



October 2006

# *The Conservationist*

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

## South Central Pennsylvania It's Really All true!

**O**ur featured speaker this month is Mike Heck. Mike is a TU President and an Orvis endorsed fly fishing guide based in Chambersburg, PA. Although Mike has been guiding for 12 years, he has lived in the area his entire life. Mike will give us the low-down on four fabled streams in his area. The Letort Spring Run, Falling Spring Branch, Yellow Breeches Creek, and Big Spring Creek have been the topics of many articles and even book chapters. Mike has authored several articles on Pennsylvania streams, but to hear him talk about the trout fishing excitement in his nearby haunts will increase your desire to fish them. The streams can all be easily reached for a day trip of great sport with a friend or, better, with Mike himself. Check out his web site at [www.fallingsprings.com](http://www.fallingsprings.com). It has a lot to offer from stream reports to his great selection of flies and leaders. Most importantly, come to the meeting to hear and see the enthusiasm for Pennsylvania trout fishing. — Nick Weber

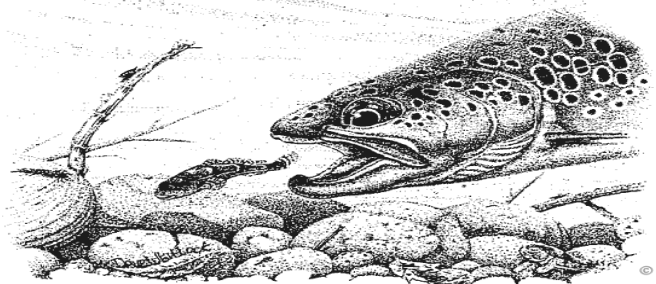
## Fly-Fishing South Central Pennsylvania

Monthly PPTU Meeting  
Wednesday, October 18, 2006  
7:00 PM

### FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER

Mike Heck  
Veteran Flyfishing Guide

Also Don't Miss the Tying Bench &  
Anglers Corner Segments  
(See details, Page 4)



Artwork courtesy of Dave Whitlock— [www.davewhitlock.com](http://www.davewhitlock.com)

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE!



- **Western Maryland Weekend Outing & Camping Trip - October 13-14.**
- **The BIG Raffle — Great Prizes, Great Fun!**
- **Low water Fly Fishing Techniques**
- **Annual Warning — Hunting Season in Patuxent River State Park**

## 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

**EDITOR: Matt Baun**  
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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Nick Weber

**O**ctober is here and the fall fly fishing season is well underway. I hope that you have already had some luck convincing our wary prey that your imitation was a worthy one. I intend to do just that while enjoying the friendship of fellow Chapter members on our fall outings. It is a great way to share a fishing experience and learn a lot about a particular stream by exchanging information while the focus of your attention, the stream and its fish, are right there in front of you, and your stream companion can tell you what is working and what is not.

We will continue our ticket sale for our Fall Fund-raiser at this October Meeting as well as next month at our November Meeting when the raffle will take place. In purchasing tickets for the Fund-raiser, you will be supporting our education and conservation activities such as the Trout in the Classroom and others we are planning such as some replants on the Hawlings River and other work just beginning on the brook trout tributaries of the Gunpowder River.

In another article this month, the lineup of great prizes for the Big Raffle is outlined — so start your dreaming early. I can feel the smooth action of the Winston and hear the scream of the Hardy with a 4-pounder taking me into the backing. In coming back to reality, consider buying a ticket or three, or more, and even suggest it to a non-member fly fisher. You will be helping our Chapter with important programs that will benefit the Chapter and its mission. Contact any member of the board for tickets if you cannot make the meeting.

In the coming year, I intend to make a conscious effort to bring the joy of fly fishing to someone. Someone who has not enjoyed the thrill of feeling a trout taking a dry fly or nymph, or a big bluegill smacking a popper or glow bug. They may be 7 or 70. In fact the joy at these ages may be exuberant as well it should. And my joy will be just as intense in sharing something new and challenging and fun. Lets all consider making the coming year one for new water, new friends, and most of all to help bring the joy of fly fishing to someone new to the sport. And don't forget to fish with your "old friends" occasionally as well! ■

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# Tackle and Tactic Tips

BY JAY SHEPPARD

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**F**all brings out a lot of larger trout in many of our waters. At the same time, we can still see the smaller trout grabbing the last of the hatches, most of which are small mayflies and the early winter stoneflies. One minute a fisher can be tossing #20 flies at 7–12" trout and a few minutes later try for a much larger monster lurking in the stream. Usually, the monster is not going to be interested in some tiny fly—it wants a large 'protein packet.'

Tippet selection and tactics are going to radically change in the above scenario. The small flies will require a tippet of 6X or even 7X. Switching to some large attractor pattern such as a #8 cone-head sculpin means a much heavier tippet. Tippet and leaders need to be quickly changeable from a delicate dead drift presentation of a small dry or nymph to a stouter system that will both turn the heavy fly over and absorb any strike from a moving large fish. I have a small handout about using a simple loop-to-loop connection from a tapered leader to a tippet. If you have not seen this, contact me ([jmsheppar@aol.com](mailto:jmsheppar@aol.com)) for a copy.

The old "rule of 3" was useful for determining the tippet size by dividing the hook size by 3. Today's monofilament is much stronger than what we had even 15 or 20 years ago. For dead drifted presentations I try to use the finest tippet I think I can get away with under the prevailing conditions—wind, currents, selectivity and maximum sizes of the trout. I usually want tippets that are very long and supple. So I may start with the "rule of 3" but more likely will make the tippet one size smaller. Because I am more often than not fishing small flies of #16 or smaller, I go through a couple of spools of 6X material each year.

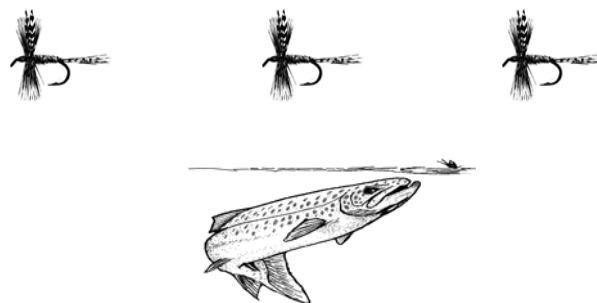
What the trout is seeing is the actual minuscule movements of the fly compared directly to the bubbles and other materials in the drift line a few inches away. A heavy tippet will restrict those minute movements, while a much finer tippet will be less restrictive. Think of a fly with NO tippet attached drifting down the river; it will be very tempting to any trout that sees it. Trout do not run up a leader and check all the knots and connections or what diameter any of the leader system is using.

It is reacting to the movements of the fly—does it look like a natural?

For dry flies and nymphs I often use tippets in the 30–45" length. For streamers and woolly buggers the tippet may be only 15–20" long. The latter might be 3X or 4X, while the former is more likely to be 6X. The principles of tippet length selection are easy to remember, if one considers casting 10 or 20 feet of 6X versus a few inches of 2X. The first will not go very far and leave a heap of curls and loops, while the second will lay straight out; I do not ever fish with such tippets, but these extremes give the outline of tippet length and size selection

Two last points: for large fish attacking a fly on a tight line, the shock to the knots and leader material is instantaneous and must be able to withstand that assault. The same fish taking a dry fly on a dead drift is not going to instantly shock the connections, unless the angler rears back on the rod and strikes too hard. For tight line presentations, I tend to make the tippet one size larger than the rule of 3 would otherwise suggest, especially if the fish are large, going to react violently and charge into cover or down the stream.

The last important point (there are many others!) is to check the age and condition of all your leaders and tippets. Mono left in the trunk of the car during the summer is going to be much weaker than if it had been kept cool. Age is also very important. If the manufacturer does not mark the spools and leader packets with a date, you need to mark each of them when purchased. Avoid all mono more than 3 years old, especially if it has laid in a hot trunk for more than a week or three. One really gets very frustrated when he hooks a fish of the year or lifetime, and it immediately breaks the line. Be a good scout: be prepared for a much larger fish and you will be disappointed far fewer times—and show us the picture!



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# PPTU October Outing to Western Maryland

By Dennis Covert

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**R**eservations have been made at Big Run State Park for October 13 & 14. I have booked the Monroe shelter from Friday noon till Sunday noon for a group tent camping reservation that allows us up to 25 people. All this for just \$120 split however many ways we have participants. The shelter has a fire place (bring our own wood), picnic tables, and a place to gather after the days fishing to cook, make coffee, swap stories, and if it rains we have something to get in under. Dry camp site, has no running water.

This was a great experience last year. Gathering around the fire at night cooking, comparing notes on flies used and relating the happenings of the day was a real treat. We saw a lot of wild life including one bear. The big browns are spawning on the North Branch of the Potomac at this time and last year the river was very wadable. The savage fished well producing some few browns, a few in the 16- 17 inch range, many brookies and some rainbows.

**Directions from Baltimore:** Take I70 West. At Hancock interstate I70 splits into I68 and I70. Bear left onto I68. Proceed on I68 through Cumberland, just before Grantsville turn South onto New Germany Road. Follow New Germany Road past New Germany State Park and proceed on to Big Run Road. Turn left on Big Run Road and proceed to Park entrance. Monroe Pavilion will be on your right a short distance into the park just past the sign for Monroe Run Trail and bathrooms.

Monroe Run and Big Run can be accessed from the Park. The upper and lower Savage is within a few miles. Other area streams and rivers include the North Branch of the Potomac, The Yock, and the Casselman.

Take into consideration when packing gear this is October in the mountains. Temps can vary widely. There can be a good frost at night and be quite warm by afternoon.

## Items Needed:

Tent, sleeping bag, lantern, food, water, and toiletries, basically everything needed to sustain you for a weekend. We can use showers at New Germany State park.

To sign up for a camping site; call me at 410-740-8337 (leave your number) or email me at [dennis-covert@hotmail.com](mailto:dennis-covert@hotmail.com) Remember it's 25 people not 25 sites, if you are more than 1 to a tent I'll need a head count.

**Tying Bench** – This month you will find Bob Dietz at the tying bench. Bob is well known as one of our most successful fishers and one who ties his own flies. When approached about his go to fall and winter flies, he responded that one indispensable fly is his Pheasant Tail Soft Hackle. Bob will show you how he ties this pattern, and maybe some secrets on how he fishes it as well.

**Angler's Corner** – Stop by the Angler's Corner and chat with Dennis Covert about our Chapter outings past, present, and future. He willingly shares his rich experiences concerning our outings as well as comments and stories about his fishing experience in our area, or nearby and far destinations.

*Tying Bench and Anglers Corner will take place at the Monthly PPTU Meeting on Wednesday, October 18. Both segments run concurrently from 7:00 – 7:30 PM.*

## 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 paid a supporting contribution will be asked to contribute \$15.

Contact Ken Bowyer at 301-627-7154 or e-mail [ken-bowyer@comcast.net](mailto:ken-bowyer@comcast.net).

## The BIG Raffle Coming November 2006 Get your tickets NOW!

At our **November Meeting** along with our program panel of fly fishers, we will have a raffle of extraordinary prizes to benefit our conservation and education programs.

This is our major fundraiser for the year and we urge **everyone** to take part for a good cause as well as have an opportunity to win great prizes.

**The Grand Prize** — is a destination **fly fishing package for two to the Savage and North Branch of the Potomac Rivers**. It includes a two night stay at the Savage River Outfitters cabin located right on the lower Savage River. Also included is a day of guided raft fishing on the North Branch and a half day of guided wade fishing on the Savage. Most of us have heard about these two fabled streams. Now is an opportunity to fish them for the first time or for a repeat of great fishing past. This package includes the guide tip and is **valued at \$1000**.

**The 2nd Prize** — is a fly fisher's dream rod and reel combination – the much praised **Winston Classic 8'6" 5 wt rod** and a, listen-to-it-sing **Hardy Viscount Reel!** Now this is a sweet combination, if there ever was one. The combination rod and reel is **valued at \$770**.

**The 3rd Prize** — Top of the line, **Orvis Tailwaters stockingfoot, waders**. These great waders are valued at \$329.

Ticket prices are \$10, 3/\$25, 6/\$40 available from board members at our Chapter meeting or contact them - see list on page 2.

## Calling all Fly Tiers....or is it Tyers?

**O**ur Chapter members help the cause in numerous ways. If you would like to help out but just don't have the time, consider this.

Next time you're at your tying desk, tie up a couple extra flies and set them aside. Nothing special, just whatever you're tying. When you have a half dozen or so tied, bring them to the next chapter meeting so we can offer them at future raffles.

If you attach your name, we'll be sure to thank you when they are raffled off. Just one more way to help protect the trout. If interested in helping in this effort, email PPTU Chapter President Nick Weber at [heritagero@aol.com](mailto:heritagero@aol.com).

Thank You!

## Annual Supporting Contribution NOW PAYABLE

The Annual Supporting Contribution for 2006-2007 is now payable. Check your label on The Conservationist. If the "PP-" date is "0906" (or there is NO "PP-" and date), you can send your \$15 now, and you will not have to worry about paying at the next meeting. If you have already made your Annual Supporting Contribution, your label will show "PP-0907." Make checks payable to "POTOMAC-PATUXENT CHAPTER - TU" and send it to our chapter P.O. Box. If you wish to receive The Conservationist via the Internet, please indicate this with your check and provide your email address. The Annual Supporting Contribution covers only the Conservationist and related administrative expenses plus special rates for certain Chapter activities. All other donations above expenses at raffles, etc., go to the resource and educational programs. **Final mailing** for those having "PP-0906" on their label will be the November issue. **There will be NO separate mailings to remind members of this obligation. Please take note and action today!** You will not want to miss our January issue and all the other 2007 issues with their announcements, reports and tips. Thank you.

## **Annual Supporting Contribution**

Members of the **Potomac-Patuxent Chapter** of Trout Unlimited who make an Annual Supporting Contribution of \$15 will receive our publication *The Conservationist* either by mail or electronically. Members of other TU chapters may also make an Annual Supporting Contribution and receive *The Conservationist*. The Chapter operates on a September-to-September basis. The Annual Supporting Contribution is separate from TU dues. Send all correspondence, changes of address, and Annual Supporting Contribution to our P.O. Box (below). Also indicate whether you wish to receive this publication by mail or via the internet. If the latter, please provide the e-mail address where you will receive your electronic copy. You will be contacted by email and given the URL to obtain your copy. Students may receive a free copy of this publication, if they provide their graduation date. Your publication expiration for *The Conservationist* is indicated on the address label as PP-0906 or PP-0907.

## **ADDRESS CHANGED?**

If you have moved or see any error in your label on this publication, please advise both the National TU office and this chapter with separate notices. Our mailing list is maintained apart from the National list. We do eventually get the notice of address change from National TU, but it is often a few months before it affects this publication and other mailings. Please help us help you.

Last year we had several reports of members not receiving *The Conservationist*. First, make sure we have your correct address, including ZIP, and that you have made your Annual Supporting Contribution (label reads PP-0906 until this November, then PP-0907 after that). If you are missing a back issue, please contact us for a copy. For future reference, we try to mail our publication to contributing members about two weeks before the next meeting. Remember, there is no publication or meeting in December or during the summer months of June, July and August.



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