



ANGLERS' EDGE

CONSERVING, PROTECTING AND ENHANCING COLORADO'S COLDWATER FISHERIES THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



Bi-Monthly Newsletter

West Denver Chapter of Trout Unlimited

June 2019, Vol. 25, No.3

www.westdenvertu.org



Our Mission

To conserve, protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

Our Vision

By the next generation, Trout Unlimited will ensure that robust populations of native and wild cold-water fish once again thrive within their North American range, so that our children can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters.

Who We Are

Founded in Michigan in 1959, Trout Unlimited today is a national non-profit organization with 150,000 members dedicated to conserving, protecting and restoring North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. Our staff and volunteers work from coast to coast to protect, reconnect, restore and sustain trout and salmon habitat on behalf of today's anglers and coming generations of sportsmen and women who value the connection between healthy, intact habitat and angling opportunity.

From forested rivers like the Farmington in Connecticut to the pristine waters of Alaska's Bristol Bay and all points in between, TU's work spans nearly a million miles of cold water all across North America. TU is the most effective coldwater fisheries conservation organization in the country. Donors invest in TU because we get things done on the ground, in statehouses and on Capitol Hill.

TU has a basic approach to its conservation strategy. First, we use the best available science to protect headwater spawning habitat for trout and salmon. We reconnect tributaries with their rivers to ensure resilience, and we restore waters where development has impacted trout and salmon and the opportunity to fish for them. Second, we sustain our work on the ground by:

- Using the best science to drive conservation priorities
- Promoting and maintaining a strong legal and regulatory framework to protect fish and fishing opportunity
- Connecting with passionate anglers who want to give back to the resource they value so much
- Increasing our ability to engage TU members in conservation by training, educating and building a strong community of angler advocates
- Connecting with generous donors and helping them give to the fish they cherish and the places they love
- Helping members connect and communicate with one another via our website, TROUT Magazine and the TU Blog

From the Penobscot in Maine to the South Fork of the Snake in Idaho and west to the Klamath in Oregon and California, TU and its staff and volunteers work on the ground in hundreds of places, protecting, reconnecting and restoring trout and salmon habitat for the benefit of today's anglers and generations to come.

If you're interested in becoming a part of TU and giving back to the fish and the places you value, become a member and help us 'save the world, one trout at a time.'

West Denver Chapter Trout Unlimited Organization And Officers: 2019

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Anglers' Edge

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Editor:	Alexa Metrick	rosyranunculus@gmail.com
Assistant Editor/ Advertising Mgr:	Jon Weimer	303-830-1609
Photography:	Dr. John Pern	
Circulation:	Jackie Edwards	303-278-2282
	Linda Miyamoto	303-423-5616

We want your contributions such as guest editorials, letters to the editor, photographs, big fish photos, trip reports, etc. Send them to the editor via email at rosyranunculus@gmail.com.

Women's Casting Meet Up!



Join Us!

Ladies, come on out and learn how to rig up and cast with some fun gals from Colorado!

Bring your rod or borrow one of ours. Anyone is welcome! Free wine provided!

This event is being held before West Denver Trout Unlimited meeting on Wednesday, May 29th, from 6pm to 6:30pm. Meet at the American Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden.

The President's Message

Anticipation. Is that what fly fishing is about? Yes, Bill Fitzsimmons, former owner of the Taylor Creek Fly Shop, told me one day many years ago. I was chatting with him in his shop when he asked me to go fishing with him. Well, not to actually fish with him, but to take some pictures of him fishing.

It was February, and the snow banks along the upper Frying Pan were around 8 feet high. It was cold, so we warmed up with a little Miller Hi-Life and peppermint schnapps.

Finally, Bill was ready to fish. His back cast cleared the snow banks with ease, and he quickly caught one of the rainbows that were rising to midges on the far bank. Anticipation fulfilled.

I hope you all are full of anticipation for summer activities. In addition to fishing, summer and fall are the seasons of stream conservation work. Our Chapter members will be involved in:

- Native trout re-introduction
- Stream cleanups
- Water quality sampling
- Bug life censuses
- Stream temperature monitoring
- And more

Check our website www.westdenvertu.org regularly, and watch for email blasts about volunteer opportunities. I am anticipating a great season of fishing, volunteering, and fun! BTW, if you are not getting regular emails from West Denver TU, sign up on our website. If you have signed up but are missing our emails, check your spam folder and put West Denver Trout Unlimited in your safe senders list.

Tight lines!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Calmer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "E" at the beginning and a "C" at the end.

Group It Up!

by Jon Weimer

Eons ago, I graduated from high school at 17 years of age. I could have gone to college then—my high school grades were good (National Honor Society) as were my college entrance test scores. In fact, as I recall, I had received a half-tuition scholarship to any state-supported college/university in Colorado. However, neither my father nor I felt I was mature enough to head off to college. So, I joined the Navy. After all, I had seen all the Frank Sinatra/Gene Kelly movies and knew what a great time sailors had: traveling the world, having a girl in every port, etc. Well, I went to boot camp in San Diego, to some special school in some God-forsaken town in Maryland, and then sent down to Washington, D.C. to work at the U.S. Naval Security Station. I never went abroad. In fact, I never went on a ship because back in those days it was feared that if we “Navy Security types” were captured on the high seas by an enemy, we would be forced to cough up valuable secrets (yeah, right).

So, I was stuck in an office. Although I was dealing with top secret stuff, I was bored to death. To stave off boredom, I decided to join the local Naval District Command’s boxing team (I had boxed for several youth clubs while growing up in both Denver and Colorado Springs). Our coach and trainer was a grizzled old boatswain mate called Swenson. I can’t remember if that was his first or last name but, of course, we called him Swen. He was a nice guy, although a little rough around the edges and not the most articulate fellow on earth. He was just full of homilies and aphorisms, most of which no one understood. One of his favorite sayings was.... “Group it up!” You’d be sitting on a stool between rounds as he patched you up; then he would give you a pat on the butt, say “Group it up,” and send you off. I would nod enthusiastically, jump off the stool to meet my opponent, not really knowing what Swen had just said. And I was too embarrassed to ask him what he meant. When I asked my teammates what Swen meant, I got about as many interpretations as we had team members (I think there were about 11-12 of us at the time).

Swen, I’m sure, is long gone. I was only on the team for about a year. Unlike my teammates—whose sole job appeared to be boxing for the Navy—I had a “real” job, and had difficulty finding time to train and box, so I quit. I lost contact with my teammates long ago. But, occasionally, I pause and reflect

on my halcyon days of youth and my association with Swen. About a decade ago, I had an epiphany and thought I knew what Swen was really trying to convey with his “Group it up” instruction. Swen was big on teamwork and mutual support. I remember he would occasionally take some of us out for a few beers and, after a few brews, would rattle on about how important it was for us to support each other—even if a member wasn’t scheduled to box on a particular night, Swen wanted that guy there to support those members who were boxing. So, I think Swen’s “Group it up” overture was a variation of the “one for all, all for one” motto you sometimes hear. I’m not sure how much all of this sank in with the guys since we were occupied in guzzling as much beer as we could on his tab.

The point of this long-winded tale relates to our chapter’s need to incorporate more volunteers into our activities. Hey, people, West Denver represents a great group! Among the 24 chapters within the state, we’re the most accomplished in terms of honors and awards received and in terms of number of events and activities we oversee. But in order to maintain this high standard, we need more volunteers, more people to step up and help the group. I’m fully aware of the fact that some of you have job and family responsibilities that may curtail the amount of time you can spend with us—but just 4 to 5 hours a calendar year would be invaluable.

We have something for everyone: for example, working with youth, conservation/restoration projects, and humanitarian activities. And, as I’ve said before, fundraising is a necessary evil in order to fund our youth, conservation, and humanitarian efforts and, consequently, we’re always in need of members to help us raise money as well.

A common phenomenon with organizations (it’s not unique to us) is that a relatively small number of members do a disproportionate amount of the work. I’d like for us to try to break that paradigm and get more members involved. Again, we don’t need an inordinate amount of time from you—anything you can offer us would be extremely helpful. Call President Ed Calmus (303-744-2940 or 720-257-8218), and he will fill you in on more details about these various activities. So, if you’re considering whether or not to volunteer, just remember what old Swen would say: “Group it up!”

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In a desert, I learned to fish

Dams, invasive species and roadways. All this, so I could go fishing.

by Maya L. Kapoor/*High Country News*

After a lifetime of recreational pacifism, I hooked my first catch. Kneeling on the sandy gravel beside the lake, I pinned the fish to the ground with my left hand and gripped a slender knife in my right. Then, I paused. I knew, in theory, how to cut off the head of a fish. But when I actually held a fish in my hands, I hesitated, a cold wind raising goosebumps on my arms. I huddled over the motionless trout with my back to the sun. I had no idea what I was doing.

I had no idea what anyone else there was doing, either. Arizonans, I'd recently learned, love fishing. Arizonans love fishing to the point of damming creeks, moving earth, building lakes, and trucking fish in, just to catch them. In 2001, while the U.S. economy sank, people in Arizona spent more than \$800 million on fishing-related costs, from rods and reels to lodging and fuel. Native Arizona trout species face extinction, thanks in part to the competition, inbreeding and predation of the browns and rainbows introduced for sport. But no matter: brown and rainbow trout flourish in Arizona's built water systems, including reservoirs, urban lakes and streams. Brown trout were originally a European species; rainbows evolved in rivers on the West Coast of North America, near the Pacific Ocean.

The more I tried to understand fishing in Arizona, the less sense it made to me. I preferred waterways undammed, species locally unique. Then, a few years ago, I spent a weekend in a cabin near Rose Canyon Lake with three other anglers. At the water's edge, I tried out bobber fishing—the kind you do on a sleepy Sunday, not exactly *A River Runs Through It* material—to see if I could make sense of the practice of this sport in such an arid place.

It was February, and Rose Canyon Lake, in the Santa Catalina Mountains north of Tucson, was peaceful. Young ponderosas and manzanitas leaned in from the edges of the canyon, jays calling from their branches; cattails fringed the water, their white fluff floating in the breeze. Patches of snow lingered in the shade, and sheets of ice covered the shallows, even as sunlit ripples sparkled across the lake.

During the high season, May to October, anglers crowd the water's edge for a fishing spot, but that morning I counted only three other groups. Four men in Army fatigues heckled each other on a dock across the lake. Once in a while their voices carried, as they teased one another about the size of their catches ("That's not a fish! I don't know what that is!")

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Volunteers Needed for Father's Day Cookout

We need volunteers help with WDTU's Fathers Day Cookout at Bass Pro. The dates are June 15th and 16th. We will be setting up at 9:30 and sell until about 4:00. We need 6 people per day. If you are interested in volunteering contact Tim Toohey at tim2e@comcast.net or 303.423.8636.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Women's Casting Meet Up!

May 29th, 6:00pm to 6:30pm

Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden



Ladies, come on out and learn how to rig up and cast with some fun gals from Colorado! Bring your rod or borrow one of ours! Anyone is welcome! Free wine provided! This event is being held before West Denver Trout Unlimited meeting! Join us!

June Chapter Meeting

May 29th, 6:30pm to 9:00pm

Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden

Speaker: Levi Lambert

Topic: South Platte river: tactics for fishing technical tailwaters



Levi Lambert grew up in Western Montana, fishing the rivers & creeks of the Bitterroot Valley and surrounding areas. After graduating from the University of Montana, he and his wife

moved out to Colorado and live on the S. Platte river near the town of Deckers. His passion for teaching the technical aspects of fly fishing and providing anglers with the tools to improve their overall fishing experience is what led him to become a full time guide. Levi spends a majority of his time fishing and guiding on the South Platte River. Website: <https://www.minturnanglers.com/levi-lambert-minturn-anglers-fly-fishing-guide-profile/>



Chris Carroll is a U.S. Forest Service Fisheries Biologist and Crew Lead in the Clear Creek Watershed. We partner with him to install and monitor temperature probes in Clear Creek and its tributaries. Chris will present a brief presentation on the data collected last year from the probes. He will also talk about opportunities to work with the Forest Service this year.

Canned Food Drive

Bring a non-perishable food item to our Chapter meeting and get a raffle ticket for a chance to win a fabulous prize. All food items donated will be given to the Arvada food bank. Please be generous.

Windy Peak

June 6th, 7:45 am to 5:00 pm

Windy Peak Outdoor Lab

Windy Peak is Jefferson County's Outdoor School, located near Bailey. West Denver TU teaches classes in conservation, stream entomology, and fly tying.

June Board Meeting

June 10th, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Golden Public Library, 1122 Washington Ave, Golden

Nature Writing Book Club

June 26th, 6:00pm to 7:00pm

American Alpine Club Library, Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden

* see page 12 for book selections

July Board Meeting

July 8th, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Golden Public Library, 1122 Washington Ave, Golden

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nature Writing Book Club

July 24th, 6:00pm to 7:00pm

American Alpine Club Library, Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden

* see page 12 for book selections

Chapter Picnic

August 7th, 4:00pm to 9:00pm

In lieu of our regular chapter meeting, join us for an evening picnic at Lions Park in Golden, Wednesday, August 7, 2019. We are gathering at the East Pavilion in Lions Park. We will set up at 4:00 pm and plan to eat at 5:30 – 6:00 pm. Attendees are asked to bring a side dish to share. An extra table will be set up for hot dishes near electrical outlets for crock pots, etc. The chapter will furnish chicken, soft drinks and water, and eating utensils, etc. BYOB if you wish, but no glass please. The “No Glass” rule will be strictly enforced by Golden’s park officers. Please contact Jackie for more information, jaxedw@gmail.com

August Board Meeting

August 12th, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Golden Public Library, 1122 Washington Ave, Golden

Nature Writing Book Club

August 28th, 6:00pm to 7:00pm

American Alpine Club Library, Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden

* see page 12 for book selections

September Chapter Meeting

September 4th, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden

September Board Meeting

September 9th, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Golden Public Library, 1122 Washington Ave, Golden

Fly Tiers' Night Out

September 17th, 7:00pm to 8:30pm

Grand Lake Brewing, 5610 Yukon Street, Arvada

West Denver TU and Grand Lake Brewing host a fly

tying night on the third Tuesday of the month, from August through June. Besides craft beer, they have a full menu. All levels of tiers are welcome.

Nature Writing Book Club

September 25th, 6:00pm to 7:00pm

American Alpine Club Library, Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden

* see page 12 for book selections

October Chapter Meeting

October 2nd, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Am Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden

October Board Meeting

October 14th, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Golden Public Library, 1122 Washington Ave, Golden



Fantasy Raffle Winner!

This year's Fantasy Raffle winner is Steve Toon and his wife Susan of Golden CO. Congratulations!



Volunteer at Windy Peak Outdoor Lab

West Denver TU introduces sixth graders from across Jefferson County to stream ecology, aquatic entomology, conservation, and fly tying through the Windy Peak Outdoor Lab program. WDTU volunteers travel up to the Windy Peak site (outside of Bailey near Wellington Lake) one day per week and teach two classes: one in the morning, one in the afternoon. Windy Peak provides lunch with the students and teachers.

Each WDTU team is comprised of three volunteers:

Discussion Leader: leads a 45-minute discussion of what Trout Unlimited and the West Denver Chapter does, water habitat, trout species, etc...

Fly Tyer: spends 45 minutes teaching how to tie a San Juan Worm and Wooly Bugger or Orange Asher

Helper: assists during the fly tying and fishing segments

If you'd like more information or would like to volunteer, please contact Mark Story (mastory@comcast.net).

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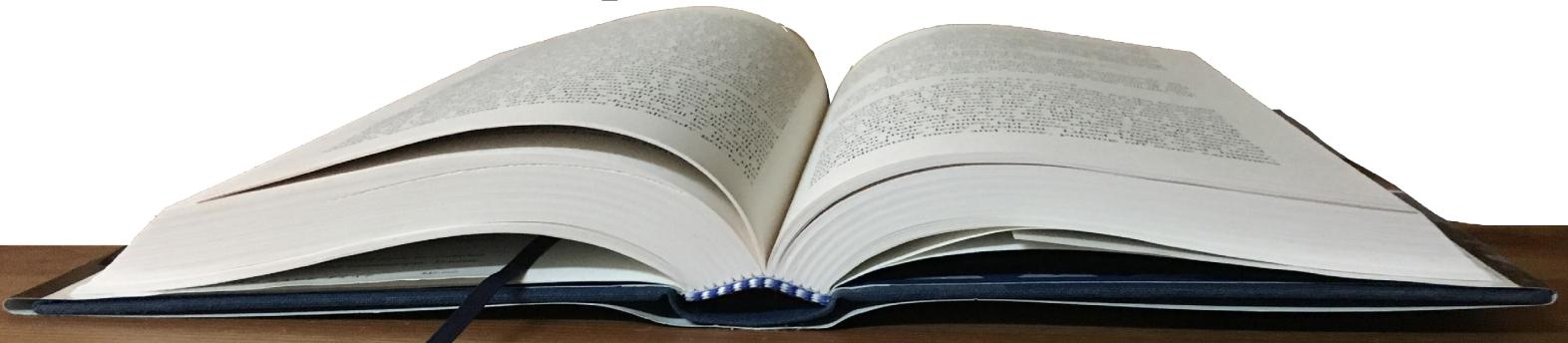
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Nature Writing Book Club:

An Exploration of the Canon



We are partnering with the American Mountaineering Center and *Pack Animal Magazine* to launch a nature writing book club! We'll meet from 6:00pm to 7pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month at the American Alpine Club Library in the American Mountaineering Center, 710 Tenth Street, Suite 15, Golden, CO 80401.

The reading schedule has been set through April of 2020; feel free to read just one or all of the month's selections. Everyone is welcome. Coffee and tea will be available.

Wednesday, June 26:

Upstream by Mary Oliver

Why I Wake Early by Mary Oliver

Just Before Dark by Jim Harrison

Wednesday, July 24:

The Western Paradox: A Conservation Reader by

Bernard DeVoto

H is for Hawk by Helen Macdonald

Wednesday, August 28:

How to Raise a Wild Child: The Art and Science of

Falling in Love with Nature by Scott D. Sampson

An American Childhood by Annie Dillard

Wednesday, September 25:

Welcome to the Anthropocene by Alice Major

Writing the Sacred into the Real by Alison Hawthorne

Deming

Confessions of a Recovering Environmentalist by Paul

Kingsnorth

Wednesday, October 23:

Run, River, Run; A Naturalist's Journey down One of the Great Rivers of the American West by Ann Zwinger

The Necessity of Empty Places by Paul Gruchow

Wednesday, November 27:

Rain: Four Walks in English Weather by Melissa Harrison

On Trails: An Exploration by Robert Moor

NO DECEMBER MEETING

Wednesday, January 22:

Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature edited by William Cronon

Wednesday, February 26:

Animals Strike Curious Poses by Elena Passarello

Biophilia: The Human Bond with Other Species by Edward O. Wilson

Wednesday, March 25:

Confessions of a Barbarian by Edward Abbey

The Land of Little Rain by Mary Austin

Wednesday, April 22:

A Sand County Almanac by Aldo Leopold

Wilderness and the American Mind by Roderick Frazier Nash



Want to help ensure a bright future for Colorado fly fishing
and West Denver Trout Unlimited?

Volunteer your time!

We have openings for:

Chapter Secretary

- Attends Board meetings
- Takes minutes
- Performs administrative tasks as directed by leadership

Vice President

- Provides support and assistance to the President in order to achieve the mission of the Chapter
- Fills in when the President is absent
- Learns, and evaluates a desire, to become President (you are not committing to the Presidency)

Too much? We have openings for team members on our Education team, Special Events team, Marketing and Communications team, and Membership Development team. Contact President Ed Calmus at 303-744-2940 to learn more!

Get involved! Your contribution will be rewarding for both you personally and for our Chapter.

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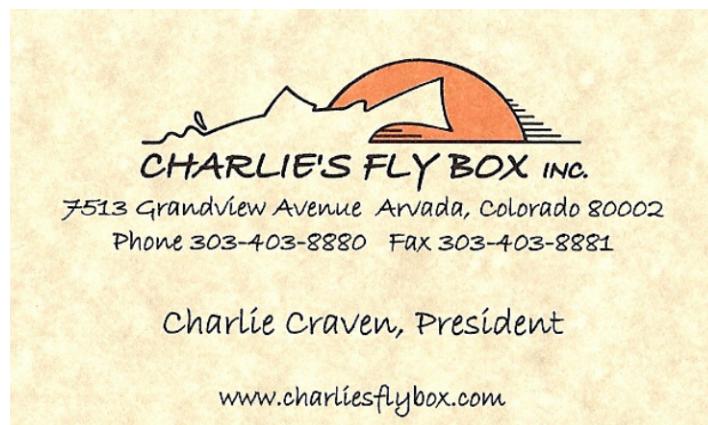


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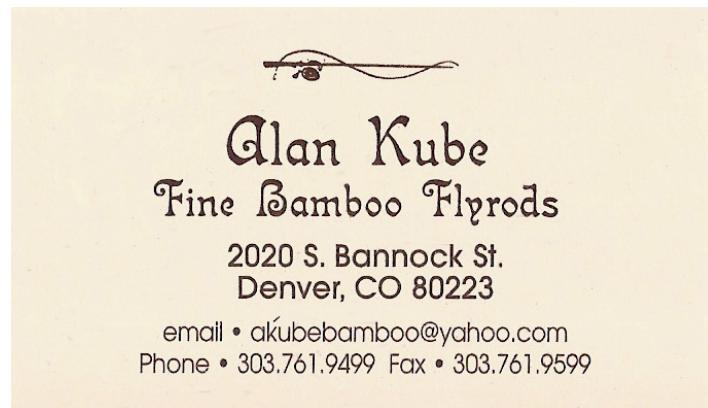


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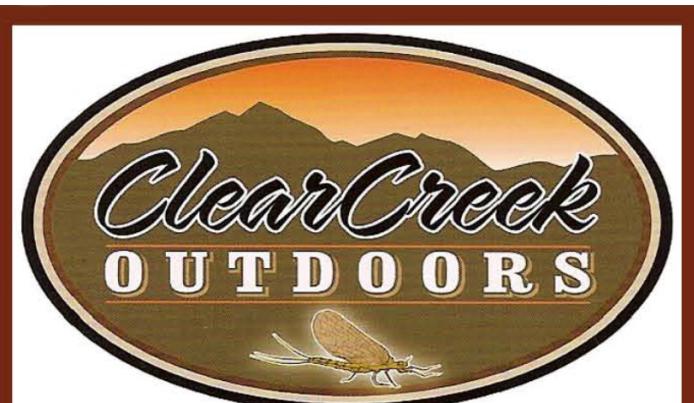
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In a desert, I learned to fish

continued from page 7

and the relative hopelessness of their fishing techniques. To my left were two peaceable old men in dirty leather cowboy hats. “You *never* take more than your catch allowance, right?” they drawled at us. “*That* wouldn’t be right.” On our right, too far away to hear, three young Latino fathers and their little boys fished, occasionally shooting a BB gun at the sky. When nothing bit, the children giggled and chased each other into patches of sun, keeping warm.

The fish I’d caught gleamed in the morning light. The most natural motion seemed to be sawing a line under its pectoral fins, like slicing a loaf of bread. “Do it fast,” said Jess, a short, fit woman with blond hair who was a native fish researcher at the University of Arizona and my teacher for the weekend. “Don’t saw!” A quick decapitation was a humane decapitation. In theory, the fish was dead already, but there was a small chance that snapping its back hadn’t kill it. Lacking a trout-sized guillotine, I held my breath, pressing the blade into the trout’s flesh.

Brown trout always sounded to me like the name of a muddy animal consigned to silted ponds, something named in opposition to its prettier, more popular, rainbow sister. But my brown trout was beautiful, with leopardine spots on skin that shone silver in the sun, flashes of crimson under its gills. The trout was surprisingly soft under my cold palm, its skin like silk against my own. I had expected it to feel dead — rough, cold, stiff, like something that came out of the grocer’s freezer. Instead, under my hand, I felt taut skin binding lithe muscle into form. I didn’t want to admit this to Jess or the others in my group, but I was enchanted by the fish. My fish was a survivor, too, at least until I hooked it: According to the Arizona Game and Fish Department, brown trout released in Rose Canyon Lake took several years to grow to its size.

My fish was part of Arizona’s giant angler economy. In better weather, wildlife managers dropped fish into Rose Canyon Lake about once a month, and just as quickly, anglers pulled them out again. The trout before me, motionless on the shoreline, existed for what is called *put-and-take* fishing. On a published schedule, hundreds of 11-inchers were thrown into the lake, along with the occasional “incentive” fish—giants bred at the state hatcheries. With my \$63 non-resident fishing permit, I had become a part of that economy. I wondered what else I was part of now. If these fish were grown indoors and stocked outside for me to catch, was this an escape from, or an extension of, my urbanized life?

I sat back on my heels, wiped the bloody knife clean on my jeans, and grinned at the fish head gazing up at me from the ground. Jess, who had lent me her knife, was not impressed. “You’ve got to be careful closing your eyes,” she said. “Sometimes the body jumps. You could cut your hand.” I did not tell Jess that the first time I tried to open a can of sardines, I ended up getting stitches. Instead, I proudly studied my bloody handiwork. Where there had been one whole fish, two pieces now lay in the dirt. I was now a participant in a quintessential American pastime, the catching and eating of a meal. This wasn’t just so I could text my siblings pictures of fish guts while they were at work (though I did); I wanted to have the full fishing experience—to take responsibility for my catch by turning it into dinner. How else would I understand the culture of fishing, where this kind of thing was normal? Plus, to be honest, my diet was mostly vegetarian, and I really just wanted to eat some fish.

One of my neighbors, a middle school science teacher in his 40s, did not understand why I had never been fishing before. He told me his grandfather had taken him when he was a kid. I explained that my grandfather had been a vegetarian.

“What are you,” he asked, “Pentecostal or something?” His question confused me. Were Pentecostals vegetarian? I had a vague idea they did something with snakes.

“We’re Hindu,” I said. Later, other friends assured me that vegetarianism was not a Pentecostal tradition. It was a Hindu one, though. My family was extremely open-minded about personal interpretations of our traditions (my parents loved a good steak), but I had been vegetarian on and off for 21 years at the time of my fishing trip. I was willing to relax my food rules, though, if it would bring me closer to understanding why we had a recreational fishing industry in the desert.

“Put the knife in *here*,” Jess said, indicating the orifice through which the fish, until recently, conducted its reproductive business. “Then hold the knife at an angle and cut up.” I held the fish on its side and slid the knife into the flesh, then pushed it away from my abdomen and through the sternum. The fish fell open like a book; together, Jess and I read the chapters of its life. “It’s female,” Jess said, digging the fish’s ovaries out from where they lay underneath the digestive system. “Look — full of eggs.” Jess handed me a translucent orange sac, long and skinny like a tiny hot dog, crammed with little shining beads. “She’s early to be this fertile. It’s only February.” She was ready to breed when she swallowed the hook.

"Here's her liver, I don't know what it's doing up *here*," Jess continued, indicating a dark, smooth organ. I held the glistening liver in my fingers. The stomach was a rubbery white tube shaped like a flower on one end. The swim bladder, deflated, barely showed against the fish's back.

After I'd removed everything, I ran the back of my thumb nail up the fish's spine, bottom to top, the way I had seen Jess do with other fish, scraping out the last of the congealed blood. There. My fish was clean — minus the dirt, gravel and dead grass pasted all over it.

It would have been easy for me to discount my trout, to look around and reject the whole situation. Environmental economists talk about existence value, how something can matter to people even if they never get to see it. Polar bears had existence value to me. So did whales. On a local level, so did native biodiversity. Native desert trout, formed by our capricious waterways, impressed me with their strength of body, their endurance. Whether or not I ever saw a Gila trout or an Apache trout—Arizona's state fish—in the wild, I wanted to know they were out there, streaking through clear water, stalking caddis flies, leaning into currents. Other Arizonans agreed: Our endangered species management was funded by a voter-approved measure that apportioned some of the state's lottery tax for conservation.

I asked Jess if the remnant of the natural creek feeding Rose Canyon Lake harbored native fish species. Her answer was no; the lake was artificial, and prior to its construction, no trout swam on Mount Lemmon. Here, in high mountains looming above the Sonoran Desert, we built a lake and put in fish. We put in roads, walkways, docks; added crayfish; built houses; shot some animals; raised and released others. All this, so I could go fishing. There may not have been native fish swimming around the creek burbling nearby as I sat flicking entrails into cattails, but their ghosts nibbled at the edges of my conscience. If the point of managing Arizona's water systems was to protect native biodiversity and natural systems, then Rose Canyon Lake was a spectacular failure.

But if the point was getting people out of the city and into the forest, Rose Canyon Lake was a success. Across the West, the story was more complex than recreational fisheries competing with native trout fisheries. All of the region's trout species, whether introduced or native, depend to some extent on human husbandry. Like rainbows and browns, native trout live in water left over from thirsty crops and cities. Native

trout, too, come from fisheries, where managers struggle to keep the fish's behavior wild, their genetics diverse. Native trout take rides by mule, backpack, even helicopter, to be stocked in their historic ranges, then rescued from fires. Perhaps this is the truly quintessential American pastime: managing all of our outdoor landscapes, deciding what lives where, and why.

Jess instructed me to wash off my fish. I held the trout in my palms and dipped her gently in the lake. The frigid water made my hands ache; cursing earnestly, I swished the fish, then tossed her onto the frozen shallows to keep cool. I rubbed my benumbed fingertips and looked around for something non-fishy to eat. To catch one fish and kill it wasn't the point of learning to fish. I was genuinely trying to adopt a hobby, at least for a day. So after a snack, I baited my hook with a new smorgasbord of fish treats — fake maggots, salmon eggs, something that looked like orange play-dough.

"Aim for right next to that big log," Jess said. "If I were a trout, that's where I would live."

I decided that if I did catch another fish—which seemed unlikely, given that I felt guilty even looking at the live earthworms Jess brought, and that I wasn't having any luck with any of her fluorescent artificial baits, not even the sparkly pink one or the fake salmon eggs laced with something called "SEXattract"—I would release it. I wondered if I could release, too, all of the contradictions swirling inside me. To the part of me that enjoyed the adventure, release meant finding a way to live in the landscape, not just near it. But perhaps I also needed to release my idea of untrammeled nature. Managed landscapes and wild landscapes are strung by a taut line. Increasingly, as Arizona's population grows and its climate becomes hotter and drier, Arizonans will choose what swims in our water, and even where that water flows.

I carried my rod to a flat spot on the water's edge, looked around to make sure no other humans were close enough for me to hook, and snapped out a cast that smacked the water right in front of me. Swearing luridly—I seem to have gotten that part of fishing down—I turned my reel, bringing in the hook so I could try again.

Maya L. Kapoor is an associate editor for High Country News. This story was originally published at High Country News (hcn.org) on June 21, 2018.



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Trout Unlimited

“Founded in 1959, TU is the leading conservation organization dedicated to conserving, protecting, and restoring, North America’s trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. Our 100,000 members are organized into 450 local chapters nationwide. These volunteer chapters are the “watchdogs” of their local rivers and streams. They conduct stream restoration projects, monitor legislation, and fight for “fish friendly” policies with state and local officials. Through its Washington DC-based national headquarters, TU conducts valuable scientific and economic research to foster more enlightened trout and salmon management practices, lobbies to strengthen environmental legislation like the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act, and provides a voice for its 100,000 members.”

West Denver Trout Unlimited

The West Denver Chapter, Trout Unlimited (WDTU, TU chapter #130) is a member-driven 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is conserving, protecting, and enhancing Colorado’s coldwater fisheries through volunteerism, education, and outreach.

WDTU was founded in Colorado in 1974, and now has over 900 members across western metro Denver, including Lakewood, Golden, Morrison, Englewood, Littleton, Wheatridge, and Arvada. Our conservation and community outreach projects include the restoration and water quality monitoring of Clear Creek, Jefferson County school programs, and Joseph’s Journey. The chapter’s membership meets regularly at the monthly chapter meeting (except July). These meetings are free and open to the public.

WDTU’s governance also relies directly upon its members, who generously volunteer their time and effort to achieve the chapter’s mission. The WDTU Bylaws provide details on the chapter’s governance. The chapter’s Board of Directors has a board meeting every month (separate from the chapter meeting). Members are welcome to attend board meetings and are encouraged to volunteer to be an Officer or Director.



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A Note About Email Address Changes

Please notify us whenever you change your email address, snail mail address and/or telephone number so we can communicate with you quickly and efficiently.

Linda Miyamoto

sullimoto@gmail.com

WDTU Shirt Logo

Jackie Edwards has made arrangements with a vendor to have an official WDTU logo imprinted on your shirt for just \$5. This program was initiated several years ago and has gained popularity. You simply need to bring your shirt to the next Chapter meeting and give it to Jackie. She will take care of the rest.

WDTU Chapter Board Meetings

Note:

Chapter Meetings are held at the American Mountaineering Center, 710 10th Street, Golden, Colorado 80401
 6:30 - 7:00 PM: Welcoming-Fly Tying Demo
 7:00 - 7:30 PM: Chapter Business
 7:30 - 8:45 PM: Speaker

Board Meetings are held at the Golden Library, 1019 10th St, Golden, CO 80401

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