



UPPER MANISTEE RIVER ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 282 • GRAYLING, MICHIGAN 49738

SUMMER NEWSLETTER JULY 2018

Visit our Website UMRASITE.ORG

The purpose of this Association is to preserve and protect for future generations the Upper Manistee River system and its drainage as a world-class natural resource.

The UMRA Annual Meeting will be Saturday, August 18 at 9:00 A.M. at the Bear Lake Township Hall. Please note, we have returned the meeting to the traditional, 3rd. Saturday in August.

President's Message

Dave Boberg

As I write this on July 4th, all I can say is HOT HOT HOT! And I am not talking about my barbeque. We have had some unseasonably hot weather on all the river systems up north. Most in the know recommend that we stay away from seeking trout when it's like this and let them chill in the cold deep water. Sounds like a good idea to me.

Although we aren't doing a ton of instream work this summer, at least physically, we are hard at it planning the next five summer's worth of in-stream work. As many of you have heard, UMRA was the recipient of a large State of Michigan HIA grant this year (see further info in this newsletter). The planning stages of that have begun. This will be a large three year project and we are happy to have Michigan TU and the DNR on the front end of figuring this all out.

Michigan TU is also partnering with us to start the planning of a big, and I mean big, five year project. This project will bring much needed love and work to the area between Yellow Trees Landing and the CCC Bridge Site. We will be working closing with many other conservation groups on this project for the labor. In addition we are partnering with them to go after big corporate and government financial donations. We will keep you posted on this one.

I had a chance to chat with DNR Fisheries Management Biologist, Mark Tonello, regarding the Grayling fish reintroduction. My interview is in the newsletter. It's pretty interesting stuff. The one thing that Mr. Tonello stressed to me was that even with all this careful planning and years of getting things right, there is still no guarantee or even an estimate of the success rate.

Several important events are coming up, which are listed later in the newsletter. I'm very excited to be part of The Kalkaska Conservation District's river clean up. This event sees two days of work in the areas downstream starting at Yellow Trees Landing. Look for their contact info in the newsletter.

Keep watching our Facebook page for upcoming events and pictures of our projects. That method of social media has really worked well for our correspondence with those of you that are looking out for the river like we are. Feel free to contact us at umra@umrasite.org. Have a great summer!

Upcoming Events

Friday, July 27, 9:00 a.m. Manistee River Cleanup, Yellowtrees Road to CCC Bridge, sponsored by the Kalkaska Conservation District. For more info visit www.Kalkaskaconservation.org, Volunteers needed

Saturday, August 4, 9:00 a.m. Manistee River Cleanup Rainbow Jim Bridge to Lucas Road (Missaukee Bridge) sponsored by the Kalkaska Conservation District. For more info visit www.Kalkaskaconservation.org, Volunteers needed

Saturday, August 18, 9:00 a.m. UMRA Annual Membership Meeting

Saturday, September 22 a Manistee River paddling river clean up is being sponsored by the Boardman River Clean Sweep Organization. Starting location and time is currently TBD. Contact us at umra@umrasite.org for more info. Watch our Facebook page for more details.

Saturday, September 29, Manistee River Water Quality/Bug Survey. Please contact Bob Thorsen at (248) 318 5220 or sockeyebob@att.net if you would like more information or to sign up.

Stream Projects

Jim Anderson

The summer of 2018 isn't as busy with River work as we have been in past summers. This summer work will continue on clearing the North Branch of the Manistee for navigation. Also work on Portage Creek continues in order to clear for navigation. The new boat slide at CCC has had some modifications installed. We receive complaints regarding various boat slides from users. In each case the complaint isn't anything within UMRAs capability to correct. The DEQ and DNR Natural Rivers permits are the agencies that impose the criteria/restrictions which causes users to voice complaints.

Talk about a major win, UMRA was recently awarded an \$88,000 Habitat Improvement Grant! The grant is for 3 years, 2018 mapping and permitting, 2019 and 2020 crews will be in the river working. The area habitat work to be done is between the lower end of the Tree Farm and Yellow Tree landing. 18 private property land owners within the reach targeted for work were sent letters asking for their support for the project and permission to do habitat work on their river property. 11 private land owners replied favorably. I'm sure submitting those letters of support were instrumental in receiving the grant. An initial float has been conducted with DNR fish biologist and Natural Rivers agents. 26 locations have been identified and more sites will be added this summer. Land owners will be contacted to explain the proposed habitat work and secure final land owner approval. DEQ and Natural Rivers permits will then be submitted for approval so work can commence during the summers of 2019 and 2020.

Activity in Portage Creek to clear the waterway for navigation and improved water flow



Portage Creek - Opening for Navigation



Simplify Fly Selection

Captain Chuck Hawkins

I remember way back (45 years ago) when I was learning to fly fish out west, the most intimidating facet of the sport was bugs. Pale Morning Duns, Blue Wing Olive, Green Drakes, I had no idea what these were or how to proceed in learning more.

Fast forward 35 years. One night during Hex and Brown Drake (the big bugs) season my son, Zach, was wade fishing while I was on the water, working. When all the guides and customers gathered in a friend's garage Zach was showing a picture of a nice brown that he landed that night. A customer of one of the other guides asked Zach "how did you know what fly to use"? Watching from across the room I wanted to make sure that Zach was polite and respectful. He said to the angler "just a moment sir, I'll be right back". Minutes later he returned with his fly box, opened it and told the angler "I catch the bug that the fish are eating, set it in my fly box and pick the bug that looks like the natural"! At 10 years old he had that figured out.

In Michigan fly selection is pretty simple if you have some basic information. The goal of this article is to give you that information. I want to help you simplify, reduce cost and avoid the junk! You don't need to know the name, habitat or the imitation. You can just compare the real bug to the ones in your box. If you populate your fly box with the imitations I recommend below most of the time you will have the imitation needed to fool the trout.

First let's list the major hatches that you are most likely to encounter. Understand that there are a lot more bugs that you may run into but this list is the bugs that you will encounter most of the time.

These major hatches are Hendricksons, Black Caddis, Sulphurs (2 sizes), Cahills, Mahoganies, Bat Flies, Isonychias, Grey Drakes, Brown Drakes and Hexes. Without going into bug habitat, hatch timing and life cycles let me give you the easiest, simplest way to be prepared for these hatches. The simplicity comes from purchasing or tying the correct flies, carrying them so that you can compare them to the natural and having the correct fly to match the hatch!

The flies that all Michigan anglers should have with them at all time are the following.....

A Hendrickson dun and spinner pattern, the female after mating has a prominent yellow egg sack. Make sure your fly does too.

A Black Caddis Adult and Egg Laying fly. The female Black Caddis has a very visible chartreuse egg sack, make sure your imitation does as well.

Get a good Bat Fly imitation. Look for oversized wings and a short, chubby body

Carry Robert's Yellow Drakes in every size from 18 to 4. This Michigan pattern, in different sizes, is a great imitation for Sulphurs, Cahills, Brown Drakes, Yellow Sallies and Hexes.

Adams, in size 10 and 12, is a great Grey Drake and Isonychias Dun imitation. This is a fly that was invented on the Boardman and is considered by many to be the very best dry fly in existence.

Another Michigan fly pattern, the Borchers should be available to you in size 10, 12, 14 and 16. It is a great imitation for a variety of insects like the Isonychia spinner and Mahoganies.

The above list will cover most of the hatches that you are likely to come across but it is not a complete list. If you want to get a little more sophisticated I'd add the following flies to my arsenal.

Many of our stoneflies can be successfully imitated with a fly called the Mattress Thrasher. Carry that fly in sizes 4 to 8

If you are a gluten for punishment, Tricos in size 18, 20, and 22

(article continued on the following page)

Blue Wing Olives can produce rises at times. Carry imitations in size 12-16

In addition to the imitations I've listed there is another little trick to help you successfully fool trout. Carry Adams, Stimulators and Goddard Caddis flies in size 12 to 18. Take a black permanent waterproof marker with you. Use the marker to change the flies to black. Then present the same size as the naturals to the fish. Usually they will eat it!

We are lucky to have a great reference book, Guide to Upper Midwest Fly Hatches, Ann Miller is the author. Ann has written a great reference book for our hatches describing both the bugs, life stages and fishing methods.

Take care of your flies by drying them before storage. If you do they will last until you wear them out (preferable) or lose them with errant casts!

Use this information to simplify your fly box and as an aid in your pursuit of fly fishing knowledge. You don't need to know the names of bugs or flies, the life cycle or the nuances of the hatch. All you need to do is remember what my son did, catch the natural and compare it to the flies from this list, pick the one that is the same size and color, tie it on and go get em! Good luck and have fun!

Status - Reintroduction of Graying into Michigan Waters Dave Boberg (DB) interviews Fisheries Management Mark Tonello (MT)

Dave recently had a conversation with Fisheries Management Biologist, Mark Tonello regarding the DNR's plan to reintroduce the Grayling to Michigan watersheds.

DB: So Mark, many people have been asking us what the status is of placing Grayling into the Manistee River Watershed.

MT: We really want to do this the right way this time based upon a lot of models we have studied. At this point we need to get a UV filter to place at the Oden Hatchery. It's really important to us that this money not come out of the general fisheries budget, so we are fundraising to purchase this.

DB: I had heard you were getting the eggs from Montana. Is this still the plan?

MT: We are still researching that as well. At this point we aren't that thrilled with the genetics of those fish. We have started looking instead at the Grayling in Alaska, as they seem to have better genetics and are very widespread.

DB: So the idea is to start with better genes, then the fish might do better.

MT: That's what we are hoping. Everything points to developing a great captive brood stock with great genes. That's what we want, to set the Oden Hatchery up perfect from the get go.

DB: So we have all kind of heard that the Grayling will be distributed somewhere in the Upper Manistee River Watershed. Is that still the plan?

MT: I have still not received final confirmation on the location. I would suggest that it is a good possibility they go into the Upper Manistee system, especially based upon our relationship with the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians on this project. However our Division Chief, Jim Dexter, says he is open to other ideas for deployment as well.

DB: When do you think we will see the Grayling in the rivers?

MT: This is a pretty tedious project, since we are really focusing on getting that good brood stock from day one. I would say once we develop that, it would be around three years until we are able to deploy them into a natural watershed. However this is crucial that we take our time and really get these initial steps right. We feel this is critical to the long term in-stream survival.

DB: Thanks very much. This was very informative.

Financial Update

Bill Dean

As of June 1st, we have 145 paid members. 38 individuals donated \$3,435 to the Foundation bringing our current balance to \$80,227.54 We've received several memorial donations. The checking account has a balance of \$55,187.54

2018 Dues

The annual dues are due at the beginning of each calendar year. If you have paid your 2018 dues, thank you ever so much. If you have not paid your dues, please do so utilizing the form below. If you're not sure if you made your 2018 dues, please contact us at umra@umrasite.org

The Upper Manistee River Association

P.O. Box 282
Grayling, MI 49738
www.umrasite.org

The Upper Manistee River Association offers the following membership levels:

- \$25 Family Membership
- \$30 Club / Commercial Membership
- \$100 Associate Membership
- \$250 River Steward Membership
- \$15 Sign Package, which includes a patch and a front license plate
- \$_____ Additional support for current projects
- \$_____ Upper Manistee River Foundation

Please consider the Upper Manistee River Association in your estate planning as well.

The Upper Manistee River Association is a 501 (c) (3) Corporation. Your contributions are tax deductible per IRS regulations.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Email address _____

River Address _____

Please check here if you prefer to receive all correspondence electronically.
You may go back to paper at any time by sending a request to umra@umrasite.org