

# *Antigonish Rivers*

*Christmas Edition 18/12/2022*

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

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



Photo by Raymond Plourde



## *President's Message*

Winter is typically a down time for fly fishers. It's a time to reflect on the past season and look ahead to the next. This is the key time for many of us to tie flies, build a new fly rod and stay up to date by checking out the "cabin-fever-killing" Fly Fishing expos and shows. 2022 proved to be an exceptional year for salmon fishing; the Cape Breton Rivers had good spring and summer fishing and the Northumberland Straight Rivers didn't disappoint. The Antigonish Rivers started producing salmon early in October and that continued throughout the season.



ARA, much like you, is reflecting on the past season and planning for the 2023 season. This past year, ARA completed the Cameron Lake Accessibility Project (see picture), and the River Restoration Crew were busy. They did everything from installing digger logs, planting trees, checking temperature loggers to installing fence posts and planning for the 2023. (More on this in Nick and Bruce's update). ARA held an online auction in March and the Dinner Committee hit a grand slam with the October Biennial Atlantic Salmon Dinner & Auction. It's an amazing amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to put on this event. This was the most successful event in ARA's history, raising over \$ 25,000.00; a big thank you to the Dinner Committee and everyone for your generous support!

**From the Executive, Board Members, and myself, thank you!**

***Merry Christmas and Happy New Year***

**Tim Handforth**

**President**

**Antigonish Rivers Association**



Photo by Malorie Crispo



Photo by Deirdre Green



Photo by Mark Dort



# Antigonish Rivers Association

ARA EXECUTIVE

2020-2021

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President:

Tim Handforth

Vice President:

Malorie Crispo

Treasurer:

Christine Hanlon

Secretary:

Leo Callahan

Past President:

Nicholas MacInnis



## ARA NEWS

***Biennial Wild Atlantic Salmon Dinner and Auction 2022***

*Photos by Erin MacNeil*

It was worth the wait! After Covid-19 restrictions forced the cancellation of the 2020 dinner it was a long journey back and anglers and friends, like the salmon, returned to Antigonish. A new venue, new caterers, a new date and the worst hurricane, Fiona, in memory challenged the Dinner Committee. They rose to the occasion.



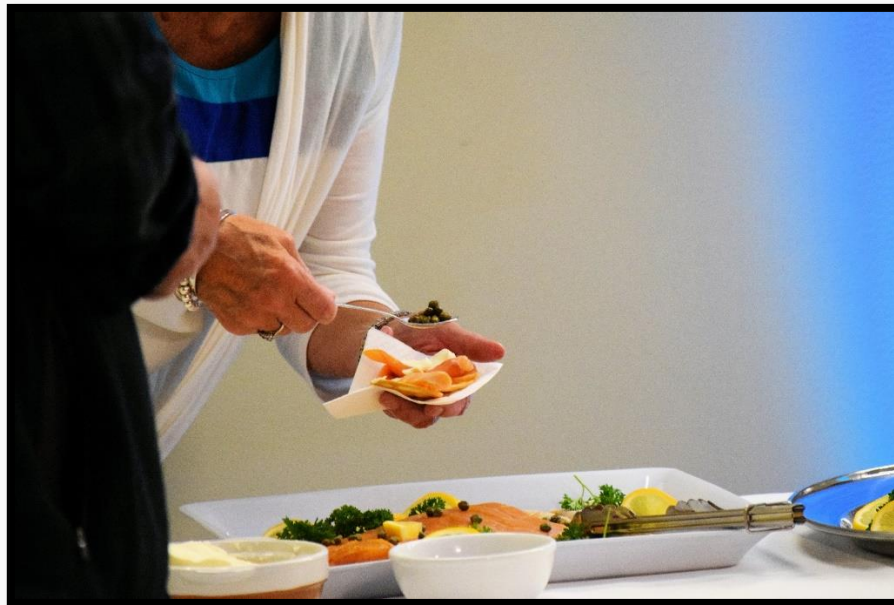
On Saturday Oct.1 at the East Coast Credit Union Social Enterprise Centre, we were hosted by the Royal Canadian Legion. Catering was provided by Canadian Association for Community Living Antigonish and chef Damian Welsh. The new date was selected after our original booking at SFX was preempted by Homecoming. So, with fingers crossed and faith in our members, the new dinner was launched. Right from the beginning ticket sales were strong and our new Dinner Ambassador, Dana Doucet, was busy with ticket and table sales, sponsorships and donations. Thank you all for your support. After a few years and lots of changes it was heartening to see your continued support for wild Atlantic salmon and the ARA.

The events began riverside at The West River Tent. Dinner Co-Chair, Daniel Dorion, organized the event to heighten community awareness of the river conservation work being done by the ARA and to promote the sport of fly fishing. A steady stream of curious folks and anglers enjoyed a sunny afternoon with a free BBQ. There were information displays, casting demonstrations and riverside chats and story telling with notable anglers.

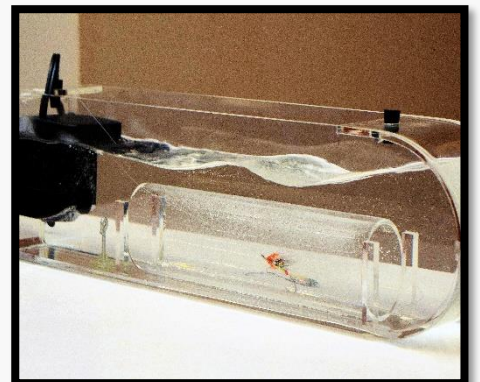
Later that afternoon as guests entered the venue, they were welcomed by our Fly Tyers Conclave. Organized by renowned fly tyer Bob MacDonald, a team of notable tyers entertained guests with their tying skills, answering questions and providing stories about successful pattern. Our thanks to Steve Andrews, Ben Cleveland, Deirdre Green, Lexie Legatt, Gordie MacKinnon and Parker Wong (more on Parker later).



What a great start to the evening!



While meeting friends and watching the tying expertise (and the Fly Tester tank which was a big hit) there was a delicious Smoked Salmon Reception hosted by Angela Shields. Sustainable Blue provided their land-reared, sustainable salmon, smoked to perfection.





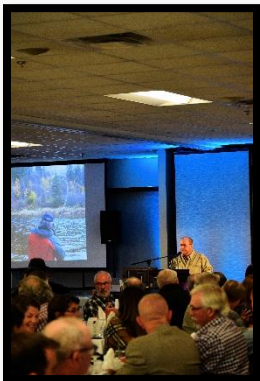
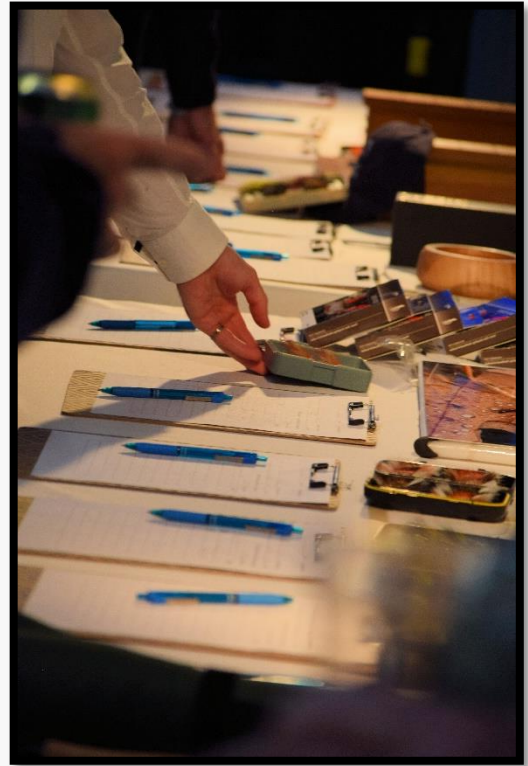
*SUSTAINABLE BLUE: A SUSTAINABLE FISHERY THAT DISCHARGES ABSOLUTELY ZERO EFFLUENT*

*BACK INTO THE ENVIRONMENT*

<https://www.sustainableblue.com/>



Once inside the main event area guests enjoyed a raffle table and silent auction items to browse and bid.



Master of Ceremonies, Raymond Plourde, called the gathering to order. Christine Hanlon delivered a treaty recognition that was relative to the rivers we fish. As part of the Truth and Reconciliation process we are being ask to take the next step towards understanding our Treaty responsibilities. Christine reached out to Cory Julian, Chief of Paq'tnkek as well as C.J. Pictou, Fisheries Director and Trevor Gould for their help in understanding and sharing our responsibilities.



President Tim Handforth then welcomed our guests. A presentation on the work being done in our area by Nova Scotia Salmon Association Adopt A Stream's Amy Weston and Nick MacInnis followed. (see more later in this edition)



Ray Plourde, on behalf of the ARA, delivered a moving tribute to the Legend, Mike Crosby. It's hard to summarize the contributions of Mike and what he meant to the Atlantic salmon community but Ray did a tremendous job.

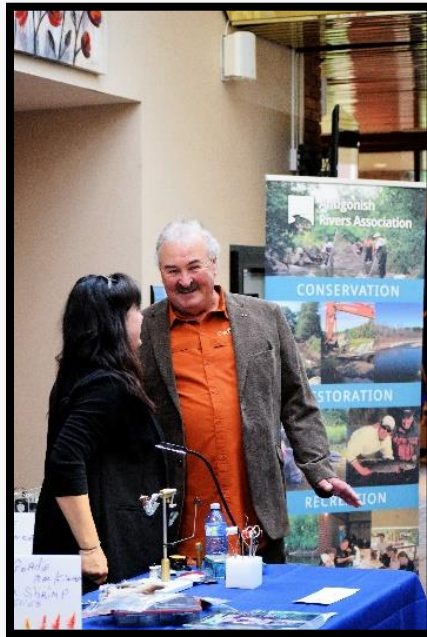
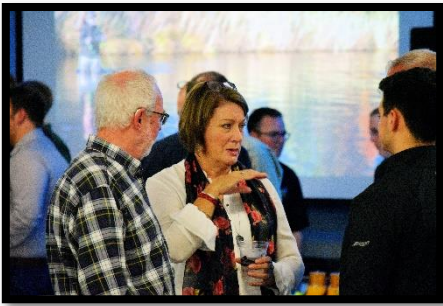
Every two years the ARA recognizes an individual who has made long-term, significant contributions to wild Atlantic salmon conservation. Gerry Doucet delivered a touching recognition to our honoree, Jim Lerikos.



Dinner was served interspersed with Snap Auctions and trips to check on Silent Auction bids. After dinner Dr. John Chiasson led some spirited bidding on a selection of Live Auction items.

It was a time to gather, meet friends old and new, swap stories and raise some money for conservation. We were even treated to high water and fresh salmon in the West River. Thank you to our many donors and supporters who make this dinner such a success.







A few special notes of thanks; to Ray Plourde for stepping up to take on the MC role, to Kris Hunter, ASF, for a masterful job on the AV/audio presentations, to Dana Doucet ,Dinner Ambassador, for a whole bunch of things, to Bob MacDonald for the Fly Tying Conclave, to Angela Shields for the Smoked Salmon Reception , to Dr. Chiasson ,our auctioneer, and to the Dinner Committee chaired by Gerry Doucet, Dan Dorion and David MacNeil.



Sadly, just weeks after the Fly Tying Conclave our angling community lost Parker Wong. The picture here is from the conclave where Parker shared his skill, stories, and kind words with all our guests. Parker was a long-time participant in the conclaves and always donated a much sought-after fly box filled with his fabulous trout flies.

Parker was an angler and fly tyer of great renown. He contributed to many conservation organizations locally and nationally.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to his family.

We will miss seeing Parker on the rivers and at the dinners, but we will remember his kind and generous nature.



*Sign of the Times (my favourite sighting this fall on the way to Frenchman's)*







### **ARA New Membership Model**

For a volunteer organization attracting members and keeping membership lists up-to-date is a challenge. To help improve our communication with our members and to allow members to participate to the degree that they want, the ARA has developed a new model. Updating memberships will begin on Jan.1, 2023. Traditionally we have had members pay when it was easiest, at the Dinner, on the river bank, chance encounter etc. While we appreciate each and every member, from a record keeping perspective it was a challenge to keep track and provide timely renewal notices.

We would ask you to consider renewing your membership on or around Jan.1 each year. We will send you a reminder. If you paid your 2022 membership fee at the Dinner or during the fall season then we will consider you a paid member until Jan.1 2024. Thank you for understanding.

Thank you to Dr. Don Wescott for taking over the Membership portfolio and pushing for a new model.

### **New Membership: Change Effective 01 January 2023**

#### **Four types of memberships:**

#### **1. Basic**

1. Free
2. Each member is recognized (e.g. email from president).
3. Each member receives regular newsletters, notifications of special events, learning opportunities and volunteer opportunities.

#### **2. Deep Water**

1. Fee to be set by board. Currently membership fee for 2023 will be \$20.
2. Benefits:
  1. All of the basic benefits
  2. Free fly tying with local knowledge of flies for the Antigonish area rivers.
  3. Priority notification of special events, learning opportunities and volunteer opportunities.
  4. A cap or other accoutrement (neck wrap, scarf, toque, masks, etc) as available, free of extra charge to these members upon request

**3. Life members**

1. Fee to be set by board. Currently is \$300
2. Benefits:
  1. Includes all of Deep Water membership benefits
  2. Each Life member will be recognized with a certificate suitable for framing signed by current president.
  3. Each life member will also be recognized annually in the year end newsletter with great thanks.
  4. Each life member will receive a hat initially and such other accoutrements over time as the board deems appropriate and upon request.

**4. Honorary Life Members**

1. Only on recommendation
  1. need written application from a member
  2. The application will be kept confidential until presented and discussed by the board.
  3. Requires a 2/3 majority of board members to accept the member as an Honorary Life Member.
2. All benefits of life members will apply.
3. This should be a significant publicity event and so will need news releases, photo ops, social media etc.
4. Each member will receive a framed certificate and such other awards, benefits or accoutrements at the board's discretion

The board may, from time to time, change the benefits as necessary and is not limited by the above.





### **ARA Fly Tying**

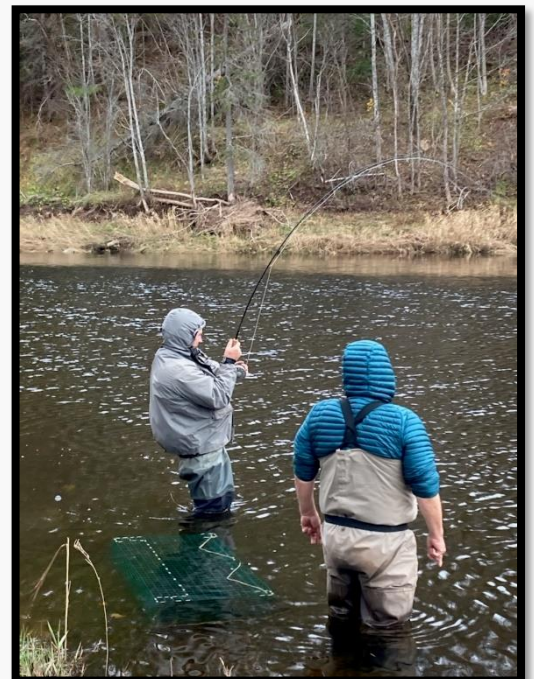
Fly tying for all skill levels will return in January. Free instruction and all tools and materials are provided. Classes are open to everyone from beginners to experts. We ask that youths under the age of 16 be accompanied by an adult. We've added a video component so it should be helpful as it can be a long table. Thank you to Daniel Doiron for arranging a location at A. H. Roy on Main Street, Antigonish. Tentative start date is Monday, Jan.9.

### **Brood Stock Collection**

This year the decision was made to prioritize collecting brood stock from the South River. With good rain fall early in October it seemed that South River fish could be collected and then switch efforts to the West River. However, after several unsuccessful seining attempts and limited angling success the decision was made to switch but once again salmon had their own schedule and despite a determined angling effort only females were captured. On the positive side salmon had ample water this fall and many were high up in the tributaries.

On a very encouraging note our Watershed Coordinator, Bruce Wheadon, reported 43 redds on Pinevale Brook. All were located near structures placed this summer work season to improve spawning success. Without your ongoing support this work would not happen!

Thank you to Stephen Thibodeau and the staff at Fraser's Mills Hatchery for their efforts and support. Thank you to Gerry Doucet for organizing and coordinating the traps, transportation, and volunteers.





**Free Family Fishing Derby**

Nova Scotia Heritage Day is Monday, Feb. 20, 2023 as that weekend is the free fishing weekend.

The ARA will be hosting a free family Fishing Derby at Gillis Lake, Pinevale from 9 a.m. until noon. There will be prizes and a free BBQ with hot chocolate. More details will follow in the New Year.



**Cameron Lake Accessibility Site**



The second stage of this project was completed this season. For a spectacular tour of the venue check out the video from James Smeaton, Highland Multimedia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gk6Nze4bCWQ>

The official opening was held on Friday, September 30.

President Tim and Director of Inland Fisheries, Jason LeBlanc, unveil a commemorative plaque.



**Funding Partners:**

N.S. Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture / Sportfish Habitat Fund

N.S. Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage: Access-Ability

Antigonish County Municipality Partnership Grant

Antigonish Community Recreation Capital Grant

Antigonish Kinsmen

**In Kind Donations:**

Iron Maple Construction

Bird Construction

Beech Hill Auto Repairs and Towing

**In Cooperation with:**

N.S. Department of Lands and Forestry



### West River Access



A group of volunteers and our river crew organized by President Tim 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. As you

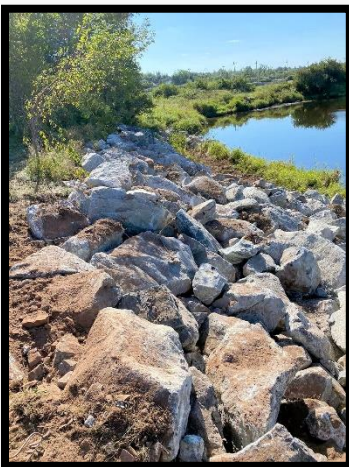
can see from the photos Hurricane Fiona added a whole new element to keeping trails open.



### 2022 Watershed Coordinator Report

By Bruce Wheadon

The winter of 2022 presented an exciting opportunity for the Antigonish Rivers Association (ARA). With extended funding from the Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk (CNFASAR), in partnership with the Gulf Rivers Priority Project put forth by the Nova Scotia Salmon Association (NSSA), the ARA put together the Atlantic Salmon Recovery and Conservation Plan for the South River Watershed. The team, headlined by Nick MacInnis (NSSA), Bruce Wheadon (ARA), and Allison White (ARA), were able to complete a comprehensive restoration and accompanying monitoring plan for the South River Watershed. The aim of this project was to prioritize areas for potential projects over a five-year period, along with a monitoring program to ensure continued success of the completed restoration work. The







report required extensive planning, research, and data collection over the course of the summer of 2021 and throughout the winter of 2022.

The Pinevale Brook was identified through the Atlantic Salmon Recovery & Conservation Plan for the South River Watershed as the major issue the South River faced in terms of spawning productivity. (see before and after pictures to the left of one of many structures installed this summer). With contributions from the CNFASAR, the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation, and the Adopt-A-Stream program through the NSSA, the ARA restoration crew was able

to complete the Pinevale Brook Restoration Project and collect baseline data for continued monitoring of the project's success. A Pinevale Brook Restoration and Monitoring Report has been written and will have monitoring data added year over year.



This summer the restoration crew consisted of Andrew Grace, Bailey Randall, and Gregory Shields. The restoration crew installed 25 instream structures throughout Pinevale Brook. The structures will help guide the river back to its natural meandering pattern, dig pools, and provide instream cover for aquatic species. The crew also carried out maintenance on all previously installed structures throughout the watersheds of Antigonish County. In order to establish baseline data for future projects in the West, Wrights, and Pomquet watersheds, the crew also conducted Habitat Suitability Index surveys (HSI), collected data from over 30 temperature loggers, and did

electrofishing surveys.

Another goal for Year One of the South River Plan was to stabilize banks and restore riparian zones along the main channel of the South River where degradation due to agriculture processes has taken place. Armour stone was used in these locations, and rows of trees were planted to supplement the stabilization process.





With extended funding again through the NSSA from the CNFASAR, the ARA has been able to extend a field technician through the winter. Bailey Randall, a field technician on the crew this summer, will support Bruce Wheadon, ARA's Watershed Coordinator, to collect data and carry out field surveys in order to write the Atlantic Salmon Recovery and Conservation Plan for the West River Watershed. This plan will be completed by April 2023, and, with guidance from the NSSA, is the next step

in the Gulf Rivers Priority Project.

It was yet another busy and productive season for the ARA crew. We wanted to extend a well-deserved thank you to Nick MacInnis and Amy Weston of the NSSA. Without their guidance and expertise, the field projects carried out in Antigonish would not be as successful year over year as they continue to be. Also, to ARA President Tim Handforth, who always carries a positive attitude and outlook towards the projects taking place, and never failing to provide gear when necessary.

#### Meet the ARA Watershed Coordinator: Bruce Wheadon



I have been lucky enough to be working with the ARA for two years now, and the experience I've had has been unparalleled. While taking the Environmental Engineering Technology program at the Nova Scotia Community College, I told my instructors time and time again that I aspired to find work revolving around habitat restoration. Every time I brought this up, they warned me it would be near impossible to find a full-time job in the field. I have always had a passion for preserving our natural world and treating our environment with respect. To my luck, I received a call from Nick MacInnis to complete my work placement with the ARA.

The work placement became an incredible chance to learn from Allison White about the extensive restoration work going on not just in Antigonish, but the province as a whole.

After just five short weeks, I knew I was in the right place. The work placement turned into a job on the summer field crew, where I was able to get first-hand experience of the restoration work, and a chance to learn from two valuable mentors in Nick and Charlie MacInnis.

Upon finishing the summer term, an opportunity arose to continue work in a more technical form, helping Allison and Nick write year end monitoring reports for funding partners that provide support on our summer



restoration work. When it came time for Allison to go on maternity leave, I was again lucky enough to seize the opportunity to fill her enormous shoes as the Watershed Coordinator for the year.

It was when I took on this role, I came to realize just how tight knit of a community the local anglers have in Antigonish. Being able to learn about conservation at a grassroots level, and all of the knowledge passed down from anglers over the years has been vital for kickstarting my career.

I truly cannot put into words the gratitude I have towards everyone I have met in my time with the ARA, and the conservation community as a whole. Having a job that entails both field and technical work has been a dream come true. Although I will be leaving in April as Allison takes over once again, I look forward to continuing to lend a hand with the conservation and restoration efforts going on in Antigonish County in a volunteer role whenever possible.

**Thank you to everyone for making this year a seamless transition, and to the ARA volunteers for making this organization a continued success. Without you, none of this would be possible! Happy holidays!**

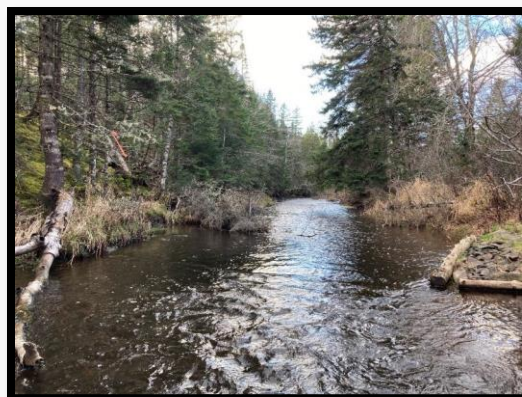


*Before*

*Structure #22 Pinevale*

*After*

*Below Pinevale structure #19 in fall conditions*







***Destination: Bahamas***

***Quarry: Bonefish***

*Story and photos by Gerry Doucet*

Based on a true story...

What to do when the recreational salmon season comes to a close and that door slams shut? Fishing options are limited. The stripers are gone from the estuaries and beach cuts. There are some freshwater lakes that are open year-round and that might scratch the itch? Traveling to the Bras d'Or lakes and searching for escaped aquaculture rainbows is possible, if that appeals to you. Not my cup of tea.

November can be a depressing month as many anglers reluctantly dry off their salmon flies, break down their rods, store them in their tubes, clean fly lines, and hang their waders, rain jackets and boots to dry. The days get shorter, darker and colder. Snow is in the offing. The timeline to April 1 is five months away. Can one last that long?

This year, after years of talking with my close friend and legendary salmon fishing guide Robert Chiasson (he is also my second cousin, twice removed), we decided to plan a warm saltwater fishing expedition. Our preliminary conversations were a DIY trip to North Andros in the Bahamas scheduled to be launched in the winter of 2022. Our target species was bonefish and perhaps some encounters with permit, barracuda, and tarpon. Covid squashed that.

As spring unfolded and rounded into summertime, banter and planning became real. The noted American author

and vastly respected angler Charles Gaines entered the picture (he is Editor of the ASF book "LEAPER" and a frequent contributor to many other fishing magazines). His interest in joining us was immediate and the trip took shape. Soon we were planning to head to Great Abaco, a Bahamian Island that was pummeled by hurricane Dorian three years ago. As Nova Scotians, we know this hurricane well, as it slammed our province in September of 2019.



Charles knows this island well, as he has had one or two trips there annually for the past forty plus years. He would be the teacher, Robert and I, the students.



It was decided to arrive the last days in November which curled into early December. After some discussion, Robert and I decided to stay an extra week and put to test our learnings from the School of Gaines. Two weeks were booked, a week in Abaco and a week in North Andros. Week one was to be a combo of a couple of days guided fishing and the remaining days hitting the flats in the areas surrounding us, under the competent direction of Mr. Gaines. We would stay in Marsh Harbour, the capital city of Abaco. This way we could travel north to Treasure Cay and fish the surrounding flats, a thirty-minute drive. Conversely, we could travel south and fish Sandy Point, exploring the mangrove inlets and creeks which are world renowned.

Week two, we were to be on our own, apply our new skills and shift our focus to North Andros. Our days would be a DIY approach paying attention to the excellent book penned by Rod Hamilton entitled *"Do It Yourself Bonefishing"*. We would base ourselves out of Fresh Creek and figure the rest out as the days unfolded.

During the waning days of the salmon season, another close friend and accomplished global angler, Chip Sutherland, was a steady presence in Salmon Central. He overheard our banter and inquired about the timelines and the possibility of being a wingman. Soon he was part of this planned excursion.

The planning continued, changing course a number of times, but it was decided to forgo the flying choosing to drive instead. This would facilitate visits along the way and awaken the senses as the topography and climate changes were subtly altering as we drove from our beloved Nova Scotia to the southern climes of the USA.

Our first stop was Portland, Maine. Robert and I shared a beautiful night with our mate Topher Brown and talked about the salmon season past and the bonefish trip ahead. A few days later we arrived in Alabama to share the company with Charles Gaines and his beautiful wife Patricia at their family compound. The ensuing days included the Florida Panhandle, Homosassa and eventually a one week stay in Key West where we would launch our flats fishing for bones!

Key West was warm and beautiful, but the fishing was tough. Our plan was to do a few days of guided angling in a flats skiff. However, due to brisk winds and the threat of dangerous thunderstorms, our guided days were cancelled. After consulting some of the local fly shops (yes, they have them in Key West) and Rod Hamilton's book, we focused our efforts in Geiger Key Beach and Bahia Honda Key primarily at the State Park. The net result was no bonefish but lots of smiles. Nonetheless, the nightlife in Key West was outstanding.

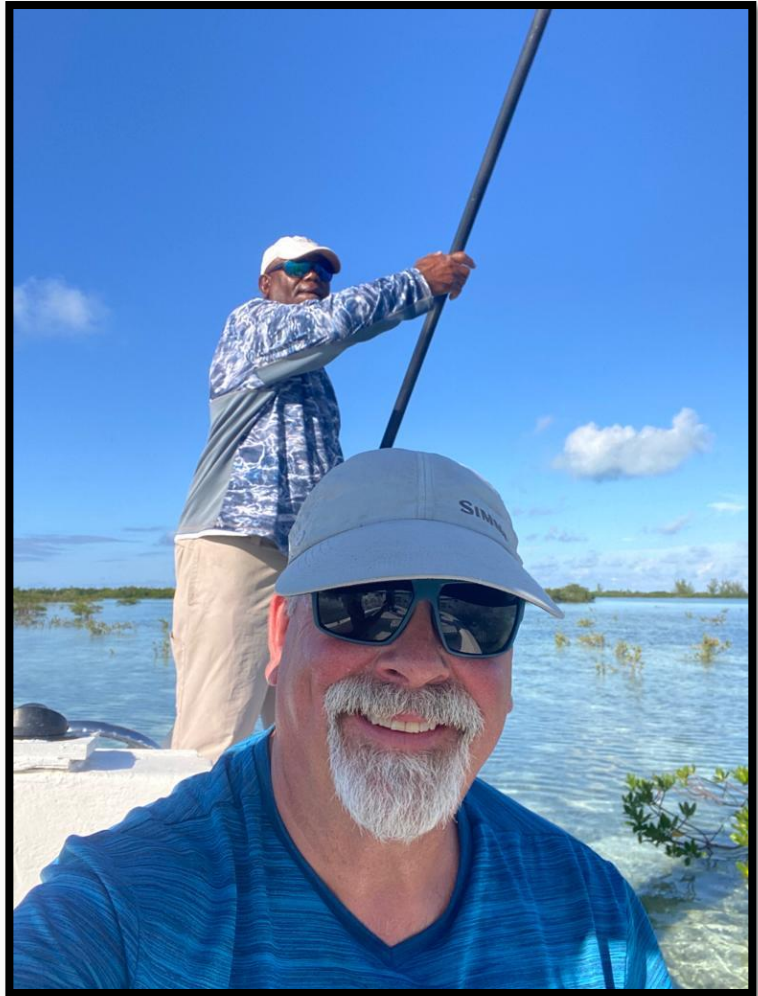
Key West ended for Robert and I and we were off to the Miami International Airport where we would connect with Charles. A short flight successfully delivered us to Marsh Harbour, Abaco and we set up shop in a beachside Condo for the week. Accommodations were terrific in this capital city despite the massive destruction Hurricane Dorian delivered to this island three years previously.

We cut our teeth with walking the flats and playing with gear setup: mono vs fluoro, bloodknots vs triple surgeon, fly selection (Gotcha vs Crazy Charlie, Mantis Shrimp vs Spawning Shrimp, dumbbell eyes vs bead chain eyes, white bodies vs tan bodies); we were curious students!

Nevertheless, DIY produced connections. Without a doubt, a hired guide produced significantly more hook ups. The distillations of this intel are simple, 1) DIY is doable, satisfying, and cheap, 2) Professional Guides are markedly more productive but markedly more expensive. 3) It is all fun.

Halfway through the trip Charles left for the US and Chip flew in. Trips to Sandy Point resulted in the most prolific fishing, including days of fifty landed fish over a day of six hours of fishing, should you get the tide right!? Days of DIY could produce a few fish each, although these results were intensely rewarding and a personal triumph.

Both islands are remarkably beautiful. Andros is set up more for the DIY approach as Abaco leans towards the hired guide maneuver. It is possible to stay at a lodge and have it all taken care of. These lodges exist, notable Blackfly Lodge and Delphi Club in Abaco and Andros Island Bonefish Club and Andros South Bonefish Lodge in Andros. Obviously, this approach is more costly than the manner we set up ourselves during our two-week fishing tour of the Bahamas, but like salmon fishing, the angler has options.







There are many accommodation offerings in Abaco and Andros. If you are staying in Marsh Harbour or north of the capital city, much of this area is under construction as they continue to rebuild after the big hurricane. South of Marsh Harbour, most of this area was lightly impacted by Dorian. One can find quality accommodations via AirBnB or VRBO or searching the internet. The quality of your rental units can vary markedly, so do your research carefully.

Here are some of this “musts”

you need to go fishing in the Bahamas:

- A good salmon rod works well for bonefish, so take a 9 or 10 foot, 7,8, or a 9 weight.
- A selection of bonefish flies (Gotcha, Crazy Charlie, Christmas Island Special, Pops Bonefish Bitters (crab), Spawning Shrimp, Mantis Shrimp), Fleeing Crab, Mini Puff
- Rental car
- Ten or twelve pound leaders, clear
- Wading boots, long brimmed hat, SPF clothing, sunscreen
- Polarized sunglasses
- Sling pack

Preparation allows for success, hence doing your homework pays dividends. In the Bahamas there are no fly shops thus the angler needs to go prepared. Cell service is very good, although international cell plans are expensive. We turned our phones on Airplane Mode and used the WIFI at our condo. WhatsApp was our primary communication vehicle and we used this approach make calls and send photos.





### **ASF 2022 Update**

For many in the Maritimes, it's a highlight each season to connect with friends in Antigonish as we close out the Nova Scotia season together – celebrating successes both in conservation and angling.

#### **Introducing Nova Scotia's new Program Director – Deirdre Green**

As most of you know, I began working with the Atlantic Salmon Federation this spring. In April, I began as *RiverNotes* Editor and shortly thereafter, stepped into the role of Nova Scotia Program Director. Kris Hunter and I have worked together as I transitioned into the position and as he moved along to lead ASF's new Wild Salmon Watershed initiative.

Throughout these past months, my focus has been on engaging with and supporting a diverse group of anglers, key affiliates, and stakeholders. From supporting groups in the field, to attending a variety of planning sessions provincewide, it's been a productive first year.

Having just returned from our staff forum in Chamcook, I am excited to share the following updates from our team. Enjoy!



The Team – Outside ASF Headquarters in Chamcook, NB

#### **Research – West Greenland Tracking**

This fall, ASF and partners returned to Qaqortoq for our fourth year of the West Greenland tracking program. The first three years of the program saw a total of 102 Pop-up Satellite Archival Tags (PSATs) – 12 in 2018, 20 in 2019 and 70 in 2021 released. Of the total 102 PSAT tagged fish, 54% were identified to have originated from North American stocks, while 40% of them originated from Great Britain or Ireland. Sampled fish from North America were further classified/identified as follows:

- Gaspé Peninsula (29%)
- Gulf of St. Lawrence (15%)
- Southern Labrador (27%)
- Newfoundland (8%)
- Quebec Lower North Shore (8%)
- Ungava Bay (3%)
- Maine (1.6%)

Jonathan Carr, VP of Research and Environment



Continent of origin was inconclusive for 6% of tagged fish, while region of origin was inconclusive for 9% of North American fish. We have received data from 75% of those PSATs, which have collectively yielded 7,529 days of positional, temperature and depth data.

We are pleased to report that 2022 was our most successful year yet. In total, 209 fish were tagged and released in Greenland: 96 with PSATs only, 95 with acoustic tags only, and 18 fish with both an acoustic tag and a PSAT. Fishing took place between September 12th and October 17th over roughly 30 days of fishing. Several variables likely aligned to present such a bounty of fish, including vast amounts of prey items in the fjord (krill, capelin, sand lance, squid, and shrimp).

**Greenland Salmon Conservation Agreement**

In June of 2021, the Greenlandic party to the agreement, the fisherman’s union known as KNAPK, requested the agreement be suspended for a year. Since then, ASF has worked closely with our partners in the agreement, the North Atlantic Salmon Fund (NASF) and KNAPK to negotiate a resumption and some modifications.

For West Greenland, the commercial and recreational salmon fishing seasons in the south are August 1 – September 30 and in the north, September 1 – October 31. As of October 27<sup>th</sup>, the total harvest for all fisheries stands at 24.5t with only a small recreational fishery in the north still open. This compares to 39.97t last year (12,000 salmon).



(Left to right) BACK: Malu Ravn (Greenland Hunter and Fisher Organization: KNAPK), Lili Petersen (Qaqortoq resident, boat captain), Ken Whalen (AST), Carole Anne Gillis (GMRC) and Chantelle Burke (DFO). Front row: Jonathan Carr and Heather Perry (ASF).

Since the latest Greenland Salmon Conservation Agreement came into effect in 2018, real catches of Atlantic salmon in Greenland have declined from recent harvests as high as 88t (26,400 salmon). Current catch totals more accurately reflect total landings due to mandatory licensing and reporting requirements that the agreement helped instigate, representing several thousand wild Atlantic salmon saved every year.



**Nova Scotia: Dobsons Lake Smallmouth Bass Eradication**

This past September, Kris Hunter and I played a key role in the latest invasive species eradication project, led by the Nova Scotia government, at Dobsons Lake in the eastern part of the province.

In the recent Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RFAC) meetings, Inland biologists, John MacMillan and Colin Buhariwalla, offered comprehensive presentations on behalf of the NS government on all this project entailed. We are relieved to report that the province is confident that smallmouth bass are no longer present within Dobsons Lake and Black Duck Run.



**New Brunswick: Miramichi Smallmouth Bass Eradication**

ASF has played a lead role in the high profile Miramichi smallmouth bass eradication project, which has been years in the works with permitting, consultation, and technical planning. With two-thirds of ASF staff involved, this was an all-consuming project that was extremely taxing on our organization.

We are happy to report that Phase 1 has been completed, which included a



rotenone treatment on 7 km of Lake Brook and 15 km of the Southwest Miramichi River, as well as the successful deactivation of rotenone at the downstream extent of the project area. The project is the largest and most complicated riverine aquatic invasive species eradication in Canadian history and ASF leadership

has been instrumental in bringing it to fruition. Keep an eye out for the next issue of the Atlantic Salmon Journal where this project is featured.

Image: 80 m long fish migration barrier installed on the mainstem of the Southwest Miramichi River to ensure Atlantic salmon and other fish species did not migrate into the rotenone-treated project area.

#### Antigonish Rivers Association Dinner

ASF was pleased to attend ARA's dinner this fall. It was a sold-out event, with 180 tickets purchased.

Personally, I had the privilege of joining many skilled fly tiers that evening. Bob Macdonald did a wonderful job orchestrating a successful fly-tying conclave at the entrance of the dinner.

A lively night where our team shared how refreshing it was to resume in-person dinners and re-connect with friends.

Thank you!

#### In closing

The Antigonish Rivers Association and its dedicated volunteers are well known for decades of river restoration and enhancement, but also community engagement and thoughtful mentorship. ARA's passionate core has attracted many youth and new anglers to the salmon fraternity over the years, and even to careers in conservation.

Without devoted groups like the ARA - the river, the fish, and many of us would not be where we are today. I look forward to continuing to partner with ARA for many years to come. Thank you!

Yours in Conservation,

Deirdre Green





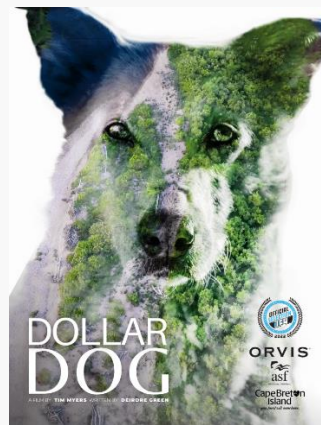
***For the Film Buffs***

The story of a four-legged Cape Breton salmon guide is an official selection in the 2023 International Fly Fishing Film Festival.

The ASF x Orvis production, produced by filmmaker Tim Myers and ASF's Nova Scotia program director Dierdre Green tells the story of Ella, a golden retriever mix from Cape Breton who walks alone every day to Dollar Pool on the Margaree River where she watches people fish and points to where salmon are laying.

The short documentary features legendary Margaree Guide Robert Chiasson and Ella's family, telling the story of their remarkable pooch. It will be shown around North America in the IF4 series of films – proof that not every fishing movie needs to be about fish.

To learn more, check out the festival's website: <https://www.flyfilmfest.com/>





### ***Smallmouth Bass Eradication Project: Nova Scotia***

#### *Dobsons Lake and Piper Lake Smallmouth Bass Eradication Project Updates*

Again, this year, Inland Fisheries has been working diligently on completing another smallmouth bass eradication project. Smallmouth bass were confirmed in Dobsons Lake near Canso, Guysborough County, in May 2020. The lake supports a popular springtime and early summer brook trout fishery. Dobsons Lake is a headwater lake of the Cole Harbour River system and is connected to 14 other lakes, including Coeeycoff Lake, that is known to provide excellent angling for brook trout. Immediately after smallmouth bass were confirmed in Dobsons Lake, several measures were implemented as a part of the aquatic invasive species rapid response plan. The rapid response plan included surveys to assess the distribution of smallmouth bass, angling and electrofishing removals, as well as the installation of barriers to prevent migration of smallmouth to downstream waters.



This past September, Inland Fisheries worked with local volunteers from the Eastern Guysborough County Dobsons Lake/Coeeycoff Volunteer Association and Atlantic Salmon Federation to apply rotenone to Dobsons Lake and Black Duck Run. Unlike the Piper Lake Project, the lake could not be blocked off and water held back while rotenone degraded naturally. Instead, water leaving Black Duck Run was treated with potassium permanganate – which is used to deactivate rotenone. As water temperatures dropped, the natural degradation of rotenone slowed, and

deactivation took longer than expected. When Hurricane Fiona arrived and brought heavy rain, rotenone was diluted to a level that was virtually untraceable. In 2023, we will continue to monitor Dobsons Lake to be certain the eradication was successful.

Piper Lake monitoring continued in 2022 and Inland Fisheries is certain that smallmouth bass eradication was achieved. All barriers have been removed from the lake outflow and natural connectivity has been restored. Ecosystem monitoring continues at Piper Lake as we track the recolonization of plankton, invertebrate, and fish communities. This season, we confirmed the presence of creek chub returning to the lake naturally by migrating upstream through connected streams. We will continue to monitor Piper Lake in 2023 and will be working with the local rivers associations on a plan to decommission the berm.



Andrew Lowles  
Manager, Resource Management  
Inland Fisheries

*Ed. If you attended this fall's RFAC meetings then you had a chance to see the full slideshow presentation of this project. The amount of effort, time, dedication, and funding needed was enormous. This is a large and pristine habitat for brook trout and Atlantic salmon. The loss of this resource to an invasive species would have been tragic. Newsletter constraints really don't do justice to this project. If you get the chance watch the slideshow. Great job!*



Malorie Crispo photo

\* Nova Scotia Fishing Licences for 2023 will be available in March both at retailers and online.

<https://sportfishing.novascotia.ca/>

*Steelhead Rabbit Matuka Fly*

*Article and photographs by Mark Dort*



A simple and effective pattern that attracts big fish! Who would have guessed that a fly tied to fish the lakes of New Zealand would have such an impact on multiple species at any time of year?



The Steelhead Matuka is a revised version of the New Zealand method of Matuka flies. The traditional Matuka fly uses feathers for the wing, but the steelhead version uses a rabbit strip. Although the pattern has been dubbed a "steelhead" fly it has proved effective for many species. In its simplest form the Matuka fly is a rabbit strip secured over a dubbed body with a feather collar.

Along the North Shore of Nova Scotia, you can target many species with a Steelhead Matuka fly. Many anglers often use a similar Zonker style fly with a cone head for trout in the Spring. However, the Steelhead Matuka fly is equally effective in the fall for Atlantic Salmon.

#### **The benefits of rabbit fur**

Rabbit fur will absorb water and stay under the water surface on the swing/strip. It is a good alternative to marabou. Marabou flies are often light and fished effectively on a sink tip line. Steelhead Matuka style flies can be fished on a floating line without adding the weight. The rabbit fur has a great pulsating action and swims flawlessly. Once waterlogged, the rabbit fur softens and creates a fly with bulk and with fish triggering action. Steelhead Matuka flies are durable and easy to tie.

#### **Tying recommendations and best practices**

When securing the rabbit strip, I use Semperfl nano silk tying thread to secure the rabbit strip at the back and then again at the front. An alternative would be to use a light wire wrapped through the body of the fly to secure the rabbit strip. I prefer not to use wire as it can trap the rabbit fur.

Before tying in the rabbit strip I like to add krystal flash in the tail and double it over to create stiffness. This will prevent the rabbit strip tail from wrapping the shaft of the hook when casting. Adding a bright colored butt on the fly also helps keep the rabbit strip in place and adds a bit of color while creating a strike zone on the fly.

The length of rabbit strip tail is an angler's preference: however, a general rule of thumb is the tail length to be equal to the length of the body of the fly. If the tail is too long the rabbit strip tail will tangle when casting and if too short the tail will have limited pulsating action. Steelhead Matuka flies are often tied on a up eye salmon hook. I prefer to use a heavy wire hook such as a #4 Gamakatsu or AHREX equivalent.

The Steelhead Matuka fly can be fished on the swing and in slower water with a saltwater strip will drive its effectiveness.





#### Steelhead Matuka Fly composition

Body – mylar, bright colored wool/yarn (soaks water well), dubbing, oval braid

Wing/tail – rabbit zonker strip and krystal flash. Barred zonker strips also add a nice touch.

Collar – saddle hackle, guinea fowl feathers, rabbit fur fibers. A different color throat can be added to personalize the fly. Jungle cock can be added for eyes if preferred. Favorite colors – green slime, Blue/Black, Purple/pink

#### *“We took that as a good sign”-In Praise of Salmon*

*By Don MacLean*



The Fall salmon season is a month behind us as I put my gear away and check which patterns I need to tie this winter to refill my fly boxes. For me it was an opportunity to spend some wonderful time on the water with friends and to celebrate landing my first salmon in a few years. As I grow older, I also find myself often reflecting on the world of the Atlantic salmon and the role it has played in my life. I

am now retired for seven years after spending almost forty years in various aspects of fisheries related work, much of associated with sport fishing for trout and salmon. Before that I spent two years doing my masters on Atlantic salmon in Newfoundland. That time spent professionally on salmon pales in comparison to the time I've spent fly fishing and fly tying, much of it focused on Atlantic salmon. While my work-related connections to salmon are dimming my interest in tying flies and fishing for Atlantic salmon continues unabated. In fact, as the year's progress, the pleasure I get from fly fishing and fly tying only grows. I know I am not alone in my love of all things related to Atlantic salmon. Atlantic salmon have long been an iconic species which fascinated people with long migrations from their home waters to feed before returning to the rivers where they were spawned to repeat the process. The salmon's ties to Nova Scotia

are based on geological and climatic events which together formed the aquatic environment we have today. Created by the collision of continents 400 million years ago, Nova Scotia has rocks which were once part of Africa, others from North America and some which resulted from the volcanic activity which occurred in the millions of years since. The resulting mass of rock and lava cooled and, with the passage of millions of seasons, life came to the land. Then, 75,000 years ago, life and landforms disappeared as the province itself disappeared, under the weight of hundreds of meters of ice, not once, but four times. The last ice of the Wisconsin Glaciation retreated from Nova Scotia 12,000 years ago, a heartbeat of time in the time clock of the cosmos, and life began again.

Fish may have been the first animals to return, swimming up rivers of glacial melt water from refuge areas farther South. These freshwater rivers soon retreated as the ice melted and the land rose, rebounding as the great weight of ice receded. Now almost surrounded by the sea the only freshwater fish in the province were the ones which had been able to colonize over glacial melt water. From now on only fish which could survive for a period of time in saltwater would be able to naturally colonize Nova Scotia's lakes and rivers.

The legacy of this glacial history is that only a handful of fish species are found in our freshwater lakes and streams. Thirty-seven fish species are found in our waters, and four of them, brown trout, rainbow trout, smallmouth bass and chain pickerel are late arrivals, the result of human intervention in the last one hundred years.

This small species mix pales in comparison to the over 300 species of fish which are found in the coastal and marine waters surrounding Nova Scotia. Atlantic salmon may have been one of the first colonizers of our rivers. Over time they became well established in the province and have long been an iconic species. I am reminded of this when I visit the Margaree Hatchery and admire the Atlantic salmon hanging from the ceiling. When I was employed with



the Nova Scotia Dept. of Fisheries we wanted to update the original First Nations' display in the Visitor's Centre at the Margaree Hatchery. We knew the important role Atlantic salmon played in the food, social, and ceremonial life of First Nations so we turned for advice to the late Charlie Dennis who, at that time, was executive director of the U'namaki Institute of Natural Resources. Charlie put us in touch with the appropriate people which resulted in the display you see there today. But he went even further and contacted Mary Francis, his aunt, and a well-known basket maker, to see if she could craft salmon for the display. Mary and her son Virick were up to the challenge. I think that it is especially symbolic that they used another iconic species of great significance to First Nations communities, Black Ash, to craft these fish. I had the good fortune to meet with Mary and Virick at their home in Eskasoni when I was writing my book on traditional arts, crafts and trades of Atlantic Canada. I asked Mary about the project and she told me that when Charlie first approached her she was initially reluctant but together she and Virick took on the challenge. She also told me that when they came to hang the salmon at the Visitors' Centre, after hanging the fish, the first thing the salmon did was to swing toward the river and she told me, "We took that as a good sign." Mary has since passed away but the salmon they crafted still face the Margaree and are a



testament not only to the species but also to the skilled hands of their makers. The significance and importance of Atlantic salmon cuts across cultures and has a long history. There are cave drawings of Atlantic salmon in France and the Atlantic salmon's scientific name, *Salmo salar*, is credited



to Roman troops who, when they were invading Britain, observed silvery fish leaping in the rivers and named them *salar*, or leaper, from the Latin *Saliio*— to leap. The Romans are also credited with introducing Christianity to Britain, but long before their arrival the native residents, the Celts, had their own beliefs in which Atlantic salmon played an important role.

The licence plate on my truck supports the Office of Gaelic Affairs in Nova Scotia. It was

one of a series which supports various groups, including an environment plate with a piping plover, First Nations and Acadian plates as well as one which supports local food production. In my case the licence plate proclaims that I am from Alba Nuah-Gaelic for New Scotland, and it also has the image of a leaping salmon on it. The Atlantic salmon is the symbol for Gaelic Affairs Nova Scotia and it was selected as a symbol because of the high regard it was held in the Celtic world. The Celts had a deep spirituality which has a history running back for centuries. They revered nature and attached special significance to features such as rocks, hills, springs and groves of trees—all were worshipped but they attached special significance to Atlantic salmon. Much of it was attached to the salmon's life cycle with their ability to move between two worlds—that of fresh water and salt water combined with the fact that they appeared in the rivers on a recurring basis, all held special fascination. Many will be familiar with the Celtic legend of Finn McCoul who caught, and ate, the salmon of knowledge and, as a result, gained all the knowledge in the world.



When you look at the state of Atlantic salmon stocks around the world you might be tempted to think we have lost our knowledge of what not only Atlantic salmon, but all of nature requires, a healthy environment. Global warming and climate change are only the latest threats.

As anglers we need to play a special role by raising awareness, not only of the fish but to also encourage the sharing of research, stimulate investment in conservation efforts and raise broad public knowledge of the crisis facing many populations of salmon. We need to recognize that collaborating and sharing knowledge is essential to learn how best to help salmon by drawing on science, Indigenous knowledge, and the experience of anglers, fishers, policy makers, resource managers and others working to conserve and protect salmon. While many efforts need to be directed at global threats often solutions require local action. By acting locally, our combined efforts can make a big difference and the Antigonish Rivers Association is an excellent example of a local group working together to help trout and salmon in Eastern Nova Scotia. I am always impressed by the ARA's work to conserve and enhance sport fish, and their habitat,

as well as your programs to improve access to sport fishing as well as introduce new anglers to the sport. Keep up the good work!

Compliments of the season to everyone, and all the best in 2023.

Photo credits 1. Redditt 2. Avon River 3. Historical Society 4. Government of Nova Scotia



*Ed. Don's books make excellent gifts and there is something for everyone in the latest*  
**With These Hands: Traditional Arts, Crafts and Trades of Atlantic Canada**

# adopt a stream

ARA Christmas Newsletter

Gulf Priority Rivers Project Update from Nova Scotia Salmon Association

For the past nearly 4 years, the Gulf Priorities Rivers Project has served as a touch stone for collaboration among local river associations and indigenous-led organizations to boost recovery planning and habitat restoration with Atlantic salmon and other aquatic species of concern, such as American eel and Atlantic sturgeon, focusing on the West and South Rivers of Antigonish and the Mabou and Margaree in Cape Breton.



Led by the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, and funded in part by the Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk, the Antigonish Rivers Association, Inverness South Anglers Association, Margaree Salmon Association, the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources and the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq - Mi'kmaw Conservation Group have been partners in this initiative which has resulted in significant habitat restoration, monitoring, capacity building, and increased appreciation for, and integration of, Mi'kmaw knowledge and values.

There have been many aspects to this project, and the river association partners, under the technical support and guidance of the NSSA (and its Adopt A Stream program) had four busy and productive years, completing important annual water temperature monitoring, watershed planning and high priority restoration projects.

Specific to the ARA, the Gulf Priority Rivers Project allowed for the hiring of year-round positions for the role of watershed stewardship coordinator and a field technician, contributed funds to the seasonal summer restoration crews and a number of large-scale bank stabilization and riparian restoration projects. Between 2019 and 2022, this joint project has provided \$234,000 to the ARA as well as \$8900 worth of scientific, field and other equipment including temperature loggers, a remote safety kit, laptop, tablet and GIS software licensing.

Through 2021 and the winter months of 2022, ARA's Allison White and Bruce Wheadon were tasked with completing the South River Watershed and Conservation Plan, which provided a detailed assessment of instream conditions within the South River and its tributaries. The South River Plan also provided ARA with a stepwise plan for implementing high priority restoration activities in 2022 and beyond.

This year, the ARA tackled the number one priority of this plan: restoring spawning and rearing habitat in Pinevale Brook. Accompanying this restoration work was the roll-out of a comprehensive instream monitoring project throughout the restoration site. The Pinevale Brook Monitoring Plan, completed by ARA, with direction from NSSA's Nicholas MacInnis, has allowed the ARA to not only restore an important tributary but also complete this work within the scope of a strong scientific context.







Among the habitat restoration work undertaken this year, three major bank stabilization projects were completed on the main South River to address significant streambank erosion to help maintain these important staging pools for Atlantic salmon. To ensure the long-term success of these projects and to help mitigate warming summer water temperatures, the ARA also planted over 3000 trees within the South River watershed.

The creation of a watershed management plan for the West River Antigonish, will be the last capacity-building piece of this current Gulf Rivers project. Funding has been secured to employ over the winter, Bruce, and Bailey Randall for the remainder of the 2022 fiscal year (ending March 2023). Bruce and Bailey will work under the guidance of the NSSA's team to complete this next major project for ARA. With two watershed management

plans completed, the ARA will be in strong position to continue completing meaningful restoration work in Antigonish for years to come.

Although the Gulf Priority Rivers Project will wrap-up in March 2023, the collaborative legacy of strengthened relationships among the partners will continue.

Amy Weston and Nick MacInnis



Quick update from Adopt A Stream -

This past year, the NSSA's Adopt A Stream program supported 21 on-the-ground, habitat restoration projects led by community groups including the ARA. The program provides, project funding, technical advice, training, and environmental permitting support.

To date, some 2.7 million square meters of stream habitat has been restored, and 800 km of fish passage re-established. Adopt A Stream is supported in large part by anglers through the NS Sport Fish Habitat Fund. For more info visit [www.nssalmon.ca](http://www.nssalmon.ca) and [www.adoptastream.ca](http://www.adoptastream.ca)



**Walking Between the Footsteps:** Maintaining the Eskape Anglers Legacy

Eskape Anglers 2021, Wayne Grant

*A tough if not impossible act to follow!*

I did not even try – When approached by the editor of the ARA to provide an article for the newsletter I immediately felt anxiety: what would I say, what would those reading think of what was penned? Then my thoughts turned to what a great opportunity this is to explain to the Atlantic Canada angling community how it came to be that I was fortunate enough to carry on the legacy (in name only) of Eskape Anglers.

Like many others, 20+ years of treks from my then home in Nova Scotia to Eskape Anglers at 33 Wentworth Drive, Riverview, NB combined with lengthy phone calls filled with plenty of laughter resulted in an immediate lightening of the load in my pocket where my wallet rested. This followed by a hearty thank you and prime fly-tying material would be enroute. Yes, I always bought three times more than planned, and yes, the wife was not going to be happy but that did not matter as dealing with Bryant was an experience not a requirement.

Our relationship, thankfully, was more than commercial as we constantly and jokingly discussed me buying his empire (as he called it). The conversation always ended with, "I will let you know when you need to cut the check".



"Check!", I said to Bryant, 'They don't even exist anymore.' This followed by a hearty, "See you next time."



**The Carter's Bug as tied by the man himself many will replicate few if any duplicate.**

Hook- Daichi 2110

Thread- Danville 210 Waxed Denier

Hair- Sun Bleached Deer

Hackle 2vRed Punjab Hen 3-5" 3 ½ Turns

Head Light Cahill Uni 8/0

Then in the Fall of 2020 after my thankfully now shorter trip over the bridge from my home in Charlottetown, the visit was a bit different. It was the same ole' Bryant but his tone was a bit more formal. As we entered The Shrine (no not the back room but the secret room adjacent to the left of the stairs as you left the shop) he said, "I told you when you would need to cut the check, it is time to cut the check".

Amazingly enough there was no shock, doubts, or confusion on what would happen next on my part. I was now at a point in my life that retirement or what they call retirement was on the horizon. We were stabilized in

Charlottetown and had the resources to accept the challenge. This I can assure you was a much easier decision on my part than Bryant's as he put his heart and soul into serving the angling community of Atlantic Canada.

Over the next six months into the early summer of 2021, I busily prepared the property, set up the product structure of the shop, (the market in PEI was completely different from that of New Brunswick's) and extracted as much advise as possible from the man himself on what it takes to not only create an environment that customers would enjoy but also an environment I would enjoy.

Fast Forward to December 2022 sitting at the counter looking around the shop, I reflect over the last 18 months. I feel very humbled and thankful for the wonderful opportunity I have been fortunate enough to be part of. The wonderful clientele who makes Eskape Anglers 2021 their shop of choice for "All things Fly Fishing", our wonderful

distributors such as Vision, Beulah, Darmor Flies and Tackle, Red Truck Fly Fishing Co. and many others which support us in having the quality products that Bryant had previously set the bar in expectations. I also reflect on the number of times this angling season that I recognized customers utilizing equipment we had provided (a most humbling experience), and I look at the positive comments provided by our customers. These things validate that we have made the right choice.

In closing, we at Eskape Anglers would like to thank the ARA for the opportunity to tell our story. We thank the wonderful customers of Eskape Anglers who support us. We accept that there is no way we could copy the experience Bryant provided but we hope that you appreciate our efforts to ensure Escape Anglers remains a household name in our community.

Wishing everyone a wonderful 2023 and looking forward to being a part of your angling experience.

Tight Lines, Wayne Grant



  
**Happy Holidays**





### *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 and on the international level the ASF needs our support.
2. A book that I thoroughly enjoyed (Thanks Darryl Murrant for the recommendation) is *Lost River; the Waters of Remembrance: A Memoir* by local author, Harry Thurston.
3. Travel restrictions have lifted and things are getting back to normal so a trip makes an excellent gift especially if you invite yourself along. I hear Norway is an affordable choice!
4. Some raffle entries in Matt Dort's online event which is a fundraiser for Tango2 research (<https://tango2research.org/about-tango2/>) give you some great prize choices. Watch for it on Facebook starting Feb.14. Someone I know won a great guided trip with Matt in last February's raffle! (Donations of raffle items can be to Matt made up to Feb.1)

5. This looks like a great new product. I use a bin and a piece of my old neoprenes so this looks like a step up: Simms Taco Wader Bag.



6. A great stocking stuffer; finger guards (Thanks, Ken!). I found these really useful especially with some of the textured fly lines and a full day of lake fishing. There are different models but the simple ones work great.

7. What do they need? A gift card from your favourite local fly shop is always appreciated and takes out the guess work.

8. A neck gaiter can solve lots of problems from sun protection to cold weather to hordes of blackflies. Buff made the original but there are lots of options for lots of conditions.



9. It is December and there is still some fly fishing left. A line that stays soft and resists coiling is a treat. Most of the major brands make a specific cold water fly line. Contact your local fly shop and I'm sure they can fix you up.



10. After a long session on your favourite river take a break and have a coffee and a snack. A gift certificate from one of our local cafes is a nice gift; perhaps the Tall & Small after a cold morning on the West, or if you're on the Margaree a stop at The Dancing Goat! (Leo recommends the lemon squares !)



Thank you to the contributors: Mark Dort, Bruce Wheadon, Tim Handforth, , Kris Hunter, Deirdre Green Amy Weston, Gerry Doucet, , Don MacLean, Wayne Grant, Nick MacInnis, and Andrew Lowles.

Jakob Lorefice photo

Anyone with ideas, flies, stories or other items for the Newsletter please contact The Editor. [djmacneil349@gmail.com](mailto:djmacneil349@gmail.com)

