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Trout Stocked: 349,900

2016 Spring—One of the Greatest on the Lehigh

This has been a phenomenal spring for our Lehigh River trout fishery. The quality and size of the fish stocked was excellent—17” brown trout average, 12-15” rainbows all with excellent colors and fin quality. More than twenty 20”+ trout associated with memorials or Lunkerfest. The river levels and weather were ideal for stocking on each stocking date. There were dozens of you who came out to help us stock the river and it is always a great social experience working with our Lehigh River friends during these events. So many of you have been coming out for many years and we are delighted to see so many new faces as well. Please go to our facebook page and look for the stocking videos for the best possible review of those events. The LRSA was honored again this year to be able to assist in memorials for loved ones where family members released trophy sized trout at a river side memorial. Those in memoriam we honored this year were:

Zachary A. Paules (23), Joe Kenzakoski Jr. (72), George Thompson, Lee Zellner (55) and Samantha Sfarra (22).

6th Annual Lunkerfest 2016 - SUCCESS!

The 6th annual Lunkerfest trout fishing contest was held on May 21st with ideal river conditions, 58 deg F, normal flows and slightly overcast skies. 175 contestants fished the 1 mile stretch from Lizard Creek through to the islands below the East Penn boat ramp area pool. The LRSA trout stocked for the event included: 400 17” browns and rainbows (50/50 split), 1-29” rainbow, 3-28” rainbows, 1-27” rainbow, 4-21” brown, 7-20” brown and 2-19” browns. There were 70 winners and prizes for all. Many thanks to prize sponsors and contestants. The winners in order were: Craig Mangold (28.3”), Paul Maricharek (24”), Chris Fox (21.3”), Mike Bianchi (20.8”), James Marion (20.8”), Bob Weller (20”), Matt Moyle (20”), James Stauffer (19.3”), Victor Vasquez (19”), Jesse Lapera (18.8”), Greg Kovach (18.8”), Clint Schafer (18.8”), Farren Frable (18.8”), Dale Dickey (18.5”), Chris Krystopoa (18.5”), Mark Bollinger (18.5”), Ann Messick (18.3”), Nate Hahn (18.3”), Joe Burns (18”), Nick Gower (18”), Justin Santee (18”), Richard Callahan (18”), Shawn Hutchison (18”), Ryan Scott (18”), Kevin Strunk (18”), Kevin Miller (17.8”), Bob Mauser (17.5”), Jim Sullivan (17.5”), Tim Solewej (17.5”), Kenny Sutton (17.5”), Don Roth (17.3”), Matt Burns (17.3”), Paul Koutch (17.3”), Josh Miller (17.3”), Chris Davis (17”), David Lucykanish (17”), Shane Bedell (17”), Dale Beck (16.8”), Cheryl Krystopoa (16.8”), Tommy Hynoski (16.8”), Tyler Rodgers (16.8”), Andy Rodgers (16.8”), Jason Bristow (16.8”), Chris Kerstetter (16.3”), Stephan Miller (16.5”), Chris Collings (16.5”), Jim Hummel (16.3”), Keez Kerstetter (16.3”), Galen Bollinger (16.3”), Chase DeLuca (16.3”), Chuck Kowalchick (16”), Frank Lukitsch (16”), Mike Shupp (16”), Josh Agosto (16”), Jamie Hawley (16”), Brad Hendrickson (15.8”), Jarrett Rodgers (15.5”), Greg Berry (15.3”), Brandon Behler (15.3”), Fred Foster (15”), Paul Troutman (15”), Garrett Bollinger (14.8”), Michael Behrens (14.5”), Nate Vetesy (14.3”), Kyle Kendall (14”), Chris Fox (13.8”), Miguel Ortiz (13.4”), Jeff Strohl (13”), Quin Horn (12.8”). The LRSA expended $5,345 to purchase the trout and recovered about $5,500 in revenues so we were happy to more than break even. Many fish were measured and released unharmed! Kids really enjoyed the 12” co-op rainbow pool. The river continues to fish great to this day (pic at right) with trophy fish still adding great excitement to the Lehigh trout fishery!
Lehigh River Watch
Issue 64, June 2016

Monthly Meeting Location—Meetings now held at Sliders Pub in Schnecksville, 46650 Main St. (Rt 309). 610-769-4004. Meetings 7–9 pm the last Tuesday of each month. Please visit us, we would like to meet you and get your input!

LRSA stocks trout in four main areas along the 29 miles of river between Northampton and Jim Thorpe. A listing of most popular spots are:

Jim Thorpe—use the train station parking lot where the rafters put in (it is just below the 903 bridge). Or, you can walk up river a bit. Also try Glen Onoko—follow 903 over the river and stay left into the park. There is a great trout pool a short walk from the parking lot, or you can walk or ride a bike upstream into the gorge. Park Bench, Bear Creek trib area is also very good.

Packerton—pull off 209 where the road dips down steeply between Lehighton and Jim Thorpe. You can park and walk straight back to the river, lots of good access there. Head down river about 100 yards to pump house and you will find a riffle with a deep pool behind it.

Lehighton—make a right off of 209 at Dunder’s Beverages and take the road all the way back to the rocky beach near the river. Or, drive down stream on the access road that runs parallel to route 209 and walk to.

Parryville—pull off route 248 where the road dips down steeply between Lehighton and Jim Thorpe. You can park and walk straight back to the river, lots of good access there. Head down river about 100 yards to pump house and you will find a riffle with a deep pool behind it.

Walnutport—head into Walnutport and Canal Park on the east side of the river just below the Main Street Bridge. Head down to the pavilion (about 1/4 mile downstream) and walk to the river. The canal runs about one mile down to Bentch Creek. You will find many good pools along the way.

Triechlers—heading north on Route 145, take a right onto Cove Road before you get to the bridge. Drive down and park under the bridge. Fish there or head up stream to the fantastic pool just below the old dam.

Northampton—fish below the dam where Route 329 crosses the Lehigh. Anywhere from the dam down to the pavilion area is a good area for fishing.

Notes about Water Quality (WQ):
1. Tint predictor test in the range 1-40 Fe units indicates clear water.
2. Specific Conductance is a measure of how much stuff is dissolved in the water. Low numbers indicate cleaner water. Poor water has 4-6 micro-siemens/cm.
3. Low river levels are desired, the more for drinking water at 35ppm. Normal run off is within the river from agricultural runoff, town, farms, Wallace Creek, etc.
4. Trout predare dissolved oxygen (DO) levels above 5ppm. When water below 3ppm, Varies with algae photosynthesis and rapids.
5. The pH is a measure of how acidic or basic the water is. Normal water is the best and has a pH of 7.0. Varies with algae photosynthesis.

Please renew your sponsorship, form enclosed for your convenience, or join on-line at www.LRSA.org

Ryan Scott with one of his many Lehigh trout Facebook posts, keep them coming Ryan!
Czech Nymphing
By John Mosovsky

I’m a nymphing maniac with an abnormally uncontrollable desire to catch trout under the surface of the water where they spend 90% of their feeding time. Don’t get me wrong, my heart skips a beat as fast as the next guy when a trout takes my dry fly off the surface. And the Lehigh does have its share of great hatches. But my fishing schedule usually doesn’t match the hatch schedule. And even though I enjoy communing with nature, my priority is to catch fish. Hence my maniacal focus on nymphing.

The tight line (or high sticking) style of nymphing was first described in Joe Humphreys’ Trout Tactics book published in 1981. Joe and his mentor George Harvey taught fly fishing at Penn State for decades and many consider them to be two of the greatest fly fishermen that ever held a rod. Their tight line technique has seen a revival in the USA as the Czech style of nymphing. And while the Czech style doesn’t emphasize the tuck cast as much as Humphreys and Harvey, it is very similar in many respects.

Czech nymphing is a simple technique for getting flies near the bottom of the river where most nymphs are consumed by trout. It is a technique that is “close up and personal” and is best suited for fast water and swift currents. Consequently, it is more physically (and somewhat more mentally) demanding than most other fly fishing techniques, but when mastered, can be very productive and rewarding (especially when nothing is hatching). The technique works well for targeting fish in swift water seams, so long rods that can reach out over currents are best suited for minimizing drag. Drag is just as important underwater as it is on the surface and because we can’t see our flies underwater it is hard to detect and control.

My nymphing rod is a Cabela’s CZN Series 11 foot, 4 weight and is a good fit for the Lehigh. There are many good “Euro” nymphing rods on the market. The reel is nothing special but provides good overall balance - important since the rod hand is extended outward in an effort to keep line and leader off the water. Since the fly line is not on the water when performing the technique, any general purpose floating line will work. I do however use a special RIO Euro Nymph Fly Line that has a very small core diameter which provides excellent sensitivity - but I can’t cast a dry fly with it. That’s why I often carry two rods.

The leader should be 2-3 feet longer than the rod. I prefer to build leaders with fluorocarbon rather than monofilament because it is denser, cuts through the water better, handles abrasion better, and is less visible than mono. I usually tie double surgeon’s knots for the leader but for better action, I prefer non-slip mono loops for tying on the flies. Umpqua makes a nice 3X (13 lb.) bi-color fluorescent sighter (indicator) material. My tippets are 3X - 5X and tippet rings are great for getting back into action after tippet breaking snags. I like to pre-tie tippet rigs and store them in an Orvis Dropper Rig Fly Box. It saves time on the river that would otherwise be used for tying all those knots.

I don’t use spit shot because it interferes with detecting strikes. If you cast appropriately, you don’t need split shot to get to the bottom (unless you’re fishing deep holes). Tungsten beads and lead wrapped flies tied on jig hooks are the way to go. My favorite Lehigh nymph patterns are Frenchie, Prince, Pheasant Tail, Caddis Pupa, Stone Fly, and rubber leg nymphs. If I need additional weight, I’ll tie Tungsten beads and lead wrapped flies tied on jig hooks and store them in an Orvis Dropper Rig Fly Box. It saves time on the river that would otherwise be used for tying all those knots.

The technique is all about fly presentation and requires direct contact with the flies at all times in order to see or feel the strike. Here are the basics for performing the technique:

- Feed out the leader and let your flies dangle downstream. Only a foot or two of fly line should extend beyond the tip of the rod.
- Target a seam and reach out over the current.
- Attempt an upstream lob cast.
- After the cast, pause for a couple seconds to allow the flies to get to the bottom.
- After the pause, straighten the leader by lifting the rod, but try to keep the rod parallel to the water surface as much as possible otherwise drag will occur.
- Keep reaching out over the current to target the seam, trying to keep the rod tip perpendicular to the drifting fly/leader in the seam.
- Lead the flies downstream as fast as or just slightly faster than the current.
- As you lead the flies, try to keep a tight line to the flies. Sometimes you can feel the flies “ticking” on the bottom if you properly combine how fast you lead the flies with how high you raise your rod, which depends upon water depth and how fast the current is.
- Watch the sighter for the slightest pause or jump indicating a strike. Often times you can feel a subtle strike.
- Stay in contact with the flies as they float past you and rise towards the surface downstream. I’ve experienced many strikes as the flies rise from the bottom imitating emergence.
- Once the flies reach the surface, repeat the process with another upstream lob cast.

The technique is difficult to describe on paper, but if you google Czech Nymphing Videos you’ll get thousands of hits that can help. The best book out there on the technique is Dynamic Nymphing by George Daniel.

The technique works well on the Lehigh in riffles and runs. I’m always amazed to find feeding trout in very swift water. They take advantage of all the nooks and crannies and the slower currents on the bottom that we sometimes neglect to consider. That’s why Czech nymphing can be so successful! I hope you’ll give it a try.
What a great spring for fishing. The water levels and temperatures have been ideal. The fish we stocked were large and healthy. There were plenty of holdovers from last year due to the mild winter and the bug hatches were prolific.

As you can see by the pictures posted here and on our Facebook page and website, there are plenty of LRSA members catching lots of nice trout. The Hendrickson, Sulfur, Blue Winged Olive Mayfly and Caddis hatches were heavy and the trout were eager to come to the surface for naturals and artificials.

The LRSA / PA Fish and Boat Coop Nursery completed its first year successfully. To summarize: the construction of the holding cage and docks were completed in March 2015 by many LRSA members, (1000) 3 inch rainbow fingerlings were delivered by Fish and Boat to Gyory’s Pond in Slatington in June 2015, the trout grew approximately 1 inch per month for 10 months at a cost of $1 per trout in food, in April (100) 12 inch nursery rainbows were stocked in Gyory’s pond for a fishing contest and to supply hold overs for next year, (5) 25 inch brown and rainbow trout were caught and transported to the Lehigh along with (800) 12-14 inch coop nursery rainbows that same day between Walnutport and Treichlers, the last (100) rainbows were placed in the kids pool at Lunkerfest where 30 were caught and the rest stocked in the Lehigh at the end of the day.

I think the coop nursery was a big success. It provides quality supplemental trout for a fraction of the commercial price. We plan to continue to raise another (1000) trout next year and we plan on doubling the amount in 2018.

Another newly implemented program, that was researched and developed by LRSA member John Berry, is the Whitlock Vibert Box Hatchery. A secluded small spring creek was selected near the Lehigh River in Rockdale for the hatchery site. Approval from Fish and Boat was granted. Fishing guide Paul Davidson completed the plumbing work by converting an old freezer into a holding tank through which creek water was piped. An internal baffle system was set up and the 10 Whitlock Vibert Boxes were placed in the freezer with the running water flowing through the boxes. 500 eyed trout eggs were placed in each box for a total of 5000 fertilized eggs that were purchased for $180 from Big Brown hatchery.
Within a week, the yolk sack fry were swimming in the hatchery and a few weeks later they swam out as swim up fry into the small creek and eventually into the Lehigh. According to Dr. Fred Eales of Wyoming who developed the freezer incubator concept, the success rate of swim up fry surviving to adult size trout is 3-5%. This means approximately 200 adult size trout in the Lehigh from this one box. We hope to expand this idea to multiple sites. If anyone wants to try their hand at hatching trout and knows of an accessible small creek please contact me.

Finally, I want to mention a patient of mine George Condash of Whitehall for his fly fishing stories, knowledge, flies and materials that he has given me over the years. He is unable to fish anymore due to his failing eyesight but his passion for the sport is still alive and well. Thanks George!

The LRSA is providing great fishing opportunities on the Lehigh by finding more ways to stock more trout. And as the fishing equation states More Members = More Fish. Let’s keep growing.

Fishing Poetry—Submitted by Susan Weaver

Exit 37B
by Richard Jordan

The house stood near a widening of the creek. It was gray, small, maybe fifty feet back from the bulrush bed where pearl dace glittered when the sun climbed high. A freeway overpass now casts its shadow across that place. The bank is choked with loosestrife. But I knew a woman who lived there twenty years ago. I trimmed her forsythia, planted peas & later worked my line along a riffle on a day when brook trout broke the surface at the suggestion of a damselfly. We breaded the pink fillets: cornmeal, salt, a drizzle or two of ale & they tasted delicious, out there in the open. Like spring, we thought, like nothing you could buy.

Susan Weaver is Development Director, Allentown Public Theatre. Richard Jordan lives in the Nashoba Valley in Eastern Massachusetts, not far from the Nashua and Squannacook Rivers. There, and in nearby streams, he fishes and observes. This poem first appeared in the journal, “Canary.” It is reprinted with his permission.
Membership Information — by Gary Klein

There still has been a lot of confusion as to why some people received only renew apps. and raffle tickets. We received numerous questions as to why non-paid friends and others were getting newsletters and specifically Spring stocking info. After questioning membership on how they felt it was determined that we would NO LONGER send Newsletters containing stocking information to NON_PAID people, as sharing this info would be unfair to paid sponsors/members.

Additionally, some members are confused about the LRSA membership period. LRSA membership year runs from October 1 to September 31 of the following year. We use this cycle to allow LRSA to get a start on the fund raising necessary to estimate dollar amount we can spend on fish for following year fish purchase taking advantage of discounts given to us by our fish supplier if paid PRIOR to JAN. 1st.

As we no longer Fall stock, this gives us Oct.-Dec to get a better idea on amount of money we can use for fish. Anyone who renews after August 1st will be added to following year membership roll and get all NLs for that year. All paid members from 2016 will get last NL of year which normally goes out Late Dec./earl Jan. First newsletter of year with stocking info goes out at end of March so as to get info out to ALL paid members in time. That gives ALL members ALMOST SEVEN(7) MONTHS to get renewed in time for stocking info.

We have also been asked: Why do I continue to get renew/ join appl. with every newsletter even though I am a paid member? These mailings are bulk mailings and they are sent in by printer. What we probably should do is add as part of newsletter or Not at all till Fall/Winter newsletter. I hope this clears up ALL concerns from everyone. If you have ANY further questions please feel free to contact me—(Gary) @ gdklein58@gmail.com or LRSA. Thank you for your continued support.

Spring Drawing Winners!
Wow, spring is upon us already and I’m happy to say that I only have one Christmas decoration left to put away. Life and time seem to move along pretty quickly these days. I often feel like I have too much to do and too little time to do it. In recognition of this reality, I vow to forgo some lawn care obsessions this spring and go fishing before I find myself saying “wow, fall is here already! I waited all winter to go fishing and I’m ready and determined to make the most of this particular spring.

My Inspiration: Seeing a lot of zombie people at my part-time job. I work at a tax office in Tamaqua between January and mid-April. Many of my clients leave me with the impression that they are letting their lives smother them. I’d have to say that some of them definitely are! They walk the earth in a trance full of work related worries, self-imposed life pressures, and the hope that there is a minute chance they will get on their eleven year-old’s calendar somewhere between homework, soccer practice, and karate lessons.

I think that seeing people in a self-imposed smothered state inspires me, because I can think of ways that I am just as guilty. I’ve decided that for my penance, I am going to lighten the burden of chores, projects, and other self-defeating preoccupations that I normally heap on myself at this time of year. These include my getting ready for spring and getting ready for summer sets of self-punishing rituals. Instead, I intend to add a few extra fishing trips to my schedule as a reward for faithfully accomplishing all of the non-fun activities on my calendar.

I recently made the most of an opportunity to cut school on some lawn chores and fished the delayed harvest section of Nescopeck creek. I also tried the “anything goes” section of Mahoning Creek in early April. Both places fished well for me. The trout were small though and didn’t inspire me to make any encore trips to either location.

I was disappointed to see that Mahoning Creek not only functions as a local fishery, but it also seems to be a municipal dump of sorts. There were plenty of bait containers, cigarette butts, and aluminum cans deposited along the trails. As if a pair of “dirt-bag” Hansel and Gretel’s had left a trail to find their way home after they fished. Or, maybe they left “the trail of trash” so others could find the spots where the PFBC deposited its bounty of pan sized trout. Much of that stuff will be headed toward the Lehigh with a good rain; despite my frustrated efforts to bring some of it home with me.

My time on Mahoning creek did get me to thinking about the Lehigh and bigger trout. It also convinced me to take a trash bag with me whenever I go fishing. I believe that as anglers and sportsmen, we have a responsibility to our fisheries. It’s wise to preserve and improve them so that they will continue to preserve and improve us. It is unfortunate that many of our memories from the fields and streams of Northeastern Pennsylvania are punctuated with images of garbage.

On a lighter note: Our members have been talking about the good Quill Gordon hatches that came off in March and the nice holdover fish that they have been catching since: both rainbows and browns. That’s exciting news because it means the trout the L.R.S.A. puts in the river are coming out of winter fat and healthy. With this in mind, I decided to ply the big water for big L.R.S.A. rewards while overcoming misplaced feelings about my grass being too long. I was happily rewarded for my efforts on both occasions. I had nice luck using Hendrickson wets and muddlers. I even enjoyed good top-water action with some of the browns that have been starring in our stocking videos.

I wish all of you luck in “making” the time to appreciate the finer things in life. Like taking a child fishing for example. Shared fishing trips can bring a sense of balance to lives that are continually filled with more but not necessarily better things to do.
LRSA Conservation Program Update—Matt MacConnell

One of the water quality monitors has been in the Lehigh since April 18th in Slatington area (near the Pillars about 1 mile below the Main St. bridge). The temperature profile downloaded from the LRSA Internet webpage shows an average 57.7 deg F between April and mid June and a brief high temp on May 28th at 75F. The trout prefer the cool temperatures and the periods of high temperature may stress the fish. However there are spring seeps along the river that provide thermal refuge and the east side of the river is a bit cooler from the influence of Pohopoco Creek upstream.

The same water quality probe also reports pH and dissolved oxygen as reported below. It is interesting to see that the oxygen and pH cycles oscillate each day together. This is due to the photosynthesis of river algae consuming CO2 (carbonic acid) and producing pure oxygen. We also see that as depth increases these swings attenuate. You can see the FEW white water release level increases as well in the depth data.

The LRSA conducts an annual tributary survey and the 2016 survey will take place shortly in June. The bar graph at left plots the specific conductance of each trib as well as the Lehigh Main stem in a number of locations. The specific conductance is a measure of how much dissolved material there is in the water and is therefore a measure of the water purity. We can see that the Coplay has the biggest issue, nearly equal to that of the Lausanne tunnel mine drainage site. Reasons for this should be evaluated. The cleanest tribs, which have cleaner values than the Lehigh River itself include: Lizard, Mauch Chunk and Nesquehoning Creeks.

The LRSA is conducting iron and aluminum metals analysis at the Lausanne Tunnel and Buck Mountain mine drainage sites and will be reporting on this in the next newsletter.
Trout Tagging Results for 2016 To-Date—Karly Imdorf, Gary Klein

There were 319 fish were tagged and released in 2016. The majority, 250, were raised at the LRSA cooperative nursery. 21 have been reported as of 6/7/16. A few observations have been made from the results obtained, among which:

- We now have some direct evidence of holdovers from 2015 with 2 fish reported before our first 2016 stocking date
- A few have traveled miles from stocking locations, such as from the Pennsylvania Turnpike Bridge to Jim Thorpe.

14 out of the 21 tagged fish reported so far this year were reported as released. We thank these anglers and this is a marked increase from last year. Releasing tagged fish helps maintain the population of fish we are hoping to track into the next season. LRSA appreciates the donation from Lehigh Valley Sierra Club for the tags and equipment used in the tagging studies.

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**LRSA Board of Directors:**
- Vincent Spaits
- Tom Gyory, DMD
- Greg Gliwa
- Karl Imdorf
- Matt MacConnell, P.E.
- Jim Deebel
- Chuck Morgenstern
- Steve Chuckra
- Gary Klein

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- **Vice President:** Vince Spaits, 215-272-3175
- **Treasurer:** Tom Gyory, 610-730-9359
- **Merchandise:** Chuck Morgenstern, 610-216-4022
- **Secretary:** Steve Chuckra
- **Newsletter Editor:** Matt MacConnell

**In Memoriam**—LRSA Founder, Ted Miller

**If you shop Amazon, please shop smile.amazon.com and designate LRSA to receive a portion of the sale be donated to our non profit organization.**

**LRSA Board members at Lunkerfest joined by State Rep Doyle Heffley. From left Greg Gliwa, Tom Gyory, Gary Klein, Doyle Heffley, Steve Chuckra, Chuck Morgenstern, Matt MacConnell and Vince Spaits (board members not pictured are Karl Imdorf and Jim Deebel)**

**Seventh Annual LRSA Sponsorship Award**

**Presented to Paul Davidson**

In appreciation for many years of support to the Lehigh River Stocking Association

May 2016

This year LRSA is honoring Paul Davidson with the Sponsorship plaque. Paul is owner of Skinner’s Lehigh River Guide Service and has been a big help and advocate for our organization for many years. Thank you Paul! At left Paul gets some help from his partner, Nellie, while fishing the Lehigh.