



LEHIGH RIVER STOCKING ASSOCIATION

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The Lehigh River Report

The Voice of the Lehigh River Stocking Association

Spring Stocking Schedule and Plan

LRSA's Running Total:

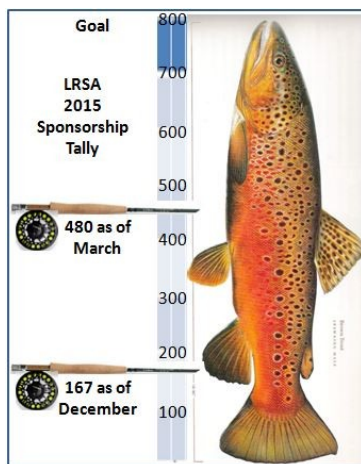
Trout Stocked:
338,500

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form enclosed for your convenience,
or join on-line at
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Sunday April 12th— Meet at 9am in Northampton at the Pavilion parking area on Canal Street (about 1 mile below the 329 bridge). Stocking points will include the stretch to the Lafarge Dam, below the dam, Laurys Station at pull over (shale ledges), Treichlers, points along the D&L trail on west side of river including at the tail out below the three sections of fast water, the old blown out dam, the cliffs, and then across the Main St Bridge to the Walnutport boat ramp, the pavilion just below the boat ramp, then up to Slatington behind Szokes Bros and finishing up at the boat ramp below the 873 bridge around 11:30 to 12:30. We will be releasing four 20" trophy browns at the 873 bridge in memory of four sponsors who passed recently. RIP: Lee Zellner (55), Joe Kenzakoski (72), Bob Erle, Jr (55) and Zachary Paules (23).

Saturday April 18th— Meet at 9am at the Glen Onoko beach area. Stocking will proceed down river with stops at Nesquehoning Bridge, Jim Thorpe beach (train station parking lot), Packerton dip straight back to river and down behind Kovatch's. Then back on 209 and to Dunbar's beach (behind Dunbar's beverage), back to 209 and down to Parryville with stops at the Pohopoco confluence, under turnpike bridge and behind Rock Hill Shack. Then down to Bowmanstown with stops below 895 bridge, then down Riverview Rd to Lizard Creek confluence, the East Penn pool (site of Lunkerfest) with multiple stops down along the D&L trail on the west side of the river finishing opposite the Horseshoe (Delaware Ave).

Fish Description — The stocking truck on each of the stocking days will contain 900 lbs of brown and 900 lbs of rainbow trout in the 12-15 inch class. The cost of the trout in each truck is about \$8,000. We will distribute trout evenly between the stocking points noted.

Lunkerfest A Unique Trout Fishing Event

By Vince Spaits

Fishing the big water of the Lehigh offers many unique challenges and even more opportunities. We have spoken to it many times. If the person reading this newsletter right now is a veteran Lehigh angler then you understand....if on the other hand, you have yet to fish the river, give it a try as soon as you can. Fishing for trout on this big river is second to none in eastern Pennsylvania and our premier event "Lunkerfest" offers truly unique fishing.

Having grown up locally I cut my teeth fishing many of the smaller streams around the area. I lived very close to the Coplay Creek and fished it almost daily or so it seemed. My good friend Tim and I couldn't wait to get to the creek when school ended for the day. In the summer we would walk the railroad tracks and fish. From Twin Lakes Golf Course all the way down to Darktown where the creek dumped into the Lehigh and every place in between.

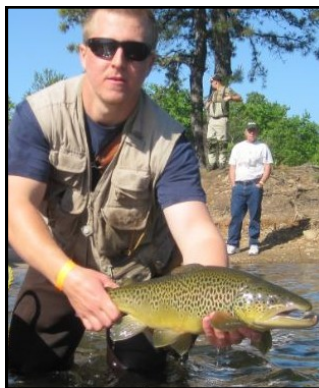
We knew it like the back of our hands...it was the same to us as the Mississippi River was to Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. I remember sneaking up on my hands and knees to the undercut banks and dangling my rod tip and #10 eagle claw snelled hook with a garden worm over the grass and into the water. Waiting for the distinctive tap, set the hook and hopefully catching a 9 inch brown. Those trout were spooky, the water usually low and clear. It was here I learned of the importance of catch and release.

As I grew older and started driving, I was off to other area streams. The Jordan had nice water, I learned to fly fish at the "stretch" on the Little Le-



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Cont'd on Page 4



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 to Park Bench, Bear Creek trib area is also very good.

Packerton—pull off 209 where the road dips down steeply between Lehigh 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.

Lehigh—Make a right off of 209 at Dunbar'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 in.

Parryville—Pull off route 248 at the Rock Hill Cement Company and park at the Canal Park area. The Pohopoco Creek confluence with the Lehigh provides very good, cold, conditions for trout. The Pohopoco holds fish too, particularly below the dam.

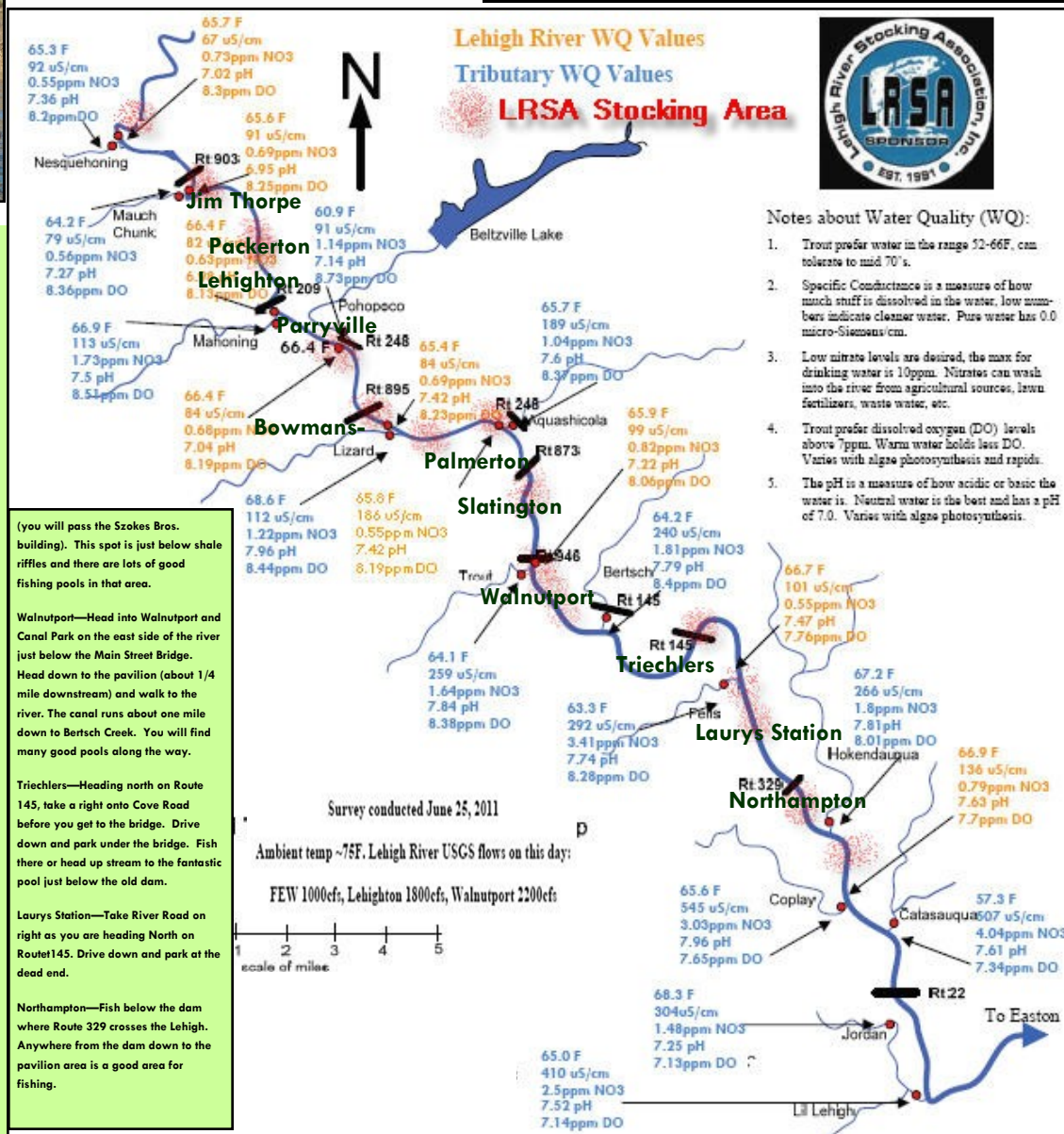
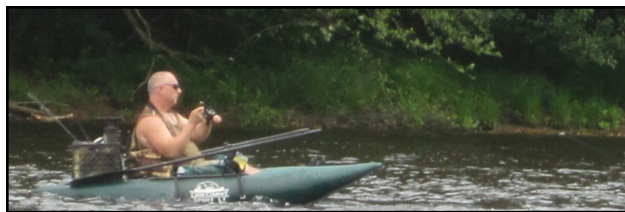
Bowmantown—Fishing is good above or below the Route 895 bridge. You can park under the bridge. Or, drive down to the new boat ramp about 1/2 mile south of Lizard Creek, on west side of river: we call the large pool the "Musky Pool" and it is where we hold Lunkefest.

Palmerton—Head south on 248 and take the Palmerton exit. Take the second dirt road to the right and head down to the "horseshoe." The river forms a big bend in that area and there is a pool just below the rapids.

Slatington—Heading east on 248, take a right over the 873 bridge and you will see Slatington Fabricators on your left. You can find a place to park along the road at that point and walk-in access to the river

Monthly Meeting Location—

Market Café, Wegmans, 3900 West Tilghman St. Allentown.
Meeting time from 7:00 to about 9:00 pm the last Tuesday of each month. We encourage our sponsors to come visit us at one or more meetings, we would love to get your input!



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EXPLORE THE LEHIGH FISHING THE CEMENTON DAM AREA

By Vince Spaits

A popular place to fish is the Cementon or Lafarge Dam. Being easy to find and access makes this one of the places that sees the more fishing pressure, especially the boil below the dam. Although it is fished hard

it remains a top pick for many anglers and is especially productive in early season. We typically stock in 4 areas of this run as indicated on the map.

The section we will discuss runs approximately 3/4 mile downstream from the dam and ends at the confluence of the Hokendauqua Creek. You can access the dam from either side of the river. On route 329 directly across the street from Willies Bait Shop you find parking near the gate. A short walk will put you at the dam on the west bank of the river. Cross over the bridge and make a right on Canal Street and you will find a small parking area. This will get you to the east side of the dam. Continue down Canal St. and you can park near the small pavilion and ball fields and wade fish this section of the river. Continue down further and there is another small parking area, this is where the Hockey Creek enters the Lehigh.

Fishing the falls can be exciting but please practice good common sense and respect the power of the water. **The plunge pool is deep and the hydraulic is very powerful.** It is not advised to ever walk across the dam itself or enter the water close the hydraulic even in the lowest of water conditions. This area fishes best slow and deep. Live bait is an excellent choice for this area as are hard baits and spinners. Focus on the areas that tail out of the highest velocity water and the seams that can be found all along the boil. It is these areas that the trout will seek as a place where less energy needs to be spent to stay in the con-

veyor of food that the dam spillway creates. There are many species of fish in this well oxygenated water so there is plenty of forage. Most anglers spend a great deal of time near the boil, I target further downstream. The water is still deep and fast however it feels less pressure and I have had better luck further downstream from the main boil.

Working downstream you will find fairly swift water that averages 3- 4 foot deep. Look for pockets and rock eddies that will hold trout. This area can be waded but I advise using a staff when you do. As you approach the confluence the river widens and shallows. Keep in mind the Hockey is state stocked and the trout will migrate in and out of the main stem of the river. This is a great area to head to if you are pressed for time. You can get to this section quickly and the walks are short and relatively easy. You can fish all three of these areas in a short time and is a great after work spot to hit early season.

There is one more place in this run that warrants to be mentioned. For this spot you can park at Saylor Park near the Coplay Community swimming

pool. Walk past the old kiln stacks from the country's first Portland Cement Company and follow the trail to the river. Walk upstream about 100 yards. You will be high above the river. Below you is a very deep long pool. In fact this was the big swimming hole back in the day and is still used

by many on hot summer days. You will need to search for a decent place to get down to the river. If you are floating, it may be a place you choose to anchor down for a period of time. Although not your typical trout water they are in here.

This is a great place to live line large minnows. If there is no trout action you can expect action from other species. I have caught big Smallmouth, Carp, small Muskie, Eel, Fallfish and Channel Catfish in this section. I have observed large Muskie just cruising in the sun and have seen dinner plate sized Snapping Turtles poke their heads through the surface film for a breath. Overall it is a pretty cool place on the river. Check it out when you can!



"This area fishes best slow and deep. Live bait is an excellent choice for this area as are hard baits and spinners."



LRSA Stocking at dam in Northampton

**Lunkerfest—Continued from Page 1**

high and ventured to the Monocacy, the Hockey, Cedar, Saucon and many others. I attended college in Western Pa. and fished a number of streams out there as well (Slippery Rock Creek being my favorite) I would occasionally fish the Lehigh mostly at the behest of my Dad who had his share of luck fishing there and was convinced that this river was getting better all the time....and it was.

Along at that time come a few groups, who decide to stock the river with adult trout, Pete Nestor, Tri Boro and the LRSA. And now the river had a population of trout that was getting bigger every year. We experienced hold-over and you could catch trout just about anytime of the year. The water quality and access improved, we found wild trout from the tribs. In places that was called bass water, the rail trail was just in the planning stages as a bold new idea. **The fish were bigger and badder...they got pissed when you hooked them and fought their way free more often than any other place I fished. This river was getting to be a pretty cool place to fish.**

Jump forward to today. Thanks to the tireless work of many people and the efforts of multiple groups and most significantly the LRSA and its sponsors the river continues to improve and holds great future promise. We must however, stay the course and continue to push on. Much has been accomplished yet there is much yet to do.

It is a blast to catch trout anywhere in any water. Remembering back to those days spent on the Coplay Creek, flipping a 15 foot cast to the opposing bank and hooking a 9 inch brownie, my heart raced ...it was great. Fishing the upper Jordan and getting into an nice 12 inch trout after making a perfect cast was awesome and I remember those fish well....But setting up on a healthy 17 inch Brown on a 90 foot cast in that 6 foot deep run is second to

none. Unlike the smaller water these fish have some room to run and some current to swim with. There are boulders, not rocks in some of those holes and they don't mind swimming around them. More than once I had to almost do the old "A River Runs Through It" thing to keep a nice trout on the line. There are places you can fish that you are almost for sure going to get a hit, the challenge is not that as much as it is can you hold the fish once you do? And this is the difference.....this is what will get you addicted, this is why we fish the river. It is all good, every place has its merits. It's just that with limited time to fish you need to get the maximum rush per hour and in my minds eye that is the Lehigh River.

There are plenty of contest and derbies, plenty of stockings and meat markets you can attend as a fishermen. There is only one Lunkerfest. What is the difference you ask? Some answers to that follow

The fish are bigger on average with many real trophy size fish.

Like mentioned above these fish have room to run. The Lunkerfest is held in a large deep run with depths to 15 feet. You will have a battle on your hands if you hook one of the big boys with no guarantees that it sees the net.

This years expanded area will provide everyone with more room

We are expanding the stocked area from the confluence of Lizard down to the side channel of the first island. This will effectively widen the area and types of water you can fish

The prizes are great and plentiful

We will have many great

prizes again this year. From wildlife prints, gear and trips to deals on taxi-dermy.

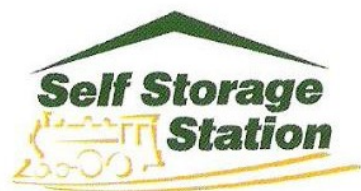
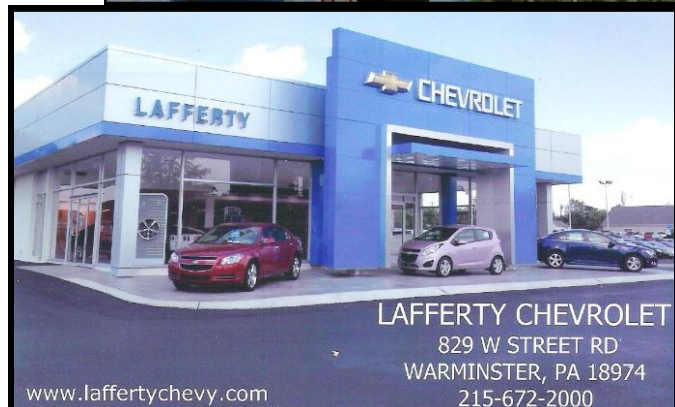
Spend the day,

With plenty of parking, food, restrooms and beautiful scenery it is a great way to spend the day.

You are fishing with others that also have a vested interest in the Lehigh.

It is a great place to learn. Talk to others and share stories, places and techniques to help you get more out of the Lehigh Trout Fishery. Many of the anglers who are at Lunkerfest are some of the best I know on the river. There are experts fishing and on the banks and this is a great venue to learn more.

I hope to see you at Lunkerfest this year so you to can experience the area's best and



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Lessons Learned— By Steve Chuckra

With the prospect of nice weather just around the corner, I find myself thinking about trout fishing and the contents of my fly boxes. I depleted my inventory of favorites last season and feel an anxious need to restock. The question is what to restock with? Of course, replacing time-tested favorites is top priority. Some of my Lehigh selections include hendricksons, green drakes, and red and ginger colored quill patterns. I prefer sizes 10-12 for the Lehigh, wets and dries. Having a few muddlers handy is never a bad idea either. However, I find myself in the pre-season mode of thinking about lessons learned and plan to add some new feathery products to my arsenal and possibly mothball items that always seem to be in the way. Regardless of your tactical preferences (fly fish or spin), mustering out some of your less productive or never used flies and lures, will make room for what might become a new favorite. This advice also applies to old CD's, socks, and deadbeat-friends.

I attended the Somerset Fly Fishing Show last February and learned about Slate Drakes. I am excited about tying some drake variations to fish with this spring. I have seen them hatch many times and mostly assumed that they were stoneflies because they tend to be fairly large. It's funny how easy it is to mislabel things or categorize them in ways that are easiest for us to relate to. Although this explains the popularity of political talk shows, it presents larger dilemmas for fishermen. I've taken a lot of fish on big hendrickson patterns when the drakes were coming off and frequently concluded the fish were eating those. They were in a sense, the sense that I was coming close enough for government work, while not completely understanding the bigger picture. Sometimes that's the best you can do, but

filling in the dots and solving the real problems allows us to improve our fishing experience and confidently move on to other challenges. Like, "why is it so hard to catch rising trout on a caddis when that's all you can see on the water and in the air?" Or, "why does my wife always put my stuff where I can't find it?" I will attempt to answer the caddis question in the next newsletter after I have tested a theory that I acquired at the fly fishing show. I let you solve the other one on your own.

Incidentally, they hold excellent seminars at the Somerset Fly Fishing Show and back them up with power point presentations that you can take pictures of with your smart phone. I was also surprised to see that many speakers present information on our local streams. In particular, a few of them discussed the Lehigh and offered good advice that addressed some of the challenges that I personally encounter every season.

All right, I'll tell you about the caddis theory. If you like to fish elk hair caddis, you may frequently notice that you are not hitting pay dirt even though the fish you are casting to are eating flies that are close in color and size to your presentation. When this happens, it can be because the palmer hackle on your caddis makes it ride too high on the water for the fly to look natural. I recommend using a pattern that doesn't ride high on the surface film. Caddis don't do that and when the fish are paying attention, they are looking for a bug with its butt in the water.

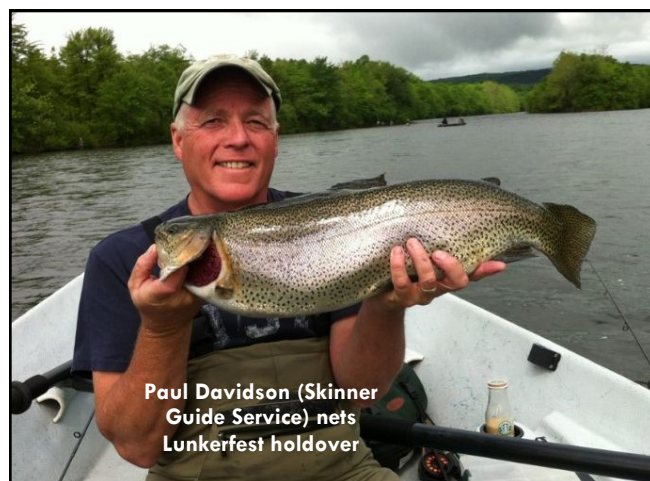
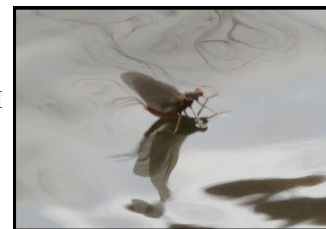
Since caddis rarely remain still, skipping your fly over a feeding fish will often trigger a strike as well. It is important to mimic the skip of a natural without dragging the fly when it is over the fish you are

casting to. I like fishing with a fly that I can easily pull under the surface film without making a wake. You can

make a very realistic caddis presentation by allowing your fly to float naturally then stripping it under the surface when it starts to drag. Set your cast up so that the drag happens six to eight feet behind and on the opposite side of the fish that you are presenting to. Then, all you need to do is strip your line and lightly tick the tip of your rod upward to make your caddis emerge from the water. Follow-up with a few well-rehearsed twitches to make the fly skip upstream over the fish like the real thing. If this doesn't draw a strike, you can then park your fly on the water a few feet upstream from the trout and let it float back to them. Note, that this method works best in moving water and that it is easier to say, than do. With a little practice though, you can apply my learned lesson and think like a caddis. This can significantly add to the excitement of being on the Lehigh when they are hatching.

"Many men go fishing all their lives without knowing that it is not fish that they are after."

Henry David Thoreau..



Paul Davidson (Skinner Guide Service) nets Lunkerfest holdover



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Lehigh River Trout Musings

By Evan Williams

The Lehigh River was experiencing an unusually warm spring, welcoming in the way it induced favorable attire for the first week of April; the local fauna seemed to enjoy the sun as well. The section of the river was absent of trees, evoking the calming illusion of a western river. I waded out to a desirable location and began spin-casting a silver spoon. As the hours passed, the fishing slowed; my cousin noticed me swatting and snorting at the insects swarming my face. "Caddis, size 12 – if you actually knew how to fly fish you could catch all of these fish rising," he said, as he chuckled at my ignorance. I guess I took his explanation quite literally: by the next day I had my first trout, a brown trout, in the net, with a size 12 caddis in his mouth and my first fly rod in my hand.

The Lehigh River was the catalyst that started my fly fishing career. Today, I am 15 credits shy of a bachelor's degree in Organismal Ecology at Kutztown University. This field, of course, serves as a great excuse to be around water as much as possible. But when I am not studying for the rigorous academic program I love so dearly, I live a quiet, fish-bum lifestyle, never quite being fulfilled and always wanting more.

The trout has a long, celebrated history within the scientific community, one which dates back centuries. Simply put, however, if one needed to catch fish to survive, then one needed to understand their quarry. A short history on the origins of naming the two trout that inhabit everyone's favorite river could really help develop a greater appreciation for the animal. Most of the time, I prefer to understand more and read about the fish that I devote so much of my energy to, rather than focusing on buying the hottest new lure or fly.

A Swedish biologist named Carl Linnaeus was on a never-ending mission to properly classify all organisms by using two Latin-based words. In 1758, Linnaeus described the brown trout. His name for the fish was *Salmo trutta*, which translates to "salmon trout". This was initially chosen due to the

salmon-like behavior the brown trout exhibits in a majority of European streams. They both spend a portion of their lives in salt water, for example. What may be most notable, however, is the fact that Linnaeus realized how closely related the brown trout was with the Atlantic salmon, and later advances in genetics have undoubtedly proven this connection. (As a side note: the Atlantic salmon is named *Salmo salar*, which means "leaping salmon". This hardly seems relevant, though, as I likely have a better chance of seeing a unicorn than hooking a true salt Atlantic in the lower 48).

The nomenclature of the Rainbow trout has a far more colored history. The first description for this trout was done by a European fellow who received this odd fish indigenous to Siberia. The name chosen was *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, but this name was only held for one specific population, and went unused for centuries. Another European scientist then described the west coast rainbow trout. Noting its striking similarities to the brown trout, he decided to name the American rainbow trout *Salmo gairdneri*. This name was partly

chosen in tribute to a fellow colleague, and while the name was universally accepted within the scientific community, modern genetics showed that the Atlantic and Pacific trout were not related after all. Thus, the name *Oncorhynchus mykiss* now remains the proper name, interpreted as clawed-jaw trout. The term *mykiss* is the Latin reading of the word trout, indigenous of Kamchatka.

History, as important and fascinating as it is, remains in the past. Now, the clutches of winter are lifting, the sun is shining just a little bit longer, and it's finally time to go out and appreciate the amazing fishery that the Lehigh river has to offer. But while doing so, be sure to speak some Latin, enrich yourself, and impress your friends. Most importantly, delight in an animal rich in history, one that has always been and continues to be utterly enjoyed.

"by the next day I had my first trout, a brown trout, in the net, with a size 12 caddis in his mouth and my first fly rod in my hand."



Evan with a steelhead from a recent trip

Lehigh River Fly Fishing Journal—by Tom Gyory

The Lehigh is a medium sized river so it takes longer to change its seasonal temperature than smaller creeks. I use this information when planning my fishing trips in the early spring. Many fishermen understand that



and oxygen levels may be greater in slightly faster shallower areas (head of a pool). The photograph below is of the rapids just above the confluence of the Lehigh and the Aquashicola creek. In the summer the area in the foreground is a good holding area for trout but in the spring the slow deep pool in the distance is more productive.

I am sometimes asked how to fish the Lehigh in the spring before the top water dry fly fishing happens in May and June. I tell people to fish the pools with stone fly, caddis and mayfly nymph imitations below the tributaries as I described before. I also suggest a trolling method when fishing by drift boat. The photograph above taken by

smaller creeks provide cooler water in the summer but don't realize that they provide warmer water in the spring. The smaller tributaries of the Lehigh are spring fed and therefore stay warmer all winter long. They are also shallower so the sun warms them more quickly. These factors are important to remember when deciding where to fish when the water is still cold. Trout can detect even slight temperature differences and will locate themselves down river of the tributaries which can save valuable energy for their survival. There is also a difference in location preference between cold and warm temperatures. The trout will find the slowest deepest water downstream of a tributary (tail of a pool) in cold water conditions. In warm water conditions this is not always the case because the food quantity



LRSA President Matt MacConnell, shows Greg Gliwa and I spring drift fishing in the Trout Scout. Tandem wet flies, nymphs and streamers work well. I keep the speed of the boat about equal to the speed of the water by back trolling to allow the flies to sink into the deep holes and eddies behind large rocks. Sometimes the flies snag on the bottom but it is important to get as close to the river bed as possible because that's where the fish are and they won't move very far when the water is cold. A few twitches of the rod tip can entice a few more bites. This method is also good to use for bait fishermen.

Boating safety is important on the Lehigh especially in cold weather. Mandatory wearing of life jackets from November 1 to April 30 Here

are some more tips.

One wearable Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD or life jacket) in serviceable condition and of the appropriate size is required for each person in your boat. If your boat is 16 feet or longer, one throwable device (seat cushion or ring buoy) is required. Canoes and kayaks, regardless of length, are not required to carry a throwable device.

PFDs must be worn by all children 12 years-old and younger on boats 20 feet or less in length while under way, and on all canoes and kayaks. Others are strongly encouraged to wear a PFD at all times on the water.

All boats must display an anchor light (a white light visible 360 degrees) when at anchor between sunset and sunrise. Boats can use a lantern or clip-on battery-powered unit to meet this requirement.

All powered boats must show running lights between sunset and sunrise. Between sunset and sunrise, unpowered boats must carry a white light (visible 360 degrees) installed or portable, ready to be displayed in time to avoid a collision.

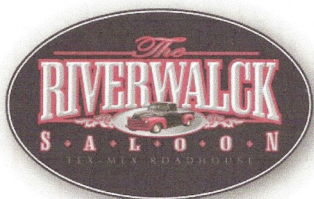
All boats are required to carry a sound-producing mechanical device audible for a half mile. Athletic whistles meet this requirement.

All motorboats using Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission access areas must be registered. Valid registration from another state is honored for up to 60 days for unmoored boats. Launch permits issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources allowing unpowered boats to launch at state park lakes are also valid for use at Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission accesses. The Commission also issues launch permits in lieu of registration for unpowered boats.

Operating watercraft, including canoes, kayaks, and rafts, under the influence of alcohol or drugs is illegal. The law is strongly enforced for user safety. For further information on boating regulations, contact the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission at www.fish.state.pa.us.

The spring is an exciting time for the LRSA: Stocking, fishing, coop nursery, water quality projects, Lunkerfest. Join the fun, sign up a friend, and we'll see you on the Lehigh.

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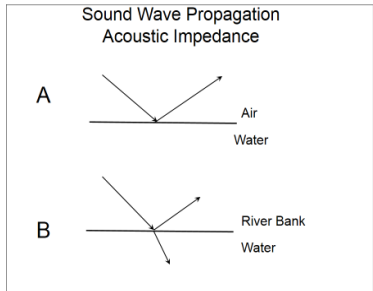
Understanding Bioacoustics to Catch More Fish

by John Mosovsky

This article is the first in a series that will provide practical tips and/or useful information developed from the science of bioacoustics; the study of how sound (or noise) travels underwater and how it affects fish.

Acoustic Impedance - the opposition of the “flow” of sound from one medium into another

When we’re wading the Lehigh and we shout to our fellow angler, should we be concerned about spooking the fish? Do we spook fish from the noise we make



on-board when floating the river in a

drift boat, kayak, or canoe? Can we spook fish that can’t even see us when we walk along the river bank? These questions can be answered with some practical knowledge about acoustic impedance.

When we generate a sound in air, e.g., shouting, the energy of the associated sound wave is

almost totally reflected off the surface of the water. The amount of sound energy that theoretically penetrates the water is so small that for all practical purposes we can say that it is zero (see figure A). This is true because of the very large acoustic impedance contrast between water and air. The acoustic impedance of water is about 3,500 times higher than air. However, the acoustic impedance contrast between water and other materials/mediums is comparatively very small (see table). Because of the small acoustic impedance contrasts between water and sandstone (commonly found on the river bank), aluminum, wood, fiberglass reinforced plastic-FRP, and polyester casting resin (common water craft construction materials), a por-

tion of a sound wave’s energy generated in these mediums WILL penetrate into water (see figure B). Practically speaking then, the portion of a sound wave’s energy that penetrates into the water from these other mediums could spook fish.

So we should be concerned about spooking fish from the noise we make in our boats, kayaks, and canoes and from the noise we make with our wading staffs and metal studded boots as we walk along the river bank. However, shouting to our fellow anglers about the big one that got away should not be a problem. The real problem occurs from the noise we make IN the water. More on that topic next time!

| Acoustic Impedance Contrast Between Water and Other Mediums | |
|---|----------------|
| Material/Medium | Contrast Value |
| Air | 3,500 |
| Sandstone | 5.7 |
| Aluminum | 11.6 |
| Wood | 1.1 |
| FRP | 2.6 |
| Polyester Resin | 1.7 |



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After Winter, This River, These Bass

by Harry Humes

for Steve Breininger

All afternoon, he reels them in,
mouths open, gill plates flared,
their backs bronze in the sunlight.
He doesn't keep one,
slides them back into quiet water,
feels them bump his legs,
his shadow a good place to hide.
A big one breaks his line,
jumps and is gone. Like that.
He should have worn a hat.
His eyes ache with the fierce light
off the water, and that place behind
his thumb begins to hurt some.
He fishes down to the pool,
then walks to the feeder stream
where he has left some beer.
Deer tracks, a swallowtail butterfly.
He thinks of his friend who first showed him
the black and white caterpillar
the butterfly comes from,
how when it is squeezed
it gives off a smell like a wet cave.
Some crows, a blue heron,
the beer almost cold.
He has taken off the waders,
his feet in the water he loves,
in the afternoon, far from winter.

Originally from Schuylkill County, Harry Humes is the author of thirteen collections of poetry, including *The Way Winter Works: Poems by Harry Humes* (University of Arkansas Press, 1990), from which this poem is reprinted with permission. He has held professorships at Kutztown University and Cedar Crest College and won many awards for his poetry. An angler himself, he knows fish and rivers.



STEELHEAD IN THE LITTLE LEHIGH— THE BEGINNING OF THE LITTLE LEHIGH FLY STRETCH

By Scott "The Stone Fly Guy" Lechki

Around 1965, posters appeared on trees throughout the Lehigh Parkway noting a Steelhead program had been introduced to the Little Lehigh with hopes that stocked 8" to 10" silver beauties would migrate to the Big Lehigh then to the Delaware and finally to the Atlantic Ocean via the Delaware Bay. The hope was that these little chromies would return to the Little Lehigh one day. The fish were very easy to catch as catch and release wasn't practiced at the time. It was illegal to keep Steelhead yet many fish were dying after swallowing baits and fisherman were ripping the hooks out of their gullets.

The section of the Little Lehigh thick with Steelhead was the section from Fish Hatchery Road to the flat bridge where the Lil' Lehigh Fly Shop now exists. People came from the hatchery and threw fish food into the Little Lehigh to watch the fish feed. Eventually that section, about 1 mile long, was closed to fishing to give the Steelhead a better chance of survival. This area later became a safe haven for all trout and fish that survived the Trout Creek Contest area of the Little Lehigh above the hatchery and the Little Lehigh Fish & Game Association Contest. Many of the fish stocked for the contests were over 20".

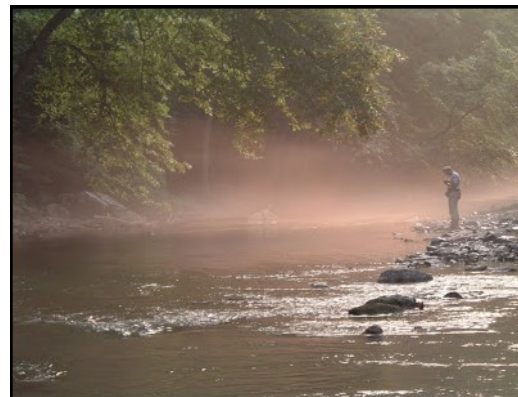
This area remained closed to fishing for about 3 years. People wondered what to do with this stretch of stream that was full of all size trout with no pressure on them. I don't exactly know who was in charge of the program next set into action. The Little Lehigh Fish & Game Protective Association and a few other influential people, including Joe Samusevich a well-known fly tier and fisherman from Allentown, proposed a "fish for fun" program for that section of the stream. Rules were: No wading, flies only, no artificial lures, and catch and release all fish with the exception of keeping 1 fish per day over 20". Since then the rules have changed somewhat removing the 20" keep fish rule and changing it to no fish killed and recently, within the past 5 years, wading is allowed. This was the birth of the Little

Lehigh fly stretch.

The element of skill has changed to capture these fly wary trout. Now hatches and presentation are required to take even 1 fish in this area. As time went on it became more and more difficult to catch fish. People were still getting bags of fish pellets from the hatchery and feeding the fish who would readily feed on what they were raised on, pellets. Eventually one smart fly tier got the idea to stack deer hair on a small hook (as you would tie a muddler minnow), usually a size 14 dry fly hook, and trim it down to look like a fish pellet. What an ingenious fly. It floated perfectly and resembled the fish's favorite food. It wasn't uncommon to score 20 plus fish per day on the pellet fly. Of course, the old school fly fishermen frowned on this technique, but it was completely legal. People eventually were asked not to feed the fish and the fish stopped eating pellets now becoming educated only by being caught and released.

Although my many years on the Little Lehigh and Lehigh Rivers have educated me in the many aspects of fly fishing for trout, I still wonder if any Steelhead made it back from the earlier stockings or did dams, water conditions, and predatory fish wipe them out. During that first year of the original stocking, I personally caught Steelheads as far downstream as where the Little Lehigh/Jordon Creek meet the river.

Today we have dam removal as a major issue for the return of Steelheads and Shad. Even though the LRSA stocked thousands of Chilean Steelhead fry, I don't think the migration process will happen for years to come; however, we are moving in a positive direction.





LRSA

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Lehigh.River.Stocking.Association@gmail.com

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Dedicated to the Restoration and
Revitalization of the Lehigh River
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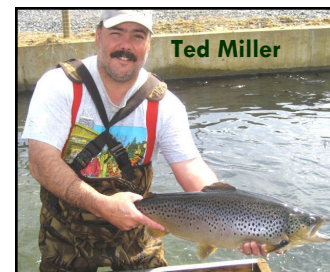
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In Memoriam—LRSA
Founder, Ted Miller



LRSA board gathered for monthly meeting at Wegmans. From left:
Gary Klein, Greg Gliwa, Tom Gyory, Karl Imdorf, Dave Carl, Matt
MacConnell, Jim Deebel, Vince Spaits and Chuck Morgenstern

Conservation Update— By Matt MacConnell

This year a more formal tagging program will be conducted. \$400 was received from Lehigh Valley Sierra Club to purchase new fish tags and associated equipment. We hope to learn more about brown and rainbow trout movements. Please let us know if you catch tagged fish.

The annual tributary survey will be conducted again this spring and then the probe will be redeployed in the Lehigh to document river conditions. The river conditions monitored include temperature, dissolved oxygen, specific conductance, pH and depth. This data will be used to document that the Lehigh River quality is well within desired parameters for a trout stocked fishery and to monitor for pollution events.

The 2nd water quality probe will be used to monitor streams for special projects. For example Sierra Club is providing funding (~\$1,000) to study streams threatened by development or fracking operations.

The Lausanne Tunnel will continue to be the focus of project activity as we seek to identify methods for reducing the iron load that flows to the Lehigh river from that source.



One of two LRSA water quality monitors deployed in the Lehigh in Slatington last year.



Lunkerfest 2015

Lehigh River Stocking Association

What: Fishing Contest for Great Prizes.

New for 2015! More Fish, Kids Fishing Pond, Extended Stocking Area, and Water Rescue

When: May 30th 2015, (high water date June 13st 2015)

Sign up starting at 7:00 am
Fishing from 8:30am-3:00pm

Where: Lehigh River, East Penn Boat Launch, Bowmanstown, PA

Fee: Nonmember Adults and Youths \$25, (\$20 Members), Kids under 12 free

