

January 2007

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

Invincible Flies For Your Box!

By Nick Weber

Start the New Fly Fishing Year at our January Meeting, on Wednesday January 17 at 7 pm. You are in for a treat with a menu of great flies that you will want to see and tie for yourself. Come see a wonder group of sure winner flies tied by notable folks who enjoy tying them and sharing the joys of how they catch our finny friends.

We have a great line up . **Charlie Gelso** will tie surface/ adult caddises, **Jim Greco** will tie Galloup's Crippled Spinner, a must have for any spinner fall. **Bob Dietz** will share his talents in tying Classic wet flies. And none other than **Jay Sheppard** will share a sure-fire variation of his now classic Patuxent Special that he calls the Super Patuxent Special! **Sebastian O'Kelly's** "Fly" is a "Worm FLY" that we're told crazens Largemouth Bass – the Big Bubba Worm Fly.

Bob Serrano will share the wonderful world of A.P. Nymphs, and **Robert Simpson** will share Knot Tying Tricks and Tools. **Theaux La Gardeur** of **Backwater Angler** will tie redfish flies in the "glass minnow" style. **Tim Pembroke** is going to tie his killer Dubbed Fur Ant that he assures will catch 30% of the Browns in the Gunpowder River. **Paul Vicenzi and son Peter** will tie the Woolly Bugger and San Juan Worm. And Fly Tyer **John Colburn** says the Americanized North Country Spider is the tie that binds more trout than whatever! Printed recipes and tying instructions will be available. Come join the fun!

The Fly Tying Meeting

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

7:00 PM

(see bottom of page for directions)

2007 PPTU Fly Tying Class

Begins January 23rd

Size of Class Limited

Sign Up Today!

(see page 5 for details)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

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INCLEMENT WEATHER ALERT...CHAPTER MEETINGS MAY BE CANCELLED DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER. PLEASE CHECK THE LIST SERVER OR CONTACT ANY BOARD MEMBER IN TIMES OF UNCERTAIN WEATHER!!!

Meetings

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

Place: Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland

Directions: From Capitol Beltway: North on Georgia Avenue (Rte. 97). First right onto Forest Glen Road. Pass Holy Cross Hospital and go across Sligo Creek Parkway. The Center is on the right.

The Conservationist

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Contributions in the form of clip art, articles, conservation activities, trip reports, letters, fishing and conservation news, tying tips, book reviews, and essays about trout fishing should be sent to the Editor as plain text in the email body or Microsoft Word attachments. Authors should also include their phone number and a brief descriptions of the attachments. The deadline for submissions is the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Nick Weber

It's January and time for New Year 's resolutions. I look at the New Year as an opportunity for the Chapter and personal growth. That growth can be in Chapter membership activities, conservation goals and projects, outreach activities to bring fly fishing to more members of our community, and education for young and old alike.

I see the Chapter involved in bringing varied and interesting programs to its members. We should take advantage of opportunities to increase Brook Trout populations in the state as well as locally. This involves continuing participation in the Maryland Brook Trout Alliance (MBTA) as well as the Gunpowder Brook Trout Group, our local on-the-ground working unit of the MBTA. Our plan is to work with state and local watershed coalitions to upgrade one or more brook trout tributaries in the Gunpowder watershed. Hopefully, some of that work will begin soon in the New Year.

This will also be a year of continued support for our youth through our efforts to maintain and possibly expand Trout in the Classroom. Dave Wittman and Jim Greene plan to get the new program year off to an early start with egg delivery to eight schools on January 11. Their enthusiasm for this program is spilling over to at least two other Fly Fishing organizations in our area.

Our support for the Boy Scout Fly Fishing Merit Badge this summer at Camp Spencer will also continue that spirit to help young fishers become fly fishers. Please see related article to learn more and how you may help (Page 5).

Since we were all good and got a few fly fishing presents for the holidays, the idea is to plan to use them early and often in the New Year. Plan to catch trout in every month of 2007 – I've heard this is a doable goal in our area. I also plan to get a lot of good fly patterns at our January Fly Tying Fest on January 17. Come to the meeting, pick up some good pattern recipes, and plan to tie a few new ones for your fly box this winter. See you there.



Tackle and Tactic Tips

BY JAY SHEPPARD

Winter does not mean we have to stop fishing.

We just need to pick the days when the weather is tolerable (40s?) to get out. If nothing else, look at these mid-winter trips as a chance to keep in practice with your casting and tactics. You may also want to practice a few new or infrequently used techniques that might provoke a strike even in cold weather.

Although midges and small black stones are about the only dries one can use at this time, the trout will still try to chase a well-presented attractor like a muddler minnow, woolly bugger, Patuxent Special, or a soft hackle or nymph slowly drifting along the bottom. In cold water, the trout thinking processes slow just like their muscle reflexes. It may take them a few seconds to recognize and then pursue some offering that would take less than a second in warmer waters.

Letting a muddler minnow or even a well-weighted nymph hang in the current and slowly undulate back and forth can sometimes get a slow but certain response. Just let the trout take the fly for a full second before even thinking of setting the hook. In fact, I try to react to a hit on a tight line by instantly dropping the rod tip toward the fly to give a bit of slack for a second or so.

Hits against a tight line often result in missed strikes, as the fish is usually turning away as it takes the fly, and the tight line simply jerks the fly right back out of the mouth as the fish turns. Giving instant slack for a second is a cure for this problem but requires quick reflexes! How to cover the water with an attractor pattern on a tight line must be methodical so that time is not lost covering the same water with the same presentation. Winter days are short; life is short; cover more water and catch more fish with an effective pattern. Using the same amount of line on all casts is one of the major factors to covering the water effectively. As one moves up or down the stream, study all the possible routes the fly will take on a tight line over the bottom. From a position in the stream, consider after each cast the rod tip to be held in one of three positions: directly upstream, directly across the stream and directly downstream of your position. *(Continued, next column)*

In most cases the rod tip is held maybe a foot or two above the water. Now aim your casts to three or four 'targets' close to the farthest bank and each separated by 5–10 feet. When casting the attractor to any one of these target spots, there are three major variables in the ensuing presentation. The first, is how long to let the fly sink when it hits the water; longer waits allow it to both sink deeper and drift further down the stream before the drag of the line pulls it back toward you.

The second is where to hold the rod tip (see above); this determines the speed and arc the fly will follow as it comes back to a point below the rod tip. The third is adding any line mending or other effects that you might employ to either speed up the fly or slow it down on the swing. These effects might be as simple as pulsing the rod tip so as to make the fly 'jump' and 'die' as it is dragged across the stream. Stripping some of the line might be another effect to increase the speed of the fly; feeding line or allowing the rod tip to slowly drift downstream will slow the speed. Upstream mends usually slow the drift; downstream mends speed them up. If you cannot follow the fly, watch the line tip for speed and direction.

Thus, standing in just one spot, holding the rod tip in several different positions, allowing different sink times to each of several target spots against the opposite bank, and then applying mends or other effects on the line, one can create dozens of presentations that crisscross the same water in different directions, depths, and speeds. No two presentations over the same spot in the stream should be duplicated if all the various alternatives are followed as you wade up or down the river.

As in all other trout fishing: keep moving or change your flies to cover the same water. The first good presentation to a trout is the one most likely to yield a strike, while later presentations elicit far fewer, if any, strikes. Our local, well-educated trout will rarely attack the same fly on a second or third presentation of the same pattern and presentation, so move to different water and look for other trout.

Be sure you are wearing polarized glasses when fishing flies on a tight line. Seeing trout flashing at the swinging fly at least reassures you that you have a good pattern but not quite the best presentation to yield a hookup. Dress warmly and enjoy some winter fishing while practicing your techniques.

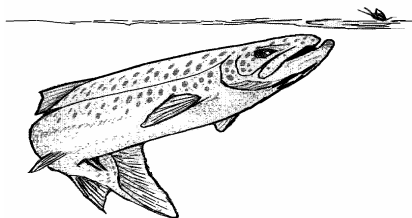
Patuxent Report

By Jay Sheppard

Hunting season will continue through most of February in some sections of the Patuxent River State Park, so be careful. There should be a few holdovers and wild trout left to chase in some of the deeper pools. I have fished dries in mid-January on a few occasions on the Patuxent. Find a deep quiet pool and pick a day well into the forties with little wind.

If you have not helped stock trout in the past and want to help this year, email me (jmsheppar@aol.com) BEFORE the February meeting or sign up at the January or February monthly meetings. To help on this activity, you must have chest waders and be available on a weekday. Although this is strenuous work wading up or down the middle of a stream, it is very rewarding, as you may get to see 1.5–2.5 miles of that stream "up close and personal." Those already on my E-mail list need not contact me, unless they have a new E-mail address. We stock the upper Patuxent Special Area (above Rt. 97) and the Middle Patuxent Delayed Harvest section in south Columbia.

The situation on the main Patuxent below Brighton Dam is not good. The W.S.S.C. tried to work on the dam all last summer, and the trout got nothing but hot water after early June. Both the repairs and the water management of the dam were abysmal. The water levels were kept low after mid-May in anticipation of delivery of the new parts, which did not actually arrive until well after Labor Day. There is some additional work to be done on the dam when the weather warms this coming spring. Although we intend to ask DNR to provide some trout for the Flies-Only section below the dam, we are not, at this time, optimistic that we will have any cold water for the coming summer. We will keep you posted.



In Appreciation

By Bruce Eberle

Many thanks to all who helped set up, clean up and man the various tables at the November Raffle. This was critical to the success of the event!

The Big Raffle raised over \$2500. The Flea Market was such a success that we are considering holding it twice a year. The following organizations/businesses contributed to PPTU's fund raising event:

Backwater Angler
Bare Bones
Bass Pro Shops
Ben & Jerry's
Blue Pearl
Champs
Don Pablo's
Einstein's Bros.
Giant Foods
Kings Contrivance Liquor & Smoke Shop
Outback Steak House
Pepino's
Pizza Hut of Maryland
Rocky Gorge Golf Fairway
Roots
Safeway Foods
Savage River Outfitters
Vintage Cellars
Wisp Guides

The following individuals contributed to the Silent Auction:

Jed Feffer
Jim Greco
Richard Lewis
Cathy Nutter
Jay Sheppard
Dick Talleur
Frank Thompson
Gail D'Ambroiso

Equipment Needed for BSA

By Bob Dietz

PPTU is helping Camp Spencer of the Boy Scouts of America this year. As you may know boy scouts can earn their Fly Fishing Merit badge and we want to help them. Camp Spencer is one of the three camps at Broad Creek Scout Reservation, which is part of a large, undeveloped block of land in the Baltimore metro area.

Troops from all over Maryland spend one week there each summer. They help scouts earn merit badges — and this year have agreed to add the Fly Fishing badge to those they teach. If you have any equipment or fly tying material/tools you can donate or lend to the camp, please let me know.

We're specifically looking for 5 weight rods (though if you have others, please let us know), reels and lines, as well as fly tying tools. Also wanted: old fly lines, backing, and leader material -- the scouts will be asked to demonstrate nail knots and needle knots. Since they're also asked to demonstrate a backing to reel knot, we could probably use one or two more reels than rods. We're anticipating about ten scouts per week working on the badge. Thanks!

Learn The Art of Tying Flies 2007 PPTU Fly Tying Class

Attention novice and intermediate tyers: this class is for you! The class will be held at the Schweinhaut Senior Center from 7 to 9 pm on Tuesday nights: January 23, 30, February 6, 13, 20, 27. **Students are required to bring basic tools** and some materials (see www.pptu.org)

Tuition is \$110.00, or \$95 if the fly tying student is slated to receive *The Conservationist* through September 2007 or later. If you have a question as to whether you are eligible for the reduced rate, please contact Jim Greco.

Tuition covers the room rental, handouts, and tying materials for flies to be tied in the class. The balance of revenue goes to PPTU for use in its education and conservation efforts.

To register or for more information please contact Jim Greco by phone at 410-997-2787 or email at Jimg6128@comcast.net.

Internet Delivery of The Conservationist?

By Robert Simpson

Last May, the chapter announced that Internet delivery of *The Conservationist* would become an additional option in the Fall of 2006. Subscribers have the option of receiving only the paper copy, only the electronic copy, or both. Those who ask for just the electronic copy help us to keep down our production costs, freeing up funds for other purposes. If you want to try out this new distribution method, you can request that you receive the publication in both formats and decide later if electronic-only distribution satisfies your needs. If you decide you simply like to receive it both ways, that's fine, too.

Those who are currently receiving *The Conservationist* by mail may request changes to their delivery status by sending an email to pptu-owner@yahoogroups.com (note, it's pptu, not ppctu in the address) and indicating your preference (hard copy only, electronic copy only, both hard and electronic copies). If you are choosing the second or third options, include the email address you would like to use for this purpose. Prior to the next issue of *The Conservationist*, you will receive an invitation to join that listserver. You **MUST** respond to the invitation and follow the directions in order to be added to the listserver. Shortly after the beginning of a month that a new issue comes out, a message will be sent to all members of the listserver with instructions as to where to find the new issue. It will be available as a pdf file that you can download, view at your leisure, or print if you wish.

Those not on this special listserver, including the general public, can still view the front page of the current issue by visiting our website at www.pptu.org. Past issues of *The Conservationist* are also available at that same website. Persons wishing to sign up for *The Conservationist* may do so by filling out the form available on our website under the link for Membership – Join PPTU.

Please address any questions about this new option, or any problems you might encounter with it, to pptu-owner@yahoogroups.com. We'll do our best to help as promptly as we can.

Annual Supporting Contribution

The Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC) is separate from TU dues. Members of the **Potomac-Patuxent Chapter** of Trout Unlimited who make an ASC of \$15 each year will receive *The Conservationist* for one year, and be entitled to other PPTU benefits such as the mentor program, outings, and reduced rates for the Fly Tying class. First-year TU/PPTU members for whom the Chapter receives a TU rebate do not have to pay the ASC, but they are still eligible for ASC benefits. High School and college students are also eligible for ASC benefits. Members of other TU chapters may also make an ASC to PPTU and receive *The Conservationist* and ASC benefits. When you pay the ASC, please indicate whether you wish to receive this publication by mail or email, and be sure to provide your contact information. Your expiration for *The Conservationist* — as well as expiration for your ASC benefits) — is indicated on the address label as “PP-0907” (September 2007) or a later date. Send payment to the address listed below. If you have questions about the ASC or to check on your eligibility for ASC benefits, please contact the PPTU President (*Contact info on Page 2*) or visit the Chapter’s website at www.pptu.org/join.shtml.

PPTU MENTOR PROGRAM BEGINNERS & BEYOND

One-on-one stream side fly fishing instruction is available to PPTU members. Participants must show commitment by having waders or hipsters, a rod and reel outfit, and leader.

Discussions will include equipment, knots, casting, flies, dry fly and nymphing techniques, entomology, reading water, conservation, etc. at nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs. Members who have not made an Annual Supporting Contribution will be asked to contribute \$15.

Contact Ken Bowyer at 301-627-7154 or e-mail kenbowyer@comcast.net.



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FIRST CLASS MAIL