instruction and all tools and materials are provided. Big thank you to Chris Marchand who made a large donation of hooks which we always need! Thank you to Daniel Dorion for arranging a location at A. H. Roy. Details will be announced very early in the new year.





**Brood Stock Collection**

On Nov.3 the NS Inland Fisheries crew, Fraser's Mill's Hatchery staff and ARA volunteers collected brood stock. A seine of Frenchman's Pool provided enough Atlantic salmon to complete our enhancement needs. Four females and five males were captured and transport to Fraser's Mills. One of the males was a fin clipped fish spawned at Fraser's Mills. We are awaiting scale analysis results which should tell us some interesting information. We will have a full report on his year's brood stock later. A big thank you to everyone who took part,







### ***Free Family Fishing Derby***

Well, there have been unsafe ice winters, storms and covid but we are determined to try again. Saturday Feb. 19 2022 is the day during Nova Scotia's Heritage Weekend! More details will follow as in the New Year.

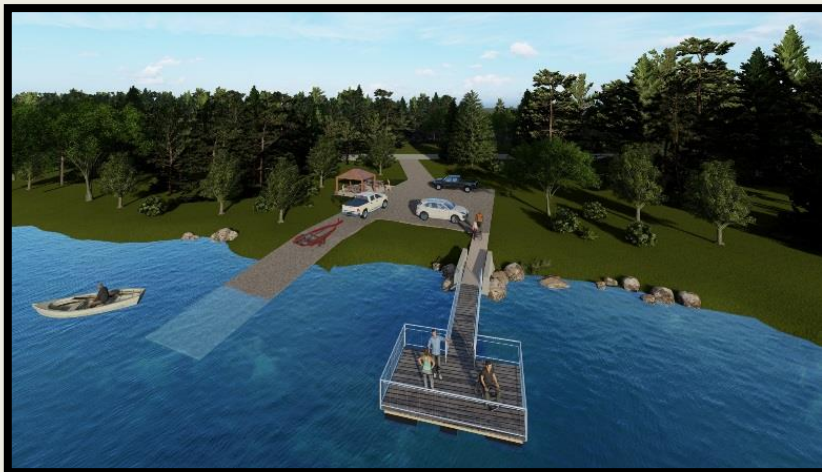




### ***Dave Symonds Award***

ARA Director Gerry Doucet received the Dave Symonds Award from the Nova Scotia Salmon Association for his long time dedication and work for the cause of Atlantic salmon conservation.

Fittingly the award was presented by Nick MacInnis on the South River after a morning work project planting trees and just before Gerry headed to the Hatchery to check on our brood stock. Well Done!



### ***Cameron Lake Accessibility Site***

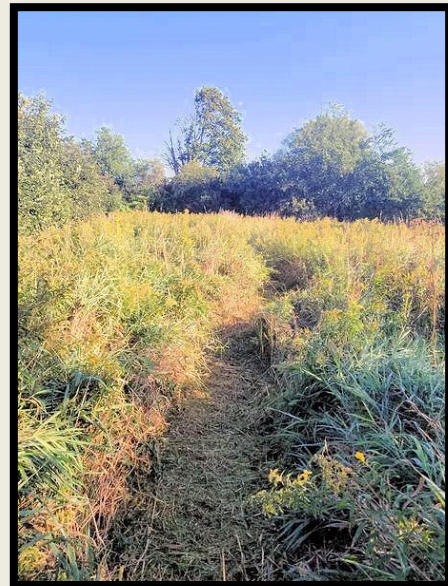
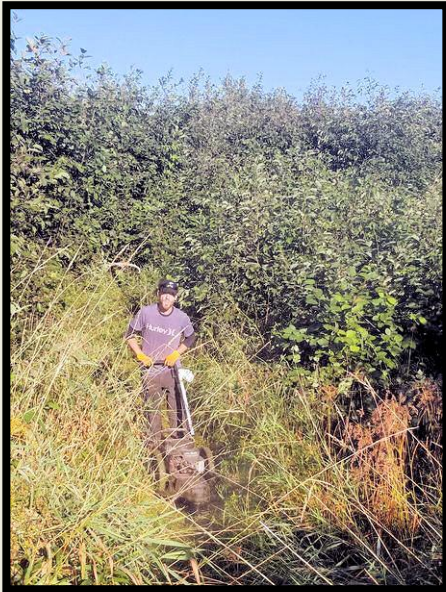
Great news this week: the license document for land use at Cameron Lake has been approved and is being sent to the ARA for review and signing. As most of you are aware this was the hold-up for the project which we had hoped would be finished in 2021. The floating dock has been purchased and is in storage and funding for the whole project was in

place. With the cooperation of our funding partners we will be ready to go in the spring. Can't wait to see this site being used.



### ***West River Access***

A large group of volunteers organized by President Tim and Director cleared the trails and parking areas to the lower pools on West River. Cleared trails make travel to popular pools easier for anglers and also protects the many trees that the ARA has planted along the riverside.



### ***In memoriam***

The salmon fishing community was saddened by the loss of two iconic figures this fall.

**Mike Crosby** was an Atlantic salmon fishing legend, a friend to many of us, a champion of salmon conservation, President of the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, supporter of the ARA, author, chef and above all a family man. We will miss Mike in many ways.

**Bryant Freeman** was a gifted fly tyer, angler and dedicated conservationist. The winner of the New Brunswick Lieutenant- Governor Award for Conservation Bryant was a pioneer in salmon conservation. Many of us know Bryant through his former shop , Eskape Anglers, where you could easily pass hours listening and learning. I owe a few salmon to Bryant's rendition of the Carter Bug.



## ***Salmon news***

- The government of Newfoundland and Labrador recently released a long term study on the effects of catch and release on Atlantic salmon. The study also considered the effects of temperature and the use of landing gloves. The video gives a concise summary of the project.



- At COP26 in Glasgow delegates were greeted by *Salmon School*, a stunning multi-media visual conceptualized by artist Joseph Rossano. The installation hoped to draw attention to the risks posed by climate change to species loss and the loss of biodiversity, as well as the role of Atlantic salmon as a bellwether species for ecological change.

*Trendsmag photo*





- Anecdotal reports from the UK are raising concerns over the absence of traditional fall runs of Atlantic salmon on their rivers. Reports from the Miramichi River system especially the Cains River point to a similar pattern. Check out Brad Burn's [blog](https://www.bradburnsfishing.com/november-2021-miramichi-river-atlantic-salmon-trap-and-barrier-counts-discussion/) <https://www.bradburnsfishing.com/november-2021-miramichi-river-atlantic-salmon-trap-and-barrier-counts-discussion/>  
This is the same trend that we are seeing on our local rivers. The speculation is that the fall fish are still arriving but well after the close of angling season. The fear is that these runs may have been part of the missing salmon issue. A great area for some research.
- Reports from Iceland indicate that wild Atlantic salmon numbers have declined by 70% over the past 40 years. Environmental groups and anglers are uniting to fight a huge expansion of sea cage aquaculture in Icelandic waters claiming that disease, sea lice and a flood of escapees will lead to the total collapse of Iceland's wild salmon stocks.

## Trolling Flies for Big Trout

By Don MacLean

Most anglers are familiar with streamer and bucktail flies and know how effective they can be for catching big trout and landlocked salmon. The late Col. Joseph Bates, who popularized these flies with his excellent books, coined the phrase “the big fish flies” to describe them and there is no question they attract large fish. The trolling fly, which is another form of streamer or bucktail, was first developed in the early 1900s by Maine anglers. Trolling flies for trout and landlocked salmon has a long tradition in that state but the popularity of the patterns soon spread throughout the eastern United States and Canada. Tied to imitate smelt and other baitfish these flies are very effective when fished in early spring when trout and salmon are hungry after a winter under the ice. A problem you sometimes run into with long winged streamers is that fish will nip at the tail of the fly and not get hooked. The tandem or trolling streamer avoids this problem through the use of a second trailing or stinger hook which hooks these short takers.

Trolling flies allow me to combine a number of my favourite things, tying and fishing my own flies and spending time in a canoe. If, like me, you become interested in trolling flies your search will soon lead you to Maine’s Carrie Stevens. She was born in 1882 in Maine and lived there her entire life. While she never ventured far from home her reputation as a fly tier is known around the world and her streamer fly patterns remain popular today. Her career as a fly tier began in the 1920’s when she and her husband settled in the Ranglely Lake area of Maine. They had a small cottage, Camp Midway, near Upper Dam which was a popular area for fishing brook trout. A hotel, Upper Dam House, was a popular destination for visiting anglers. Carrie’s husband worked there as a fishing guide and Carrie became a fly tier, supplying flies to visiting anglers.

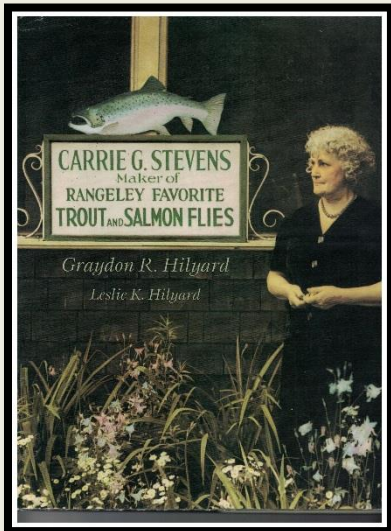
Her fame grew when she took second place in the 1924 Big Fish Contest run by Field and Stream magazine. Her entry was for a brook trout which weighed in at an impressive six pounds and thirteen ounces. She caught the fish on one of her own flies, a Gray Ghost, and the fame generated by the story began to bring in more and more orders. Over her career as a fly tier, until she retired from fly tying in 1953, she tied thousands of flies and invented at least 24 original patterns. Perhaps her most famous is the Gray Ghost streamer. Tied to imitate a smelt, this fly remains a popular pattern for trout and salmon today. Totally self-taught, she never took a fly tying lesson, and tied without a vise, simply holding the hook in her hand.

I have been a longtime fan of Carrie Stevens and her flies and, quite a few years ago I realized a long term





wish by visiting where she once lived and where she tied her flies. I was in the Rangeley Lake region of Maine for a work related fisheries conference. Knowing I was close to Upper Dam I asked one of the fishery biologists from Maine how to get there. He supplied me with directions and a map so, when I had a few hours free, I drove to Upper Dam and walked through the woods to where her cabin still stands. The area is surrounded by tall pine trees and I felt like I was in church as I headed down the path. The state of



Maine recognized Carrie Stevens' achievements back in 1970 when they celebrated Carrie Stevens day and dedicated a plaque in her memory directly across from the cottage where she tied her many flies. I thought it was a very nice tribute to a person who did much to make Maine famous as a sport fishing destination.

Carrie Stevens passed away in 1970 and today her flies are very collectable, and valuable. Which I find interesting, given the fact that when she was tying and selling flies, she never charged more than eighty-five cents for her casting flies and one dollar for a trolling streamer. If you are interested in learning more about Carrie Stevens and her flies I highly recommend the book *Carrie G. Stevens Maker of Rangeley Favorite Trout and Salmon Flies* by G.R. and L.K. Hilyard which was published by Stackpole Books in 2000. It is a great summary of streamer flies and fly tying in Maine and includes some beautiful images of the fly tiers art.

Perhaps the best tribute to her memory is the fact that the flies she created are still being fished, and are catching fish, today. Definitely a lasting legacy for a great fly tier. While I will never reach Carrie Stevens's skill level I get a lot of enjoyment from tying trolling flies so every winter I tie up a few for the upcoming season. The first trolling streamers were tied on single long shank hooks with an 8X or a 10X shank. In another nod to her legacy they are known as Carrie Stevens hooks. However these hooks are not always that easy to find and they can be expensive so many anglers prefer to tie tandem streamers and find they often out fish flies tied the traditional way. Connecting two hooks in tandem is not a difficult job. You can connect the flies with nylon covered wire, heavy monofilament or stainless steel wire. A piece 5cm (2.5in) long will make a fly long enough to match the size of most smelt. I generally use a size 6 single wet fly hook as the rear or trailer hook with a size 4 streamer hook in the front. Some fly tiers attach the single trailer hook with the hook up, others with the hook down. I don't think it makes too much difference. Traditional wet fly hooks such as Mustad 3399A or 7948A work well as the rear or trailer hook while a streamer hook such as the Mustad 9672 at the front gives a longer, smelt like shape to the fly.

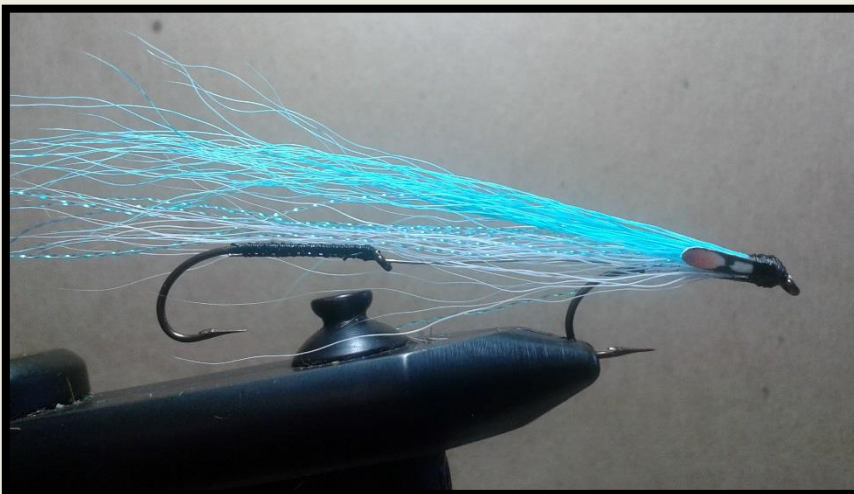
To connect the two hooks begin by clamping the rear hook in the vice and wrapping a thread base. Lay the end of the wire or monofilament on the shank of the hook and cover tightly with thread to ensure it is securely fastened. Cover the thread with head cement. Now place the front hook in the vice and once again prepare a thread base. Make sure you have the rear hook lined up with the front hook before tying it on. Lay the front part of the wire, or monofilament, on top of the hook and securely wrap. Now you can tie

whichever pattern you wish on the front hook. Some tiers put tinsel or floss bodies on their rear hooks but I prefer to leave mine bare except for the thread.

As with any other type of flies, there are literally hundreds of trolling patterns. Most were developed in Maine where patterns like the Black Ghost and Nine-Three are as famous as the Cosseboom or Blue Charm here in Atlantic Canada. While most patterns were developed to imitate rainbow smelt others, like the Red and White or Mickey Finn, are attractors. I generally fish smelt patterns and find flies which imitate the green, blue and purple colours of a smelt to be very effective. While I find a silver tinsel body will fool most fish there is no question that mylar tubing makes a great smelt imitation as well. Crystal flash or flashabou, as well as fishhair are also useful in adding some sparkle and lifelike movement to your flies. I like to add a bit of red hackle as a throat or collar hackle to my trolling flies. Eyes on your flies are also a personal choice. I believe they add to a fly's appeal so I sometimes add jungle cock to my trolling streamers.

Fishing trolling streamers is fairly simple.

My preferred method is to slowly troll them through my favourite trout and landlocked salmon water and hang on. However there are a few things you can do to increase their effectiveness, and hopefully catch



### The Rainbow Smelt

Rainbow smelt, *Osmerus mordax*, are widely distributed throughout Atlantic Canada. Most smelt are anadromous, meaning they spend part of their life in the ocean and return to freshwater to spawn. These smelt reach lengths of up to 25 cm (10 in). Some larger lakes, such as Lochaber Lake, have populations of landlocked smelt which never leave the lake except to spawn in brooks. Many of these freshwater populations are stunted, never growing to more than 10 cm (4 in). Smelt first spawn at two years of age. Spawning generally occurs in the spring from March through May and takes place at night. A large female can produce up to 93,000 eggs. Smelt eggs are very small, 1mm in diameter and take 11 to 29 days to hatch, depending on water temperature. When they hatch young smelt are about 5mm in length. Feeding on plankton they grow very rapidly and may grow to 5 cm (2 in) by August. Some smelt die after spawning but most survive to spawn many times. The oldest smelt recorded was 17 years old. Rainbow smelt are fed upon by trout and salmon and also support a popular winter sportfishery throughout much of Atlantic Canada.

more fish. I know many anglers who troll streamers using a spinning rod, and that can work well, but I generally use a 9ft fly rod when trolling. I also use a sinktip line to keep the fly below the surface and some anglers suggest a full sinking line to get the fly down to where the fish are. Leader length is always an issue when trying to fool trout and salmon but early in the spring fish



are hungry they are not as selective as they may be later in the season. I generally use a fifteen foot level leader of 6lb test but go longer later in the summer. Any single action fly reel will do the job but if you use your salmon reel you will be sure to have enough backing in case you hook a good one.

Fish are where you find them but a good spots to target after ice out in the spring is the area where brooks empty into lakes. Smelt often concentrate in schools prior to spawning and will travel close to shore before moving into brooks. After spawning smelt are in a weakened state and drift back into the lake where they are eaten by trout and salmon. Later in the season trout and landlocked salmon generally stay in deeper water so you may have to troll deeper to get at them. That's when a fish finder comes in handy. If you haven't tried fishing trolling streamers before I hope you tie up a couple and try them this spring on your favourite lake.

*Don MacLean is a Nova Scotia writer, and retired biologist, who enjoys trolling flies in Gabarus Lake for trout and landlocked salmon. His latest book: With These Hands-Traditional Arts, Crafts and Trades of Atlantic Canada is published by Nimbus.*

Images of plaque and flies by Don MacLean

## ***Stillwater Fishing Tips***

***By Ken MacAulay***



Last year I wrote a short piece on the opportunities available for fishing trout in the shoulder season. Recently, I was at Gillis Lake in said shoulder season and the fishing was difficult. It reminded me of the importance of good technique to detect, hook, and land a fish. When the fish are aggressive, fish will

often hook themselves and the need for good technique may not be as apparent. However, when the fish are more selective, good technique will ensure a successful day of fishing.

This article will focus on tips for fishing nymphs and lures in lakes. In thinking of technique, I like to break it down in to 5 steps: the cast, the retrieve, detecting the take, converting the take (i.e., setting the hook), and fighting/landing the fish. I will address each of these steps for sinking lines. The same principles apply to floating / midge tip lines with one exception which is discussed below.



### **Sinking Lines**

Sinking lines can vary from a hover line that sinks at a very slow  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch per second to a Di  $\frac{7}{8}$  line that sinks at a fast 7 to 8 inches per second. They can also differ in their composition: some are designed to sink in a straight line (density compensated) while others are designed to sink in an arc (sweep lines). Finally, the composition of the cast of flies used will also impact the behavior of the line. I will offer several general principles for fishing sinking lines but will not address the many presentations that are possible with different sinking lines.

*The Cast* - The first item to consider is the cast. Anglers should cast the line to ensure that their flies turn over properly and are ready to fish as soon as they land in the water. It is generally a good idea to give the fly line a couple of quick pulls as soon as the flies hit the water to ensure that the angler is in contact with their flies.

*The Retrieve* – The next step for the angler is to count the number of seconds they allow the line to sink before beginning their retrieve. This is important to allow them to be able to repeat the retrieve if they find fish at that depth ...remember that the purpose of the sinking line is to get the flies to a specific depth where the angler thinks the fish are located. The angler also needs to ascertain the best retrieve action. They should try different retrieves in each cast (consider cycling through a hand twist retrieve, a strip retrieve and the roly-poly at different speeds) until the angler can determine which one the trout prefer.

*The Take* - Generally the take is detected by feel ...sometimes it is an aggressive take where the fish hooks itself and other times it may be expressed as a series of nips and plucks. To ensure the angler can feel the take, the rod tip should be held at or in the top of the water so there is no slack to impede the angler's feel (as in the accompanying photo).





*Setting the Hook* – Having no slack in the line and having the rod tip in line with the fly line will allow the angler to use the “strip-set” to set the hook. A “strip-set” is exactly what it sounds like, the angler uses their retrieving hand to impart a sharp 3-4 foot pull to set the hook...the angler raises their rod tip to fight the fish only after the fish is hooked. The

advantage of the strip set is that if the fish is not hooked, the angler can continue retrieving the fly. With this technique, the fly will still be at the same depth as the fish and will likely have the fish still following. In contrast, if the fly rod is used and the fish is not hooked, it will likely result in pulling the fly up and away from the fish and reduce the chances of catching the fish.

*Fighting the fish* – When a fish is hooked, the angler should move their rod to the side so the tip is just above the water and use long pulls to bring the fish in to their net. Moving the rod to the side will allow the rod to bend at the tip while fighting the fish but is less likely to bring the fish to the surface where it may jump and shake the hook off.

A couple of additional tips to consider when using sinking lines. First, after the cast, it is important to stay in touch with the flies during the count down as detection is determined by feel. The sound of the flies landing in the water (and the two quick strips) may bring trout over to investigate and these fish may take the flies as they are being counted down. Second, counting down by fives is an efficient way to find the correct depth...consider counting down to five for the first couple of casts and if no fish are encountered, count down to 10 for the next series of casts and continue until the correct depth is found. Third, use low stretch fly lines (e.g., Rio ConnectCore) as these types of lines will better transmit the softer plucks by trout. Fourth, if the fish are being particularly difficult, consider pausing halfway through the retrieve for a couple of seconds. The fish will often take the fly on the pause or immediately after you resume the retrieve. In summary, these tips should help improve your angling success. If I had to highlight two tips that will likely result in the biggest improvements for most anglers it would be first, eliminate slack (i.e., keeping the rod tip at the water's surface as opposed to 12-18 inches above the surface) and second, use the “strip-set” to set the hook.

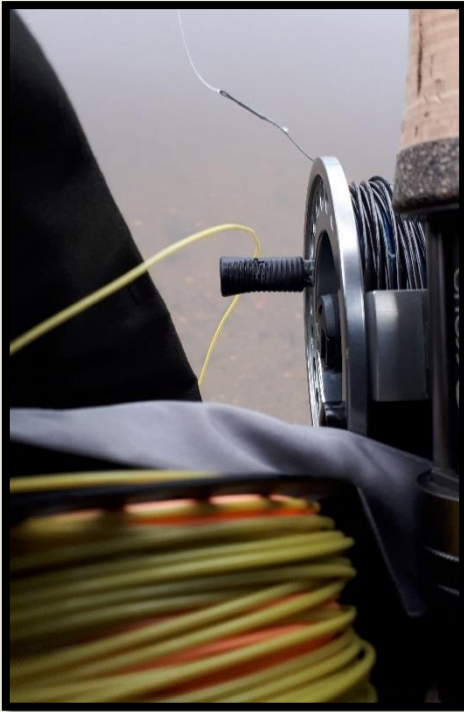
## Floating Lines/Midge Tips

Floating and midge tip lines are likely the most used lines for stillwater fishing because they are the most versatile. Floating lines are exactly that, lines that float and midge tips are lines that have a floating running line and a built-in intermediate tip that sinks. These lines can be used for near surface or deeper presentations and for retrieves ranging from static presentations to very fast retrieves. For example, a standard floating line can be used to fish multiple buzzers (static) or to fish a team of flies or single lure at speed. The principles for fishing these lines are very similar to those for sinking lines except for take detection.

These lines have an advantage over sinking lines: they float on the surface and therefore provide an opportunity to see the take. Anglers can therefore detect a take in one of two ways: by feel or by sight. If the angler wants to use feel, they should follow the principles mentioned above for sinking lines. Competition anglers, however, have found that more fish can be hooked if take detection is done visually as opposed to by feel (as much as 50% more). A take can be detected visually in two ways. The first is to watch the floating fly line itself, particularly the end of the line for any unusual movement that may indicate a fish. To help detect these small visual cues, some anglers may mark their floating / midge tip lines with a black marker. These anglers will place a three to four inch black band every 2 to 3 feet to help with seeing small movements of the line. This method is not always feasible as it may sometimes be very difficult to see the end of the line (the angler is too close to the water's surface, the line is too far away, the lighting is poor, etc.). The alternative method is to hold the tip of the rod about 4 inches above the surface of the water and watch the little arc of line between the tip of the rod and the water surface for unusual movement (see photo). Fish activity will be seen here before it is felt and sometimes fish activity can be seen that is never felt. Anglers should practice using visual cues when the fishing is easy... this is the best time to determine what is an unusual movement using different techniques / retrieves. It is these cues that will help anglers detect a take when the fishing is difficult. A quick reminder when fishing with floating and midge tip lines. If a take is detected, use the "strip-set" to initiate setting the hook. If any weight or resistance is felt on the line, the rod should be lifted into the "strip-set" to complete the setting of the hook.







Anglers should also consider using a cassette reel when fishing stillwaters. A cassette reel system will allow an angler to quickly change fly lines (usually less than a minute or two) while seated in a boat or standing in the water on the side of a lake. The process is easy. Wind the fly line all the way in until the end of the line is just outside the reel. If the top dropper is less than ten feet from the end of the fly line, the angler will likely have to cut the fly off the dropper to be able to wind the line onto the reel. With the new cassette ready, cut the leader off the old line and tie it onto the loop in the new line using a clinch knot. If the angler is worried about the leader slipping out of their hands while cutting it off the old line, use a set of forceps to clamp on the leader and prevent it from slipping away. Pull the new line back through the guides using the leader and fly rod is ready to start fishing again.

[Cassette reel ready for change]

A couple of observations to conclude. At the end of the retrieve, always pause your retrieve and fish the “hang” to catch any fish that have followed the flies. In addition, treat these principles as general guidelines. Anglers will always encounter exceptions. For example, if fishing for large aggressive fish (like happens sometimes with the rainbows in the Bras d’or Lakes), it may be prudent to introduce slack to reduce break-offs. I hope that you find these tips helpful and that you are able to incorporate a few of them into your fishing trips in 2022. Happy New Year and Tight Lines!

### **Meet the ARA Watershed Co-ordinator: Allison White**

After working with the ARA for the past year, I thought I would give a little more detail into my educational background, experience, and position within the association. I am a graduate from the Nova Scotia Community College with a certificate in Natural Resources and Environmental technology (NRET). My class was very fortunate to have Minga O’Brien as our instructor. Minga brought an extraordinary amount of experience and passion along with uncompromising integrity of work which she imparted on us all. Before graduating from the NRET program in 2015, I had applied to continue my studies at Cape Breton University where I was able to transfer my NSCC credits and that resulted in me graduating from a 3-year program in just 1 year. By 2016, I had earned a Bachelor of Engineering Technology degree with a focus on Environmental Studies.

Between NSCC and CBU I had worked for a summer with the ARA as part of the restoration field crew installing structures, notching beaver dams and learning about aquatic habitat restoration from Nick MacInnis. After graduating from CBU, Nick contacted me regarding a restoration field technician position with the Inverness South Anglers Association in Mabou. I sent in my resume and landed my first field technician job. I worked with the ISAA for 2 seasons and during that time I was mentored by hardworking volunteers and a man who I have come to understand is a true river restoration legend – Charlie MacInnis.

Through my network connections, I heard about the Watershed Stewardship Coordinator position with ARA and decided to jump on the opportunity. I turned out to be the lucky candidate chosen for the position and have been hard at work ever since. It has been an incredible opportunity for me to work in my hometown and play a role in habitat restoration within the ARA. The workload is varied and my time is split between administrative duties and field work, which is why this position is so unique. It comes with its own challenges, but no great adventure is without difficulties. During the colder months, I focus on coordinating with habitat consultants on upcoming projects, applying for project funding, website administration, attending virtual meetings, obtaining permits for field work, and data/document management. I also work on different aspects of management plans and project planning including the creation of watershed and restoration maps, and pre/post restoration data interpretation and reporting. In the warmer months my job is centered around field work which typically involves trying to keep up with Charlie and Nick MacInnis as they walk upriver to determine what type of restoration structure goes where in the project area, I also create work plans for the field crew, install restoration structures, conduct water quality monitoring and aquatic species surveys, assessing potential project sites, and compiling data for year-end reports required by funding partners.







Reflecting back on 2021, I'm amazed by the dedication and comradery within the ARA and the incredible volunteer work that goes into every aspect of operations within this group. I am not an angler, but during my time with the ARA, I have been lucky enough to get a glimpse into the angling world – the passing of knowledge through generations, the innumerable stories of fishing trips where lifelong memories are made and

friendships are forged – it is not a hobby, it is a lifestyle that brings passion and excitement to one's life. With this in mind, it is clear to see why the angling community in Antigonish and surrounding areas commit so much of themselves to the ecological integrity of aquatic habitats and the ongoing endeavor of restoration efforts.

**Thank you all for your encouraging advise, support and friendship throughout this year. I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season!**

**You can check out Gerry Doucet's interview with Allison.**



## ***A Busy Year for Inland Fisheries***

***By Andrew Lowles***

While most of the world has been impacted by health restrictions and folks are cautious of indoor events, recreational fishing has seen a resurgence during the pandemic. It seems that folks who with the *take it or*



*leave it* attitude towards fishing have rekindled their passion, dusted off their gear and have taken to the water.

Inland Fisheries has remained business as usual over throughout the pandemic. Last year, we were able to successfully apply rotenone to Piper Lake with the purpose of eradicating smallmouth bass. In 2021, I am happy to say that we have not detected any surviving smallmouth bass and we have begun to restore fish passage and natural ecosystem function.

While the good news of Piper Lake is fresh, we are dealing with another unfortunate introduction into Dobson Lake in Guysborough County. Dobson Lake is a part of the Coeeycoff River system and is significantly larger and more complex. Options are being presented before the Minister and we hope to increase our efforts towards control or eradication beginning early next year.

As many are aware, Inland Fisheries administers the Freshwater Fisheries Research Cooperative (FFRC) – a funding program to aid in determining the health and status of the freshwater sport fishery and to evaluate the strategies used to enhance and sustain the freshwater sport fishery. Recently, three of these projects have focused on Lake Trout. Although two populations of lake trout are known to exist there are several lakes, such as Lochaber Lake, that are rumored to have remnant populations. Likely the most viable population in Nova Scotia can be found at Sherbrooke Lake in Lunenburg County, and is the focal point of the research into seasonal behavioural patterns and the importance of marine derived nutrients to these large, cold water trout. Due to some equipment and delivery challenges associated with COVID, fish collection started a bit later into the season when fish are more difficult to catch.





In July, researchers from Acadia University and St. Mary's University, along with help from us here at Inland Fisheries, surgically implanted the first acoustic tag into the belly of a lake trout from Nova Scotia. A small incision is made just in front of the vent, the AA battery size tag is inserted and the incision is sutured closed with dissolving stitches. These tags give off a "ping" of location and temperature about every minute that is recorded by receivers strategically placed throughout the lake. Fish, being cold blooded, have an internal temperature of their surrounding environment. We have strung temperature loggers vertically in the water column to create a temperature profile of the lake. When combined with the data retrieved from the receivers, we will be able to see how much of the lake is being used, how much fish move vertically through the water column, and if there are daily or seasonal trends in movement. It will also enable us to estimate how much of the lake is



available lake trout habitat based on seasonal temperature availability.



Food web analysis is typically done using muscle tissue removed from lethally sampled fish. Because lake trout distribution is so low and each individual is valuable to the population, we have developed a method of biopsy similar to what is used to collect human tissue samples. A small hole is punched adjacent to the dorsal fin, and tissue is removed for lab analysis. The purpose of this study is to determine the importance of marine derived nutrients, or in other words, how important are

gaspereau to the Sherbrooke Lake food web and to lake trout in particular?

Lots of interesting work is underway at Inland Fisheries and with partners from all across the province. We are always happy to discuss this work with anyone interested enough to listen.

## *Dry Fly fishing for Atlantic Salmon*

*By Mark Dort*

One of the most rewarding, exhilarating and heart stopping experiences is dry fly fishing for Atlantic Salmon. The moment a dead drifted fly floats over a salmon and you see a head show, mouth open and resulting splash is an addictive experience that never gets old. Your adrenaline surges to an all time high.



Dry Flies for Atlantic Salmon are mainly built from a buoyant animal hair. In most cases deer hair is the primary source used in Salmon bombers and Buck bugs. Caribou hair and foam are also utilized to some extent. A dry fly hackle is often wrapped around the body of the fly which allows it sit higher on the water's surface. Other key ingredients in dry flies include calf tail which is used for the head and tail of the dry fly. Deer hair and squirrel can be used as substitutes.

Salmon bombers often range in size 2-6. They can be tied with a head (front wing) or without.

Having a front wing on a Salmon bomber serves several purposes. The front wing will cast a bigger shadow on the water so when an Atlantic salmon is looking up, they see the increased profile of the fly. Secondly a front wing can help the fly float longer and higher. Personally, I find the front wing on a fly helps me locate the fly as it is drifting through choppy water. Front wings on the Salmon bombers are often tied in as one clump of hair or in a split wing formation. It is good to have variety in your fly box. Salmon bombers can also be tied without a front wing. These tend to be my preferred style of Salmon bomber simply due to the fact once the fly is done dead drifting, I can skate or wake the bomber to finish off my swing.

This variation of fly presentation has enticed many salmon over the years to attack the fly as it skates out of a dead drift.





Buck bugs tend to be smaller in size often ranging from 6-12. The luxury about Buck bugs is they can be fished wet or dry on the same cast. Buck Bugs do not have a front wing.

Wulff series of dry flies is a beautiful pattern that catches the eye of both fish and angler. It is always good to have a handful in your box. Many anglers often speak of the White Wulff. These flies are effective on Atlantic salmon and trout. The Wulff series tends to have a slimmer profile compared a Salmon bomber. They are often tied with a thin uni-yarn or light dubbing tapered on the body with a thick collar of dry fly hackle on the front of the fly. These flies float well, are easy to cast and attract several fish species.

Now the important part! Casting a dry fly. Dry flies are most often presented in a dead drift fashion. The goal of the game is to have your dry fly drift over the nose (or close to it) of an Atlantic Salmon triggering a take. When floating a dry fly, it is best to ensure the fly is floating wake free and naturally. Most anglers will cast the dry fly slightly in front of themselves or a bit down stream. This fly placement will help the fly float over any potential holding salmon before your floating line passes over them. The Reach cast is an excellent technique and effective way to make this happen. As mentioned above If dead drifting a fly is not exciting the salmon to your liking then mix up the technique. On the next few casts try skating the fly once it has drifted for 3-5 seconds. In this technique you want the fly to eventually swing on the surface as it moves on a 45-degree angle across the pool.



What do I need to get started? A single hand rod ranging from 7-9 wt is a good choice. Anglers should learn to master a single hand rod and fly placement before advancing into the double hand rod world. A simple over-head cast, roll cast and Reach cast will ensure your fly is over the fish. A common mistake I have noticed is novice anglers often want to experiment immediately with 2 handed rods. As the majority of casts on a double hand rods are water borne there is unnecessary line disturbance over holding fish and the tendency is for the angler to toss the fly to the far side of the pool. Making a long cast is fun but not necessary when dry fly fishing. Casting a fly on the inside seam of the pool is as effective as casting one to the far side. As anglers become more experienced double hand rods are effective for longer drifts and covering water.

Fly reels should match your rod weight and a weight forward floating fly line that sits within the grain window of your rod. My go-to line has been the Guideline Bullet Evolve series. I like to finish off my setup

with a straight piece of 10lb tippet. I often will use a 10.5-foot tippet. Some anglers prefer to use tapered leaders as they help with fly presentation during casting.



*Salmon caught on a Carter Bug.*

## Tips/best practices

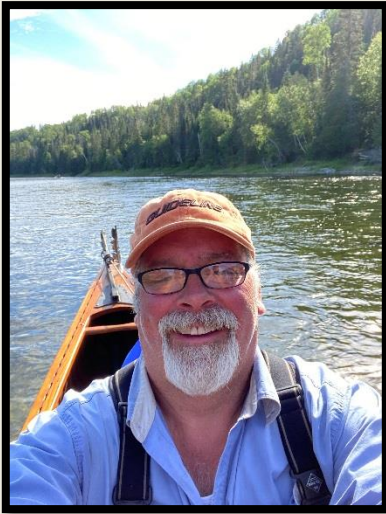
1. Keep it simple – don't over complicate dry fly fishing. A Single hand rod, 10 -10.5 foot leader and WF floating line will provide endless amount of fishing opportunities.
2. Be excited but be patient. It may take many casts to raise a salmon. When that salmon does rise it may do so multiple times before committing to your fly.
3. When a salmon does rise for you fly and miss it then give it a brief break and let the salmon swim back to its holding position. If the following casts do not raise the salmon, then try a different dry fly.
4. Avoid the yanks! When you see your fly grabbed, bumped or pulled under... wait! A common instinct is to immediately set the fly and "yank" ... don't make your move until you feel the line tighten or the weight of the fish pulling. Slowly raise the rod tip and keep your line tight.



5. Short cast the pool first then work your casting placement wider and deeper into the pool. The inside seam of the pool can be as productive as the far side of the pool. See point number 6 😊
6. There is no need to wade deep into most salmon pools. Look for the current in the pool or the white foam line and begin your casting in that vicinity.
7. Dry fly floatant – your budget will dictate what you want to use. Generally, I have found all price points have worked. Some just require they be applied more frequently. A well tied fly doesn't require a lot of floatant to keep it on the surface.
8. Salmon become educated – If you are aware that salmon are in the pool, but they are being fussy try a dry fly pattern, size, and color that anglers ahead of you have not used. I often find going with a smaller size fly will fool leery salmon.
9. Late season salmon – by this time the salmon have seen a lot of flies floated over their heads. I have found natural colored dry flies in colors brown and green have been successful on these fish.
10. Don't be scared to splash the fly when casting. In most case a softly placed fly on the surface is the preferred choice. However, salmon are unpredictable and splashing the dry fly on a cast has intrigued salmon to rise.
11. Favorite patterns -Carters Bug, Bee, Green/Orange Bomber, White Wulff, Green/Yellow Wulff, Blue Green butt bug, Green Lime Green butt bug
12. Learn and master the Reach cast.
13. Flies such as the Carters bug can be a successful skating fly. The absence of a front wing and bottom of the fly shaved flat tends to allow it to skate and wake easily.

***Have a safe and enjoyable Holiday season and I look forward to seeing you on the water in 2022.***





## ***Reflections***

***By Gerry Doucet***

This summer from late June to late July, I spent four weeks away fishing in northern New Brunswick and the Gaspé Peninsula of Quebec. It was a bucket list experience fishing rivers named Bonaventure, Matapédia, Cascapédia, Metis and

Restigouche.

Half of the trip I shared it with my close fishing mate Chris Chisholm on the Restigouche River. He was a perfect fishing companion. I was honoured to share his company. The second slice of my journey saw me plying the riverways in the Gaspé with another close friend, the venerable Neil Houlding. Neil is a spey casting instructor of the first order and international acclaim. He is well known to those that fish the West River, Antigonish. It is his chosen playground in October.



Throughout my trip, I scribbled notes, wrote paragraphs and pages as my thoughts wondered here and there.

This was the first fishing trip I took since Covid began fifteen months prior and the first since I lost my dear wife, shortly after the salmon season ended in 2019. My writing has been therapeutic in my journey of healing.

I returned home to my beach house located at Mahoneys Beach. My hands and feet were blistered and bleeding from a month of tireless pursuits of Atlantics. I needed time to heal and reflect. I did so here on the shores of St. Georges Bay sharing time with my children and friends.

The cut at Mahoneys is the harbour entrance to the rivers of Antigonish (West, Rights and South). When the August ocean was flat enough, I would cruise the cut watching the salmon jump randomly while they awaited the fall rains. It pleased me to again be near these majestic creatures.

Now, as I review my notes and scribbles, I am working on tying it all together, perhaps for a larger story, and if published, may see wider distribution.

I will take it for a maiden voyage to you, the readers of the Annual ARA Newsletter. I hope you enjoy it...

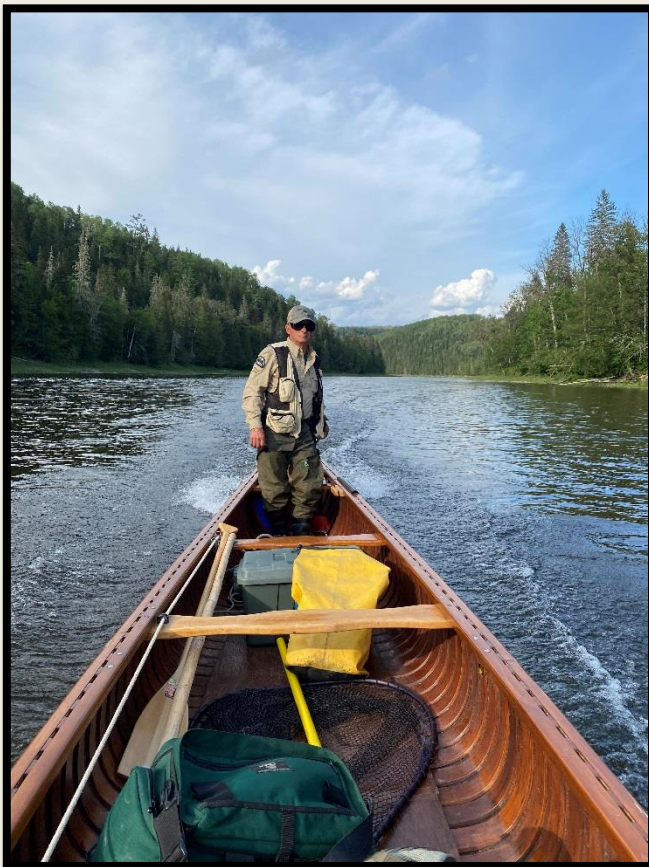


July 7, 2021

The morning wakes cool.

Commotion stirs as the lads awaken and search out coffee. Sleep is scrubbed from eyes and conversations emerge.

Hope springs eternal as fly patterns are discussed. Comprehensive reviews of yesterday now lengthen the truth. It is spoken with jocularly and smiles. This nourishes the mind as does the food prepared by the French ladies.



Eventually our feet carry us to the rod room when we suit up in our waders and grab our long sticks and fly boxes.

In the distance we can hear the hum of outboard motors. Purring.

I find my guide, Edgar, a kind, knowledgeable riverman with a lifetime of experience on this mighty watercourse. He pulls his beautiful freighter canoe alongside the dock. It is impressive in its length and beam. Twenty-six feet.

Rods are safely stored in the company of our crew of two, close at hand beside the gunnels. We set off.

Our trip this morning is a short journey of four minutes. We will swing flies over the Home Pool.

We drift along gently allowing the current to dictate our float. The motor is off and eventually my guide

grabs his poling stick. It is handmade of black spruce and allow us to adjust our course without the use of a loud outboard.

We see a fish and chose to begin near this spot. The anchor is a thirty-pound triangle weight, referred to by the river-lords as a killick. It is neatly festooned with ropes and pulleys, perched at the bow of this impressive river vessel.

Our first order of business it to pour a cup of coffee and watch the water looking for signs of the iconic fish we seek, *Salmo salar*.

Birds of all manner dominate the airwaves. A bald eagle soars overhead eyeing its domain. The drumming of a woodpecker plays out. Off in the distance, crows scream at each other.

I am melancholy as I think of my previous life, my wife, my children.

Edgar speaks about this and he can see I am emotional. He looks at me with gentle caring eyes denoting his understanding and compassion. It makes me weep. He allows me the time to collect myself. Eventually the sadness ebbs.

I stand up in the ark and begin the slow methodical work of covering the water with my fly, a Shady Lady. Self-crafted by my own hands, it searches.

The mission is simple but intensely complicated. Can a wild iconic fish of inordinate cultural value be found and enticed to grab it? It seems impractical but a salmon angler is the consummate optimist.

Cast over cast repeats its cadence. A rhythm. A ballet. Harmony.

The wind arrives and inserts a new variable. The gusts grow. The challenge escalates. Eventually it is so dominant it is futile to continue. We concede.

Conclusion is to save our energy for the evening fish which seems logical. We weigh anchor and ignite the motor and with great lethargy, set sail back to the lodge.



At the dockside I shake my ghillie's hand and thank him for his kindness. This moment is quietly intense and makes me weep again.

I trudge up the steep hill to my cabin. Seventy-two steps. I dry my eyes.

Coffee awaits in the grand dining hall. I fill my cup full. Black. Bitter. Perfect.

Sleep is needed to recharge and renew as day over day fly fishing is a physical enterprise.

I welcome the slumber. It will create dreams of finding the elusive Atlantic salmon on our sojourn this evening.







### ***NSSA Adopt-A-Stream Report***

***By Amy Weston and Nick MacInnis***

**Priority Rivers Project and Adopt a Stream Program – Keeping the good work flowing!**

The NSSA staff, volunteers and affiliate organizations had another landmark year in terms of restoration, research, and outreach in 2021. Across the province, projects and

important research and monitoring were completed, with special attention going to rivers in both the Gulf Region and the Southern Uplands. The continuation of the Priority Rivers projects, funded in part by the Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species At Risk (CNFASAR) is a collaborative initiative aimed at improving

habitat conditions for Atlantic salmon and American eel as well as assessing the habitat suitability for Atlantic Sturgeon, all species assessed at risk in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. Across the province, on the Atlantic side, the NSSA launched a similar, and even larger project for species-at-risk focusing on 8 watersheds in the Southern Uplands. These projects build on the NSSA's flagship restoration program Adopt A Stream and West River acid rain mitigation project.



The Adopt a Stream Program consistently provides critical funding to over 20 watershed and conservation groups across the province, and thankfully due to easing covid restrictions, we were able to host our in-person digger log installation training once again this past summer. In all 67 people participated in one of the 3 sessions held across the province. In the Gulf Region, our training day took place on the upper reaches of the Southwest Mabou River, hosted by the Inverness South Anglers Association, with teams from Cheticamp, Margaree, Sydney and Antigonish attending.



Over the course of the 2021 field season, 21 river associations, Indigenous organizations and community groups completed habitat restoration, fish passage improvement and watershed assessments.

As part of the ongoing restoration and planning work on the South River Antigonish, the impacts of riparian zone loss due to agriculture has been identified as



contributing factor to the warm summer water temperatures that frequently reach near-lethal temperatures. To address these issues, NSSA and ARA have been working closely with local farmers to establish riparian zones along the river. In 2021, our organizations continued to complete bank stabilization projects in the South River to address issues such as siltation. As most issues of bank erosion are caused by an absence of riparian zone vegetation, it is important that partnering landowners, who benefit from bank stabilization work, enter into agreements to allow the establishment of riparian zone vegetation.

Following the instream restoration season, the NSSA was approved additional funding through the Canada Nature Fund to support project partners in watershed planning for the Gulf Rivers project. This funding allowed the ARA to extend a field technician position through the fall. Bruce Wheadon, a field technician on the crew this summer, assisted Allison White, ARA's Watershed Coordinator to collect data and carry out stream surveys throughout the South River Watershed. This work will be used to produce a watershed restoration plan for the South River which will be completed before the end of March 2021. We are looking forward to providing Allison and Bruce with guidance and feedback as they work on this important document.





ARA has been a consistent leader in the province for completing restoration projects, fundraising and community outreach, which wouldn't be possible without the commitment of their strong volunteer base. Consistent, year-over-year volunteer commitment requires leadership and in the realm of salmon conservation, ARA's own Gerry Doucet delivers. In recognition of his leadership and commitment to Atlantic salmon conservation, the NSSA was pleased to present Gerry Doucet with the distinguished Dave Symonds Award which celebrates individuals in Nova Scotia who have made significant contributions to Atlantic salmon conservation. Gerry has been a pivotal contributor to ARA since its inception and he continues to play an important role with the group. He's the driving force behind the ARA's bi-annual fundraising dinner, he coordinates the broodstock collection program and he has the uncanny ability of bringing people

together whether it's at board meetings, fundraising events or reliving the past days' angling experience at 'Salmon Central'. On behalf of the NSSA, we salute Gerry and look forward to many more years of conservation together!

Best wishes for 2022 -

Nick MacInnis, NSSA Habitat Specialist and Amy Weston, NSSA Habitat Programs Manager



Atlantic Salmon Federation  
Fédération du Saumon Atlantique

### *Atlantic Salmon Federation Update*



*Kris Hunter*

Like so many in the salmon community, ASF continued to deal with covid issues in 2021. Despite many challenges and constraints, we were able to accomplish a significant amount for wild Atlantic Salmon this past year. We continued to make progress on the four pillars of our Blueprint for Saving Wild Salmon (determine what's killing salmon at sea and develop solutions, ensure fisheries are sustainable, reduce the effects of aquaculture, and remove barriers to fish passage and restore healthy streams). In 2022 we are set to launch new campaigns and projects that we hope will be a significant step in this strategic plan.

ASF's research team continued to make progress as ongoing tracking and research programs, curtailed in 2020 due to Covid, were restored to almost normal in 2021. This past year also saw a significant advancement in the Greenland tracking project, which seeks to close the loop on our decades long tracking program by tracking adults back from Greenland to their native rivers. Utilizing a new approach our research team was able to tag almost 70 salmon with pop-up satellite tags, which will give them much needed insight to what is happening to salmon on their return migration. (ASF photo)

ASF also continue to make waves on the international stage and towards improving sustainable fisheries through our Greenland agreement, our work with NASCO and the ICES Working Group for North Atlantic Salmon, and our salmon school display at COP 26 in Glasgow. While there have been some changes within the Greenland political landscape and continued reporting issues that are causing challenges, we know that our Greenland Agreement is working as since its implementation several years ago, returns have shown small but significant improvements across the range wild salmon. At COP26 our collaborative salmon school display caught international attention and brought the importance of salmon conservation and restoration work in fighting climate change to the attention of world leaders

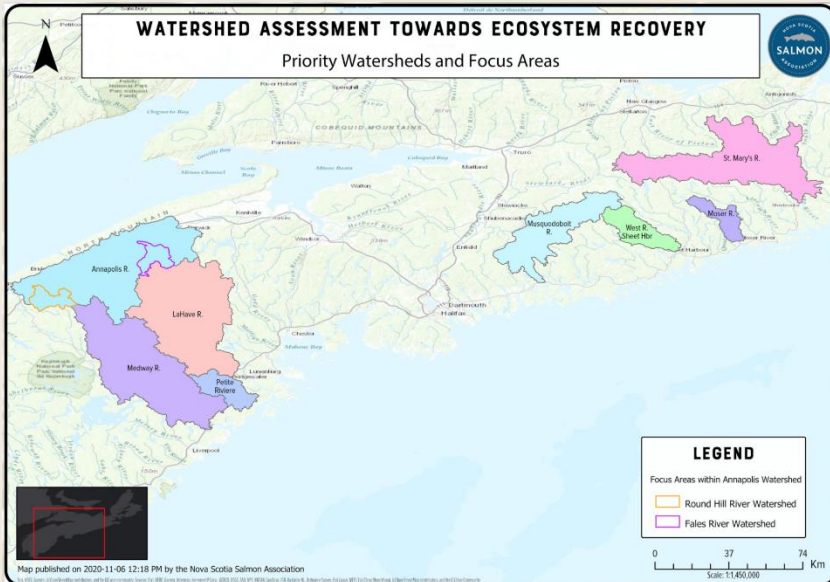


ASF also continues to work on reducing the impacts of Open Net Pen Aquaculture on wild salmon. (ASF photo. ASF biologist Eric Brunsdon hold an escaped aquaculture salmon captured in the Magaguadavic River) This year we continued our advocacy work at the national and international levels. Locally we presented as an expert witness at the ARB hearings that took place in Yarmouth, advocated with the Minister and in the legislature for improvements

to aquaculture regulations, and did numerous media interviews to draw attention to the issues (such as sea lice, disease, and escapees) associated with open net pen aquaculture in NS and beyond. Through me, ASF also continued its support for the Healthy Bays Network, a provincial organization working to



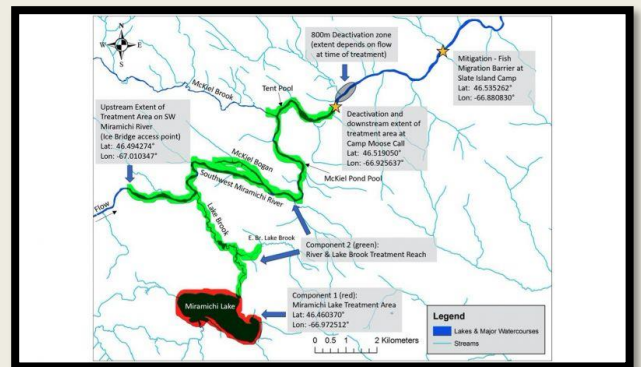
unite communities and give them voice in discussions around aquaculture development. In 2022 we will continue to expand on these efforts, supporting a new Atlantic wide organization, the East Coast Coalition for Aquaculture Reform or EC-CAR. We also will be launching a new campaign with our local, regional, and national partners from across Canada to improve this industry and ensure that wild salmon are protected.



A major initiative for ASF this past summer was the Smallmouth Bass Eradication project on Miramichi Lake and the Southwest Miramichi. This project, which has been years in the making, brought together dozens of organizations from across Maine, NB, and NS to try and address an illegal introduction of the invasive species Smallmouth Bass into Miramichi Lake. The bass, which have already escaped the lake and established themselves in a several km long section of the Southwest Miramichi, are an invasive

species that are disrupting the food web and threatening the integrity of the entire Miramichi ecosystem. ASF, with our partners, brought together over 150 volunteers to address this issue in what is the largest ever attempted aquatic invasive species eradication in Canada. Despite a tremendous effort by all involved the eradication could not take place because protestors disrupted the effort. ASF is working with those persons, and the communities they represent, to address their concerns in the hopes of carrying out the eradication in 2022. This project is significant for what it is doing for the Miramichi, but also because it is helping to build capacity, and establish knowledge and expertise that will be helpful in future projects involving invasives species, including places like Dobson Lake in Guysborough County.

ASF's regional council, the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, also had a very successful year in 2021. The NSSA continued their salmon research, conservation, and restoration efforts; conducted advocacy work; and despite suddenly and tragically losing Mike Crosby, hired a new Executive Director. The NSSA expanded their own tracking efforts through the ESRF funded tracking program that is tracking salmon from across their native range to learn about impacts from the oil and gas industry and they continued to develop their Watersheds Towards Ecosystem Recovery (WATER) project that is working to better understand and develop restoration programs for priority watersheds across the Southern Uplands, Eastern Cape Breton, and Gulf regions. ASF continues to



support these efforts and will in 2022 launch our Wild Salmon Watersheds initiative to add even more support to conservation efforts like the WATER project. (NSSA illustration)

Looking ahead to 2022, it is promising to be another busy year. Already we know of several significant events that are scheduled to take place. The initial phase of DFO's Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation Policy is set to wrap up so there will be consultations around the implementation plan for the next phase. DFO will continue its development of its Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Plan with in-person and virtual consultations (check out [talkfishhabitat.ca](http://talkfishhabitat.ca) for more info). The Species at Risk Act listing decisions for salmon in the Southern Uplands (Endangered), Eastern Cape Breton (Endangered), and Southern Gulf (Special Concern) are expected. There will be public comment periods for several gold mines developments that threaten wild Atlantic Salmon and recovery projects. Public consultations on the Northern Pulp Environmental Assessment are also scheduled to take place. As always ASF will be involved speaking on behalf of wild Atlantic Salmon and will be a resource to help support groups and individuals participate and/or have their voices heard in these important discussions and developments.

On behalf of ASF, I wish you a happy holiday season and hope that you can find some peace, relaxation, and enjoyment during these uncertain and stressful times. Cheers! Kris



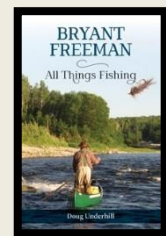
*Mark Dort photo*





### *A Christmas List for the Avid Angler*

1. A membership to one or more of our conservation groups. Locally there is information here for the ARA. You can join the NSSA for free in their new membership drive and on the international level the ASF needs our support.
2. A tribute read : Mike Crosby's *River Talk* for the Christmas Break . Stories, tips and wisdom from a life well lived.
3. A trip to the Gaspé is always a welcomed gift.
4. Fly boxes, spare reel, extra tips, leader, food, thermos, camera. Hmm, time for a trip to Fishing Fever for a new Simms backpack?
5. Some fly tying materials are always welcome; feathers, hair, sparkly stuff, hooks. Support your local fly shop and check out The Tying Scotsman.  
<https://thetyingscotsman.ca/>
6. Tickets for the 2022 Wild Atlantic Salmon Benefit Dinner and Auction. Be an optimist.
7. A copy of Doug Underhill's *Bryant Freeman* will provide a fascinating and informative look at the life of a Maritime icon.
8. There are some great photographers in our little association so a beautiful print of a favourite pool or vista keeps giving every day. Check out James Smeaton <https://www.jamesphotos.ca/> , Matt Dort <https://matt-dort.picfair.com/> , Ray Plourde, and Mark Dort.
9. A new favourite of mine is a pair of sun gloves. I have Glacier Gloves but I'm sure your local fly shop has a pair that works for you.
10. It is December and there is still some fishing left. A nice double walled Hydro Flask from Patagonia Halifax will keep your coffee hot while chasing Bras D'or rainbows





Thank you to the contributors: Mark Dort, Allison White, Tim Handforth, , Kris Hunter, Amy Weston, Gerry Doucet, Don MacLean, Ken MacAulay, Nick MacInnis, and Andrew Lowles.

Anyone with ideas, flies, stories or other items for the Newsletter please contact The Editor.

[djmacneil349@gmail.com](mailto:djmacneil349@gmail.com)

