

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

September 2021 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

“Summer Vacation Show & Tell.” Adventure Tales from PPTU Members

Sep 15th, 2021 at 7:00PM

Summer is winding down but you wouldn't know it with the heat! It's about time for a cool spell, to sit back and relax among your fishing friends. Have you vacationed this summer to an exciting location? Have you ventured out locally and recorded the action? Hopefully yes, and you're willing to share with the group. If you haven't had much fun, then feel free to sit back and enjoy the adventures of others as we get together for the first time in several months.

We were hoping this first meeting would be in person, but to keep our PPTU members safe we're doing more Zoom meetings. For the near future, relax in your living room, kick back with a drink and enjoy this meeting hosted by our own members.

It won't take much to imagine yourself standing in another's shoes enjoying the scenery and hopefully, some cool water and big fish.

If you wish to share any of your adventures, please send me your summer pics with location info: singhkaranr@yahoo.com

– *Karan Singh*



Monthly Chapter Meetings – Virtual Until Further Notice

Time and Day: 7:00 PM unless a new time is stated, Third Wednesday except June, July, August and December

Virtual Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84359288039?pwd=RzZTMVUyRjU1dUNBMFFHRnFhRjJjdz09>

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

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Past-President: Randy Dwyer
Vice-President: Joe Taylor
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Secretary: Brian Hepler
Directors: Ron Briggs
Ray Miller
Peter Schuler
Bryan Sirotkin
Craig Vanderkolk
Pete Yarrington

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Fundraising: *Vacant*
Forum Moderators: Sean Beck, Motti Tadmor
Librarian: Lou Reichel
Mentor Program: *Vacant*
Membership Secretary: Jay Sheppard
Conservationist Editor: Bob O'Donnell
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Speakers Program: Karan Singh
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Trout in the Classroom: Alan Burrows
Chuck Dinkel
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Stream Committees:

Paint Branch: Joe Robinson
Northwest Branch: Joe Robinson
Middle Patuxent: Bryan Sirotkin
Patuxent: Jay Sheppard

Mid Atlantic Council Delegates:

Alan Burrows
Bob Dietz: Secretary
Randy Dwyer
Marc Hutzell
Lou Reichel
Nick Weber

Contact Us:

mail@pptu.org

Presidents' Column - Alan Burrows



Well I'm back. I don't expect to be here long, as Joe Taylor will be taking over soon, but in the short term you have me again. In 2021 I have had shoulder surgery, currently have a broken leg from a fall, and expect to have a hip replacement by the end of the year. Here is a hint to all of you. Stay young! But keep fishing regardless of circumstances.

The last year has been a challenge. We have all had to learn how to do Zoom meetings and virtual board and chapter meetings. Some of our members have children at home and have had to struggle through home schooling. Finally, we thought we had this thing beat and along comes the Delta variant. We thought we might be able to have in person chapter meetings again, and we even located an alternative site since the senior center was not open for outside parties. We were on our way and then the infection numbers started to shoot through the virtual roof. We sent out a survey to see if the membership was interested in an in-person meeting. We had a total of 44 respondents. 26 members voted for an in person meeting and 18 voted for a virtual meeting. The board, most of whom had voted to meet in person earlier in the week, unanimously voted to go virtual through the end of the year as a result of the climbing infection rate. I'm afraid it was the correct decision.

Our September meeting will feature slide shows and descriptions of our summer fishing adventures by our members. Thanks to our Speaker Chairman Karan Singh, we will resume having outside speakers in October and November and we will revisit the situation at that time. We all hope, for everyone, that COVID is back under control again and we can meet in person again in January. Whew. Through all that, I hope all of you and yours are avoiding COVID or at worse contracted a mild version.

Our Outings Chairman Lou Reichel assures me that we will continue to have interesting outings though the fall and winter. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the rivers and streams. A list will be posted on our website and appended to our calendar shortly.

We continue to be involved with conservation on the Patuxent River. We are in the process of conducting a temperature survey in the upper Patuxent and its tributaries. We are also working with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to correct the problems with both temperature and dissolved oxygen in the Patuxent below Brighton Dam. I'm sure Jay Shephard will have more on these efforts in his column.



We have some volunteer opportunities and I am hopeful that several of our members will feel moved to help us out. Ken Bowyer has retired as our Mentor for many, many years. Thanks so much for all you have done, Ken! While we would love to have a replacement and would welcome a volunteer, we think we can try to fill Ken's shoes best through a committee of volunteers who can take turns providing mentor outing as requests are received. Ray Miller, one of our Directors, has volunteered to chair this committee. I encourage those of you who can make some time and who may have been the recipient of Ken's time in the past, to volunteer to help contact Ray at RMiller220@aol.com.

Bob O'Donnell continues to do yeoman's work editing the Conservationist. For many of the past several years I have acted as publisher. That means getting copies made for mailing and making a run to the post office. If anyone lives anywhere near an Office Depot and would be willing so volunteer a few hours each month that we publish, I would appreciate it. FYI we get the best pricing from Office Depot.

One day we will again have in person meetings. Since Joe Taylor will become President, we need to replace him at the raffle table. This is a great opportunity to meet and chat with all the members as they purchase tickets for the raffle. Again, not a tough job. It does require you to store some stuff and

occasionally make purchases for raffle items. Hopefully this will start again in January. Please email Joe Taylor at timeflies15@gmail.com if you are interested.



There will also be volunteer opportunities collecting temperature loggers, helping with Trout in the Classroom and stream cleanups. Signups will be posted as these activities commence. There is always plenty of fun activities and projects to go around. I do encourage everyone who can, to volunteer some time to help the chapter.

Alan Burrows
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. 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: mail@pptu.org



Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

We have a new owner of the hydropower facility in Brighton Dam. I have not met or communicated with him, but expect he will contact us soon. PPTU has advised FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) that the power plant is not in compliance with its license by releasing water that has almost no oxygen. The state standards are 5.0 ml/L oxygen, but the dam is often releasing less than 1.0 in the summer months. We hope this will get some results in correcting this issue. Stay tuned.

At the beginning of October we will be retrieving our temperature probes from the upper Patuxent and most of its tributaries. We are working with the National Capitol Chapter on the project. Some 38 probes were set in the stream bed last May and early June. They have been recording the water temperature every 20 minutes and could operate all winter long if we left them in the stream. We hope they tell us if we have any tributaries contributing excessively warm water to the main stem of the river after summer rain events. We will also learn which tribs are primarily spring fed.

I have no information at this time if we will have any stocking of the upper Patuxent, tailwater, or the Middle Patuxent this fall. Likely we are not to know until the first week or so of October.

Beaver Creek Fly Shop - Sold! - Bob O'Donnell

The Beaver Creek Fly Shop has been sold to Precision Fly & Tackle.

Precision Fly & Tackle is a family-run operation owned by Justin Pittman and his wife. Together they opened Precision Fly & Tackled in Mount Holly Springs 3 years ago, and opened a second store in Lancaster 2 years ago. There are no immediate plans to change the Beaver Creek name, as they understand the passion and following the name Beaver Creek has for each and every one of you.

The fly shop is basically business as usual. You can expect to see more fly-tying materials added to the Beaver Creek shop, as well as a few more new brands like Thomas & Thomas, Syndicate, Temple Fork, Hanak, FireHole Hooks, and more. Precision Fly and Tackle plan to send out a special offer for the

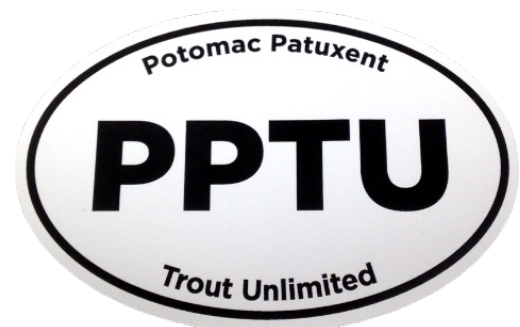
friends of the Beaver Creek Fly Shop very soon. So keep an eye on your email box and watch the PPTU forum for notices.

Precision Fly & Tackle would like to welcome all the friends and followers of Beaver Creek Fly Shop to the Precision Family. They share the same passion for the outdoors as you do, and are very excited to meet each and every one of you. If you're in the area, drop by the shop, mention you're with PPTU and say a warm hello to the new owners.

Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC) - Jay Sheppard

September starts our annual cycle and now is the time to consider making your Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC). As a Chapter we are not allowed to assess dues or fees for membership. Along with our other fund raising events, we ask for a \$20 ASC each September to sustain the chapter's administration costs, educational programs, and community service projects including:

- Room rental for the monthly Chapter meetings (when they resume).
- 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.



To be clear, PPTU does receive a tiny amount back for members' annual dues to the national TU. This only amounts to a few hundred dollars annually. Your dues to national TU are separate and apart from any ASC, which is a donation to the chapter to help cover its expenses each year. PPTU does not mail renewal notices to anyone. If you see a renewal notice in the mail regarding TU, it is from the national offices. PPTU no longer handles renewals of national membership dues.

You can pay the ASC in several ways:

- At the next chapter meeting (whenever that might be) by cash or check.
- Go to pptu.org and use our PayPal portal: <https://pptu.org/j-d/donate>
- Mail a check payable to PPTU to our PO Box (see last page).

Your contributions are most appreciated!

If you spot poaching please place a call to the:

**Catch a Poacher Hotline At
1-800-635-6124**



Add this number to your cell phone contact list!



Save the Date - Party on the Pier! - Potomac Riverkeeper Network

PRKN's Annual Benefit Gala
Saturday, September 25, 2021

Last year's first-ever Virtual Gala was a huge success – you tuned in and together we raised \$200,000 to support clean water in the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers!

We are very pleased to be able to return to an in-person gathering, which we will do OUTDOORS

this year to enhance safety, and we will still have a virtual aspect to suit everyone's tastes. How could we possibly outdo last year's success you might ask?

We have lots of great surprises in store for a 2021 Gala you won't want to miss. This year, we will "Party on the Pier", under tents, but still outdoors – on the Dockmaster Building District Pier, at The Wharf Washington, DC. And, our research vessel, MV Sea Dog will be joining us! If you haven't been able to come aboard to see our state-of-the-art water quality monitoring lab, this is your chance!

We will also showcase our first-of-its-kind, in-river freshwater mussel nursery, with a special prototype cage developed in partnership with Peterson Companies and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. You will see the progress of our 50 Million Mussels project, harnessing the pollution filtering capabilities of native freshwater mussels to put some "mussel" back in the river. The "before and after" impact of mussels on dirty water is absolutely amazing.

And we'll have fun, too. A Potomac Riverkeeper Network Gala always has music, dancing, inspiring stories of the work the Riverkeepers do, and general frivolity. Mark your calendar for September 25, 2021 and come "Party on the Pier!"

https://www.potomacriverkeepernetwork.org/?event=party-on-the-pier&event_date=2021-09-25



" Ours is the grandest sport. It is an intriguing battle of wits between an angler and a trout; and in addition to appreciating the tradition and grace of the game, we play it in the magnificent out-of-doors."

~ Ernest G. Schwiebert, Jr.

Moved?

Changed Email?

If you have retired, moved, or changed your email address, please let us know. Send an email to membership.pptu@gmail.com or go "old school" and drop a postcard in the mail (see address on last page).

Tackle & Tactic Tips - Jay Sheppard

I stopped this column a number of years ago, but we have had a plethora of new members join PPTU and our mailing list in the interim. Old timers may have forgotten some of these tips over the years. So am going to resurrect this idea of we all need help in fly fishing. I know I do!

This summer, two of our members tied into the biggest trout of their lifetimes but lost them. These were very experienced fishers, so we all commiserated with the failed netting of these monster fish. Fighting large fish on a fly rod with light tippets is not easy under any circumstances. I am an old boy scout, and I try to follow the maxim: Be prepared!

Yes, most of the trout we catch are under 12"; in fact, most on the Gunpowder are under 9". We become complacent. Oh, hum...the next trout will be another dink! Maybe 99 times out of 100 that will be the case. It is that 1 in a hundred that will stir our adrenaline and lift our spirits--so long as we land it! Preparing for that 1 in 100 should be our aim as we start fishing each day. We cannot become bored catching little trout. Our expectations must remain high that at some point we will hook a really big fish—might be the next fish or maybe the next trip, but we must prepare for one.

The preparation starts with leaders and knots. A good friend years ago hooked a 32" brown. He knew he had a wind knot in the middle of his leader (not in the tippet). That overhand knot reduces the strength of the mono by 50% at that point. After a number of runs around the pool the leader parted company with the fish. We estimated it was about 12+ lbs. No pictures. So the lesson here is check your leader system for wind knots any time you flub a cast or think something happened in a cast. Just pull the leader and tippet through your fingers and see if you have any knots where there should not be any. I usually find a couple on every trip.

Every trout I hook that is clearly over 10 or 11 inches I treat as a teaching opportunity. Where will the fish go? Is my line under control? Where are the potential stream obstructions that could hang up my line? Where or how will I get to a better place to fight the fish? These and many other questions pass through my head as I start to fight this trout. Often I do not know the real size of the fish for the first

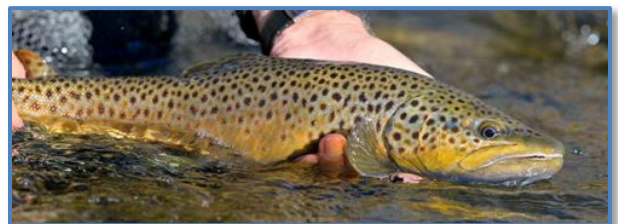
minute or so. From the pull I can guess, but I want to be careful if it feels like a respectable trout of maybe 15" or larger. Practice with the smaller fish so you know what to do when you have a large trout on the end of your line.

Never ever play a large trout using your hand to feed or retrieve line. Nobody has the ability to meter out the tension on the line to a few ounces. The resistance of a line going through the guides of a raised rod can easily be multiplied by 8 to 12 times the force on the line at the reel. If 4 ounces of pressure is applied at the reel, the tippet may feel 2 lbs or more of pressure. For trout, I try to set the drag to about as low as I can without getting the spool to overwind when I pull it. I can raise or lower the rod to apply more or less pressure to the fish. In a blistering run, one might even point the rod right at the fish, unless it is headed to some obstruction.

If you have any extra line laying around you when you hook the big trout, simply let the fish run and feed the line out with little resistance until it all runs off the reel. The sooner you get a large fish onto the reel, the better your chances of landing it.

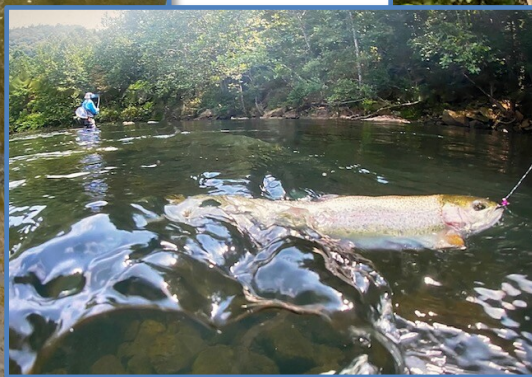
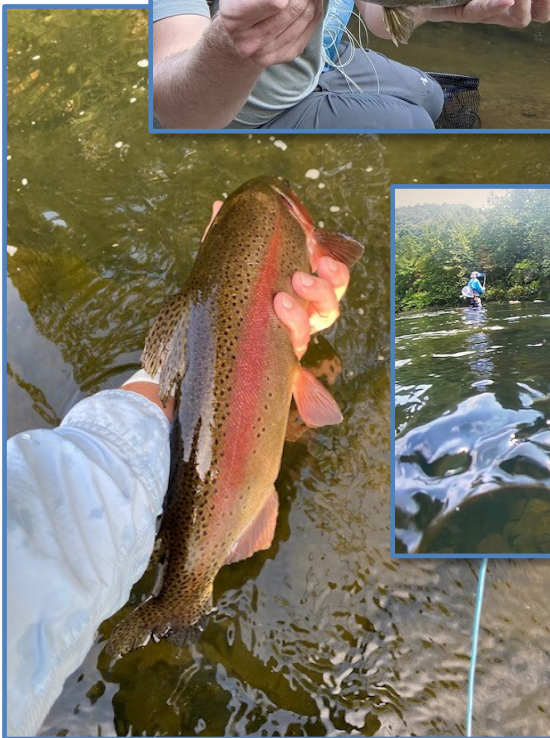
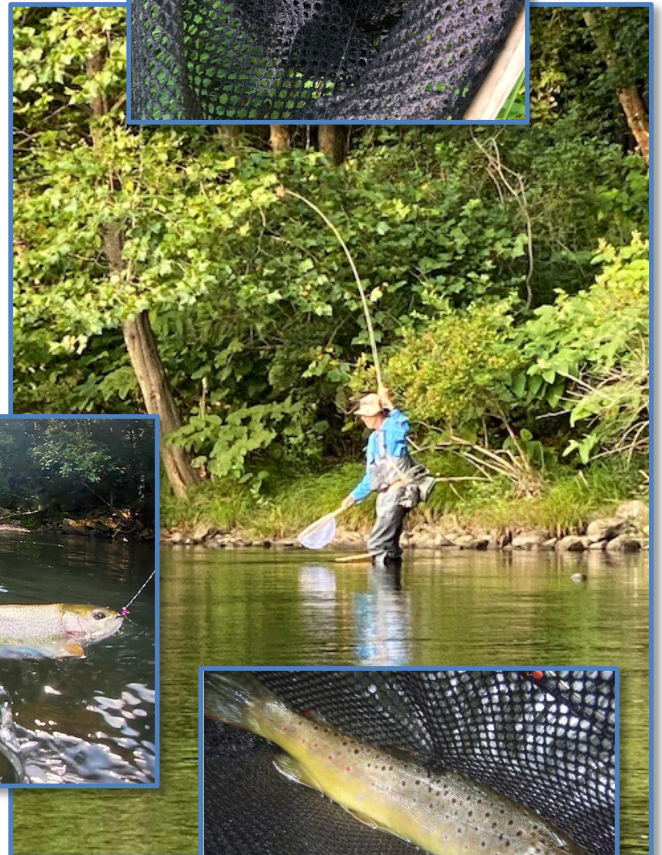
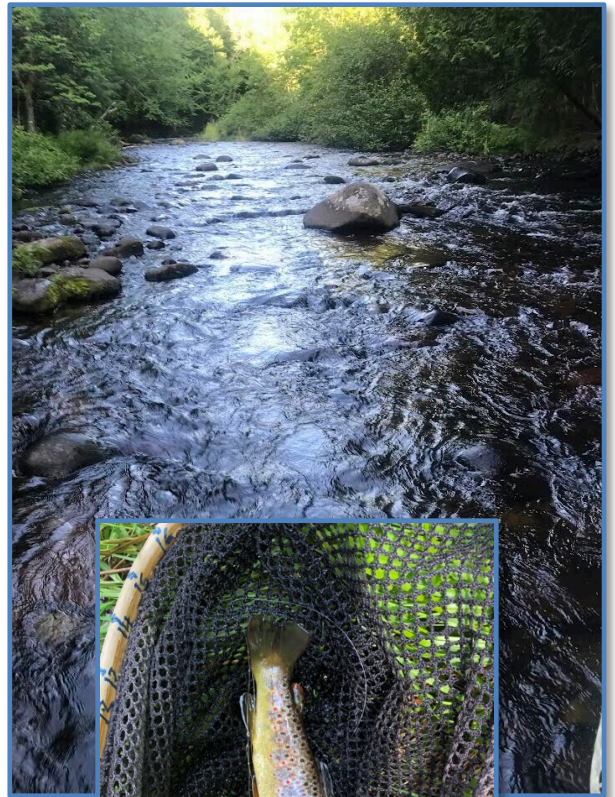
One of our very experienced members hooked the largest trout of his life and let the line laying around his wading staff go unnoticed until too late. It was hard to drag the wading staff through the guides, and he lost the really big brown. If you are sight fishing to a really large fish, do not have any more line out than needed to make the cast. When you set the hook, do not immediately hold the rod in Lefty Kreh's "Orvis position" at high noon. Unless you are using a heavy tippet, let the fish run! Slowly add more pressure as the fight continues, but do not grab the line and hold on!

Practice, practice, practice. Those medium sized trout should be used to train yourself on the tactics needed for a much larger fish. Another way to practice with larger salmonids is to go to the Great Lakes and chase salmon or steelhead. A 25" steelie at Erie, PA in the fall is a blast and can get you into fighting trim for a large trout on the North Branch later. You never know when that monster trout might take your fly and start a memory that will last a lifetime. Just get pictures!



Members Catch - Bob O'Donnell

Glad folks got outside during all the heat over the summer months. Join us at the next PPTU outing!



Contributions Welcome!

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

Editor: Bob O'Donnell

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Davie's Black Cricket

This is a realistic looking cricket pattern tied by Davie McPhail.

Through late summer and early fall, crickets and grasshoppers often end up in rivers, and imitations of them work magic on trout water across the country.

As anyone with a basement will tell you, crickets like shade. Brushy banks are great cricket habitat and the shadow of a boulder is another great spot in which to drift a cricket.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCONSwwRXXo>



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