

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

May 2013 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December



Fishing the Potomac River Tidal Basin with Trent Jones May 15th

This month we welcome Trent Jones to our last PPTU chapter meeting before the summer break. Trent is the Fly Fishing Manager for the Bethesda, MD Orvis store. Trent is also a Certified Casting Instructor through the Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF). Trent will be sharing his knowledge and experiences fishing the tidal portion of the Potomac River

Trent is originally from Michigan and was introduced by his grandfather to fishing. Trent is an avid trout fisher but as he puts it, “the Potomac opened up whole new world of fish to me. Instead of driving a couple hours to places like Shenandoah National Park, Mossy Creek, and other places wild trout like to swim, I can target Stripers, Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass, Gar, Catfish, Snakeheads, Sunfish, Carp, Perch...and some of these fish pull really hard!”

Trent will share his knowledge on fishing the tidal Potomac during the summer but will also discuss opportunities for the fall and winter. Trent will also share his techniques and the tools to use for landing fish like Stripers, Snakeheads, and Carp. The summer offers a wide range of fishing options on the Potomac that we may overlook. I'm sure all PPTU members will leave the May meeting with some new knowledge of water that we may take for granted.

– Marc Hutzell

Special Note

Trent will be demonstrating tying one of the most effective fly patterns ever created, the “Clouser Minnow” at the fly tying bench prior to his Potomac River presentation.



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

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS 2012 – 2013

President: Dennis Covert 410-740-8337
Past-President: Larry Vawter 410-750-8264
Vice-President: Jim Robinson 301-490-5358
Treasurer: Ken Bowyer 301-627-7154
Secretary: Lou Reichel 410-730-5150
Directors: Jim Crowell 301-816-9445
Dick Friis 301-249-6214
Pati Nicholson 240-508-7864
Bob O'Donnell 410-733-0638
Jim Greene 301-652-3848
Marc Hutzell 240-499-4945

Committee Chairs:

Fundraising: Bruce Eberle 301-854-3142
Listserve Moderator: Robert Simpson 410-461-8180
Librarian: Lou Reichel 410-730-5150
Mentor Program: Ken Bowyer 301-627-7154
Membership Secretary: Carl Smolka 301-929-1365
Conservationist Editor: Bob O'Donnell 410-733-0638
Outings: Dennis Covert 410-740-8337
Speakers Program: Marc Hutzell 240-499-4945
Conservation Advocacy: Jim Keil 301-588-8375
Project Healing Waters: Larry Vawter 410-750-8264
Publicity: Bob O'Donnell 410-733-0638
Raffles: Bob Dietz 301-854-6893
Refreshments: Rodger Johnson 301-275-2593
Trout in the Classroom: Jim Greene 301-652-3848
Chuck Dinkel 301-831-3637
Water Quality: Carl Smolka 301-929-1365
Webmaster: Ken Bowyer 301-627-7154
Jack Benoit 202-244-1040
Youth Program: VACANT

Stream Committees:

Paint Branch: Joe Robinson 301-565-3267
Northwest Branch: Jim Keil 301-588-8375
Middle Patuxent: Jim Robinson 301-490-5358
Patuxent: Jay Sheppard 301-725-5559

Mid Atlantic Council Delegates:

Nick Weber 301-774-2806
Bob Dietz 301-854-6893
Larry Vawter 410-750-8264
Vice Chairman Resources Jay Sheppard 301-725-5559
Carl Smolka 301-929-1365
Bob O'Donnell 410-733-0638
Jim Greene 301-652-3848
Pati Nicholson 240-508-7864
Dennis Covert 410-740-8337
Jim Robinson 301-490-5358
Lou Reichel 410-730-5150



Presidents' Column - Dennis Covert

This month marks the changing of the guard as my two years as Chapter President comes to an end. It's been a wonderful experience. I think what made the biggest impression on me is how hard everyone works to further the cause of TU, and how everyone just stepped up to help when needed. I want to wish Jim Robinson all the best as he takes the lead and know the Chapter will support him in his efforts as it has surely supported mine.

During the past two years we have continued to grow; In addition to giving sustaining financial support to Project Healing Waters, Youth Camp, and Trout in the Classroom we are now a sustaining supporter of Casting for Recovery, an organization dedicated to the recovery of breast cancer survivors. And, in order to support these great efforts we've actively been pursuing ideas in how to raise additional monies. After a couple trial runs it looks like we will continue the hotdog stand fund raiser at Bass Pro on an annual basis if not bi-annually.

I also want to give special recognition to our partner in the conservation of the upper Patuxent watershed, the Izaak Walton League's Wildlife Achievement Chapter in Damascus Maryland. For two years in a row they have named PPTU the recipient of their fundraiser "Shooting Clay's to Save the Bay". The combined 2012-2013 contributions exceed \$3,000, all the funds will be used for conservation projects in the upper watershed.

We are in full spring now and many of our spring projects have been either completed or well under way. This spring our chapter has participated in stream clean ups, maintained booths at Bass Pro's "Fishing Week", the National Capital Chapter's Fly Fishing Show and Howard Counties Greenfest. Owen Pochettino's Eagle Scout project of Planting 600 trees above Haviland Mill Bridge that our Chapter sponsored has now been completed, and the Chapter completed a work day the weekend after to tighten up some of the ties on

the plastic tubes that protect the shoots from predation. Afterwards we had a cookout and some fishing that was really a lot of fun. The trees are obviously a living project and will require some care by the chapter for the next 3 or 4 years, cutting back the weeds and the multi-flora from around the tubes until the shoots can get a good start. So if you missed out on the first couple of rounds be assured the call to action will come again.

The hatches are on now, and it's time for us to settle back a little and enjoy the resource. The final outing of the spring will be to Penns creek in PA and a great opportunity to meet, have some fun, and hopefully catches some fish. Hope to see you there. 🌻

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 🌻



Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

The Patuxent below Brighton Dam

By now, most members have at least heard of the flies-only section of the Patuxent River below Brighton Dam. The no-kill, fly-fishing-only water starts about a hundred yards below the pipeline crossing of the river, which in turn, is about 300 yards below the actual dam. This regulation applies all the way downstream to Mink Hollow bridge, a distance of maybe 1.7 miles. Only one bridge crosses in the middle of this water: Haviland Mill Road, which runs between rt. 650 (NH Ave.) on the Mont. Co. (or south end) and Brighton Dam Rd on the Howard Co. side.

Howard Co. parks has recently built a small parking lot on their side of the bridge. There is also a gravel parking spot on the Montgomery Co. end of the bridge on land owned by State Parks that will hold two cars, three, if good friends. There is ample public parking up at the dam; just walk downstream past the basketball court to get to the river. There is room for one car next to the one-lane bridge over the Hawlings on Haviland Mill that is also on State lands—just walk down along the Hawlings to get to the Patuxent. The Mont. Co. end of the Mink Hollow Bridge also has a parking lot for about three or four cars—walk through the chain link fence to access the stream above the bridge. If the Howard parks lot is filled, one can park off the side of the farmer's lane that takes off the road opposite the new parking lot; just be certain to be clear of the roadway—large trucks travel this gravel driveway.

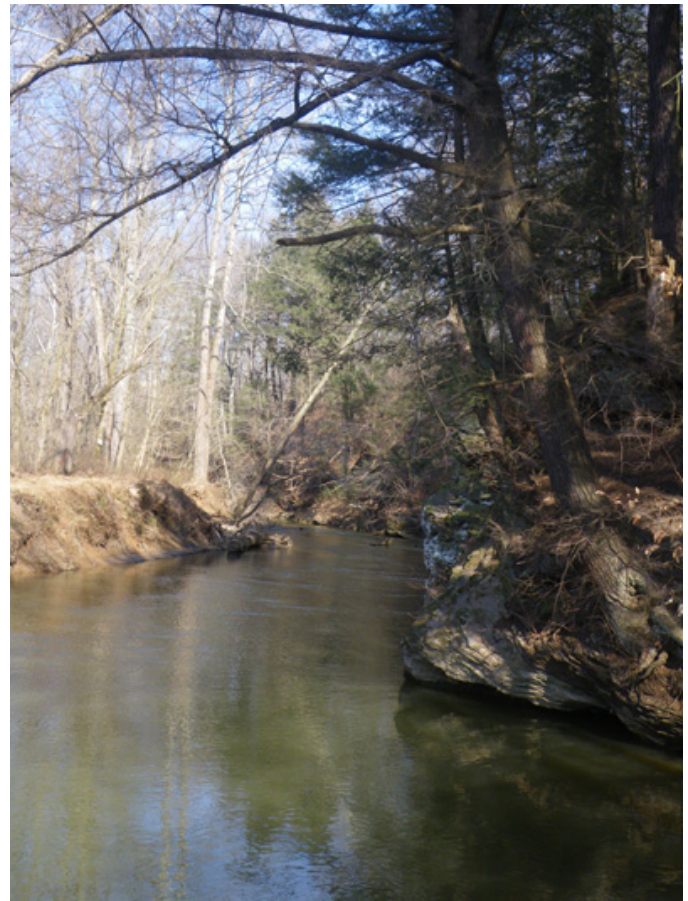
Much of the water is in public hands or we have consent from the landowners to fish the river on their property. As always, take care not to abuse our use of their lands. This river was a put-and-take fishery until approximately 1980; it was removed from the stocking list at the request of the landowners due to fishermen leaving trash, building fires, and destroying fences and other property. If you see anyone abusing our hard earned fishing privileges, please ask them to stop or let someone know (with tag number).

We hope that by the end of May the WSSC, which manages Brighton Dam, will have cleaned off the trash screens in front of their control gates on the reservoir side of the dam. The three sets of gates are set approximately 10', 40' and 53' down from the normal pool elevation of Triadelphia Reservoir. The lowest gate is essentially at the bottom of the reservoir. This is not a very deep reservoir. We do expect that periodically we will have a drought, and all the cold water will be drained before cool September temperatures prevail. Hopefully, this total loss of all trout will happen only once every 5–8 years. We are expecting a good summer with lots of cold water, but that can change if we get a dry May, June and July.

To get the current river flow and temperature information below the dam, you need to go online and visit this web site:

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv?cb_all&format=gif_stats&period=7&site_no=01591610

Flows below about 35 cfs are very slow and languid in the big pools. Flows over about 140 cfs are pretty brisk. I have waded and fished with flows around 175; there were some holes one could not get into with any comfort, but most of the river is accessible at these high flows by staying to one side or the other. Ideal flows for a fisher are in the 80–110 cfs range. The biggest problem is the very steep banks on both sides. One must sometimes back track to get out of a deep pool to go around. Chest waders are a real must-have item for this river. Accessing only with hip boots is going to be very limiting. Fishing from the bank is also nearly impossible: both sides are lined with trees and brush. There are some very picturesque holes with a rocky cliff and large hemlocks overlooking the water.



The hatches on this water are not well studied. The common mayflies, caddis, and stoneflies of this region seem to be present, but numbers to elicit a major hatch are not known. Certainly, terrestrials will be a major source of food for the trout. The numbers of bait fish in the minnows, shiners, and darter category appear to be excellent. Any trout that learns how to catch one of those protein packets is going to grow very well. Before the big January flood there was an excellent population of scuds in the river. It may take a little while for them to recover in large numbers, but this is a pattern worth trying.

I posted a map of the river last month (see the PPTU web site). It shows trails, parking lots and other features. Two in particular need noting. There is a foot bridge over a deep gulch upstream of Haviland Mill Road, just past the field on the Howard Co. side where the 600 trees were planted in March. It is not near the river, so follow the sign to find it. There is also a section of the river for which we have not gained permission to fish. This section starts about a 400 yards downstream of the Hawlings River mouth and ends about 400 yards upstream from Mink Hollow Road. Please avoid this section until we can gain their permission at

some time in the future—hopefully, sooner than later. If you see fishing regulations signs, you can fish; if you see POSTED yellow signs, you must stay out of that area.

The Patuxent River below Brighton Dam has a wide range of fish in it besides the stocked trout. One can see and maybe catch largemouth and smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye, striped bass, perch, crappie, carp, catfish, and many other species. I landed the largest fallfish I have ever seen two summers ago; it was almost 18" long—undoubtedly, a Maryland state record! (There are undoubtedly many other fallfish of this size in the river.) Give this river a try some afternoon after work, as one its main features is that it is only a short distance from most of our membership and many other fishers in the Washington-Baltimore region. 🌻



Membership Reminder *Conservationist*

This May issue of the Conservationist is the last issue to be distributed until September. Our fiscal year is from October 1st to September 30th each year. The expiration date of your Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC) is shown in the subject line of the email as (09XX). If yours is 0913, you are current until September.

Your renewal can now be easily done on-line at our website. Just go to <http://www.pptu.org/Join/join.shtml> and click on the Donate button for the ASC. You also have the option to print out the renewal form and mail us a check.

We are no longer using US mail for membership information, so having your correct email address is critical. If you have changed your email address or

wish the Conservationist be delivered to another email address, please let us know by sending an email, including your first and last name to membership@pptu.org and request an update to your record.

If you have any other membership questions, feel free to contact me at: membership@pptu.org 🌻

Thanks,

Carl Smolka
Membership

Safe Summer Fishing! - TroutWrangler

Everyone enjoy a safe summer of fishing! Here's a few tips before venturing outdoors:

- Always wear sunscreen on exposed areas like your face, neck, and hands. The sun's rays can damage your skin and give you a painful burn.
- Wear a hat. Hats keep your head cool in the summer. They also help keep the sun out of your eyes and protect you from hooks during a stray cast.
- Protect the only eyes you have by wearing some kind of glasses. Sunglasses protect your eyes from hooks and the sun's harmful rays. Polarized sunglasses also help you see below the surface of the water helping you locate fish and other objects.
- Shoes should always be worn whether fishing on shore, in a boat, or wading in the water. Stray hooks, glass, sharp rocks, and other objects on shore and in the water could cut your bare feet. In a boat, shoes designed to keep your feet from slipping in a wet boat could help prevent you from taking an unexpected dip into the water.
- Always dress for the weather and be prepared for sudden changes.

And remember... fishing with a friend makes for twice the fishing fun while also making for a safer and more enjoyable trip. 🌻

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
Phone: 410-733-0638
Email: TroutWrangler@Yahoo.com



Summer is coming...get ready for some fun!

Pictured left to right:
Parachute Hopper, Flying Ant, Fat Head Beetle



Return Address:
Potomac-Patuxent Chapter TU
P.O. Box 2865
Wheaton, MD 20915