



May 2006

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

A Fish Worth Saving

By Nick Weber

We have all heard about the decline and fall of many empires –Greek, Roman, Ottoman and others. However the decline and fall of the brook trout empire is something that has occurred more recently and continues even today. Our meeting program for May will feature work on this subject by Dr. Ray Morgan from the University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science in Frostburg, MD. The brook trout is native to headwater streams and coldwater lakes east of the Mississippi River from northeastern Canada south through the Great Lakes and into the southern Appalachian mountains.

Once highly abundant, brook trout, throughout the species' range, are under increasing pressure from anthropomorphic changes in the landscape, pollution, competition from stocked non-native salmonids, and climatic change. Understanding the interspecific and intraspecific population status of this species is critical to its continued viability throughout its native range, and especially Maryland. Brook trout distribution in Maryland, and other states, is now fragmented and compressed relative to the historical distribution for this species. Three important processes - fragmentation, compression and extinction of brook trout populations - are occurring as a result of increasing stressors statewide. Dr. Morgan's thesis is that fragmentation and compression reduce effective brook trout population size, and accelerate extinction, or at the very least increase the probability of extinction. Come and learn more about our native brookie and how we can help protect and preserve it for our fishing heritage. ■

The Decline and Fall of the Brookie Empire

Monthly PPTU Meeting
Wednesday, May 17, 2006
7:00 PM

FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Ray Morgan
University of Maryland's
Center for Environmental Science

INSIDE THIS ISSUE!



- **The New Newsletter and THE CONSERVATIONIST Explained!**
- **The Annual Memorial Day Western Maryland Trip**
- **The June Outing on the Raritan River in New Jersey**
- **Last Issue Until September...Happy Fishing!**

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

Although this is the end of our meeting year, it is the beginning of the trout fishing year for many of us. Happily, I have been out this spring several times and have a better spring start up than in previous years. That in itself is an accomplishment. I hope that all of you have had an opportunity to renew your interest in our sport with our meeting programs, and the extra time that bad weather permits us to spend at the tying bench and pouring over catalogs for the coming season's "needs".

This has been a year of accomplishment for the Chapter. It was a year that brought us in contact with youngsters and folks that were interested in planting trees and shrubs along a prospective future close in trout stream – the Hawlings River. We have even gotten a few brown trout fingerlings to "test the waters" there.

The year also saw the inauguration of a new tail water fishery on the Patuxent River below Brighton Dam focused solely on sport fishing with its fly fishing only regulation. Many have taken advantage of and enjoyed our fly tying, outings, and mentor programs as well. We have also grown our trout in the classroom program to eight participating schools, where much about trout and conservation is learned by the children. We also have served our youngsters by supporting them for the TU Conservation and Fishing Camp and Kid's Fishing Day.

This issue of The Conservationist is accompanied by the new PPTU Annual Newsletter. In the Annual Newsletter you will find an article that describes small but important changes that we have initiated in an effort to reach out to all Trout Unlimited members assigned to our chapter. It is hoped that with these changes we can serve everyone who wishes to be associated with the chapter and fulfill their needs for relevant fishing information and sport camaraderie. Let's all enjoy our sport this summer. May the rises be many! ■



Tackle and Tactic Tips

By Jay Sheppard

Buddy Jumping — If you are fishing with a buddy on a small, lightly fished stream like the Patuxent, there is a simple trick to keeping track of each other while still out of sight most of the time. Take along a rag strip or long segment of surveyors' plastic tape. When you arrive at a pool, you both then agree who will start first and that you will both fish up or downstream. One starts fishing, and the other fisher takes the marker and proceeds in the designated direction an agreed distance while avoiding all sight of the water as much as possible. I usually suggest about a quarter of a mile. The second buddy drops into the stream at a very unfishable spot, like a riffle with no cover or depth, and ties the marker on a branch out over the stream at this point. The reasons for such choice of any entry point to a stream is to avoid spooking any fish.

He then starts fishing. When the first fisher arrives at the marker he has two choices after he unties the marker: get out and go past his buddy or continue fishing a little longer over water already fished by his buddy ahead of him. I normally suggest getting out, walking the bank until seeing the buddy. The two buddies **must make contact** as the one with the marker walks past, so that the one then fishing knows he has been passed by the other. This is also a good time to exchange information. If you do not have them, I highly recommend that you try those inexpensive FRS radios for communicating while fishing. A great deal of information can be exchanged, such as flies that are or are not working, hatching insects seen, and general fish activity. Toss them into a ziplock bag and just press the various buttons through the bag when you talk, etc.

The fisher with the marker now goes in the designated direction and an acceptable distance, again avoiding seeing the water that may spook trout. He repeats the process by marking the spot he starts fishing. The two buddies may fish at far different rates. One may cover the same distance in



twice or half the time as the other, but each will end up with water that has not been fished by the other. A buddy and I have leap-frogged each other over long sections of the Patuxent and similar small streams, often leaving another car where we will finish. Fishers with those little FRS radios can make it easier, but the markers really tell each buddy exactly where the other started fishing. So do not hesitate to think of jumping your buddy! ■

SUBSCRIPTION NOW PAYABLE

The annual subscription for the Conservationist (see back and form inside the back cover) is now payable, if you wish. Check your label—if the "PP-" date is "0906" (or there is an earlier "PP-" date or NO "PP-" and date), you can send your \$15 now, and you will not have to worry about paying in September. Some members paid twice this past year, so they already show "PP-0907." We do not mail notices in September. The subscription covers only the Conservationist and related chapter administrative expenses; all donations above expenses at our raffles, etc., go to the resource and not to support our members with free newsletters, etc. Final issue for those having "PP-0906" will be this next November. **Please also advise us of any address changes or er-**

Coming in June: BOOK SIGNING

Congratulations to our very own **Sebastian O'Kelly** on the publication of his uproariously funny and clever book on fishing.

An innovative and resourceful fisherman, Sebastian, will be 'at the **Rockville Barnes & Noble store on Thursday, June 15 at 7:30 PM** to sign and chat about his new book, The Offbeat Angler: Fish Tales and Muddy Adventures. The store address is 12089 Rockville Pike.

March 2006 — The One Fly Contest — Gunpowder River

By *Dennis Covert*

We were expecting cold and drizzle, maybe even a little rain, what we got was a great March day on a beautiful river. Conditions were mixed; overcast skies with periods of sunshine, a light but cold breeze and afternoon temperatures climbing into the mid fifties. Water conditions were good if not maybe just a little low, my thermometer read a cool 42 degrees. Meeting in the Masemore parking lot around 10:30, we milled around discussing what fly we might limit ourselves to. I wavered, and then selected a flash back pheasant tail in #16, my bane for the next few hours. Jed Feffer, who had caught a few practice fish earlier that morning chose a bead head in a size #18, while Ken Bowyer, selected a larger bead head in a brassie #14. Bob Dietz tied on a partridge and pheasant tail wet, Owen selected a Caddis pupa. Larry Vawter rounded out the field tying on a green weenie. Down into the canyon and on the river, we split into groups and headed off. Rising fish had me wishing I had tied on a midge, but I still clung to faith. Two fishless hours later, and

watching Ken release his third fish on that brassie, had me less than enchanted with my choice. Early afternoon had fish rising up and down the river. Midges were everywhere. Most of the good pools and runs had anglers fishing them; bent rods and the occasional whoop not an uncommon occurrence. Meeting back at the parking lot at 3:30 we compared notes and declared a winner. Ken Bowyer blew the rest of us away with 45 inches of fish caught on that brassie. Bob Dietz came in second with 9 inches, the rest of us all pegged goose eggs. However, those who had the good fortune to lose their fly early, or maybe just the good sense to clip it off, did pretty well on alternate selections. Bob and Owen discovered a Hendrickson hatch with Owen landing a good brown on a Hendrickson dry, after tickling 15 or so with a dull green copper john. Bob netted a fish using a Hendrickson wet and Jed took two more browns after losing his fly. I finally lost my fly with a half an hour left and hooked a couple of fish on a # 24 griffiths, landing the last one after clumsily popping the first one off.

The May PPTU Outing

The Annual PPTU Memorial Day Weekend Outing to Western Maryland. We will be staying at the Casselman Hotel & Motor Inn in Grantsville Maryland May 26th, 27th & 28th. The four major rivers that we will be focusing on are; the Casselman, the Youghiogheny or Yock, and the tail water sections of the Savage and North Branch of the Potomac.

For more info on this outing just go to the outings section of the PPTU web page and click on the Western Maryland Outing link, or, Contact Dennis Covert at 410-740-8337, or dennis-covert@hotmail.com

The June PPTU Outing

Our outing for June will be to the Ken Lockwood Gorge, South Branch of the Raritan River, near Califon, New Jersey. The trip is scheduled for June 10-11 to take advantage of the fish-for-free weekend in the Garden State (no license or trout stamp required.) Camping is available in nearby Vorhees State Park, or there are motels in Clinton, about 5 miles away. Check out these two website for more information about the area we will be exploring. For more details, contact Bob Dietz at dietzredietz@cs.com or 301 854-6893.

South Branch of the Raritan

www.flyfishingconnection.com/southbranchraritan.html

Vorhees State Park

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/voorhees.html>

Don't forget to check out these two great segments at the next Monthly meeting on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 at 7:00 PM. Both segments run concurrently from 7:00 – 7:30 PM.

Tying Bench - Stop by the Tying Bench this month and see the fly that won the One Fly Contest on the Gunpowder (See *Outing Report* on page 4). The winning fly, a brassie will be on display, and winning fisher, our own mentor to many, Ken Bowyer, will demonstrate his simple but effective pattern that no fly box should be without.

Angler's Corner – Two PPTU members who will be of great interest to folks looking to go on our May and June outings will share the Angler's Corner this month. Dennis Covert will discuss the upcoming Western Maryland trip on Memorial Day weekend. He will be discussing several sulfur patterns that is effective at that time of year. The other chair will be occupied by Bob Dietz who is spearheading the June PPTU Outing to the Ken Lockwood Gorge, South Branch Raritan River in New Jersey. This is a destination of surprising beauty and promising trout. Come talk to Bob about the outing. See his write up one the previous page.



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The \$15 per year covers not just the production of the Conservationist but also helps in sending it to many of our local tackle shops, newspapers, other TU chapters, DNR offices, and others. The remaining portion is also used to pay for the meeting room rentals and other chapter administrative expenses. Full-time students receive the Conservationist for FREE, if we have their expected graduation date. Please complete and return this form with your check for the coming season. If your label already reads "PP-0907," you still need to return this form **if you wish to receive the Conservationist over the Internet**. Otherwise, please make the check payable to POTOMAC-PATUXENT CHAPTER and mail to the address on the back page. Please select one or both options. Should you need to change your selected delivery method(s), we can allow only one change during the coming year.

Please mail my Conservationists for the coming year to the address on the label found on the reverse side of this page. If there is no label on the reverse side of this page, please provide your name and a complete mailing address on the reverse side. If there is a label and any corrections are needed, please note the changes. Students receiving free copies should provide the date of their expected graduation.

Please send me an email notice that the next Conservationist is available for downloading. PPTU will send you a link to a special web site to view and download the issue (Adobe PDF file). This link will not be made available to anyone who has not selected this option. The PPTU.ORG web site will only be posting the first page of each issue for the first month after it is printed—so those on this special mailing list will be the only persons having access to the entire file for its first full month. My email address for this notice is as follows (please print clearly): _____

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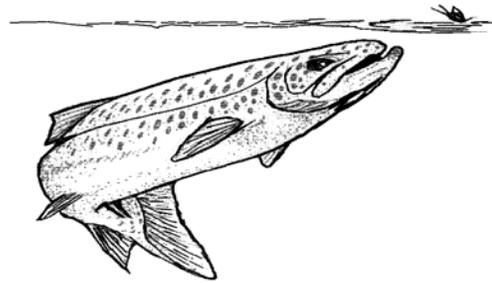
If you have moved or see an error in your label on this issue, please advise both the National TU office (1-800-834-2419) and this Chapter (see PO Box below) with separate notices. Our mailing list is maintained separately from the National list; we do eventually receive word of the change from National TU, but it is often a few months before it affects your receipt of this publication and other mailings. Please help us help you. Thank you.

Subscriptions

The **Potomac-Patuxent Chapter** of Trout Unlimited has two subscription rates: **Regular or Family** (\$15/year) and **Student** (free). PPTU invites members of other TU chapter to subscribe to the **Conservationist**. The Chapter operates on a September-to-September basis. The subscription is totally separate from TU dues. Send all correspondence, changes of address, or subscription orders to our PO Box (below). Your subscription expiration for the **Conservationist** is indicated on the address label as PP-0906 or PP-0907.

FINAL ISSUE UNTIL SEPTEMBER

Members are reminded that there are no *Conservationists* during the summer months. Keep in touch with your buddies and log onto our web site for links to current reports. If you have not joined the PPCTU list serve reporting system, please check out our web site. You will receive reports from other members on their local fishing results. Have a great summer! The September issue should be mailed just after Labor Day for the September 20 meeting.



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