



# Lee Wulff Trout Unlimited 2022 Outings Recap and Highlights

## 2022 Early Season Outing - Fennimore

Our first outing of the 2022 fishing year, held April 28-May 1, explored the various waters around Fennimore, WI, including the Big Green River, Blue River, Otter Creek and various other streams. The traditional Thursday evening bratwurst cookout started things off “on a roll” (groan). Early season fishing on streamers and nymphs was very good, although some of the fish were a bit picky. Highlights included the “day of fishing with Jerry Sapp” prize from the 2021 Conservation sweepstakes at one of Jerry’s secret spots (several nice browns and a gourmet lunch served streamside). There was little competition for fishing water during this window during the early season catch and release period that happens in the Driftless area from mid-January through the start of the open trout season in early May. The fish were hungry and not yet re-educated to fishing pressure.





## Colorado Exchange (Westby, WI)

In May we tried something completely new: a group of anglers from the West Denver Chapter of TU traveled to Wisconsin to join us for a few days of fishing on our “home waters” in the Westby/Viroqua area of the Driftless. Their interest was sparked by our former LWTU President Bob Becker, who moved to Colorado a couple of years ago, and arranged for the WD Chapter to get an introduction to the Driftless Area at one of their winter chapter meetings.

We decided to stay as a group at the Logan Mill Lodge in Westby (which turned out to be a wonderful place to eat meals, swap stories and make new friends). The Lodge is a converted feed mill right in the middle of Westby, with lovely multibedroom suites with full kitchens and all the amenities. We got some fishing in Thursday afternoon, then had a catered dinner at the Lodge, accompanied by a roaring thunderstorm (the Lodge has a metal roof that sounds like the percussion section of a marching band during a hailstorm...) that dumped several inches of rain on the areas north of Viroqua, forcing us to look to the south for streams that were not blown out on Friday. Fortunately, there’s lots of streams down that way, and we were able to show our seven Colorado guests what the Driftless is all about! By Saturday some of the streams around the Viroqua/Ontario area had subsided to “stained to colored” and the Squirmy Wormie fishing was HOT! By Sunday, most streams were back to normal, and we got some good nymph and caddis dry fly fishing to round out the weekend. Some of the Colorado folks were so Impressed they arranged to stay an extra day or two. Great memories and great new friends...





## Colorado Exchange (Silverthorne/Leadville area)

“I don’t think we’re in Wisconsin any more, Toto...” July 14-17 were the dates selected by the West Denver Chapter to host anglers from LWTU in a reciprocal exchange visit to the Colorado waters around Leadville, Silverthorne and Twin Lakes in the mountains west of Denver. The Illinois contingent stayed at an Air B&B owned and managed by Bob Becker’s son, with a spectacular view from the back deck overlooking one of the Twin Lakes, with several of Colorado’s “fourteener” (>14,000 feet) mountains in the background. Nearby waters that we visited included the headwaters of the Arkansas River, the Blue River in Silverthorne, Clear Creek, Ten Mile Creek, various high meadow creeks and a couple of lakes (Stillwater dry fly fishing???). targeting rainbows, browns, cutthroat trout and brookies. Some of the fishing was highly technical and challenging (20 inch rainbows in the middle of Silverthorne behind the Calvin Klein outlet store, with spectators on the pedestrian footbridge across the stream right above the best lies), some of it was similar to what we are used to in the Driftless, and some was just plain stupid (I was having trouble seeing the #18 Adams parachute that Bob recommended, so I tied on a #14 orange stimulator behind it as a sighting fly, and proceeded to have fish hammer the stimulator, brookies and rainbows at >10,000 feet altitude). It was my first trip to Colorado, and I caught my first cutthroat trout on the second day of fishing, while Mark added the rare greenback cutthroat to his species list. There was an astounding amount of accessible water with good trout populations in the area, in many ways similar to the Driftless, but on the weekend we had to hunt a little for uncrowded spots, spending Saturday fishing small alpine meadow creeks way up in the mountains.

It was a real treat to fish some new waters with experienced anglers who knew them well; our thanks to Bob and the other members of WDTU who hosted us!





**Colorado Exchange (Silverthorne/Leadville area) Continued.**





## Fall Outing (Westby/Viroqua)

Our final outing of 2022 took place September 8-11. By popular demand, we returned to the Logan Mill Lodge owned and managed by Ruth Rupp, who once again went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure the group had everything needed (or even wanted). The Lodge is on its way to being LWTU's home base in Westby, based on our two wonderful stays this year.

During the outing we collaborated with the Gary Borger Chapter on a Work Day project putting in new access stiles on streams north of Westby. Keep an eye out across the Driftless area for the distinctive LWTU swinging gate stiles, branded with our chapter logo, on streams like the Timber Coulee, Bohemian Valley Creek and Billings creek. A summary of past stile work, complete with maps of locations, is available [HERE](#).

Fishing was good, with hoppers and terrestrials being the best bet (as usual on the fall in the Driftless area). A cold front came through that sort of shut down the hopper bite late in the outing, but fun was had by all!

