



The *BUFFER*

The Newsletter of Buckeye United Fly Fishers, Inc., Cincinnati, OH
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Notes from the President

Jim Vota – vota@zoomtown.com

I believe we've just about all settled into the thought that our BUFF monthly meetings will be online for the remainder of 2020. It's not what any of us want, but reality says we can't, and we shouldn't meet as a large group in person. The safety of our club members is priority one. We can send messages or pick up the phone and contact our club buddies to set up fishing times. We need to be diligent and safe in doing this, but the great outdoors lets us do this with precautions. So, get your butts off the couch and head to the water. I've always found that I'm most relaxed around water. I think that most of you feel the same way.

I've been fishing here and there this past month. Mostly on the East Fork and the Little Miami rivers as well as a local lake/pond. My results have been satisfactory for the most part. A few smallmouth on the East Fork (biggest 14"). Rock bass, bluegill, crappie, largemouth (one 17 1/2"), smallmouth buffalo (> 6lb), and the one that got away (very large grass carp). Most of the fish of significance were caught on simple jig hook patterns that could resemble cray fish (hook size 2 & 1). Very simple patterns that take only a couple minutes to tie. Throw something together with rubber legs and rabbit zonkers on the back, some type of hackle body, a bright colored hackle collar and dumbbell eyes. Colors orange, olive/brown and black.

Since we are meeting online for the remainder of the year, here's the presentation schedule as it currently stands.

September – Rocky Cox, Fishing the Clinch River.

October – Rob Worthing , Tenkara (equipment and techniques)

November – Ron Lewis, Fishing the Mad River for trophy brown trout

We are also working on getting some additional presentations scheduled. These will be taking advantage of the skills of many of our club members. The first one will be Wednesday September 2nd at 7:00pm. Bill Schroeder will talk about local fishing opportunities on the Little Miami River and its tributaries. Other presentations will be steelhead fishing, musky and pike, and smallmouth fishing. We will try to do one additional presentation each month. Let me know if you have any other ideas. One idea that was brought up by a past president was to use some of the DVD's in the library and show them.

Unfortunately, trips for the near term have been cancelled. Sunnybrook contacted us and said they couldn't support the normal fall trip. The North Carolina trip has also been cancelled after discussion at the BOD meeting. Cancelling the trips is not something the BOD took lightly. However, member safety is our top priority.

I know it's early, but nominations for club officers for 2021 is coming up sooner than we may realize. If any of you have an interest in joining the board and would like to help shape the direction of the club please let me know. I've had the president's position for 3 years now. 2021 will be time to turn it over to someone new with different ideas. Without change nothing ever progresses. I think this pandemic is helping us to realize the need to change how we do things. Think about getting involved.

Food for thought, have you learned anything new? We have extra time on our hands this year. Choose a subject and learn it.

Jim Vota, El Prez.

PS. – Remember the online auctions. Get out there and check them out. Remember, the certificates are good through the end of 2021. There should be plenty of time to take the trip or redeem for merchandise. Upcoming auction dates and items are listed in this BUFFER.

Also, don't forget about your friends in BUFF. If you want to get out fishing, give someone a call to meet at a river. You can fish together safely. It is something to do to help keep the crazies away. There's a contact list on the website. If you are new to the sport and need help call someone and ask for advice. The board members are listed and are willing to help. We are all part of this community.

BUFF September Meeting on Wednesday, September 9th – Virtual Meeting via ZOOM –

September Speaker – Michael “Rocky” Cox of Rocky Top Anglers, “Fishing the Clinch River of East Tennessee”

Rocky was born and raised near Knoxville Tennessee. He grew up with wonderful places to play right in his own back yard. Countless miles of mountain streams and large, cold tailwaters provided endless playgrounds. Rocky's bio states that he never realized how much those years of playing in the water would influence my adult life. Growing up, he loved the peaceful excitement of fly fishing. It was his leisure-time activity, and he always thought about that next big trip to the mountains. Rocky



was also captivated by the guides he saw, rowing their anglers down river and finding those special places only accessible by drift boat. Guiding others and showing them the places he treasures would become a very rewarding career.

Since 1999, Rocky's been in the business of guiding fly anglers to east Tennessee's finest fly fishing destinations. I strive to please my clients and work very hard to make sure every day out on the water is a very special day. Being a professional fly fishing guide isn't always easy, but it is always rewarding and I'm truly blessed in doing what I love."

Rocky's presentation topic is the Clinch River of east Tennessee, including river logistics, the food base, information about local lodging, and float and wade information.

You can learn more about him and Rocky Top Anglers at their website, <https://www.rockytopanglers.com/>. There is a very nice video which introduces the area's fishing and services from Rock Top Anglers on the home page of their website.

- Meeting time is from 7 PM – about 8:30 PM. A brief business meeting will begin at 7 PM, and Rocky's presentation around 7:15.
- Registration deadline is September 8th.
- To attend, you must register on-line, and provide your e-mail address. Registrants will receive an e-mail with instructions on joining the Zoom session. If you are not registered, you will not be able to join in.
- All registrants are automatically entered into our monthly raffle. This month the raffle prize is a 6-wt TFO BVK fly rod.

How are the Virtual Meetings Working for You?

The BUFF Board of Directors recently sent out a club-wide e-mail asking for input on our virtual meetings. We are getting a good number of members signing up to attend, but actual attendance is much less; only about ½ of those who register, actually participate.

The Board would like to know reasons those who register decide not to participate. ***We are especially interested to know if some of you are having difficulty logging into the Zoom presentations. If so, we can try to help with this.*** We value your input and any suggestions. Please reach out to call or e-mail to any board member. Our contact information is on the BUFF website. Thank you!

BUFF COVID Relief Auctions Continue

BUFF directors recently authorized the **BUFF COVID Relief Program**, where we used club funds to purchase gift



certificates from vendors, providing income to our friends in the fly fishing industry while they were forced to close their businesses. BUFF continues to auction these gift certificates through our club website. The auctions give you the chance to win world-class fly fishing adventures and supplies at possibly bargain rates and help BUFF recoup our cash outlay. It's a win-win for our fly shop friends, BUFF, and BUFF members.

Only active BUFF members are able to participate in the auctions, which are run on our website. Bidding on and purchasing these items are a great way for BUFFers to stay connected with the sport and to plan towards better days ahead. Also, *all certificates are valid thru the end of December of 2021* (next year!), so there's plenty of time to let things settle and get scheduled.

Here is the schedule for the remaining auctions:

Dates	Vendor	Value	Description
8/31-9/6	Fuller's North Branch Outing Club	\$200	Lodging Credit
	Angler's Choice Flies Gift Certificate	\$100	Flies
	Golden Rule Fly Shop Gift Certificate	\$250	Store Credit
9/14-9/20	Lebowski's Tees	\$200	Logo Wear Clothing Gift Certificate
	Elk Springs Resort/Fly Shop Gift Certificate	\$430	Lodging or Store Credit
	Canoe Kentucky	\$100	Store Credit
	Eggman Flies	\$25	Gift Certificate
9/28-10/4	Pere Marquette River Lodge/Fly Shop	\$200	Lodging or Store Credit
	John Schmidt Trout Bum	\$400	Guided Trip + meals, snacks, flies
	Float Master Products Gift Certificate	\$100	Store Credit
10/12-10/18	Great Lakes Fly Fishing Company	\$125	Gift Certificate
	The Northern Angler Fly Shop	\$150	Gift Card
	Semper Fly Rods	\$125	Gift Certificate
10/26-11/2	River Tactical Flies	\$125	Store Credit
	Fly Masters of Indianapolis	\$100	Store Credit
	Eggman Flies	\$50	Gift Certificate
11/16-11/22	Independent Angler	\$125	Gift Certificate
	BlackJaw Tackle	\$125	Gift Certificate
	The Hook & Hackle Company	\$125	Store Credit

Help BUFF, our partner fly shops and yourself by getting in on the action. Bid "early and often" on one of more of these great fly fishing opportunities!

Soft Hackles

Ken Mandel (kengmandel@gmail.com)

I found this information for this article on soft hackle flies in a piece written and posted on the Gink & Gasoline website. The link to the full article is: <https://www.ginkandgasoline.com/gink-gasoline-fly-patterns/the-magic-of-soft-hackles/>

Soft Hackles Are the “Sharks” of the Fly Box

Like sharks, soft hackles are among the oldest types of flies we tie, and also like sharks, have changed little over the years from the original styles that were first tied. Finally, like sharks, which are superb hunters, soft hackle flies have remained fantastic lures for catching fish. Unfortunately, many anglers overlook these patterns, which remain as as effective today as ever.

Why are soft hackles effective? First, they are an ‘impressionistic pattern’. That is they resemble almost anything most fish seek and eat. Secondly, these are forgiving patterns to fish. The article emphatically states, that there’s “no wrong way to fish one”. Get it in the water, and it will attract and catch fish.

How to Fish Soft Hackles

The article suggests several ways to best fish these patterns.

- Dead drifting as a nymph is highly effective, but does not take advantage of some of the pattern’s unique properties of these flies.
- These flies can trap an air bubble in the hackle, allowing the fly to mimic emergers, so presenting on the swing is a common and productive way to fish the flies. The article has some specific suggestions of ways to enhance this property when fishing, and when tying different patterns.
- Casting across a current, and stripping back is also very effective. Again, the article shares information on techniques and coupling a soft hackle with another fly, such as a woolly buffer or caddis, so the soft hackle trails the first fly.
- Finally, applying some floatant allows the fly to be fished in the film, mimicking a floating nymph.

Tying Soft Hackles

The article’s main statement regarding tying soft hackles is that “it’s hard to tie one wrong”. One can utilize a range of colors and materials.

What is important is that while there are many options one can consider, the basic design of soft hackle flies is fairly simple. There is a body from the hook bend to about 2/3 of the shank length, a thorax, usually dubbing put on as a ball, and a hackle feather at the eye end of the hook. Variations can include adding a tail (often pheasant tail fibers), a bead head or dumbbell eyes for weight, and wing cases. Regardless, the basic form remains the same. Colors are across the palette. Black, brown and grey are classics, but bright colors like chartreuse, red and orange can serve as attractors. A couple examples of the latter were included in the article and I show them at the end of this summary.

- There are many options to use for body material. Suggestions include wrapped pheasant tail or peacock hurl (classic choices) various dubbing materials, and thread bodies.
- Traditionally, the thorax was made from wrapped peacock feather. Its iridescence adding brightness and flash suggesting a trapped air bubble. The article suggests that when using other materials, such as dubbing, consider materials with some inherent flash to provide a similar iridescence.
- The wrapped hackle is what defines this fly. Obviously, as implied in the name, it needs to be a soft material. Game feathers, such as partridge are a common choice, but hen, mallard and guinea hen all work well. Once cast, the hackle fibers lay back over the body, trapping an air bubble, and giving the fly movement and buoyancy. That is a key to its attraction and success. In selecting and adding hackle, the article recommends feathers with barbules about 1 ½ times the hook gap with and no longer than the hook shank. Also, sparser is better – two turns around the shank is enough.

Bottom line – experiment with sizes, materials, and colors. I encourage you to experiment with colors and materials and sizes.

The photos below, which I copied from the article, provide examples and variations that were suggested:



This variation uses a UV dub material for the thorax which adds visibility and flash



This is presented as a 'caddis' pattern

A couple of variations using beads – the one on the left has a tungsten bead head, the one on the right, uses bead-chain eyes.



This is described as an ‘attactor pattern’



This, which as an added tail, and a peacock herl body, is essentially a Coachman without the wing.

Fishing Adventures on our Home Waters & Getting Involved in an Important Project to Document the Fish in the Little Miami River Watershed

Bill Schroeder – BUFF-Little Miami River Co-Coordinator

It has been said when a door closes, a window opens somewhere (*or something to that effect*). I recalled this axiom when Covid-19 cancelled my trips to Yellowstone and Alaska which I had planned for this summer. When I finally stopped pouting, I began to circle back, searching for that “open window” —a backup plan to sustain and satisfy my passion for fly-fishing, and there it was, right in front of me — the opportunity to rediscover our home waters by planning and enjoying day trips I’d not previously done. And guess what? No airlines, lodging, guide fees, or out-of state licenses to buy. I’m beginning to like it already.

So I asked myself, and now ask you...“What do the Little Miami River, East Fork, Stone Lick, East Fork Lake, O’Bannon Creek, Turtle Creek, Todds Fork, Caesar Creek Headwaters, Caesar Creek Lake, Caesar Creek Tailwater and Massies Creek all have in common?” The answer is that they are all healthy streams and lakes, are loaded with fish; and all are less than 50 miles from here, within the Little Miami River watershed. **Photos included in this article show just some of the diversity of fish which can be caught in this river system.**



How many of those venues have I fished lately? Excepting the main stem of the Little Miami, my own answer is be only two of the eleven I listed. If your answer is anything other than *all of them*, your next fly-fishing adventure could be just ahead, with an open window of opportunity now in focus due to Covid 19. Like me, you likely have time and availability; a window of opportunity to plan and fish home waters.

Little Miami Conservancy Activity on Our Home Waters

One other thing these local home waters fishing venues have in common is they all are included in a year-long data collection project which is being undertaken by the Little Miami Conservancy (LMC), and is partially funded by an Aquatic Education Grant from Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Wildlife. LMC’s task is to recruit individuals, fishing clubs, schools and anyone who fishes any portion of the LMR or significant tributaries to catch to participate in the project.



Participants in this project (me and hopefully you) are asked to photograph and upload pictures of any fish caught in the LMR waters to the iNaturalist database, using their free app. iNaturalist is a worldwide nature database set up as a joint initiative by National Geographic and the California Academy of Sciences. It logs pictures of plants, animals, insects, or fish world-wide that users



photograph and submit, primarily using smart phones. The data obtained from these uploaded pictures can help fish biologists and other scientists determine the health of ecosystems (like those that exist in the Little Miami River), by identifying types of aquatic creatures, fish, animals and

plants found there, and where populations are most or least concentrated.

Sending data to iNaturalist is easily done with any smart phone, or a computer, it is a matter of a couple of clicks on the screen from the app. To date over 47 million observations worldwide have been submitted and cataloged in the iNaturalist database. Once a photo is received by iNaturalist, it is instantly processed and a preliminary identification is sent back to the submitter, usually in half a minute or less. When using your smart phone, additional data, including the date and time of the photograph, and location (identified from GPS coordinates captured by the device, is also included with the submission, providing additional important data to the iNaturalist database. The program continues processing the submitted data by seeking verification of its preliminary identification by



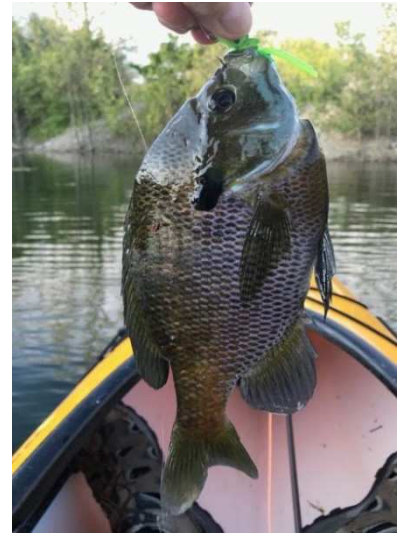
sharing the preliminary response with experts for confirmation. Once verified and confirmed observations are considered to be "research grade", which means they are considered to be reliable data which can be shared and used in other databases and by scientists working to better understand when and where organisms occur. This latter step can take several days. As a tool, iNaturalist offers an excellent means to assess the healthy existence and diversity of aquatic life in the LMR.

Historically, earlier studies have confirmed 179 species of fish are present in Ohio waters statewide. Of those, about 79 are believed to be present in the Little Miami River. That's nearly 45% of all fish species in the state, living right here in our home waters. That is an

amazing diversity of aquatic life for one river system. The LMC and ODNR are interested in obtaining updated data reconfirming species presently being caught in the LMR. The current project is designed to help accomplish that. At the same time, LMC and ODNR hope to attract new fishermen interested in Ohio fishing generally, and the Little Miami River in particular. Wouldn't it be fun to plan some home waters fishing adventures this fall, and also be a part of this study?

Well, get ready. You are cordially invited to do just that! If you are interested, please reach out to me by sending me an e-mail. I will send you specific instructions on how to upload the iNaturalist app to your smart phone, how submit information to iNaturalist, and how to tie into the LMR research program, so your entries will be included in this research. You can contact me at: bschroeder9999@gmail.com.

I hope many of you are interested and willing to participate. The more people who participate, the better the data we will obtain.



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Fishing the Little Miami

The fishable main stem of the Little Miami River is about 85 miles long, from its outflow from Clifton Gorge to its confluence with the Ohio River. Significant tributaries add more than 50 additional miles of fishable streams. The Little Miami Conservancy offers free maps of the main stem and tributaries of the Little Miami River system. These can be found and downloaded from the LMC website at: www.littlemiami.org.

Fishing from canoes or kayaks can allow access to areas not accessible from land, or difficult to wade. There are numerous wadable accesses on the main stem and tributaries as well. More information is available on the LMC website.



Smallmouth Fishing

By Tom Bachey (h2oguy@fuse.net)

Here is a link to a video on locating and fishing smallmouth bass. It is from the Midcurrent site. It differs a bit from what Parker shared with us in his presentation at last month's meeting. However, in this video, they are fishing in Alabama, so that may be the differences in part. In any case and interesting video to check out.

Link is: https://midcurrent.com/videos/creek-fly-fishing-for-smallmouth-bass-top-5-tips/?goal=0_8efbf3b958-6253c2b426-42952889&mc_cid=6253c2b426&mc_eid=d6b0365f8f

Tom said he was going to go out and try the techniques presented in the video, so if you watch it and are interested, contact him to see how he did!

Organizing Your Fly Box

By Ken Mandel (kengmandel@gmail.com)

Midcurrent published an interesting article outlining techniques for organizing fly boxes. They discuss types of flies to group together based on various considerations –

- Size and color of specific flies
- What the flies imitate – grouping flies which imitate similar bugs together.
- A system to help you remember the names of the flies.
- Grouping the same flies (colors, sizes) together so you do not have to look to see if you have used up all of a given type you brought on the water that day.
- Use boxes that best fit the flies. Small boxes for smaller flies and larger boxes to hold and space larger flies.
- If you have a large number of patterns organizing the fly box based on what pattern types can be helpful. For example, grouping imitator patterns, attractor patterns, search patterns, etc., together groups flies by their general classes.
- Alternatively, you can group flies by fly type. For example, grouping dries, nymphs, streamers, wets, etc. into groups.

Several other thoughts for organizing boxes are also in this overview. These include considering what you are going to fish for, and the season you are fishing.

Midcurrent is also offering a for-fee course on this topic. For the fee you get on-line access to a restricted site, all course



materials, and can take the course at your own pace.

The link to the overview, which contains a link within it to the fee-based course is:

<https://midcurrent.fliesforsale.com/how-to-organize-your-fly-box/?ffst=7oqlv-dvid>

BUFF Support for Improved Access on the Mad River Acknowledged

In this past February's BUFFER we wrote about our club's providing financial support for an initiative sponsored by Ohio Trout Unlimited and the Ohio DNR to purchase a plot of land along the Mad River and develop improved access for fishing (wading access and boat ramp). The location is the junction of OH routes 29 and 296, near Urbana. The development has been completed, and new signage posted, which includes recognition of our club's involvement. Here's the sign and a photo of the improved parking and access. We hope our members take advantage of this location.



May Flies – Video

Tom Scheer sent this video link. It is a 5+ minute video on the life-cycle of mayflies, which are in the taxonomic insect order Ephemeroptera. As explained in the video, the name means fleeting wings (ptera = wings; ephemero (derived from ephemeral) = fleeting or short lived). It reflects that the life span of the adult form of the mayfly is only about 24 hrs. The adults exist only as the reproductive form of the insect, while the majority of the mayfly's life is as an aquatic nymph. The video presentation is by two young women, 'The Bug Chicks', who teach insect biology. They are both entomologists, who received MS degrees at Texas A&M University. The video was in collaboration with Texas A&M University. It is a short, and simple video that discusses the life-cycle and adult and nymph forms of mayflies.

Check out the link - <https://vimeo.com/39801753>

BUFF Members Getting Out to Fish!

Cumberland River Tailwaters –

Tom Grindstaff sent the following together with the photos –

Jim Rombke and I made a trip to the Cumberland Tailwaters for a 2 day guide trip. We floated with Hagan Wonn of Cumberland Troutfitters. Hagan found where the fish were, it was up to Jim and I to hook 'em. First day was re-learning how to 'stick 'em', you know, the hook-set. What a great trip. Jim hit the trout trifecta - a brown, a brookie and a rainbow - all on Thursday. We missed many fish that day but still managed to catch a bunch. On Friday we did another area of the Cumberland Tailwaters and boated a bunch. According to our guide, we landed the second largest amount of trout in one day this year. Of course, we missed many fish; break-offs and missed stikes. Jim landed a 18 inch rainbow on Friday and I landed a 17 inch rainbow on Friday.



.....Tom's 17" Rainbow

Both fish measured by our guide.

If you want a fun trip with a great guide, give Hagan Wonn a call (606-219-0459) at Cumberland Troutfitters. (<https://www.cumberlandtroutfitters.net>)



.....Jim's Rainbow

Thunderstruck in the Mountains –

Hugh O'Donnell and Patrick Goddard sent this fishing experience –

While BUFF didn't have a North Carolina Trout Trip this spring, a few of us did venture on a trip to Bryson City in June. The weather was ideal, but the fish were unwilling compared to previous trips. That could have been the end of the story but fortunately we had arranged for private water guided fishing with the Tuckaseegee Fly Shop. This was the highlight of going to NC and one of the finest fishing trips available.

After a couple days of lackluster fishing early in the week, our Friday started at 6:30am when we met Dale and Preston at the Sylva shop. After a 30-minute drive towards Georgia and the southern side of the Nantahala Mountains, we turned right into the woods. For nearly 30 minutes, we drove on gravel roads up and down the mountain, through former logging land which has made a wonderful 30-year recovery. A thick tree canopy shaded small streams running down from the mountains which provided beautiful scenery on the drive into the wilderness. Near the end of the road we made a left turn and were faced with an unexpected sight. The gravel road ran right into the Nantahala River. Fortunately, Dale and his four-wheel drive made the two-foot deep crossing with ease. Once across the river we continued down the road, passing a few homes, and arrived at our destination.



The rustic million-dollar property features four buildings, a fenced in pasture, a sauna, and a 300-yard stretch of stream running through it. A rope bridge connects the four buildings for lodging, maintenance and a picturesque view of the stream. It also serves as a wonderful alternative to get your flies caught if you're tired of those pesky rhododendrons.

While not a wide stream, it is full of trout from fingerlings to 20 plus inch browns and rainbows. There are many sections of the stream that provide opportunities for different angling techniques. Long pools for dries, nice runs for nymphing, and a section in the national forest with smaller wild fish akin to the GSMNP. Our guides were true experts in fishing for trout. They quickly varied flies and techniques to ensure an almost continual tug on our lines. To my surprise, many of the twenty-inch trout have streamline shapes that must have develop for the fast-moving flows in the stream. These fish accelerated to full speed in a split second and are not your typical bulbous private water fish.

My favorite fish was hooked on a fifty-foot cast through a narrow window in the trees. The fly disappeared in the mouth of a truly aggressive fish. She swam fifty feet back to me in a blaze.





While drawing in line as fast as possible to maintain a tight line, she flew two feet into the air and traveled a distance like a bird in the air. As she swam away from me down stream, she again repeated this aerobic feat. I was so mesmerized by the fitness and size of this fish that I didn't respond to her next move. She turned ran towards me and then turned right to the far bank. Finding roots and tree limbs, her escape was quick. It's great to catch, but I love the fight, fitness and beauty of these incredible animals. I would take this type of fishing any day. As we had already netted about twenty fish each, it was the close to a great day of fishing.

While I have fished private water before, those experiences do not come close to the experience of the Thunderstruck. The truly private, isolated experience was a time to cherish and remember. I highly recommend a day or several days at Thunderstruck to get out and fish in our region of the country.

And for those with deep pockets, the property is for sale for a cool 1.2 million! Talk to the shop or check out realtor.com if interested. It's on Thunderstruck Lane :-)

A Few Other Photos of BUFF Members Getting Out to Fish –



Tom Scheer took his grandson up to the Au-Sable. Here's a brown trout he caught!



.....El-Prez-got-this-large-buffalo-on-the-
.....Little-Miami

Lindsay Leddy keeps getting out on fishing.
This one is from the Clinch River in TN.



**If you get out to fish, send a photo or two and we'll put them in upcoming
BUFFERS!**

Send photos, and a short description of where and when you were fishing and what you caught,
or even if you were just enjoying being on some water, to Ken Mandel (BUFFER Editor) at
kengmandel@gmail.com