

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

Jan 2024 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

“Fly Tying Extravaganza 2024” In Person Meeting January 17th, 2024

Get ready for the PPTU annual Fly Tying Extravaganza meeting! What a better way to kick off the New Year than gathering with friends to gab, compare fish stories, and watch the awesome tying skills of our volunteer fly tying demonstrators. Bob Dietz, Bob Kaiser, Carson Wargo, Pete Yarrington, plus Mike Slepisky of Tightlining Maryland are our excellent guest tyers for the evening who will be demonstrating great techniques and offering tips to the rest of us.

These tyers will create flies they use themselves and which all have caught fish. Talk with the tyers one-on-one and then take home a pattern recipe. This is a great opportunity to shorten your learning curve while you move closer to the elusive goal of mastering the special art of fly tying. Catching a fish on a fly that you tied is something special!

To kick off the New Year, our January Fly Tying meeting will be **In Person**. Come to The Montgomery County Midcounty Rec Center (2004 Queensguard Road, Silver Spring, MD 20906) to meet and greet your fellow chapter members while viewing some great tying demonstrations.



– *Karan Singh*

January 17th Chapter Meeting

Mid County Community Center
2004 Queensguard Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20906

Time and Day: 7:00 PM, Third Wednesday of the month except June, July, August and December

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

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Patuxent: Jay Sheppard

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Bob Dietz: Secretary
Randy Dwyer: President
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Lou Reichel
Nick Weber

Contact Us:

mail@pptu.org

Presidents' Column - Joe Taylor



There are so many things to be thankful for in 2023 including the pleasure I've had meeting so many great people through PPTU, the amazing events we hosted and of course some fantastic days on the water. I can only hope 2024 brings so many fond memories.

I don't know about you but spending time on the water in 2023 has brought me much needed relaxation and a chance to clear my head from everyday stressors. For some reason, I find spending time on the water in the winter to be very relaxing and in fact maybe even more so than in the summer. I can't put my finger on why but maybe it's because of the lack of crowds and the peace and solitude that comes as a result. At any rate, I am looking forward to getting on the water very soon!

Of course, fishing can be both great and very frustrating. I'm not much of a nymph fisherperson but I guess I'll have to spend more time practicing this winter if I want to be more productive, actually catching a few fish. I know some of the more experience members still catch plenty of trout using other techniques, I'm just not one of them.

Another highlight of winter fishing, at least for me, includes steelhead fishing. I have really enjoyed steelhead fishing the last few years between spending time in Pulaski and Erie. This year was no different. I'm sure you may have heard about our outing in Erie back in November. If you haven't, it was nothing short of spectacular! I wanted to take a moment to personally thank Craig Vander Kolk for all the work he put into making our Erie outing so fantastic. It was so much work... coordinating the sleeping accommodations, hiring guides, cooking dinners and just being a great host! It has turned out to be one of the most successful events we host during the year. If you didn't join us this year, make a point to join us next year...you won't regret it. Trust me!

As we all know, PPTU wouldn't be the great organization we are without our dedicated, generous members. I had the pleasure to host a recognition luncheon in December for several members that have made so many contribution to our chapter over the years it's hard to comprehend. We took a moment to recognize Ken Bowyer, Bob Dietz and Jay Sheppard. It was an idea our past president, Randy Dwyer, had

brought to the board's attention a few months ago....thanks Randy. The award was named, Order of the Patuxent Special. Not only was the event well attended but we had a chance to recognize (and do some friendly roasting) all of the contributions and impact each of our honorees have had on PPTU for so many years! It's unbelievable the impact each honoree has had on our chapter! The event wouldn't have been such a great success if it wasn't for Bob O'Donnell and Craig Vander Kolk. I wanted to thank both of them for everything they did to make it such a success. Craig helped secure the location and coordinated the event, Bob designed and provided each honoree with an amazing plaque. In addition, each honoree received a beautiful custom fly pattern clock that Chuck Dinkel personally made and donated...thank you so much! I certainly recognize there are other worthy members that deserve to be recognized as well, so we plan to make the recognition luncheon an annual event. Congratulation again to our honorees...Ken B., Bob D. and Jay S. We are so grateful for all of your contributions over the years. On behalf of PPTU, thank you so much!

Before I sign off, please think about talking a few minutes to help PPTU remain as strong as possible by sending in your Annual Supporting Contribution which can easily be done on our web site pptu.org, (look for the Donate via PayPal Giving on the right hand side of the home page). Thanks in advance for your generosity and commitment to helping PPTU have a successful 2024!

Happy New Year!

Joe Taylor
President, PPTU



PPTU Mentor Program Beginners & Beyond

PPTU provides one-on-one streamside fly fishing instruction to PPTU members. Participants must show commitment by having waders or hip boots, a rod and reel outfit, and leader. Discussions will include equipment, knots, casting, flies, dry fly and nymphing techniques, entomology, reading water, conservation, etc. all on nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs. Members who have not made an **Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC)** will be asked to contribute \$20.

Contact us by e-mail: mentor@pptu.org



It's Fly Fishing Show Time!!! - Phil Monahan, Orvis

One of the best ways to overcome cabin fever during the long winter months is to attend a fly-fishing consumer show . . . or perhaps several of them. This year, show season kicks off on January 5th. Then things really get rolling right through March, as there's a wide variety of events from California to Massachusetts, and from Texas to St. Paul.

So find the show nearest you (or the big one you're willing to travel to) and mark your calendar. Spending two or three days checking out new products, fondling tying materials, or watching one of your heroes on the casting pond is a great way to beat the winter blues. These shows are also great places to check out the new Orvis stuff!

January

5-6 Western Idaho Fly-Fishing Expo—Boise, ID

5-7 The Fly-Fishing Show—Marlborough, MA

11-14 International Sportsmen's Exhibition—Denver, CO

13-14 Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival—
Doswell, VA

18-21 International Sportsmen's Exhibition—
Sacramento, CA

19-21 The Fly-Fishing Show—Denver, CO

20 Cabin Fever Day—Appleton, WI

20 Kentuckiana Fly Fishing Show—
Shepherdsville, KY

26-28 The Fly-Fishing Show—Edison, NJ

27 Dally's Streamer Love Fest—Cotter, AR



THE FLY FISHING Show[®]

February

2-4 The Fly-Fishing Show—Atlanta, GA

3 Greater Cincinnati Fly Fishing Show—
Loveland, OH

3 Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association Expo—
South Windsor, CT

16-18, 21-25 Indianapolis Boat, Sport & Travel
Show—Indianapolis, IN

17 Fort Wayne Fly Show—Fort Wayne, IN

16-18 Troutfest Texas—New Braunfels, TX

17-18 The Fly-Fishing Show—Bellevue, WA

23-25 The Fly-Fishing Show—Pleasanton, CA

24-25 Texas Fly Fishing & Brew Festival—
Plano, TX



FREE Trout Unlimited Membership! - PPTU

If you have ever wanted to join Trout Unlimited, let PPTU cover your first year's membership! FREE! No cost except your time to send an email to membership.pptu@gmail.com. You will become an active TU member almost in the blink of an eye. The only requirement is that you have never been a member of TU. Join now!

Morgan Run's Accessible Platform - Maryland DNR

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has completed significant improvements to the fly-fishing platform at Morgan Run Natural Environment Area to enhance accessibility for Maryland's anglers with disabilities.



After several months of work, the area is now open and accessible for all to enjoy. Today, DNR Secretary Josh Kurtz, Maryland Department of Disabilities Assistant Secretary John Brennan, and project partners held a ribbon cutting ceremony to officially open the upgraded fishing area.

[Check out the improved site!](#)

Win a New Fly Rod! - Chesapeake & Eastern Waters Council of FFI

The Chesapeake & Eastern Waters Council FFI, have joined together to give you a chance to win a Winston or Sage Rod of your choice (except Bamboo) with Reel.

You can get a sweepstake ticket(s) to give you the chance to win an awesome rod, where you get to choose a Winston or Sage Rod of your choice (except

Bamboo) with Reel. Yes, you get to select the; type, model, weight and length of a rod you have always wanted. All proceeds from this opportunity to take home a high-performance fly rod you know you want, go to support the Councils commitment to the legacy and future of fly fishing for all fish in all waters. Help inspire and engage the next generation of fly fishing enthusiasts, support initiatives to grow programs, and show your commitment to conservation and healthy fisheries by entering the Sweepstakes.



Drawing will be April 1, 2024, free shipping to the continental US & Canada.

You can get tickets at the International Fly Tying Symposium NJ, The Fly Fishing Show, Edison NJ, The Fly Fishing & Wine Festival VA and The Fly Fishing Show, Lancaster PA March 2nd & 3rd.

OR

Get your chance(s) on line (\$20/ea) by clicking on the link below where you can order your Sweepstake tickets.

[Get Your Tickets Now!](#)



ALL FISH, ALL WATERS

"Whether I caught fish or not, just the thrill of rolling out that line and watching my fly turn over has been good enough for me. That and the hundreds of treasured memories I have of this wonderful sport."

~ Curt Gowdy

For the Ladies of PPTU - Bob O'Donnell

Falling in love on the first date isn't a story that's often told. Especially when it ignites a fire that still burns hotter than ever, even after a decade. But, for Pamela Dunlap, November of 2013 was the beginning of an unexpected fairytale that has only gotten sweeter with time.



Ten years ago, on an otherwise lackluster blind date (that she almost said 'no' to), Pam was introduced to the sport of fly fishing. Standing knee-deep in West Virginia's Bluestone River on a cool autumn afternoon, with her first Rainbow Trout in hand, the trajectory of her life was forever changed. After a single cast, she was hooked.

A short two years after that initial cast, Pam founded [Women, Wine & Waders](#) when her thirst for knowledge became greater than the local and regional resources that were available to her. This educational group (open to ladies of all ages and skill levels) was designed to 'contribute to the well-being of women through fly fishing,' whereby new friendships, accomplishments and lasting memories are encouraged, inspired and treasured.

Check the group out at the link above or on their [Facebook page](#).

Mailed a Newsletter Copy? - PPTU Membership

If you receive this issue through the US Post Office, we request your email address, so we can save the mailing cost for our conservation and education expenses. To receive the Conservationist electronically, please send an email with your name to: membership.pptu@gmail.com.

If you spot poaching please call or text:

Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers
At
443-433-4112



Add this number to your cell phone contact list!



MD Striped Bass Survey **- MD DNR**

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has announced results of this year's juvenile striped bass survey, which tracks the reproductive success of Maryland's state fish in the Chesapeake Bay. The 2023 young-of-year index is 1.0, well below the long-term average of 11.1.

"The warm, dry conditions in winter and spring during the past several years have not been conducive to the successful reproduction of fish that migrate to fresh water for spawning," said DNR's Fisheries and Boating Director Lynn Fegley. "In response, we're working with the Atlantic States Fisheries Commission to support management actions we can take now to protect striped bass and improve spawning success. The Department is also considering additional state-specific actions to increase protections within Maryland."



Efforts to rebuild the Atlantic Coast population have been underway for several years and are ongoing. Low levels of spawning stock in recent years have spurred action by the Atlantic States

Marine Fisheries Commission, which manages the overall population of striped bass along the Atlantic coast, including the Chesapeake Bay. In May, the Commission put in place an emergency measure that bars anglers from harvesting fish larger than 31 inches, a step to better protect large fish. In early 2024, the Commission will vote on additional regulation changes aimed at reducing striped bass deaths caused by coastwide fishing activity, including the Chesapeake Bay.

We're Fixing Trout Streams All Wrong **- Pete Anderson**

I'm far from experienced in water/habitat conservation efforts, but I found this discussion between Tom Rosenbauer (Orvis) and Chris Jordan of NOAA very interesting. Jordan's basic point seems to be that you can't "fix" streams without thinking about the broader landscape (which seems obvious). But I really liked the discussion of the nuts and bolts of the work.

[Check out the Podcast](#)

Reminder - "In-Person" Meeting Location **- PPTU Board**

We're finally meeting again in person and additionally, doing a hybrid meeting via Zoom.



The new location is:

Mid County Community Center
2004 Queensguard Road
Silver Spring, MD 20906

[Visit the Web Site](#)

Note: Our January meeting will be "In Person" only! We hope you make an effort to attend.

Five Minute Histories: Loch Raven Reservoir - Ron Briggs

If you don't know the Loch Raven story.....here it is. A pretty interesting video.

Join us today on the shores of a 2400-acre, 23-billion-gallon body of water—Loch Raven Reservoir. We'll learn about the dam that created Baltimore's current water supply and the town of Warren that thrived here before the area was flooded. Thanks for watching and stay tuned for another Five Minute Histories video soon. Johns Hopkins, Baltimore Heritage.

[Loch Raven Reservoir](#)

Steelhead Trip 2023 - PPTU

In case you've never gone Steelhead fishing, this may convince you to join us on our next outing!

It was a bit of an odd start to the week, with water conditions being low but Mother Nature (and some great guide service) helped us out. Everyone had a blast during this trip!

Many thanks to Craig Vander Kolk for making the arrangements again and additional thanks to Tom Brosnan for assembling a shared page to view the trip photos. Check them out and consider going with us next time. [Steelhead Photo Album](#)



Gear Guide - GHOSTECH Strike Indicator - Bob O'Donnell

This looked too interesting to just pass up. I haven't tried it yet, but its on my check list to look into this year.



The GHOSTECH Strike Indicator is dubbed as “The World’s Only Splash Free, Screw On Strike Indicator, Ready To Use Out Of The Package, Designed To Hide From Fish By Looking Like Bubbles.” 100% USA Made.

It was definitely “Click Bait” for me. So, why not share with the group. If anyone decides to give these a chance please email us and let us know! If I get some I will follow up with the group on it. Enjoy!

[GHOSTECH Strike Indicator](#)

Trout Stocking for December - MD DNR

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources crews stocked more than 2,000 trout. Hopefully you find some of them.

Carroll County

Morgan Run: brown and rainbow trout

South Branch Patapsco River (delayed harvest): rainbow trout

Howard County

Middle Patuxent River (delayed harvest): brown and rainbow trout

Patuxent River (catch and return) flies only: brown and rainbow trout

Montgomery County

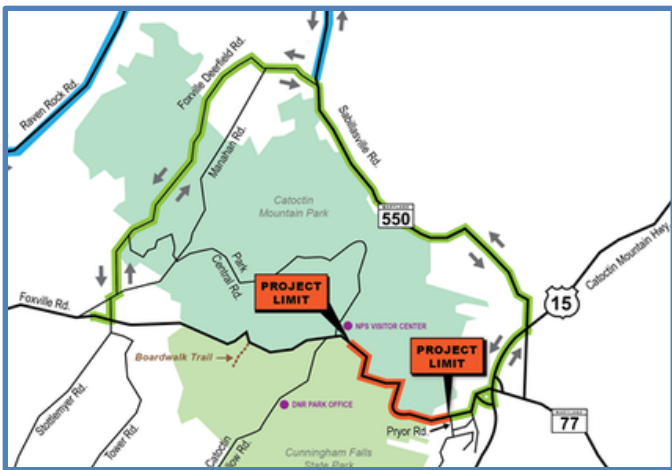
Upper Patuxent River: brown and rainbow trout

Road Closure – Big Hunting Creek

- Kevin Haney

Maryland Route 77 between Pryor Road and ParkCentral Road in Thurmont, a span of two miles, will be closed for approximately four months in order to replace a sewer line and to perform road work.

Starting on Thursday, January 4, crews will close this section of MD 77 in both directions to begin the work. Motorists will be detoured using MD 77 to US 15 (Catoctin Mountain Highway) to MD 550 (Sabillasville Road) to Foxville Deerfield Road and back to MD 77. The Cunningham Falls lake area will also be accessible via Catoctin Hollow Rd. Work is expected to be completed in May 2024. During this time, the only access for fisherman will be to park at the Catoctin National Park visitor center and walk downstream along the creek.



Winter Reading Material

- Trout Unlimited

These came up recently on the Trout Unlimited forum discussion. Suggestions for a good read over the winter months if someone is not out fishing.

Fiction

A River Runs through It by Norman Maclean

Big Two-Hearted River by Ernest Hemingway (short story)

Ninety-Two in the Shade by Thomas McGuane

The River Why by David James Duncan

Non-Fiction

The Longest Silence by Thomas McGuane

The Angler's Coast and Dark Waters by Russell Chatham

The Curtis Creek Manifesto by Sheridan Anderson

Hat Creek and Deeds Among the Steelhead by Bill Barich

(magazine articles; may be tough to find)

The Spawning Run by William Humphrey

Trout Bum by John Gierach

The Same River Twice by David Quammen (published in Outside Magazine)

A Sporting Life by Jim Harrison (magazine article, may be tough to find)

My Story as Told by Water by David James Duncan

Casselman River Bridge Closure

- MD DNR

The Casselman River Bridge State Park is Temporarily Closed. Due to safety concerns, the Maryland Park Service has closed Casselman River Bridge State Park in Grantsville, Garrett County. Fencing and signs have been installed to prevent public access to the park, including a small portion of the Casselman River.

[Closure Info](#)



Flies for Sale at the Chapter Meeting! - Carson Wargo

From many requests, I am selling Jay Sheppard's famous size 10 Patuxent Specials at the next chapter meeting (Jan 17th). I have weighted them with 0.030 wire to sink quickly, counter-wrapped with silver wire, and dotted them with UV cure resin to make them almost indestructible! If there is interest, I can also tie up some with coneheads to get them down in pocket water and the like. Hope to see you there!



The First Female Fly-Fishing Celebrity - Phil Monahan

When it comes to famous female anglers in history, most fly fishers have heard of Dame Juliana Berners (who may not have actually existed) and Carrie Stevens (whose flies continue to catch fish today). But the first real superstar in the U.S. was a six-foot-tall master outdoorswoman named Cornelia “Fly Rod” Crosby, who has the distinction of being Maine Guide #1. Here’s a cool [short video](#) from the Maine Historical Society that highlights Crosby’s achievements, as well as her contradictions. It’s fascinating stuff. To learn more, check out Crosby’s page on the [American Museum of Fly Fishing](#) website.

Good Wood - Bob O’Donnell

These are some really cool fishing items, truly works of art. For Jacob Cartwright, do a Google search to see his work.

<https://alswanson.com/>

<https://bitterrootnets.com/>

Jacob Cartwright fly boxes – Send email to:

Cartwrightcache@gmail.com

<https://www.stoneflyartworks.com/>

<https://stoneflystudio.com/>

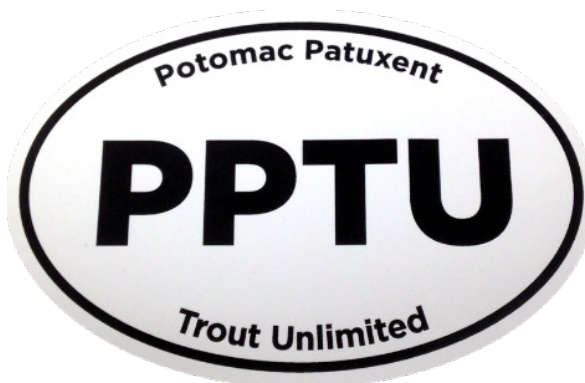


Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC) - Jay Sheppard

As the New Year begins, now is a good time to consider making your Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC) to PPTU. As a Chapter we are not allowed to require chapter dues or fees for membership. Along with other fund raising events, we therefore ask for a \$20 ASC each year, to sustain the chapter's administration costs, educational programs, and other community service projects including:

- Trout in the Classroom program that teaches primary & middle schoolers the importance of cold water fisheries to our environment.
- Support to TU fly fishing & conservation camps in Virginia and Pennsylvania, sponsoring attendance by high school students.
- Support of the Project Healing Waters program at Ft. Meade and Walter Reed that provides recreational activities to wounded warriors.
- Support the Mayfly Project for foster kids by being taught to fish and use fly rods.
- Free copies of the Conservationist for local fly shops, State agencies and other conservation organizations.
- Conservation projects that restore trout habitats in rivers & streams across Maryland.

Maybe bookmark these sites for next year and add them to your holiday “wish list”. If someone is looking for a unique gift, these fit the bill.



You can make your ASC donation in several ways:

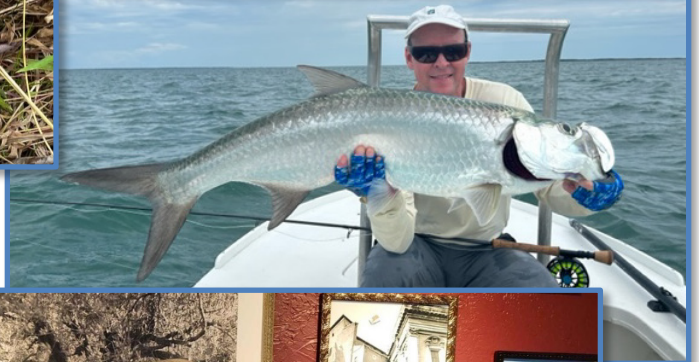
- At the next chapter meeting (whenever that might be) by cash or check.
- Go to pptu.org and use our Donate portal: [Donate to PPTU](#)

Mail a check payable to PPTU and send to our PO Box (see last page).



Members Catch - Bob O'Donnell

Happy New Year! A good start for 2024 including a funny AI generated image. Congrats to our first ever Order of the Patuxent Special awardees: Ken Bowyer, Bob Dietz, and Jay Sheppard.



Contributions & Questions Welcome!

Send your contributions, article suggestions or fly fishing questions to the Editor in an email or as an MS Word.doc attachment. The deadline for submissions is typically the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication.

Editor: Bob O'Donnell

Phone: 410-733-0638

Email: TroutWrangler@Yahoo.com



Puff Puff Midge

Its winter, sort of... hard to tell with these temperatures. Midges are a big part of a trout's diet at this time of year. Often you can find some fish rising if you hit it just right.

This fly uses a CDC Puff and foam together to make a fly that will float like crazy (as long as you present it properly) and it can be tied in many different colors. A white or gray wing works well on this bug.

[Puff Puff Midge](#)



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