



September 2002

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

The underwater world of trout with Wendell "Ozzie" Ozefovich

TO TRULY KNOW TROUT, YOU MUST SEE THE WORLD THROUGH THEIR EYES. Over the years, most of us have come to know rivers and trout by viewing them from above. We understand what goes on in the world of trout—at least we think we do!

In this unique video presentation, Ozzie takes you into the underwater world of trout. The view under the stream is not as bucolic and stable as you have come to believe. A stream is alive, not just with trout and insects, but with minnows, crayfish, and a varied mix of living things. What looks like crystal clear water is chock full of bubbles and sticks and leaves and haze. This exploration of a trout's world, from under the surface, opens your eyes to a new appreciation for trout and their living liquid world.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I SUSPECT THAT MOST READERS consider the column on page 2 more of a reference resource than a news item. But this month there is considerable news behind the listing of Officers and Directors. The list reflects not only the results of the election of officers and directors at the May chapter meeting, but also several changes in appointed chairpersons. I'd like to highlight each of the changes.

First, I want to thank the two directors who completed their terms in May. Charlie Gelso has always been ready to help with any tasks that needed his vast reservoir of wisdom and knowledge. Val Walters has always been among the first to volunteer help in accomplishing new tasks as they have arisen. Their services as directors have been invaluable directly to me, and for the benefit of all chapter members. Val is continuing her outstanding support of Trout Unlimited by representing the chapter as a delegate to the Mid-Atlantic Council of TU.

In May, Jim Greco completed three years as secre-

Ozzie has been filming and videotaping for more than four decades, so he has the skill and equipment to produce a quality experience. He is an accomplished fly fisherman who looks at a river not just as an angler, but also as a filmmaker. He asks the same questions you do—sometimes finding answers, sometimes finding more questions to ask.

This isn't filmed in the wilds of Montana, these are eastern trout in eastern waters. There are no staged aquarium shots; these trout are in their natural environment in New Jersey and Pennsylvania streams, many of world renown. There is also footage of sea-run rainbow, brown, and salter brook trout from the Connetquot River in Long Island, NY. There are wild fish and stocked fish, fighting fish and spawning fish. You will see beneath the surface as trout feed on drifting invertebrates and surface flies, and how a trout views an angler through its window.

This is one of the few presentations that almost everyone from rank beginner to crusty old cuss walks away having learned something. Questions and comments are welcome and encouraged.

See you at the meeting.

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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 articles, letters, fishing news, tying tips, book reviews, and even poetry about trout fishing should be sent to the Editor as plain MS-DOS (ASCII) text or Microsoft Word attachments to e-mail messages containing brief descriptions of the attachments. Attachments received without a description will be deleted without opening.

The deadline for submissions is the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication.

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For contributions to *The Conservationist* only

President's column

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tary of the chapter, one of the most demanding of the elected positions, and Jim did so with distinction. He will continue to serve our chapter as a newly appointed delegate to the Mid-Atlantic Council of Trout Unlimited.

I hope you all will welcome our new chapter secretary, Judy Hendrickson and directors Gus Bernard and Bern Norfolk, all of whom were elected at the May meeting. I am looking forward to them bringing fresh points of view to the board meetings and thereby stimulating the energies of the chapter.

For many years Bill Miller has been a most reliable supplier of refreshments at chapter meetings. During the past year his employer has caused him to be absent for extended periods in such far-off trout havens as Abu Dhabi and, more recently, in the Tennessee Valley. In Tennessee, Bill has actually had some success in finding trout streams. Bill's availability to continue as Refreshment Chair appears limited and, in any event, he deserves a respite. Cathy Nutter, who has served as Bill's backup during the past year, has volunteered to be Bill's permanent replacement. So, accolades to Bill for a job well-done, and to Cathy for filling the gap.

In recent years, the chapter's primary source of funds for conservation projects has been the raffle featured at the April chapter meeting. Prospects are that the chapter's increasing support of conservation education, primarily targeted at youths, will require additional sources of funds. Earlier this year we provided modest financial support to the nationally recognized Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp on the Yellow Breeches. We hope to increase that support in 2003. PPTU also provided financial and volunteer support to a local flyfishing education program (see article by Jed Feffer in this newsletter). Moreover, we expect to provide financial support for a new program that will enable school-kids in Montgomery and Howard Counties to learn about trout and their habitats.

To enable PPTU to have sufficient funds to support such programs, Bob Serrano has volunteered to research and coordinate additional fundraising activities. Please give Bob your support, in whatever way you can, as he pursues this objective.

PPTU Chapter and Board Meeting Dates

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE DATES of the PPTU Chapter and Board of Directors meetings for the 2002-2003 year. The eight chapter meetings are on the third Wednesday of each month except December, June, July, and August. The ten board meetings are normally held on the first Monday of the month except when a Federal holiday falls on that Monday. All meetings are held in the Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center at 7:00 PM.

Please mark these dates on your calendars:

Chapter Meetings	Board Meetings
September 18	August 26
October 16	October 7
November 20	November 4
January 15	December 2
February 19	January 6
March 19	February 3
April 16	March 3
May 21	April 7
	May 5
	June 2

The Board of Directors meetings are open to all members of PPTU.

Future Speakers and Programs

If you know of a speaker you would like to be considered for a program or if there is a subject of special interest, please contact Jon Barnes at jonarch@aol.com or (410) 965-4946.

New address for contributions to *The Conservat*ionist

BECAUSE OF THE LARGE AMOUNT of spam I receive on my regular e-mail address, I have opened a separate address for contributions to *The Conservat*ionist:

theconservationist@juno.com

Please use this address for all articles and other contributions to *The Conservat*ionist.

For all other correspondence, please use my regular e-mail address:

johnwcolburn@juno.com

The policy about identifying any e-mail attachments with a brief statement about the contents and your name still applies. Otherwise I'll delete your message without opening any attachment. I don't need any more viruses.

John Colburn

Paint Branch Update

WE WON A BIG VICTORY over the summer in terms of preserving and protecting the viability of the Paint Branch. The Maryland State Highway Administration, as part of the Route 29 corridor improvements, has proposed significant changes to the Briggs Chaney Road—Route 29 intersection. These changes spill over into the nearby Briggs Chaney Road—Old Columbia Pike intersection, parts of which are in the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area (SPA).

Last fall Neil Pederson, head of planning for the State Highway Administration, stated that as a state agency they did not have to comply with the SPA, which is a local law. The SPA legislation, with its requirements for water quality plans and limits on impervious surface area, is a cornerstone of the program to provide comprehensive protection for the Paint Branch. PPTU worked hard to get this and related legislation passed in the mid-1990s.

From a historical perspective, every project to date has complied with the Upper Paint Branch SPA requirements. Similar issues have arisen on previous projects, but the end result has always been compliance. For example, when the Spencerville post office was first proposed, the federal government claimed to be exempt from local laws and did not have to comply with the SPA. Eventually they reduced the imperviousness of the project and complied with all aspects of the SPA. Similarly, the Fairland Community Center was initially over the 10 percent limit, and the county transportation department claimed that public projects were exempt. Eventually they acquired nearby properties and set the land aside as a "pervious reserve" to bring the overall imperviousness of the project into compliance.

PPTU and the Eyes of Paint Branch has been doggedly following the Briggs Chaney Road—Old Columbia Pike project, and raising objections at every opportunity. This included three public meetings, and a number of letters to officials. Eventually the State Highway Administration agreed to submit the required water quality plan. However, they still refused to comply with the impervious surface area requirement.

On June 20 the Planning Board conducted a hearing on the water quality plan for modification of the Briggs Chaney Road—Old Columbia Pike intersection. Activists from many civic and environ-

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Paint Branch Update

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mental organizations from across the county turned out to support our position and testify at the hearing. Our differences boiled down to 1600 square feet of impervious surface area (an area less than that of the hearing room).

In the end the Planning Board approved the water quality plan on the condition that the State Highway Administration comply with the imperviousness limits of the Upper Paint Branch SPA. The Planning Board left it to the staff at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission to work out the details. They agreed to comply by removing 1600 square feet of existing impervious surface area from parkland near several of our reforestation projects in the Good Hope / Gum Springs sub-watersheds.

At the hearing Neil Pederson stated that this was a precedent-setting case. Fortunately the precedent for compliance with the Upper Paint Branch SPA remained intact. Rest assured, we'll continue to protect this precedent.

*David Dunmire, Chairman
PPTU Paint Branch Committee*

Patuxent Report

ANOTHER VERY DRY SUMMER is almost over. Flows were far below normal for most of the summer (at least through mid-August). The flows have not quite been as terrible as in summer 1999 when the flows reached less than 0.5 cubic feet per second. They have been mostly 2-3 cfs in July and August.

Hopefully some trout have found a pool with good aeration at its head to give plenty of oxygen during the long warm nights. (Oxygen levels can drop way below minimum requirements for trout under these conditions.)

I have found only a few trout on several trips after late June in the lower sections. Small numbers of wild trout have been spotted in the upper sections from about Mullinix Mill upstream—their usual haunts for most of the wild trout in this river. Fair survival of these wild trout can be expected.

The bridge replacement at Howard Chapel is supposed to be completed by the end of September; the new structure will offer more trout habitat with many large rocks around its base.

The annual fall DNR surveys of the stream should help us shed light on this. If you are interested in

helping in the annual trout population surveys of this stream or the Gunpowder, please contact me by the September meeting. This is always a great opportunity to see where the trout are (or are not). This is a weekday pursuit, with chest waders required to help on the shocking crew. Hip boots will still allow you to help in carrying equipment and trout. Dates and times have not been determined.

Jay Sheppard



Inter-County Connector Update

THE IDEA OF A ROADWAY linking I-270 and I-95 was first proposed in 1950. After 52 years and \$60 million of study, the Inter-County Connector still remains only a proposal; a proposal that has fractured our communities, pitted neighbor against neighbor, and created political gridlock while traffic gridlock has only worsened.

With the two leading candidates for governor already calling for further study of the Inter-County Connector (ICC), it seems likely that there will be yet another ICC study after the election. On July 30, 2002 the Montgomery County Council adopted a statement that included the following points:

- "When the ICC study begins again, it should be on a fast track process that brings this issue to closure on an accelerated basis.
- "In order to fast track the process, the prior study information should be incorporated into the new study and updated as necessary.
- "Council expects that the environmental, land use and financial implications inherent in the construction of this road will continue to be the key issues of consideration as to whether this road can be built.
- "Nothing in the study should interfere with completion of the design and construction of the widening of MD 28/198 according to the Master Plan."

These are key points, and Council should be commended for their insight and action. The Montgomery County Council has consistently rejected the ICC and looked for effective ways to relieve traffic congestion.

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Inter-County Connector Update

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Unfortunately, there is an effort underway to change the fundamental make up of Council. A few pro-growth officials and candidates are highlighting traffic congestion as a key issue in the upcoming elections, and citing the rejection of the ICC as the cause of this congestion. The objective is to replace officials who oppose the ICC with others who favor the ICC.

While traffic congestion is a problem, the ICC is not the solution. The widening of Interstate 270 is a case in point. Several years ago the section of I270 near Gaithersburg was widened to 12 lanes. Local and state highway administrators stated at the time that this widening would relieve congestion in that area for at least a decade. In a span of only two to three years, delays are common place, and additional widening is already being discussed. Transportation need readily expands until some limit is reached.

If we merely treat symptoms and not the underlying cause, it is only a matter of time before the symptoms recur again. Traffic congestion is merely a symptom of a much larger problem, unbridled growth.

The only way to get rid of traffic congestion is to stop unbridled growth. Note that "slow growth" is different from "no growth." Unbridled growth impacts our quality of life, not just through traffic congestion, but also through countless other infrastructure costs, such as over crowded schools. All of us pay the costs of unbridled growth through our taxes.

The upcoming elections this fall, both the primary and the general, are extremely important because of redistricting and this push for the ICC. Consider the candidates carefully. The "fast-growth" proponents, such as the developers, builders, and others, who profit from sprawl, have lots of money to publicize their cause and promote candidates.

It is up to individuals like us who care about our natural resources to look beyond the rhetoric, to find the facts, and to vote conservation.

The making of fly fishers

IT IS WITH PLEASURE that I describe the fly-fishing class we started at Highland View Elementary School last April. With funding from an environmental stewardship grant given to Robert Dodd, a former teacher, and from the generous monies given by our own Potomac-Patuxent Chapter, we embarked on a fishing adventure with the kids.

I arranged the scheduling of the classes with Elizabeth Curtz, coordinator our Wonderful Wednesdays Enrichment Program. She was kind enough to include the Fly Fishing Program as one of the Program Choices the kids could elect. I limited the enrollment to a small number of 4th and 5th graders. The enrollment became six students as the initial stages of the class took shape.

"I would like to learn to fly fish because I want an active hobby, am inspired by water, and I think it would be a great experience for me."

The previous year I had thought about teaching fly fishing skills to youngsters, and downloaded Phil Geneva's outline of his First Cast program from the Trout Unlimited (TU) website. This spring I read over Phil's plan. His ideas led me to begin the classes. I wanted to share what I knew with the kids, and to enlist others who felt

the same way.

The purpose of these classes was to give the children a very basic introduction to fly-fishing. We would work on identification, use and care of equipment, knowledge of trout habitat, stream health, identification of the insects trout feed on, knot tying, fly tying, casting, and fishing.

At the February Chapter meeting I spoke with Lou Boezi about the class, and he encouraged me to talk to Dave Piske. At the March meeting I spoke with Dave. He promised that if I could come up with a plan, he would present it to the Board on April 1st. On April 2nd I got word that the Chapter had approved the program and donated \$225.00 to the cause.

The kids met on Wednesdays after school starting on March 20th and ending on June 19th. There were twelve classes, including two Saturday classes. The classes ran from 3:45 until 5:00, some-



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times longer.

The classes were held at Highland View Elementary School, either in my classroom or on the upper field. We had four on-water classes: one at Maydale Pond, one at Paint Branch near Randolph Road, one at Sligo Creek, and one at the Gunpowder River at Bunker Hill Road. There were six children involved: four boys and two girls; four fifth graders and two fourth graders.

The children wrote a paragraph about why they wanted to learn fly-fishing at our first class. One girl started her paragraph with:

"I would like to learn to fly fish because I want an active hobby, am inspired by water, and I think it would be a great experience for me."

One of the boys wrote:

"I saw some fly fishing shows and I liked them and that's why I picked to go fly fishing with you, Mr. Feffer."

The children filled out a pre-program survey prepared by Duncan Blair, the Youth Program Coordinator, for TU. This, along with a post-program survey, entitled the children to a six month membership in Trout Unlimited.

Once the paper work was done, we looked over fly-fishing equipment. We looked at rods, reels, line, leaders, tippet, and flies and talked about their functions. We also looked through photos of trout, their habitat, and what they eat. All of the children seemed very excited about the class.

The next class focused on knot tying. All the students completed a nail knot connecting line to leader and a triple surgeon's knot connecting leader to tippet. They each received a baggy filled with a nipper, retractor, fly floatant, nail knot tool, knot tying card, and pieces of fly line and monofilament with which to practice their knots at home.

At the following session we practiced knot tying again, then assembled rods and reels, and went to the playground to practice casting. Some of the students became good at watching their line roll out behind them. They could shoot their line onto the small plastic discs we were using as casting targets. Sounds of snapping leaders clicked above our heads. I emphasized a slower and gentler motion to quiet the snaps. Sometimes the rod took on the character of a pitched hardball or a stiffly swung bat, but progress was made, and our

first knot tying and casting experiences were revisited over a few sessions.

We traveled as a class to two streams to look at insect life, bank erosion, tree cover and water bottoms. One was Sligo Creek and the other Paint Branch. After taking insect samples in both streams, the children could see how many more insects lived in Paint Branch than in Sligo Creek.

We discussed how the diversity and numbers of insects helped the fish population in general and trout in particular. We also talked about how the shading in the stream lowered water temperature, and how riffly water added oxygen to the stream. We looked for places fish could hide. At Paint Branch we broke out the rods, and the kids practiced casting in some tight quarters. With my assistance a couple kids managed to tie into a few feisty chubs.

On May 18th we traveled to Maydale Pond. Here we practiced casting on the grass, took some pictures for the yearbook, and then went to catch the

*"I saw some
fly fishing shows
and I liked them
and that's
why I picked
to go fly fishing
with you,
Mr. Feffer."*

wily bluegills. By this time the kids were sporting their own fly boxes, and had assembled flies in them, thanks to the nimble hands of Jim Greco who donated a huge jar of them. It was like candy. The kids sorted them out and arranged them in their boxes. They also squeezed into chest waders we had ordered through Cabelas.

Armed to the chest we waded into the waters of Maydale. The kids took bluegill on poppers and crickets, but the one fly that reigned supreme for Kevin was the fabulous honey bug. Everybody tried honey bugging by the end of the morning, though not with Kevin's success.

Our fishing jaunt was aided by loyal volunteers, Dave Piske, Bob Serrano, Robert Dodd, and Joan Feffer and by the driving capacities of one of the parents, Mr. Espino. We would not have had such a good time without all their help.

The kids even forgot about lunch. Dave Piske was disappointed that we had to leave so soon. You never know what kind of fever the honey bug can spawn!

Our next

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The making of fly fishers

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classes involved fly tying. The kids made some very respectable Woolly Buggers and San Juan Worms. Dave helped by exhibiting the various sizes of hooks on a 3x5 card, and drawing a large hook with all the parts labeled. He also had some examples of various kinds of woolly buggers and San Juan worms. The kids could not have had such a successful and fun time without Bob, Dave and Robb to help them.

The grand finale of our program was a trip to the Gunpowder. We began with a trip to the Backwater Angler, a full service fly shop in Monkton, MD. Rocky calmly answered the kid's questions as they tried on the "latest shades" and held up the most outrageous salt water flies to their eyes. Jillian was awed by all the rows of feathers, and shared a secret desire to create high fashion flies.

We drove over to the Bunker Hill section of the stream, and carried our equipment down to the river. After casting practice and a hot dog lunch we headed out on the water.

Each child had a mentor to accompany him or her on the stream. All of the above-mentioned volunteers attended, except for Robby Dodd who was replaced by Bob Dietz.

Bob Dietz with 4-weight rod in hand disappeared down river with his mentee. At the end of day Connor was excited that he'd caught two brown trout under Bob's guidance. Upstream Patrick and I struggled some with tangled leaders, but managed to cajole a brown into rising to a caddis. I watched Dave work quietly upstream with Kevin side-by-side casting onto the water.

Meanwhile, my wife and Jillian on a downstream drift landed a nice fish using a dry "light fly". Bob Serrano and Leslie had some rises to their offerings, and Bob learned that guiding could be a challenge. Leslie had fun later taking a cool dip into the chilly waters of the river. My wife and her mentee had time to do wild flower identification, and Jillian exercised her Girl Scout skills tending to the fire that cooked our hot dogs.

At the end of the day we were refreshed and happy. One of our parents, David Voss, took a series of digital shots of our fishing group, rods in hand.

Our final session took place on June 19th. Elizabeth Curtz, the Enrichment Program Coordinator, asked us to participate in a presentation with the

other children involved in the Enrichment Classes.

My kids brought their fly boxes and their digital photos. When their turn came to present they walked into the center of a large circle formed by children, teachers, and parents. Each fly fisher was asked about something they learned in their class.

Avish told about tying a woolly bugger and getting his finger pricked by the hook. Leslie explained how she had to watch the loop her line made as it unfolded behind her. Jill spoke about all the little critters she found under rocks that trout eat. Patrick told how fine the tippetts were that he had to tie on. Kevin and Israel told about the fun they had catching bluegill.

The children walked away with their fly boxes and pictures in hand with some new knowledge, and I felt good about what they'd learned.

I plan to have the class again. I hope to ask some of the past graduates to return a second time, and I hope to expand the class to some other kids. I'll be looking for more volunteers, so if you're interested give me a call, (301-879-8943) or E-Mail me at jedtfeffer@aol.com. All volunteers will be most welcome. I know the kids will appreciate it.

Jed Feffer

Tackle tips and tactics

At a recent meeting, a member asked what the difference was between a "nymph" and a "larva."

These are technical terms for the immature stages of most insects, and they have important differences. A "nymph" is the immature stage of an insect that has an incomplete or simple metamorphosis, while the "larva" is the immature stage of an insect that goes through a complete metamorphosis.

The latter is easy to remember as the way butterflies develop: egg, larva (i.e., caterpillar), pupae, adult. The former is the way many kinds of insects reach maturity, such as grasshoppers and dragonflies: egg, nymph, adult.

There are some simple ways to identify if the immature insect in your hand is a nymph or a larva. The former has major structures somewhat similar to an adult, except for size and functional wings. A young grasshopper or mayfly looks similar to the adult body, minus the wings and usually smaller size.

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Tackle tips and tactics

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In contrast, a beetle or fly larva has no structures that immediately tell you that it is a beetle, fly or another group of insects. Many butterfly, moth, caddis and beetle larvae are quite similar in their external appearance. No larva has any close resemblance to the adult. Further, larvae do not have compound eyes and show external wing pads, as do most nymphs.

All larvae and nymphs must molt from their initial size after hatching to later stages to increase their size. Each stage is called an instar. All insects have at least several instars, most 4–8 instars, but some mayflies, in particular, have as many as 20. The instar molt allows for the insect to enlarge its body, including mouth parts, lungs, and gut linings.

Except the mayflies, any flying insect is an adult reproductive stage. Mayflies have a flying subadult stage (called “subimago”) that cannot reproduce; fly fishers call this the “dun” stage, while the final reproductive stage is known as the “imago” or “spinner.”

The following is a list of those insects fishermen commonly encounter with an incomplete or simple metamorphosis where the immature stage is called a nymph: mayfly, stonefly, dobsonfly, grasshopper, cricket, cicada, dragonfly, and aphid.

A partial list of those with a complete metamorphosis where the immature stage is called a larva includes: beetle, ant, midge, moth, caddisfly, and bee. However, much of the above sometimes goes out the window with trout fishers. When we go “nymphing” we may be using an imitation of a larva or even pupa (e.g., caddis). We do correctly say that we fish with a caddis or midge larva or pupa or with a stonefly or mayfly nymph.

As a note on tackle, we need to remember that one of the main purposes of a long, tapered leader is to keep the slap of the fly line hitting the water away from the point where the fly lands. If you want any given fly to turn over so you can actively retrieve or strip it back, then the leader needs to be a bit heavier and shorter, in general.

Conversely, if you want lots of “S”-curves and the fly to dead drift as long as possible, then a longer and lighter leader is needed. Imagine casting a #12 dry fly with 4' of 0X directly off the end of the fly line versus 15' of 6X.

I would not suggest such leaders, but only as examples of extremes. Long tapered leaders are not needed for most other fish. Bass and most saltwater sport fish either totally ignore the leader and the slap of the line or may even be attracted to the sound of the popper or large fly splashing on the surface. The latter fish seem to use sound to help locate prey.

Trout seem to generally avoid most sounds, as noises more often seem to indicate trouble. So wade slowly and quietly and use the right size leaders for your trout fishing.

Jay Sheppard

Elk River Trout

ABOUT 40 MILES NORTHEAST OF HUNTSVILLE, Alabama you will find Lynchburg, Tennessee, the home of the Jack Daniels distillery. Go another ten miles east, and you will come to TVA's Tims Ford dam on the Elk River. The dam is designed for cold water release all year, and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Administration stocks a mixture of brown and rainbow trout in the river throughout the year.

This section of the Elk River is a good example of an “engineered” trout stream, and pretty typical of the kind of trout fishing you can find in the South. The flow is regulated to about 78 cfs most of the time, increasing to around 3800 cfs during periods of power generation (happens once or twice a week). Air injection into the dam discharge ensures proper dissolved oxygen levels in the river downstream of the dam. The water itself tends to be on the murky side. While there is no natural trout reproduction in the river, it will hold trout for several miles.

The Elk River gets fairly heavy fishing pressure, and the crowd runs the gamut from families with cans of corn to catch and release fly fishermen. While most of the catch and keep crowd stays up near the road access, a walk of about a mile will get you away from the crowd and into a more solitary form of fishing. This is the area favored by the fly fishermen.

The Elk is the place we should have all had when we were learning to fly fish. The river averages about 75 feet wide, and does not have many overhanging trees or similar fly-eating obstacles. Cover as we know it is lacking; the river averages two feet deep with lots of deeper holes. Accordingly, the fish are pretty well spread out and al-

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Elk River Trout

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most everywhere can hold a fish or two. Wading is straightforward; I recommend chest waders.

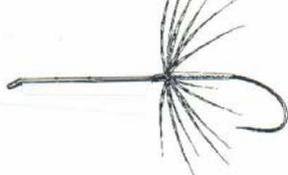
I have fished the Elk using both dry and wet flies. The technique for dries is to look for rising fish and to cast to them. I have used #18 Adams with reasonable success. I have also had success with various flies originally gotten for the Gunpowder yellow sulfur hatch; the key seems to be that small dry flies are better. If my results are any guide, the fish you will catch on dry flies are going to be in the eight to ten inch range, and three-fourths of them will be brown trout.

For wets, I have used a #10 weighted brown wooly bugger cast into the deeper holes and then retrieved with tiny strips designed to keep the fly near the bottom. Using this technique, I get rainbows in the 10-12 inch range. I have seen people catch fish in the 16" range with this technique; I haven't been so lucky yet. The spinfish group gets its fish using small spinners and plugs.

The Elk River is never going to make anyone's list of best American trout streams, but a seven trout evening in August is nothing to sneeze at either. In addition, other wildlife is abundant (I have seen wild turkeys, raccoons, and a mink), and the Jack Daniels distillery is nearby—free tours, but no tastings. If you are in the area, check out the Elk River.

Bill Miller

"Long-handled" Soft Hackle Fly



COME ON ADMIT IT. Don't you have trouble getting a small fly out of the mouth of a bluegill or other small fish? Well, here's a solution to your problem.

Tie your small wet flies at the rear of 3XL to 6XL hooks of the same size as shown above.

The fish don't pay any more attention to the long shank at the front of the fly than they do to the bend of the hook at the rear. Since I've started using them, I've caught just as many fish on these "long-handled" flies as I have on normal ones.

One caveat: Don't try this on dry flies. The extra weight makes the best dry fly into a darned good wet fly.

John Colburn

PPTU Mentor Program Beginners and Beyond

YOU'VE READ BOOKS ON FISHING. You've watched videos until your eyes blurred. You've even taken classes from "experts." But are you having trouble putting all that information together so you can fish with confidence?

Well, there is help available to paid-up PPTU members. Jim Feudale will conduct one to one streamside instruction. Techniques, flies, reading the water, etc. will be discussed and practiced on nearby streams.

Interested members must show their commitment by having waders or hipsters, leaders, and a rod and reel outfit. Contact Jim at 301-622-4923 or email him at jfeudale@aol.com

Trout Unlimited Members: Renew your membership at PPTU

Last year National TU announced that it would accept renewals of memberships sent through the chapter. In return, the chapter receives a rebate of \$5 for each renewal processed.

We hope every member will bring their membership renewal notices to the chapter meetings. We will accept cash, check (payable to TROUT UNLIMITED), or credit cards for these renewals. The chapter will take it from there.

If you forget your renewal notice, we only need to have your membership card so we can obtain your member number.

Address changed? Missing an issue?

If you have moved or see any error in your label on this newsletter, 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 your newsletter and other mailings. Please help us help you. Thank you.

Last fall we had several reports of members not receiving their newsletters. First, make sure we have your correct address, including 9-digit ZIP+4, and that your dues are paid up (label reads PP-0903 after November). If you are missing a back issue, please contact us for a copy.

For future reference, we try to mail the newsletters to our active members about 2 weeks before the next meeting.

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Membership

THE POTOMAC-PATUXENT CHAPTER of Trout Unlimited has two membership categories: **Regular or Family** (\$15/year assessment) or **Student** (free). The Chapter operates on a September-to-September basis. The assessment is totally separate from Trout Unlimited dues. Send correspondence, change of address, or assessment payable to POTOMAC-PATUXENT TROUT UNLIMITED, PO Box 2865, Wheaton, MD 20915.

Chapter and national TU expiration dates are indicated in the mailing label as PP-0903 or NTU-0903.

First time visitors receive two free issues of this publication.

Annual assessment payable now

The annual assessment (see left column) is now payable. Check your label—if the "PP-" date is "0902" (or there is no "PP-" and date), you can send your \$15 now, and you will not have to worry about paying at the September meeting. Some members paid twice this year, so they already show "PP-0903" as being paid for the coming year. Make checks payable to "POTOMAC-PATUXENT CHAPTER - TU" and mail to our chapter mail box.

The assessment covers only the newsletter and related administrative expenses; all donations above expenses at raffles, etc., go to the resource and not to support our members with free newsletters, etc.

Final mailing for those having "PP-0902" on their label will be the November issue. **We do NOT send separate mailings to remind members of this obligation. Please take action today! You will not want to miss our January and later issues and their announcements. Thank you.**



FIRST CLASS MAIL

The Action Organization
Join Trout Unlimited



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