

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

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Fly Fishing for Shad in the Potomac with Dan Davala March 19th

We are pleased to host Dan Davala this month to talk about the opportunities for fly fishing for Shad in the Potomac. Dan is the fishing manager for the Orvis store in Arlington Virginia and an expert in finding and catching Shad as they make their way up the Atlantic.

Dan is a native Virginian and has been chasing fish of all types since he was a small boy. Dan is also a certified FFF casting instructor and founded the Tidal Potomac Fly Rodders. You can visit their website to learn more - tpfr.org

Dan will be discussing the health and habitat of Shad in the Potomac, as well as the different types of Shad. He will also explain the gear and techniques used to catch what are sometimes called the “poor man’s Tarpon”. He’ll explain why a 3wt fly rod with a floating line might not be the best option when targeting Shad. Dan will also explain the very important topic of when and to where to fish for Shad.

On the Bench – Dan will be tying a few productive Shad patterns for us in the 7pm hour.

– *Marc Hutzell*



Monthly Chapter Meetings

Time and Day: 7:00 PM, Third Wednesday except June, July, August and December
Place: Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland
DIRECTIONS TO THE SENIOR CENTER

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

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

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Presidents' Column - James Robinson

As I write this, the snow is deep outside but we all know that spring is just around the corner ... and what better indicates this than the announcement of the first spring float stocking dates. By the time you read this, the first round of stocking will have been completed in late February. I've assisted in this early float stocking for the past four or five years and I've got to say that this is one of the most educational activities I've done with the chapter. If you haven't experienced the Upper Patuxent or the tail waters below Brighton Dam or the delayed harvest section of the Middle Patuxent, you should volunteer for this. You'll spend several hours with people experienced in the layout of the river, pulling more than a hundred Brown or Rainbow Trout down a mile or two on the river, periodically dropping several in the deeper holes. Contact Jay Sheppard and give it a try.

Our newest form of communications started this month – Facebook! I just joined the page and invite everyone to also join. It's not meant to replace the listserve, just to be another method of keeping you up to date on the latest activities of the Chapter.

Reports are coming in from the schools that the Kamloop Rainbow Trout are doing well despite the schools being closed for extended periods due to the snow & ice. The releases start in mid-April. If you'd like to help, contact me and I'll put you in touch with the coordinator nearest to your home. You can also look for announcements for assistance on the listserve & Facebook.

Other happenings:

1) We had the raffle drawing at our February 19th Chapter meeting. Congratulations to our winners. Our next chapter meeting is March 19th. Our guest speaker will be Dan Davala and his topic is Shad Fishing on the Potomac. I hope to see you there.

2) We'll be selling hotdogs & bratwurst at Bass Pro in Arundel Mills on March 1st. Come join us there.

3) March 29th is the annual banquet of the Mid-Atlantic Council of Trout Unlimited (AKA MAC). This is the biggest fund raiser of the year for MAC and our Chapter benefits from this. Please consider joining us at the Banquet. Tickets are on sale now.

4) April 5th is the Green Fest in Columbia. We're looking for some volunteers here.

5) And of course, there are the monthly outings to various fisheries. Check out the www.PPTU.org web site for details.

Until next month, tight lines ... 🍷

Jim Robinson
President, PPTU

PPTU Mentor Program Beginners & Beyond

Ken Bowyer 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. at nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs. Members who have not made an **Annual Supporting Contribution** will be asked to contribute \$20.



Contact Ken 301-627-7154 or E-mail:
kenbowyer@verizon.net 🍷

Tackle and Tactics - Jay Sheppard

Reading the water is a very important skill to acquire. Still water is a true challenge—and something I have not begun to understand myself. Moving water is the conveyor belt for bringing food to the trout. They need to expend as little energy as possible while waiting for the next morsel of food to appear. Unless there is a major hatch occurring where there are bugs almost every few inches to choose from, the trout will be lurking just off the edge of the current waiting for something they can eat to swirl past. Without a major hatch showing the rising fish, guessing where they are lurking is the key to having some success.

In the fall it is really easy to see where the food is being transported. Where the most leaves are being swept though the currents are the places where the food is also being carried along. At other times of the year there is less flotsam moving, and it can be harder to figure out the dominant currents at any given flow for the same stretch of your favorite stream. Bubbles become the main markers for the currents and the food being transported.

Obviously, if you can see trout moving about, rising or even just resting, they can tell you a lot. I love to stand on the various bridges over the Gunpowder and Savage to see if I can spot any trout, and, if I do see any, determine what are they doing. Just seeing a trout rise or lurking behind a rock tells me that there is food passing that spot—maybe not right at that moment, but over time it is a worthwhile place for a trout to wait for its next meal. A pair of small binoculars can be very useful to watching the trout and what it is taking.

One factor I look for is what I call 'concentrating flow' points. This is where several inches or more of the stream's width is forced to consolidate into an inch or so as it passes around a rock, along side a log or hits the outside bank of a bend. If 12" of stream width is forced to pass around an object and emerge in only a 1–2" width, that is a major concentrating point. The higher the ratio (this example is between 6:1 and 12:1), the more food and less effort a trout needs. The larger the trout, the higher this concentration ratio it will be seeking. A 90° bend in a stream will force all the

food coming into that pool to exit along the tail of the outside edge of that bend. On a large stream that can be an enormous concentration of food flowing down the outside wall of the bend. Concentrations of 100:1 or more are not uncommon. One is most likely to find all of the trout lined up along the outside wall of the bend, if not finding only the big fish hogging this chow line.

I usually locate trout where the concentration ratio is only in the range of 3:1 to 5:1. A small rock is often more than enough to shunt the flow to one side or the other and create such a funnel effect for the fish. This brings up a rarely seen but often useful point. A large obstacle in the middle of the stream generates a small pressure wave in front of it. The wider the obstacle and the faster the current, the stronger this pressure wave will be. A trout can place itself so that its tail end is inside this pressure wave. It then has to expend very little energy swimming against the current, as it is being pushed upstream by the pressure wave. It will also have a clear view of all the food coming straight at the rock.

So watch the bubbles on the surface and even subsurface to see where the food is being concentrated. On streams like the Gunpowder and lower Savage, I have found large trout waiting in the shallows below a tail out or riffle if that side of the stream had a lot of food being concentrated along that side. No need to cast to a clear patch of water that has no bubbles. Those spots are barren of food, unless there is a large hatch going on at the moment. So aim to drop your fly on trails of bubbles along side logs, coming off rocks, or up tight against a bank. Fish where the trout are looking for food and where that food is drifting. 🍷

Patuxent Report **- Jay Sheppard**

By the time you read this issue, we will have float stocked the Middle Patuxent Delayed Harvest in south Columbia, the Patuxent tailwater below Brighton Dam (flies only), and the upper Patuxent Special Area (lures & flies) above Rt. 97. Both rainbows and browns were stocked the last week of February. Another stocking will take place in the tailwater and Delayed Harvest sections at the end of March or first of April. Float stocking only spreads

out the trout initially. They can still swim! Some may move a significant distance upstream or downstream from where they were released. I have recorded movements of more than a mile in just one week after stocking in past years—that is, finding trout a mile or more from the nearest release point. After several weeks or longer and with good flows, some trout may shift up or down a stream a couple of miles or more. Floods in and of themselves do not ‘flush’ trout downstream never to be seen again. If that were the case, there would be few fish of any kind left in our streams. They just hunker down and wait for more moderate flows to resume feeding and looking for better places to find food and shelter.

Please carry your cell phone with you on the stream (and in a ziplock bag!) to be prepared to report any poachers to the Natural Resource Police. Be sure to have the NRP’s number already in your phone list: 800-635-6124. Try to get a fix on the vehicle involved, if possible. Reporting poaching is one of the more important things you can personally do for our resources. You may not get an immediate response from NRP, but a record will have been made to draw attention to the problems in that area.

Penns Creek Outing May 9-16, 2014 **- Jed Feffer**

I just finished reserving a campsite at Poe Paddy Campground from Friday, May 9 through Friday, May 16th. I reserved site 148. I am going to quote Dan Shields, the author of Penns Creek River Journal to entice you to come to Penns Creek.

"If I were allotted one last day to fish, and could choose time and place, I would spend it on the "Artificials Only" portion of Penns Creek during the third week of May. One day spent on this water, with its wonderful variety of water types and beautiful scenery, is worth more to me than several days anywhere else. Water temperatures are optimum in late May, and hatches are at their height then. I would choose a weekday, because good fishing does not go unnoticed, and sometimes the water is well occupied with eager flyrodders."

The Poe Paddy Campground is a good place to access the upper part of the Artificials Only section. Poe Paddy is primitive camping with water

and pit toilets. I paid \$97.00 for the site for 7 days. I was fortunate to get a senior discount. The site I have is certainly big enough for another tent, so anyone that wants to share it with me is welcome to. Of the, I think 45 sites at Poe Paddy, there are still others available. Three miles down the road is Poe Valley State Park. That park can handle RV's, and has 3 cabins as well. You can check availability at Poe Valley State Park on the Pennsylvania DNR website. There were also tent sites at Poe Valley with electricity for \$194.00 for a week, or without electric for \$152.00. Poe Valley has very clean and modern bathroom facilities with hot showers. . Anyone staying a Poe Paddy, can take a shower and use the bathrooms for a \$3.00 daily fee. The advantage of Poe Paddy is that it is right on Penns Creek. Right at Poe Paddy campground the fishing is trophy trout water, where 2 trout over 14" can be taken. This trophy water runs 8 miles upstream to Coburn.

There are other possibilities for lodging. A couple miles south of Coburn is Hemlock Acres Campground. They have roomier cabins, that I think sleep up to 8 people. There are 2 Bed and Breakfasts in Coburn: The Feathered Hook (that has a fly shop attached), and The Reel'em Inn Bed and Breakfast. In Millheim, which is on Route 45, just north of Coburn there is the Triple Creek Lodge, and Three Porches Bed and Breakfast. In Rebersburg, there is the Centre Mills B and B which allows guests to fish on 2 miles of its private water along Elk Creek. I think the Woodward Inn also has rooms available in Woodward. Woodward is a good place to access the lower section of the Artificials Only section at Cherry Run. Then there is a cabin for rent very close to where Cherry Run empties into Penns called Kaarondinhah. It sleeps up to 8 adults and can be rented for 3 days and up.

Fishing Creek, and Spring Creek are 2 other excellent streams that are a short drive from Coburn and Millheim. The Little Juniata and Honey Creek are also within driving distance.

During the time of the outing there could be slate drakes, march browns, sulphurs, and caddis hatching on Penns.

I hope some of you will consider coming up for a few of the days during that week. I will bring more information about the hatches for the February

chapter meeting. Feel free to e-mail me directly if you have any questions. It would great to have a nice group of us fishing on Penns and other nearby waters and sharing how our days went. Hope to hear from you. 🌸

In the Media - Bob O'Donnell

The Fly Fishing Film Tour is brought to Baltimore MD by the Great Feathers Fly Shop on Saturday, Apr 19, at 7:00 PM at the Centerstage Theater in Baltimore.

Tickets (\$17) are available locally in advance through the Great Feathers Fly Shop 888-777-0838. They are also available online through F3T for \$20. <https://www.ticketriver.com/event/8868>

They are expecting a sold out show but if there are any tickets available they can be purchased at the door on the night of the event for \$20.

Doors open at 6.00 pm, so if you have time you can join in before the show to catch up with your angler buddies. Film starts promptly at 7.00 pm.

For more information contact Mike Watriss at 410-472-6799 or contact@greatfeathers.com 🌸

If you want to catch some of the trailers for this great show, take a sneak peek here: <http://www.flyfilmtour.com/>

Reminder

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!





Contributions should be sent to the Editor as plain text 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: Trout Wrangler
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Double Fly Rig

The combination of a heavy beadhead and a more buoyant nymph can be deadly. Dead-drifted, this rig puts the larger fly on the bottom, while the dropper fly imitates an insect that has been knocked into the drift. If you twitch your rod tip, you can make this nymph rig rise and dive again, which often triggers a strike.

If you're feeling twitchy due to all the snow, email the editor with the words *"Double Down"* and get hooked up.



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