



Lehigh River Watch

Fall Update 2018:

LRSA Stocking Total
Since 1991: 367,600

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Co-Op News: The LRSA purchased aluminum for the expansion of the Gyory Co-Op nursery in September with funding from the PAFBC and grant money from the Carbon County Community Foundation. This expansion will increase the size of the Co-Op fish cage and expand the floating dock that supports it. The Gyory Co-Op expansion will enable the LRSA to stock an additional 1,000 trout each year at a cost of approximately \$2 per fish. (Note: We are looking for dock floats for this expansion project. If you have some that you would like to sell or donate, please call us: our contact information is on page 13.)

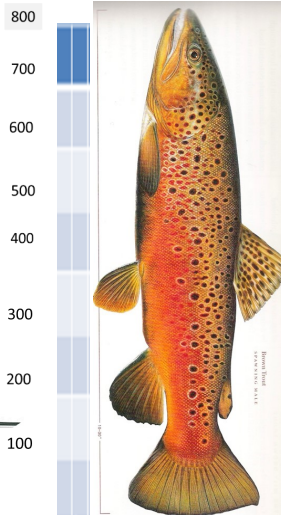
The LRSA also made an agreement with our BC Bait Co-Op nursery to double the amount of trout that they currently raise for our organization: from 1,000 to 2,000 fish annually. The PAFBC delivered trout fingerlings for the 2019 stocking season to BC Bait in early June and they are already 6 - 7 inches long!

Water Quality Probe: The LRSA probe stopped broadcasting water quality data twice this summer due to high water levels and failing batteries. The high water misaligned the probe's broadcast antenna and made it impossible for Matt to troubleshoot that issue until the river dropped to a manageable level. We later experienced a battery failure that caused the probe to stop reporting river conditions on the LRSA website. Matt MacConnell normally removes the probe, modem, and antenna from the Lehigh in October. Current water levels are making it impossible to safely retrieve this equipment for the foreseeable future.

PAFBC News: Scott Christman, the Waterways Control Officer for Carbon County attended the LRSA monthly meeting in August. He told us that the futures of the PA Co-Op program and state stocking of the Lehigh River (from Glen Onoko to Jim Thorpe) are uncertain..

2019 Membership Total: 107

**2018 Member
Total: 576**



Matt MacConnell attempting to retrieve the LRSA water quality probe from the Lehigh earlier this month. Looks like it will be a while before we are able to access it!

**(Fall Update 2018: cont. from p. 1)**

Both of these initiatives depend on the state's ability to raise adequate funding to support them. If Pennsylvania passes a resolution that provides sufficient funding to support the programs, they will likely continue. Whether or not that is going to happen is not clear at this point. We will keep you informed as we hear more about the PAFBC's plans to address its budgetary shortcomings.

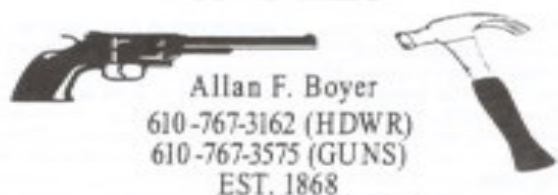
Mr. Christman also advised the LRSA Board of an issue with the Palmerton Zinc Superfund Site. He told us that the site is accepting and storing slurry materials from New Jersey and New York, and that some of those materials were washed into the Lehigh during a rain event this summer. The PAFBC was not able to determine if there was an environmental impact. They did cite the Palmerton impoundment for destroying a wetland immediately adjacent to the Lehigh and for the accidental discharge of potentially harmful materials into the watershed. WCO Christman told us that Pennsylvania's environmental guidelines are somewhat more lenient than neighboring states' and that is why the Palmerton impoundment (adjacent to highway 248) accepts and stores potentially hazardous materials.

Steve Chuckra

LRSA Neighborhood Watch!

If you see people engaging in illegal activities in the Bowmanstown area, please contact the East Penn Township authorities at 570-386-5735. Please help us make the river a better and safer place to fish. Additionally, if you see something illegal happening on the river you can contact an LRSA board member, we will immediately contact a PAFBC waterways control officer to address the situation. (Board member contact information is listed on the last page of this newsletter.)

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Trout Stocking, Friend or Foe? - Steve Chuckra

Trout Stocking, Friend or Foe?

A friend of mine recently asked me if I remember the first trout that I ever caught. I actually don't, but I am reasonably sure it may have been a stocked trout and that I caught it with a worm. In fact, I caught lots of trout on worms during my early fishing years: because that was the only bait I used. And, I relied on worm and spinner tactics throughout my teens as I gradually made a transition to fly-fishing. Fishing for trout as a kid was the underpinning of what would eventually become a life-long desire to travel to fishy places all over the country and even a few in Europe. It also got me to care deeply about fish and the places where they live.

However, there was something else that fueled my life-long attraction to fishing, something that added a needed dimension to an activity that I truly loved. That was the availability of decent sized trout. I believe if it hadn't been for the trout that the PAFBC stocks, I may have eventually lost interest in trout fishing. As a young angler, I found it really exciting to routinely catch fish over 10 inches in the Lehigh River and Nescopeck Creek. I didn't catch tremendous numbers of them, but stocked trout provided an exciting alternative to the 4 to 8 inch native brook trout that I learned to fish for as a kid. For many anglers, their first encounter with a trout is often a fish from a state hatchery or even a private stocking association. That's where their journey begins and I believe that it is critically important to fishing and fishery stewardship that those journeys do begin.

Many people think that trout stocking is undesirable for differing reasons. I don't propose to tout fish stocking as a cure all for fisheries and anglers. However it does provide some tangible benefits. Not the least of which is creating interest in fishing and fishery management. Trout stocking also augments indigenous fish populations, helping fisheries near well populated areas from becoming overly depleted.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the population of Lehigh and Carbon Counties combined in 2017 was 430,347. The Lehigh River is certainly located within convenient driving distance of several substantial population centers. The river also tends to be a marginal trout fishery due to the near fatal temperatures it reaches each summer: it is not uncommon for river temperatures to approach 80 degrees in July and August.

However many trout do manage to hold over from year to year despite these inhospitable conditions and this fact has not gone unnoticed.

Participation statistics that quantify sport fishing interest in Carbon and Lehigh counties are virtually unobtainable. You pretty much need to estimate them from other sources. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of fishermen nationwide increased by 10% between 2006 and 2011. John Bondura former SCTU President researched the number of licensed anglers in Carbon and Lehigh Counties for me in 2016 and reported that it was 16,915 for the same year. Additionally, L.R.S.A board members have observed exponential increases in angling activity on the Lehigh River during May and June each year. We are certain that some of this interest is due to the success of the LRSA stocking program and the buzz that it creates in local communities. It is also important to consider that the population of the United States more than doubled in the past 35 years and that outdoor interest has been on the rise during the same period of time. The net effect of these realisms means that we can expect to see progressively more anglers on the Lehigh in the future. (Cont. p. 5)



Steve with a Arkansas River brown trout about 1 mile downstream from Browns Canyon. (On a Monday, after the crowds returned to Denver and Colorado Springs.)



Lehigh River Fly Fishing Journal—Tom Gyory

Lehigh River Fly Fishing Journal

October 2018

I took a float trip a few weeks ago down the Lehigh River in between the flooding rain storms that were common this summer. The water was high (1000 cu ft/sec out of the Francis Walter Dam) but it was clear and fishable. I was accompanied by outdoor writer and LRSA member John Punola from Madison, NJ. I always have an enjoyable day with John because he brings a positive attitude, a few fishing stories and new lures to try out. This trip was no different. John told stories about his small mouth trip to the Veasie Salmon club on the Penobscot River in Maine this year and his speaking engagement for a few hundred people at the club on the topic of Dam removal and Shad fishing. Salmon fishing has been closed the since 2009 due to low migration numbers, so the club has been promoting small mouth and shad fishing which have improved due to their successful dam removal efforts. John says they treat him like a celebrity up there, as they should because he has an immense amount of fishing knowledge and energy.

On our trip back here on the Lehigh, the fishing was challenging. The flow was high which made casting from an anchored position ineffectual. The best technique I found under these conditions is to float the river and cast while floating. This allows the fly or lure to travel at the same speed as the water and boat. A dry fly will float drag free for long periods of time and strikes can occur at any time. This presentation is excellent for covering large amounts of productive water. The same technique applies to streamer fishing. After casting the streamer it can be suspended with no movement for a short time. This sometimes elicits a strike. (Cont. p. 6).



John Punola with a Maine smallmouth bass.



Brown Trout



LRSA Raffle Winners

Fall raffle winners are displayed in the photo to the left. Drawing order runs from top left to bottom right. Thank you very much for your support! (For a closer look, please visit the LRSA facebook page.)

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Trout Stocking

(Cont. from p. 3)

That brings us back to the issue of trout stocking and the place it has in fisheries management. There are few things better than self-sustaining fisheries that do not require stocking augmentation. Unfortunately, many Pennsylvania fisheries are not that prolific and the ones that are sustainable face increasing pressure. Sustainability ultimately becomes a matter of angling pressure. Any self-sustaining fishery will become degraded if it is fished hard enough. That calculus also applies to special regulation trout waters to an extent. I've caught hundreds of fish in blue ribbon trout streams that were handled numerous times and had plenty of holes and abscesses in their face to show for their trouble. Eventually some of that handling leads to fish mortality and incessant angling pressure certainly diminishes the quality of "blue ribbon" experience.

I remember travelling to Brown's Canyon on the Arkansas River when I lived in Colorado: and, not being able to fish that particular weekend for lack of what I thought was adequate or enjoyable space on the angler infested river. I waited until the following Monday for the crowds to clear before even putting my waders on.

Although trout stocking is typically frowned upon by Trout Unlimited and some rank and file purists, stocking marginal waters does help reduce angling pressure on high quality fisheries; i.e., the Arkansas River, the upper Delaware, etc. By attracting people who would otherwise head to a destination fishery, you can reduce some of the pressure on pristine waters and promote interest in local habitat improvement efforts. For that reason, I feel that T.U. misses the bus with some of their policies regarding fish stocking. I believe that marginal waters should be considered both targets for habitat improvement and stocking. I think it's awesome to improve fisheries to the extent that they become self-sustaining gems. I also believe you can stock some of them to bolster fish population numbers and to create additional interest in fishery improvement efforts.

Regardless of our beliefs about stocking, strategies regarding fisheries management should involve verifiable research, regulation, and continuous evaluation: not subjective opinions or dogmatic policies that can overlook the negative impacts that excessive angling pressure has on fisheries and the quality of the fishing experience.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lehighcountypennsylvania,carboncountypennsylvania/PST045217>

<https://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/fhw11-nat.pdf>



The LRSA stocking trout with the help of volunteers and Cub Scout Pack 31 in April. The boys had a great time carrying and getting splashed by trout that we purchased from the Big Brown Trout Hatchery.

Fly Fishing Journal —Cont. from p. 4

If not, you can try stripping the fly at different rates to give the action that will make the streamer irresistible. It's really cool to see the fish follow and strike at the streamer. A good pair of polarized sunglasses helps. We caught several small 9" "wild" brown trout this day on the Lehigh. It's encouraging to see the river sustain these beautiful trout.

One thing to remember when using this floating/fishing technique is that you cover much more water than you do when you anchor and fish. I usually plan 1 hour to fish one mile of floating when I anchor and fish. Under high water conditions I plan 1 hour to fish two miles of strictly floating. Either way, the Lehigh River is fun to fish while floating.

See you on the river (if the rain ever stops)!

Tom Gyory



Environmental Update

This spring LRSA members informed us about the Cunfer Farm's intention to use Class B bio-solids near the confluence of Lizard Creek and the Lehigh River. The Cunfer Farm's plan to use these fertilizers is currently suspended by a legal injunction order.

Plastic World Recycling in Bowmanstown is under investigation for dumping chemicals into Fireline Creek near its confluence with the Lehigh River last spring. Both PAFBC and DEP are investigating the incident.

Scott Christman, PAFBC WCO for Carbon County told the LRSA that the Zinc Superfund Site in Palmerton unintentionally released slurry materials into the Lehigh River last summer. Scott told us that the DEP and PAFBC investigated this incident and determined that the slurry most likely did not contain harmful contaminants. The Palmerton Zinc impoundment was fined for accidentally discharging slurry into the Lehigh and intentionally removing a wetland from the impoundment near highway 248.

Fishing in the Italian Dolomites - Alan Howe

Fishing in the Italian Dolomites

When I arrived at Aviano Air Base in Italy's Friuli region in 1993, Operation Deny Flight was just several months old. The only evidence at the base was three NATO AWACS planes parked at one corner of the flightline, taking turns flying orbits over Bosnia and Herzegovina. That soon changed.

During my five years there, countless squadrons of planes and helicopters made appearances, and a fighter wing permanently relocated from Germany to Aviano. These forces stopped the fighting in Bosnia under Operation Deliberate Force in 1995 and then supported US and allied forces on the ground enforcing the fragile peace. Tens of thousands of Bosnians had died, and the risk to our forces there were great.

As you can imagine, the pace was hectic. My teams and I worked long days and saw few days off for extended stretches during the five years. Travel was sometimes prohibited and almost always restricted by policy or by practicality. Providing critical communications for units flying in harm's way is a time-critical mission. Standing-by to respond was a constant. Still, we did what we could to enjoy our time in that lovely northern province; tucked up against the Dolomiti and within ninety minutes of Venice. This area is thick with cold streams and trout. And, after a couple years of pining for a cast, I was able to break the code and get a resident fishing license. Oh, the stress relief that provided! (Cont. bottom of next page)

*Fluent**By Paul Weidknecht*

*Our ABCs are CDC, EHC, and PMD.
 We know dries are wet,
 and that wets are soaked.
 The Hendricksens and Cahills
 may be fine people to their friends,
 but to us they're flies.
 We don't confuse
 a Muddler and a Bugger,
 a hepper and a dropper, or
 a bobbin and a bodkin.
 We know that mending a line in a seam
 has nothing to do with a repair,
 and everything to do with a fix.
 We know deer hair and bucktail differ,
 yet both are deer's hair all the same,
 that water, too, can possess a tail
 and still not be a tailwater.*

*When a hatch is on, it's the same as when
 a hatch is coming off,
 and that if a fish misses a fly, the cast is on,
 but if the fly misses the fish, the cast is off.
 In our language we are fluent,
 fluid,
 flowing,
 like the water we seek.*



Paul Weidknecht is the author of *Native to This Stream: Brief Writings About Fly-Fishing & the Great Outdoors*, a chapbook collection of previously published short stories, essays, and poems. His work has also appeared in *Once Upon A Time: Sweet, Funny, and Strange Tales for All Ages* by the Bethlehem Writers Group, *Rosebud*, and *Shenandoah*, among others. He spends way too much time fly-fishing, but remains guilt-free about it.

(Dolomites: cont. from previous page)

Fiume Livenza flowed through the town we lived in, but the stream was a fairly large river at that point, and there were few places where it could be approached. However, I did find a couple spots where I could get in some casts for a few rising trout when I could not get out of town.

Upstream the river flowed through the town of Sacile. Sacile is one of several towns in the Po River Valley that have resident, native trout. Under beautiful architecture and a stunning bridge, neighbors and visitors could look down at pods of large brown trout finning in the cold, slow-moving water. They were so tempting. However, a cast here, witnessed by residents, might lead to the return of the auto-da-fe by the trout's fans. These are a matter of pride to the locals, shared pets that belong to the city.

As I said, there were other towns in the area that included trout. Beyond just natural streams flowing by, even drainage ditches that conducted cold water from the nearby mountains held trout. Walking along sidewalks and over bridges was hazardous, as I always had my eyes on the ditches rather than curbs, other pedestrians, bicycles, or cars...the trout ruled. (Cont. p. 10)



Livenza River flowing through Sacile, Italy.



Mishap on the Bay - Matt MacConnell

Mishap on the Bay

This September my family was vacationing on Cape Cod in Massachusetts and as normal, I brought both kayaks so that we could do some paddling and hopefully fishing. Given my reasonably good paddling skills forged over numerous excursions on the Lehigh River I feel pretty confident yak fishing in bays and estuaries.

The morning was overcast and drizzling off and on. The water was fairly flat on the bay but there was a gusty breeze picking up and blowing off shore. The evening before I had picked up the sea worms that I intended to use with the surge tube while trolling along the rocks in hopes of connecting with black sea bass, tautog or striped bass.

So after breakfast I traveled the short ride from the summerhouse we were renting down to Corporation Beach in Dennis. I unstrapped my Dagger Axis 12 from the SUV and hauled it down to the water's edge, which was a good walk because the tide was low. I set the back end of the boat in the water and the front half up on the sand then walked back to the car to get the rod, paddle and life jacket. At the car I got the lure set up on my fishing rod to avoid having to do this on the boat, which is tough to do. As I was getting the snap swivel tied on my line a car stopped along side me and the gentleman inside said, "is that boat anchored? It looks like it might be getting away from you." I whipped around to see my boat drifting about 20 ft off shore and floating out with the wind gusts, I thanked the man and kicked myself for not compensating for how quickly the tide was coming in.

By the time I had hustled down the beach to the water the boat was now 50 -75 feet off shore. I had my water shoes on so was able to leap into the water and wade over the rocks that were in that area, but the gusts of wind were blowing it out faster than I could get to it. Pretty soon I was chest deep and the boat still about 20 ft away. At this point I realized I would need to swim for the boat and started swimming with a lame flutter kick due to my wearing the water shoes. I kept this up about a minute before I realized that it was blowing out faster than I could swim! Besides, it would be really hard to swim back while pulling the boat against the wind. I needed to get back to shore and run up to the SUV, grab the other kayak and paddle out for the wayward boat.

At this point, I am about 150 ft off shore in probably 15-20ft of water and I was thinking about the great white shark sightings in Cape Cod bay. The picture below is from a shark-sighting App where there are two sightings in the area I was in. Access points on the cape greet you with a picture of a great white shark and warnings not to go deeper than waist deep, which spooked me as I was treading in considerably deeper water. Thankfully, I did not look much like a seal, which the sharks have been feeding on and was very relieved when I reached terra firma. I ran up the beach, unstrapped the other kayak as quickly as I could and ran back to the water, dragging the boat behind me. At this point, my kayak was a mere spec out in the bay. I jumped into my wife's Wilderness Systems 12 and paddled as hard as I could.

The wind at my back was good for now but would compound my problems on the way back. After about 20 minutes I finally caught up to the boat and tied my throw line to the bow of the escapee to the strap behind my seat. (Cont. p. 11)



LRSA Overview: Steve Chuckra

The LRSA started its 27th membership season on October 1st. We finished 2018 with 576 members. This was a 15% decrease from the number of memberships we had in 2017. To date we have 113 members who are current for the 2019 stocking season.

Even though membership numbers declined in 2018, the LRSA mostly offset this shortfall by increasing the cost of our membership plans by 25%. We also sold enough merchandise and raffle tickets in 2018 to ensure that we had more than enough money to pay off our fish loan and continue to pay for fund raising initiatives and other operating expenses.

October is a great time to renew your LRSA membership. Early membership renewals help us to estimate the size of our annual trout stocking budget and to reduce the size of the loan we take out each year to pay for our trout order.

We are hopeful that next year will bring more fishing opportunities. High water levels made the Lehigh unsafe to fish for much of the spring, summer, and fall. I personally fished less in 2018 than any year I can remember. I have to say that I feel a bit disappointed.

As we move towards 2019, the LRSA plans to expand the range of merchandise that we offer on our website. We intend to sell breathable performance shirts and gators. The new shirts feature a handsome brown trout on the back as well as a map of the Lehigh on the sleeve. Additionally, we plan to offer flies and other lures specifically designed for Lehigh River anglers.

We are excited about the new merchandise and hope that you will like and enjoy the new shirts, gators, flies, and lures. We plan to add the new items to our website as soon as we are able to post pictures of them-

on the site and obtain initial orders of flies and lures from our suppliers.


As always, I thank you for your support and interest in the Lehigh River. Your support continues to make this river a better place to fish and your contributions are vitally important to the quality of the Lehigh fishery in Carbon and Lehigh Counties.

On behalf of myself and the LRSA Board, we are excited about the 2019 membership season and we eagerly look forward to seeing you!

Sincerely,

Steve Chuckra





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(Dolomites: cont. from p. 7)

Trout could be anywhere. Hearing and then reading in an Italian fly-fishing magazine that trout could be found in irrigation ditches in the area, I drove out a dirt road along a field and poked my head through the hedge that lined a concrete channel.

Beneath my feet was a flow some four feet wide and close to three feet deep. Just a couple feet "downstream" of me, I saw a trout about ten inches long tight to the bottom. It was behind a four-inch square brick. Four inches to the trout's left was another brick the same size. The trout would periodically cross from one brick to the other, feeding as it went.



Picture of the author at his retirement ceremony.

There was no other gap in the hedge, so I had no choice but to cast a nymph backhanded upstream, letting it sink as it flowed past me toward the trout. It quickly became clear that this trout would eat only bugs that passed between the two bricks no higher than the tops of them--a gap of two-inches by four-inches. Thirty minutes of backhanded casts with many near-misses passed before my fly finally threaded that narrow gap at the right level. The trout promptly took the fly, and I released my only irrigation-ditch caught brown.

There were prettier streams, of course. Looking at local maps for creeks and rivers, I happened upon one an hour away that turned out to be downstream from a trout hatchery. Rainbow trout are rather popular in restaurants in northern Italy. Trout farms are not unusual finds. This one, however, was unexpected and fortuitous as the weed-choked stream below was filled with escapees. Every visit could be expected to yield a trout or two. On one trip I drifted a nymph through a pocket in the weeds and watched an acrobat clear the stream as it raced up to grab it. The trout promptly dove to the bottom of the pocket and then raced downstream. My rod had gone still with a deep bend. The fat rainbow had tied me off on the weeds, snapped the tippet and made its escape. Those were determined, freedom-loving trout.

Streams like this could also be found from the local magazines. I purchased several monthly copies of one that covered fishing with spinning tackle and with "la mosca." As here, fly fishing is not the most widely pursued form, but it was common enough that stops at tackle shops would as often as not lead me to fly-fishing gear and to fly-tying materials. I have a collection of prized capes and necks that I use sparingly because I find no equivalents here.

Fortunately, the best stream was the closest. Fiume Livenza flowed through the edge of the beautiful town of Polcenigo just below its exit from the base of the Dolomiti and just a few miles upstream from Sacile, home of the village trout pets. It was barely an exaggeration to say the stream was on my way home from Aviano--close enough that on occasion I would ask my wife to pack a dinner in addition to my lunch, so I could make an hours-long stop on the way home.

The Livenza at Polcenigo included a slow, weedy section with trout waiting in ambush in the gaps and pockets. I watched a couple anglers fish upstream here and decided it was not for me. The wading into position was difficult with the weeds, and the anglers were kicking up huge clouds of silt no matter how cautious they were. They had little alternative. The banks were high here. So, casting room for upstream anglers could be had only in the river.

I approached this downstream, staying close to the near bank. I learned to cast my fly while keeping my rod tip high. I would drag the fly if necessary to put it just above a pocket and then lower the tip, letting my nymph or wet fly sink into the water column. Then I would take up the slack, letting the fly swing up to the surface, much like a Leisenring lift. The brown trout here had a hard time resisting. (Cont. p. 12)

Mishap Continued- Matt MacConnell

(Cont. from p. 8)



A view of the shark warning sign at Cahoon Hollow beach in Wellfleet where a boogie boarder was fatally attacked by a white shark this summer.

I looked around for signs of any dorsal fins and started my long and arduous paddle for shore, slow but sure into the wind and chop. After another 20 minutes or so I did finally make it to shore. I had dodged the bullet and not only survived but also did not have to return to Allentown without my boat. If things got real bad I guess I would have said goodbye to it, but was happy to now be resting on shore with both kayaks.

As I was loading the boats back on the car (because at this point the thought of now going out fishing was not particularly appealing), an older man in a vehicle stopped and rolled down his window and said “that was some strong paddling out there, I was watching you and I wasn’t sure you were going to make it, that wind!” and drove away shaking his head. Maybe I should stick with the Lehigh River from now on!



**(Dolomites: cont. from p. 10)**

While I fished this stretch often, I more often passed it up to start farther downstream. This stretch went for over a mile with restrictions most Italian anglers clearly did not favor. Fishing here was only with flies and only on barbless hooks. All trout had to be released. In three years, I met four other people on this stretch. Two I brought with me. One I did not bring had a fly rod. The other had no rod. He watched me for a while and then greeted me in Italian. I responded with my limited skills and he, satisfied that I could get the gist of his conversation, pulled out a game warden badge from his shirt pocket. He asked me for my license. I offered, "un momento," reeled up and walked across the stream to him.

After finding out how to get a license, the next largest challenge here was rationing fishing days. The Friuli-Venezia-Giulia region allows anglers to fish a total of sixteen days per week. One might suppose "fishing widows" had a hand in this. The law requires that anglers fill out a space on their license indicating they are going fishing that day before leaving home with their tackle. Anyone found with fishing gear and no indication on their license that they are fishing that day can be cited for violating the law.

This was always a different gamble for me. The hours at Aviano could not be predicted with any reliability. Many was the time I packed my gear, filled out my license, headed to work with spare clothes and dinner in my trunk. Many was the time I ate that dinner at the office and drove straight home, still in uniform, long after dark. Husbanding those sixteen monthly opportunities was a tough mission some months.

I approached the warden and pulled a Ziplock bag out of my vest, opening it and handing the license to the plain-clothes man. He leafed through the pages, including the page that correctly indicated that I would be fishing that day. He seemed a bit surprised and perhaps disappointed that I had been able to comply with the rules. His Italian nature took over from his law-enforcer role, however, and he thanked me and commended me on my documentation. Italians are often happy bureaucrats! And, I was a bit proud of passing the test. Service members are frequently reminded that they are ambassadors of their country when serving overseas.

I returned to fishing my nearly private stream. The water down here resembles more a freestone stream with pools and runs and deep pockets. While the cold flow out of the bottom of the mountains provided a steady base flow, the runoff from rain events could turn the stream into a torrent several times larger than usual. Spring melts had the same effect. I often came to the stream to see it was not just unfishable but also a hazard.

The browns here were accompanied by a European "grayling." I caught one in my three years, which surprised locals about as much as I surprise anglers here with tales of catching trout in the Letort. (They would be less surprised if they knew about my Italian experiences that prepared me for this.) The grayling created another challenge. They were spookier than the browns, and when the summer flows were at their lowest, a fly line settling gently on a flat pool was Nervous grayling rarely produced nervous brown trout. That was not catching a rod in an attempt to

No fishing article is memorable catches, stretch. Three standard val of my 2-weight. I practice cast along the worth the cost. I then hanging over the far about a foot before the gotten hung up on the roots of the bush, but when I raised my rod tip, a fat, fifteen-inch brown exploded out of the shadows. I released the largest brown I caught on that stream after a very fun fight with my lightest rod.



Picture of Italian grayling from the Friuli region. (Not the author)

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complete without a tale of and I have plenty from this out. One came with the arri-rigged up the rod and made a near bank. It was every bit shot a cast just above a bush bank. My nymph drifted line stopped. I figured I had

My assignment at Aviano Air Base was the busiest and most challenging, and rewarding of my career. It did not hurt that I was able to enjoy a bit of outstanding fishing. Should you find yourself there, the streams and trout will have you aching to break the code and get a line wet. The effort will be well rewarded.



LRSA

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The LRSA is a Non-Profit Organization Dedicated to the Restoration and Stocking of the Lehigh River.

Members and the general public are welcome to join us at our meetings— 7pm on the last Tuesday of every month (except December) at Wegman's Café, 3900 W Tilghman St, Allentown.

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In fond memory of LRSA Founder, Ted Miller

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