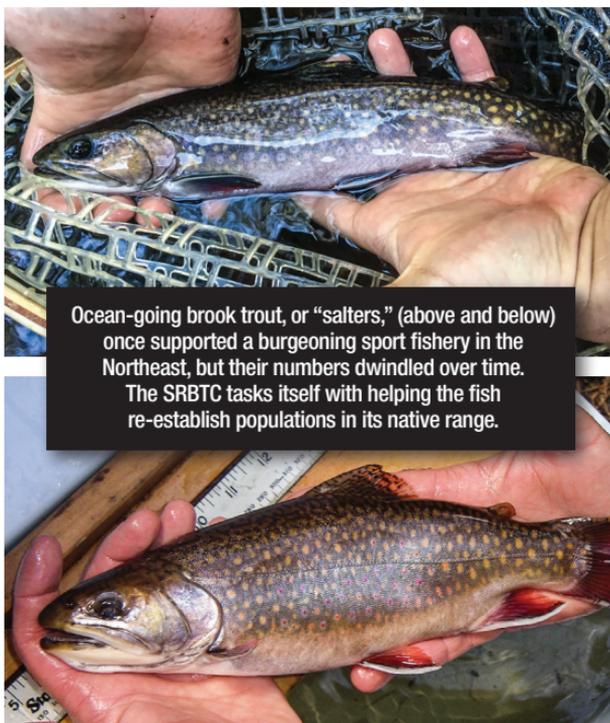


## GRASSROOTS

# Sea Run Brook Trout COALITION

[www.searunbrookie.org](http://www.searunbrookie.org)

By Joshua Bergan



Ocean-going brook trout, or “salters,” (above and below) once supported a burgeoning sport fishery in the Northeast, but their numbers dwindled over time. The SRBTC tasks itself with helping the fish re-establish populations in its native range.

**B**eautiful, hefty, ocean-going brook trout called salters, or sea trout, were common in coastal streams from New York to Maine before and during the early- to mid-1800s and supported what was considered America’s first great sport fishery. But over time, dams, deforestation, and agriculture destroyed this special fish’s habitat. Which is why in 2009, a small group of concerned anglers created the Sea Run Brook Trout Coalition (SRBTC): “a science-based, grassroots alliance of academics, fishery biologists, ecologists, non-governmental organizations and private citizens whose goal is the preservation and restoration of wild, native coastal brook trout in their historic range.” Recently, I asked Director Warren Winders a few questions about the SRBTC’s mission.

### **Why should anglers care about these small, relatively unknown game fish?**

Brook trout are the only truly native trout (actually a char) of the Northeast’s streams and rivers and they play an important role in our region’s coastal ecosystems. Where they are abundant, salter brook trout are an important food source for osprey, herons, eagles, otters, and even, on occasion, striped bass. Moreover, there is a growing interest in catch-and-release fly fishing for salters.

### **What efforts has the SRBTC made toward achieving its mission?**

The SRBTC has contributed well over \$100,000 to a variety of projects, including tagging projects designed to track salter movements and growth rates in streams on Cape Cod and at Red Brook in Massachusetts. Funding has also supported the development of environmental DNA research, temperature studies, restoring fish passages, population assessments, and educating the public.

### **How can anglers help support your mission?**

We ask that anglers respect salter brook trout for the wild and incredibly beautiful and adaptable creatures they are. We also ask they respect, help to protect, and help restore as many of our coastal streams as possible. Salter brook trout show us that the ecosystems of our coastal streams and the ocean do not exist in isolation from each other. The health of the ocean and its fisheries is contingent upon the health of the streams and rivers emptying into it.

*Grassroots is a recurring column that profiles small, localized efforts to protect or rehabilitate clean water and fisheries. If you’d like us to consider your organization for a future issue, email the editor at [benjaminromans@gmail.com](mailto:benjaminromans@gmail.com).*