



Handle Spring Salmon with Care

by Jenny Reid

Spring is here and soon the ice will be running from the river! As the water warms, the fish in the river become more active and begin feeding. For adult Atlantic salmon kelts, it has been a long wait. Many of these fish have not eaten since last year when they entered the river in June, and have lost up to 50% of their body weight since the fall. Last season, as they traveled up river, they held in cool water pools all summer, spawned and then waited under the ice for spring to arrive. Now that the water is warming, they have started to feed on anything they can find, minnows, brook trout and smelts. That is one of the reasons that spring fishing is enticing - the fish are hungry and they will take a fly easily.

Spring salmon (kelts), can be angled and released alive provided they are handled with care. During the joint kelt tracking study between the Atlantic Salmon Federation and the Miramichi Salmon Association conducted last season, kelts were angled in spring and underwent surgery to have an acoustic transmitter installed in the abdominal cavity. Spring salmon used in the study were angled by local anglers at Quarryville and Red Bank during early May. A very high percentage of these kelts (96%) survived the surgery and fared well during the holding period, and when released were able to migrate through the river and through Miramichi Bay on their way to the ocean. This is a good indication that spring salmon can be angled and survive, provided they are handled properly and not played to exhaustion. A very low number of the fish angled were not used in the study because they were too weak to undergo surgery, possibly due to the fact they were played for too long a time.

The mucus layer on the skin of the fish forms a barrier which protects the fish from handling. When this mucus is removed through excess handling, disease-causing organisms can enter through the skin and make the fish susceptible to disease. The energy

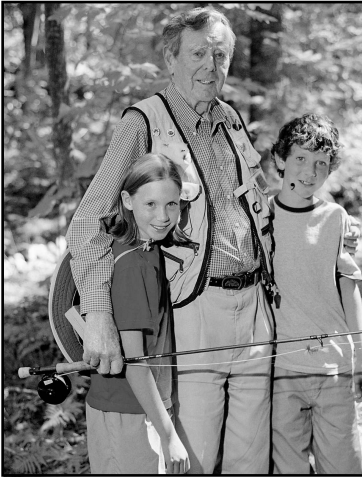
reserves of spring salmon are already low from a winter of fasting, and excessive playing on the line or handling can quickly deplete these energy reserves. It is recommended to keep the fish on the line for as little time as possible and to reduce the amount of handling once caught. If and when taking pictures, take the fish out of the water only when ready to snap the photo and immediately return the fish to the water. By keeping the fish in the water, it will be able to replenish its depleted oxygen reserves quicker after the angling experience. The new angling regulation introduced last year on the use of barbless hooks during the spring salmon season, will reduce the amount of time it takes to remove a hook and reduces the likelihood that that hook will damage the fish.

Enjoy the spring fishing! But please remember - treat the spring salmon with respect and you just might see those same fish return next year to spawn again.



MSA Mourns Great Friends

Dr. Wilfred Carter



Credit Tom Moffatt /ASF

The passing of Dr. Wilfred Carter occurred on March 18, 2009. During his vast conservation career, Dr. Carter was able to pioneer management measures and structures that have had a profound and lasting consequence on conservation. Wilf presided over the merger to establish the Atlantic Salmon Federation as it exists today.

This very telling photo of Wilfred Carter with his arms around a young girl and boy speaks volumes about his life's work. In all of the elements of this classic presentation, one can readily see and sense the satisfaction and contentment of a man who has attained his goal, and has left it safe for future generations.

The life of Wilfred Carter began in the village of Gaspé 83 years ago, and it has been deeply influenced ever since then by the natural treasures of that beautiful and rugged landscape, especially by the wild Atlantic salmon. Wilfred was quickly attracted to the majesty and the mystery of the wild Atlantic salmon. He sensed even more than 60 years ago the tremendous task and challenge it would become to sustain the Atlantic salmon in its unique and natural cycle. From that moment on, in an ever changing yet ever growing sphere of influence, Dr. Carter has used his considerable knowledge and skills in science, in communication and in leadership to pursue his lifelong goal of *preserving permanently* one of Nature's most precious species, not only in his own country, but throughout the salmon's spawning range in the North Atlantic world.

Francis Smith



The sudden passing of A. Francis Smith of Boiestown occurred on February 10, 2009. Since 1991, Francis had been a valuable member of MSA's Board of Directors in the role of Secretary-Treasurer. Needless to say, MSA benefited greatly from the broad base of qualifications this man brought to the table.

As a young boy of 12 years, his grandfather started training Francis as a sawyer and that was the beginning of his career in the forestry industry, graduating from the Maritimes Forest Ranger School in Fredericton in December of 1952, and then commenced his career with Ashley Colter Ltd. where he worked diligently for the next 44 years until his retirement in 1997. Retirement certainly did not slow Francis down. We are pleased and proud to recognize the important work and contributions which Francis Smith brought to his community of Boiestown. We remember him with deep admiration and fondness and will always appreciate and respect his dedication and commitment, not only to his community but to the salmon conservation mission of the MSA.

Francis will be greatly missed and always remembered by his ever smiling face and the kindness of his eyes. That was the way he greeted everyone he came into contact with, and so nurtured goodwill and cooperation wherever he was involved.

We are also saddened to learn of the passing of other of our MSA friends and members. We will always appreciate the commitment each of them made to the MSA and to salmon conservation, a passion equally shared among them during their lifetime.

Mr. C.L. Anceny, Big Sky, MT
Mr. Ken Bartlett, Fredericton, NB
Mr. Lee Hallowell, Westport, NY
Dr. Ronald C. Hurley, Fredericton, NB
Mr. Wallace MacMurray, Saint John, NB
Mr. Sture Olsson, West Point, VA

Mr. Willie Bacso, Howards, NB
Mr. Roger Hatch, North York, ON
Mr. James Hunter, Manchester Centre, VT
Mr. Chauncey Loomis, Stockbridge, MA
Mr. B.H. Rutledge Moore, Ridgeland, SC

In many cases, we rely on our membership to advise us of the passing of fellow MSA members, so we ask that you kindly let us know of such occurrences. Thank you.

Miramichi Lake Small Mouth Bass Issue

by Mark Hambrook

Since the discovery last fall of small mouth bass in Miramichi Lake, a tributary of the SW Miramichi River near Juniper, the MSA and its partners have been actively involved in assessing the situation and trying to contain the invasive species to the lake. Extensive electrofishing and some trap netting were conducted in October 2008 which indicated that small mouth bass were in Miramichi Lake, and a few hundred yards down the outlet brook called Lake Brook. However, none were found further downstream nor in the SW Miramichi. A barrier fence was installed at the outlet of the lake to prevent further migration and bass were removed by electrofishing in Lake Brook. The intent was to try to keep the barrier in place for the winter, but extremely high water in the fall forced the removal of the barrier so it would not be damaged. The decision was then made to leave it out during the winter since bass generally do not move at that time of year.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) held a scientific review this winter to assess the impact that small mouth bass might have on the Miramichi watershed. This two-day workshop was attended by DFO researchers from across Canada, biologists from New Brunswick's and Nova Scotia's Department of Natural Resources, representatives from First Nations, US state agencies, university scientists, researchers from Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) and biologists Mark Hambrook and Jenny Reid of MSA, as well as other interested parties. The conclusion was that (i) small mouth bass may have a moderate ecological impact on *river habitat*, but there is

high uncertainty as there is little known evidence of what the extent of impacts might be; and (ii) small mouth bass may have a high ecological impact on *lake habitat*, with little uncertainty as there are lots of examples where this has taken place. A review of control measures was also presented, indicating that the only effective control of small mouth bass is complete eradication. This is only possible if the bass have not spread too far.

A mitigation committee has been formed with members from DFO, DNR, University of New Brunswick (UNB), Miramichi Watershed Management Committee (MWMC), and J.D Irving, representing private industry. The committee's first objective is to install containment structures (counting fences covered with small mesh netting) at the outlet of Miramichi Lake and the outlet of Lake Brook and to further assess the extent of migration of bass in Lake Brook and the SW Miramichi River. A smolt wheel will be installed in the SW Miramichi below Lake Brook to monitor any downstream migration of bass and additional electrofishing and angling will be conducted in Lake Brook and the SW Miramichi to determine if bass are present. If the bass are contained, then a decision will be made whether to eradicate. If this is deemed to be the course of action, significant funding and expertise will be required from the federal and provincial governments. Funding has been received from the NB Wildlife Trust Fund and it is hoped that funding will also be coming from the Atlantic Salmon Endowment Fund to conduct these activities. MSA biological staff will be directing the assessment activities for the MWMC.

In Appreciation!



Dieppe Fly Tying Club President, Jacques Héroux (centre), presents a cheque to MSA's Fundraising Coordinator Jo-Anne Linton during their recent Forum. Also in photo is forum booth volunteer George Linton.

The Miramichi Salmon Association has just received a significant contribution towards its future conservation mission. A cheque in the amount of \$5,000 was presented to MSA by President of the Dieppe Fly Fishing Club, Jacques Héroux at its Fly Tying Forum held in Dieppe the weekend of March 28/29. This is the second installment of the Club's \$10,000 commitment, and we are extremely grateful. This donation is the result of a fundraising campaign in support of the Centre of Excellence at the Miramichi Conservation Centre which was launched in December 2005. We are pleased to recognize this generous donation by placing a plaque on a section of the centre aptly named the "Dieppe Fly Tying Club Research Wing".

How May First Nations and the Business Sector Best Work Together in Contributing to Economic Development in New Brunswick



National Chief Phil Fontaine of Assembly of First Nations and MSA Chairman Emeritus Bud Bird at March 21st Forum

Just recently, on Saturday, March 21st, the Liaison Group Annual Forum 2009 was held at St. Mary's First Nation in Fredericton, the theme being *"How May First Nations and the Business Sector Best Work Together in Contributing to Economic Development in New Brunswick"*. Co-Chairs Chief Noah Augustine and Bud Bird welcomed a crowd in excess of 70 guests bringing together Aboriginal and business leaders, an impressive panel of speakers, representatives from the federal and provincial governments, and other interested parties. Guest panelists included Chief Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations; Hon. Rick Brewer, Minister, Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat for the Province of New Brunswick; Mr. Bill McIntyre, Atlantic Manager, Aboriginal Economic Development for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; Mr. Don Dennison, Executive Director, New Brunswick Business Council in Fredericton, NB; Mr. Bill Belliveau, Principal, Bell Strategic Inc. in Moncton, NB; and Mr. Gary Wood, Executive Director, First Nations and Business Liaison Group of Miramich, NB. It was an honour and a privilege to also have in attendance Chief Roger Augustine, Regional Chief, NB/PEI, Assembly of First Nations. The floor was open to all guests who had questions to ask or comments to make. Positive and constructive dialogue was conducted, all in a direction of building better business relationships between First Nations and the private sector in New Brunswick.

The Miramichi Salmon Association is actively involved in this initiative, and upon the unanimous approval of its Executive Committee in February 2008, with a priority for Aboriginal participation and employment, MSA moved to create *the Miramichi Conservation Corps*. Starting in the spring of that year MSA hired ten Natives to work approximately 14 weeks to build a work force to assist MSA biologists and staff to carry out a series of field programs for improvement of the Miramichi watershed. This proposal, which was originally conceived and put forward by MSA Finance Chairman Carl Ash, was made with confidence that other groups will help to support and build on it over time.

Spearheaded by Chief Noah Augustine of Metepenagiag First Nation and MSA Chairman Emeritus Bud Bird two years ago, the First Nations and Business Liaison group of New Brunswick was established. Its mission statement reads: *"The Liaison Group aims to facilitate communications between First Nations and the business community in New Brunswick, to foster the building of economic relationships and business activities between the two communities, including those that create employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, all in accordance with the interests and aspirations of both parties."*

The structure of the Liaison Group consists of a membership of individuals from First Nations and the business sector in New Brunswick who actively support and aspire to the vision and the objectives stated above. The Steering Committee was formed, bringing together Chiefs (or their designated representatives) from the 15 of New Brunswick First Nations, and a corresponding number of designated representatives from the business community.

Kelt Tracking Program Continues in 2009

by Jenny Reid

The Miramichi Salmon Association, in partnership with the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF), commenced a new program in 2008 to track kelts as they migrate in spring from the river to the ocean. Atlantic salmon are able to spawn multiple times during their life span, unlike Pacific salmon that die after spawning. Atlantic salmon that have spawned, called kelts, winterover under the ice until spring. In spring, they begin feeding and make their way back to the ocean to further feed and recondition.

ASF personnel placed receivers from the head of tide at Red Bank and Quarryville to the edge of inner Miramichi Bay, and in the Strait of Belle Isle. This year, the program will be extended through the Ocean Tracking Network and additional arrays will be set up in parts of the Cabot Strait. Kelts are angled at various locations - at the head of tide, Quarryville on the Southwest Miramichi and Red Bank on the Northwest Miramichi. A transmitter is implanted in their abdominal cavity, and when that kelt swims by a receiver, a signal is transmitted recording the tag number, date and time.

In 2008, 50 kelts were tagged and 48 made it to the river mouth. Of these 48 kelts, 23 were last picked up at the inner Miramichi Bay receivers, 22 made it to the Strait of Belle Isle, and three kelts returned to the Miramichi River in 2008 to spawn. Of the 22 that were picked up on receivers at the Strait of Belle Isle, three were picked up further up the coast of Labrador and one was later picked up south of the Miramichi, near the Kouchibouguac River.

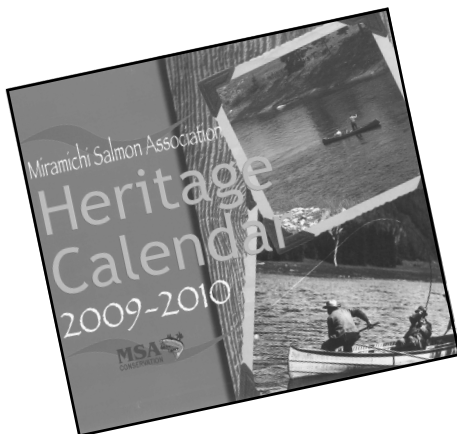
We are very excited to conduct another year of kelt tracking. Through this work, the migration paths of kelts in the ocean may be determined to discover whether they travel through the Strait of Belle Isle or if they migrate through the Cabot Strait. Additionally, we are looking forward to the 2008 tagged kelts coming back to the Miramichi River in 2009 to spawn. This season, we are planning to tag 25 kelts at Quarryville and 25 at Red Bank, depending on weather and angling conditions.



For anyone who wishes to sponsor a kelt for this season, some are still available for \$500 per kelt. Sponsors will receive updates on the location of his/her kelt as well as the results of the kelt tracking program.

When we are tagging kelts at Quarryville or Red Bank the first weeks of May, and if any of our readers happen to be fishing in that area during that time, we would welcome any kelts you may catch for this tagging process!

Get your 2009/2010 Heritage Calendar



The 2009/2010 *Miramichi Salmon Association Heritage Calendar* is now available! The Calendar contains heritage photos of angling on the Miramichi River, some going back to the late 1800's - a real collector's item. This calendar, the second in a series, is unique in that it runs from April 2009 (the start of the new fishing season!) to March 2010 so you are just in time to hang it on your wall at your office, home or camp!

The individual price of the calendar is \$15; however for purchases of five or more, the reduced price of \$10 each is applicable. Calendars can be purchased through the MSA Web site or by calling the MSA offices; South Esk at (506)622-4000 or Fredericton (506)457-2220.

The calendar will make a great gift for the avid fisherman, historical enthusiasts or for anyone interested in preserving the Miramichi River and its environment.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, May 2, 2009 - 3:30 PM

The 56th Annual Meeting of the Miramichi Salmon Association, Inc. will be held at the Central New Brunswick Woodmen's Museum in Boiestown on Saturday, May 2nd at 3:30 PM. All MSA members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

MSA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Miramichi Ice-Breaker: A 2009 Season Opener!



Please mark your calendars now for Saturday, May 2nd to attend the 13th Annual Miramichi

Ice-Breaker at the Woodmen's Museum in Boiestown. This occasion again celebrates another new angling season along the Miramichi watershed, as well as an opportunity to pay tribute to the people of the Miramichi - outfitters, guides, cooks, lodge staff, anglers and conservationists - all of whom

contribute in making this river and its salmon such valuable resources.

The Ice Breaker commences with the Annual Meeting at 3:30 PM, followed by a reception, silent auction, dinner at 6:00 PM, a live auction and entertainment. Don't miss out on the fun! We would be pleased to have you join us! For tickets (cost of \$50), please call Jo-Anne at the MSA Fredericton office at 457-2220. Please call early to reserve tickets as it is always an early sell out!

Annual Freeman Dunnett Moncton Conservation Dinner

The 9th Annual Freeman Dunnett Conservation Dinner will be held at the Crowne Plaza, Main Street, Moncton on Thursday, May 28th. The late Freeman Dunnett, F.C.A., served the MSA with great distinction as a Director. He was instrumental in creating this event for fishing enthusiasts in Moncton. We continue to remember Freeman with respect and affection for the many contributions he made to MSA during his lifetime, and we hope you will join us on this occasion. Please contact Jo-Anne at MSA Fredericton office at 457-2220 for tickets.

As with all of the MSA dinners, these events would not be the success without the attendance of all who join us. As well, for the auctions and raffles, the MSA is extremely grateful to all owners, artists and donors who have so generously made available their camps and waters, their artistic creations and their gifts to help sustain conservation action for Atlantic salmon on the Miramichi River.

At each auction event, we attempt to offer some new items. This year, the Moncton Dinner Committee is extremely pleased to offer appealing Miramichi River trips such as Maple Leaf Club, Camp Moose Call, Upper Oxbow Adventures, to name a few as well as a Matapedia River trip at Cold Springs in Quebec's Gaspé region. Also available on this occasion is a unique offering - a one week trip for two rods to Blackwater Lodge & Salmon Fishery in Upper Ballyduff, County of Waterford in Ireland, voted Best Fly Fishing Guesthouse/Hotel 2006 by the readers of the UK magazine Today's Flyfisher! See website <http://www.ireland-salmon-fishing.net>. These trips, together with the numerous other miscellaneous items, should encourage some competitive bidding!

Miramichi Salmon Classic

The 4th annual Miramichi Salmon Classic, a four day event with three days of fishing on the Miramichi River, will be held from July 12 - 15, 2009. Experience fishing the Little South West Miramichi, Renous, Dungarvon, Main South West Miramichi and many other classic tributaries with MSA volunteers, with a 3-day catch and release license provided. Last year's event took place at the peak of the grilse run, the best in the past 15 years.

To kick off this event, the registration, "meet and greet" and gala banquet will be held at the Rodd Miramichi Hotel, in the City of Miramichi on Sunday evening, July 12. Participants will meet some of the famous guides of the Miramichi as well as other anglers at the "meet and greet", learn of his/her assigned pools and have the opportunity to meet the volunteers that will guide you to the fishing pools.

Fishing will occur in the mornings and evenings, starting Monday morning and finishing Wednesday at noon. The meeting times are 7:30 AM and 6:30 PM at local landmarks or businesses. On Monday and Tuesday, a complimentary lunch will be provided at establishments in the heart of fishing country to give participants a chance to socialize and exchange fishing stories. The events will wrap-up with a noon barbeque at the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre in South Esk on Wednesday. Fly tying and casting demonstrations will be conducted during these

times. A free pass to local attractions such as the Miramichi Salmon Conservation Centre, the Woodsmen Museum and Atlantic Salmon Museum will be provided and participants can visit at their leisure during the afternoons.

The fee of \$350 CAN includes three days of fishing, a three-day hook and release license, the use of MSA volunteers to guide participants to the pools, demonstrations, opening banquet, 3 lunches and access to selected Miramichi Valley attractions. Transportation to the fishing pools, accommodations, meals (other than those included) and fishing equipment are the responsibility of the participant. Please find a list of motels, cabins and outfitters on the MSA web site (www.miramichisalmon.ca). Participants will be paired with another angler, however, if you have a fishing partner please indicate on your registration form so you will be group together. Groups larger than two persons can be accommodated, but please indicate in advance.

Most pools require leaving the paved highway and traveling on woods roads, so a high vehicle (SUV or truck) is recommended. However, if advised in advance, those traveling in cars can be assigned pools with easier access.

All are welcome to the Sunday evening banquet. For banquet only, the ticket price is \$50 CAN per person, by calling 506-622-4000. We would be pleased to have you join us!

Fredericton Conservation Dinner

The 15th Annual Fredericton Conservation Dinner will be held September 16th. Please mark your calendars now. Further details will be forthcoming.

Congratulations!



The Miramichi Headwaters Salmon Federation (MHSF) has been selected to receive one of Canada's Recreational Fisheries Awards for the year 2009. This award recognizes outstanding contributions to fisheries conservation and protection in New Brunswick and the superb example it has set for others working to improve recreational fisheries.

This well deserved recognition, awarded to MHSF President Randy Lutes and Secretary Judy Lutes of Juniper, NB, is a true testament of the hard work they do to ensure a future for the recreational fishery. They have contributed extensively in fisheries conservation, habitat protection, river restoration and fish rearing facility.

MSA expresses sincere congratulations to Randy and Judy on this significant achievement. All their friends at MSA are both pleased and proud that they have been invited by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Honourable Gail Shea, to attend an Awards ceremony in Ottawa in May this spring. Well done!

Director's Profile

PAUL VALERI



Elected to the MSA Board of Directors in 2007, Paul Valeri has already demonstrated his keen enthusiasm and has proven to be a major force of active assistance in the affairs of the Miramichi Salmon Association. He listens intently at Board meetings and often initiates good discussion, characteristic of the level of dialogue that is conducted when the Board meets three times annually.

From the tender age of five, Paul feels fortunate to have been his father's sidekick riverside with their cane rods in hand. Tony Valeri was an incredibly talented fly fisher and a unique character of "The River". He started coming to the Miramichi in 1953, where he came to call it his true *Heaven on Earth*. Paul first joined his Dad on this same river in the late 1950's at Herman Campbell's, then again in the mid-1960's to the lower Miramichi, and in 1983 to this day began his regular jaunts to the Main Southwest's Gray Rapids. Paul holds countless cherished memories of sharing time on the river with his father and their many friends. Paul often reminds us that he is forever grateful for being given the opportunity to form solid friendships with his Canadian neighbors.

Paul proudly shares ownership of the quirky six-sided cabin on Gray Rapids with his two sons, Mark and Adam. *"My most precious times on 'our river' were the gifts of when our three generations found ourselves together wading side-by-side"*, Paul states. *"Dad's ashes now rest near our camp within the comfort of his beloved Miramichi River. My service on the MSA Board of Directors is in honor of my father's heritage and our family's true love of the Miramichi and its people"*.

A graduate from the University of Notre Dame in 1970 with a Bachelor's of Government, Paul is also a Vietnam Veteran, First Lieutenant U.S. Army Signal Corps, and is a recipient of a Bronze Star for meritorious service. Paul and his wife Denise, a case worker in the field of geriatrics, happily live in Redding, CT. He has had a long history in real estate development. Since 1973, he has been Owner/Broker of Paul Valeri Realtors, active in both residential and commercial sales in Greater Danbury. In the 1980's, his company developed 600 condominiums in the state of Connecticut; and since 1995 has been Owner/Partner with Falciglia & Valeri Construction, specializing in new homes in the towns of Ridgefield & Redding. Paul is also an active volunteer - currently President of The Non-Profit Development Corporation of Danbury, Inc., charged by the Veterans Administration to provide both permanent and transitional housing for ten homeless Veterans; Past Director of the Housatonic Region Economic Development Partnership; and currently Chair of the St. Gregory's Church Building Committee in Danbury, CT. When not fishing, Paul also tries to find time for golfing and some serious trail hiking, lending the same kind of passion to these latter sports that he does when on the river.

The Miramichi Salmon Association is fortunate to have the benefit of Paul Valeri's knowledge, experience and dedication. He not only has a deep commitment to conservation of our great salmon resource, but he is also an ideal example of the international bond that brings strength to the role which the MSA performs on behalf of the Miramichi watershed.

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