

# The Conservationist



PPTU.org

**Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited**

January 2022 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

## “Latest News about the Gunpowder” Phil Gay of Trout & About

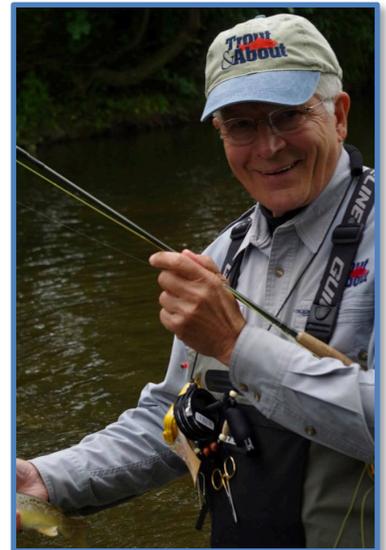
*Jan 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 7:00PM*

Let's welcome Phil Gay, from Trout & About.com, based in Monkton, MD, who will visit us virtually to talk about the Gunpowder River and his tips on how to fish it.

Trout & About is a fly-fishing instruction and guiding company that offers fly fishing classes and guiding on selected local and destination trout waters. The company was established more than 20 years ago by Phil Gay and his wife, Carol Stevenson. Phil is a retired Naval Officer who has been fly fishing since he was ten years old, and Carol has been an avid fly fisher for twenty-five years.

Phil is an FFI Master Certified casting instructor and Level 2 examiner. He has produced two instructional Casting Videos entitled “Practical Fly Casting” and “Presentation Casts for Trout”. Phil is an emeritus member of the FFI Casting Board of Governors and is an active mentor for those seeking instructor certification through the FFI.

Carol is very active in the Chesapeake Women Anglers and Casting for Recovery which is a national program that introduces recovering breast cancer patients to the therapeutic value of fly fishing.



Catch Phil's Youtube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkX-9qEUK-e-97DuJ1UmqEA>) and the Trout & About website (<http://troutandabout.com/>).

– *Karan Singh*

### Monthly Chapter Meetings – Virtual Until Further Notice

Time and Day: 7:00 PM unless a new time is stated, Third Wednesday except June, July, August and December

**Virtual Link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84846120209?pwd=N091SDV3QXByeWtwMmdzd05XclBRUT09>

Visit our website: [www.pptu.org](http://www.pptu.org)

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### Contact Us:

[mail@pptu.org](mailto:mail@pptu.org)

## Presidents' Column - Joe Taylor



**Happy New Year!** By now many of you have already heard the news that I will be taking the reins over as President of PPTU. I wanted to personally thank Randy Dwyer, our past president, and Alan Burrows, our acting president, for their great work and dedication to our chapter. To say the least, I have some big shoes to fill.

I guess an introduction of sorts is in order, I grew up in central Pennsylvania fly fishing for trout and smallmouth. After college, my fishing life slowed down a bit due to career and family priorities but as life moved on, I returned to my passion for fishing. I've had the pleasure of pursuing Tarpon, Bonefish, Redfish and more. For the last ten plus years I've been tossing flies to Stripers on the Bay and chasing Albies down the coast. With the decline of the Bay fishery, I returned to my trout roots and haven't turned back. The technical challenges, picturesque settings and pure joy of trout fishing is tough to beat. All in all, I've been fly fishing for the majority of my life and look forward to more adventures to come.

I'm sure I'm not alone when I say PPTU is a special place. Like many of you, I have been involved with other organizations, including several fishing clubs. It didn't take me too long to realize something was very different with PPTU. There wasn't the secrecy, boastfulness or members endlessly trying to outdo one another like I witnessed at other fishing clubs. It was a pleasant surprise and had an atmosphere of sharing and comradery that I desired. The level of knowledge our members have is truly second to none. I learn something every week and it's improved my fishing 10 fold, if not more. The guidance and insight our more experienced members provide is something that really makes PPTU a special place. I could go on and on but I've had nothing but a positive experience with PPTU and wanted to pass that forward.

As I get up to speed with my new role, I'll be sure to share my goals and vision during my tenure as President. Hopefully, I'll be ready to share them next month. Until then, I would ask each of you to consider how you might become more involved with PPTU, even for a few minutes a month. We need everyone to do their part so we can continue to be so successful as a chapter.

Thanks for your consideration and I'm looking forward to meeting everyone soon.

Joe Taylor  
President, PPTU



## PPTU Mentor Program Beginners & Beyond

PPTU 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. all on nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs. Members who have not made an **Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC)** will be asked to contribute \$20.

Contact us by e-mail: [mentor@pptu.org](mailto:mentor@pptu.org)

## The Catch and The Hatch – Winter Bug Guide - Allen Gardner

Most of us anglers dread colder weather. It's the end of the season and life without fly fishing for the next six months is overbearing and depressing. The silence in the winter months is reflective of the insect activity. Most insects are dormant, birds are layed up in the trees puffed up to survive the cold weather and the lack of movement shown both in the wildlife and the pace of the river makes for a tranquil environment. This is winter fly fishing. To enjoy winter fly fishing takes equal measure of passion and insanity to brave the cold weather, freezing hands and guides for the hopes of a few fish. Once you

experience a good day of winter fly fishing however, something about the onset of colder weather peaks your interest.

Low crowds, tranquil waters and chances to catch large trout are some of the most appealing aspects of winter fly fishing. In order to catch fish during the winter, you need three things:

1. **Proper Fly Selection**
2. **Effective Presentations**
3. **Productive Locations**

If you can get enough of those three, you'll find fish.

### Midges

Midges will be the bread and butter of the winter fly fishing, and make up the majority of a trout's diet. Midges will hatch during the warmest parts of the day often from 10 – 3 pm and can bring nearly every fish in the river to the surface. This hatch alone can make winter fly fishing worth pursuing.



Stages: Nymph, Emergers, Dries

Sizes: #18 – #26

Colors: Black, Blue, White, Red, Purple,  
Olive, Brown

Hatch Times: 10 -3 pm warmest part of the day

### Mayflies

Mayflies during winter primarily consist of Blue Wing Olives aka Baetis (BWO). These mayflies hatch when the water temps get above 38 degrees and are best between 40 – 44 F. They will also hatch during the warmest parts of the day 10 – 3 pm and can hatch on sunny days, cloudy days, windy days and snowy days. Water temps and barometric pressure are the most important to predict a hatch. Fish changes in weather with warm water temps and you'll have the best chance for BWO hatches.



Species: BWO (aka Baetis) Blue Wing Olives

Stages: Nymph, Emergers, Dries

Sizes: #18 – #24

Nymph/Emerger Colors: Black, Purple, Olive, Dark Olive

Dry Colors: Olive, Dark Olive, Purple

Hatch Times: 10am – 3pm – Warmest Part of Day

### Stoneflies

Most stoneflies have up to a three year lifecycle and are always present in the water system. I love fishing a stonefly nymph in a two or three fly nymph rig and using the inherent weight of a larger fly to get my smaller nymphs down in the strike zone. It's hit or miss with stoneflies in winter, but they can catch fish any day of the year and are worth a spot on your rig.



Stages: Nymph

Sizes: #8 – #16

Colors: Mixed or Solid Colors of Black, Brown, Yellow

### Caddis

Caddis are really only present as nymphs during the winter months and their larva patterns are either cased or free form. The free forms look like monstrous midges and the cased caddis have cases built out of river material around them like a cross between a hermit crab and a butterfly. Fishing deep to the bottom of the river with caddis nymphs will pull some fish during the winter and is a good bet if the above isn't working.



Stages: Nymph

Sizes: #10 – 18

Colors: Brown, Olive, Dark Olive, Black, Cream

### Scuds & Sowbugs

Scuds and sowbugs are present in spring creeks and tailwaters with ample vegetation.



Fishing these as a lead fly during winter is a good option if you're fishing the aforementioned river types. The further scuds get down from the tailwater outflow, the more brightly colored they become. As they die, they become brightly colored or as they ingest parasites, both of which happens the longer they are alive. Fish hot spot patterns and regular patterns until you find the option that works best for the day.

Stages: Nymph

Sizes: #12 – #18

Colors: Tan, Olive, Pink, Orange with Hotspots of Red (optional)

### Annelids

Annelids, aka aquatic worms are active year round in the water system. Usually as flows rise, the annelids get flushed downstream and fish will target them more. Regardless, the trusty San Juan worm or a squirmy worm can be some of the most dependable bugs during winter.

Stages: Nymph

Sizes: #8 – #16

Colors: Red, Pink, Tan, Neon Green



## Egg Patterns

Eggs exist from the brown trout spawn and provide an easy and nutritious meal for trout all winter. As flows increase, and the eggs get dislodged, they become more prevalent. Big changes in flows makes a good day for the classic “bacon and eggs” rig. Eggs are often brightly colored and serve as an attractor, motivating the fish to move for your bugs. Often you’ll get a fish to move to an egg and end up eating the small midge you have trailed below it.



Stages: Nymph

Sizes: #10 – #14

Colors: Mixed or Solid Colors of Red, Orange, Pink, Yellow, White

### Moved? Changed Email?

If you have retired, moved, or changed your email address, please let us know. Send an email to [membership.pptu@gmail.com](mailto:membership.pptu@gmail.com) or go “old school” and drop a postcard in the mail (see address on last page).

If you spot poaching please call or text:

**Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers**  
At  
**443-433-4112**



*Add this number to your cell phone contact list!*



## Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers - MD DNR

Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers was established to increase public awareness of the impact of illegal harvesting of fish and wildlife populations, and encourage anyone with knowledge of these activities to connect with Maryland Natural Resources Police.

Citizens who supply Maryland Natural Resources Police with information leading to the arrest and conviction of a suspect are eligible to receive cash rewards through a partnership with Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers. Tipsters should give names, addresses, vehicle descriptions, and as much information as possible. The anonymity of the caller is guaranteed.

Information can be relayed anonymously by email, phone or text to dispatchers, who will alert the nearest patrol officer.

To contact Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers, citizens can call or text 443-433-4112, email [mwc.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:mwc.dnr@maryland.gov), or report violations using the department’s free mobile app. Donations to Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers can be sent to: 580 Taylor Ave., E-3, Annapolis, Maryland 21401.

We need everyone’s support in our vigorous pursuit and prosecution of criminals who illegally catch, hunt or trap our fish and wildlife resources. As a result of working together, illegal harvesting will be deterred for current and future generations.



Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers depends solely on financial support from corporate, individual and public donations or gifts.

## Fly Fishing Shows 2022 - Bob O'Donnell

Hopefully these shows will move forward. We'll keep an eye on the list and post updates as they arise.

If you decide to attend a show, be safe.

### 21st Annual Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival

Jan 15, 2022 to Jan 16, 2022

<https://tickets.vaflyfishingfestival.com/e/virginia-fly-fishing-festival-2022/tickets>

### The Fly Fishing Show

Edison, NJ

Jan 28, 29, 30

<https://flyfishingshow.com/edison-nj/>

### Lancaster Fly Fishing Show 2022

March 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>

<https://flyfishingshow.com/lancaster-pa/>

*"There is certainly something in fishing that tends to produce a gentleness of spirit, a pure serenity of mind."*

~ Washington Irving

## Video: A Journey Upstream - Gene Cyprych

Some of you may have seen this. Sorry if it's a repeat. "A Journey Upstream" is a short film about how two seemingly unrelated fish species help us understand the connectivity within our environment and the importance of a healthy Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Andrew and Eric Braker are two brothers, native Marylanders, avid fly fishing anglers, and sustainability advocates. This film is a reflection of all of those things. The Braker Brothers are going on a journey throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, fishing for their two favorite native species (striped bass and brook trout), and spending time learning from various specialists in the field in order to gain a deeper understanding of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

<https://youtu.be/f-Q-YriUDFQ>



## How Trout See Color - Mike Abramowitz

How Trout See Color - A Research Based Explanation video. Skip the ads to get to the main video.

<https://youtu.be/PjnVtCukGWU>

Additionally, besides what Mike shared with us, you may find this series on the underwater world of trout is interesting as well, Part 3 also goes into trout vision.

### Underwater World of Trout

#### Part 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S57HY7TOvMA>

#### Part 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRTcmEISVnA>

#### Part 3

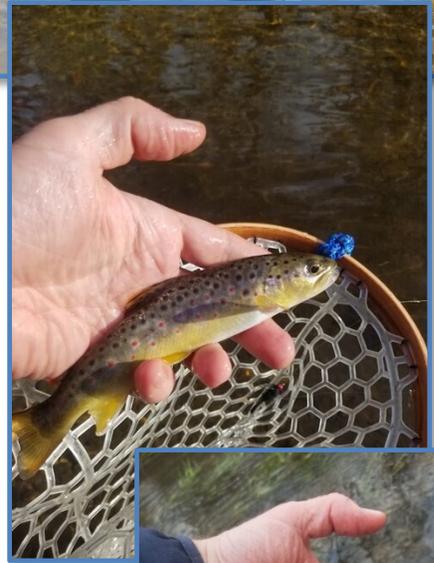
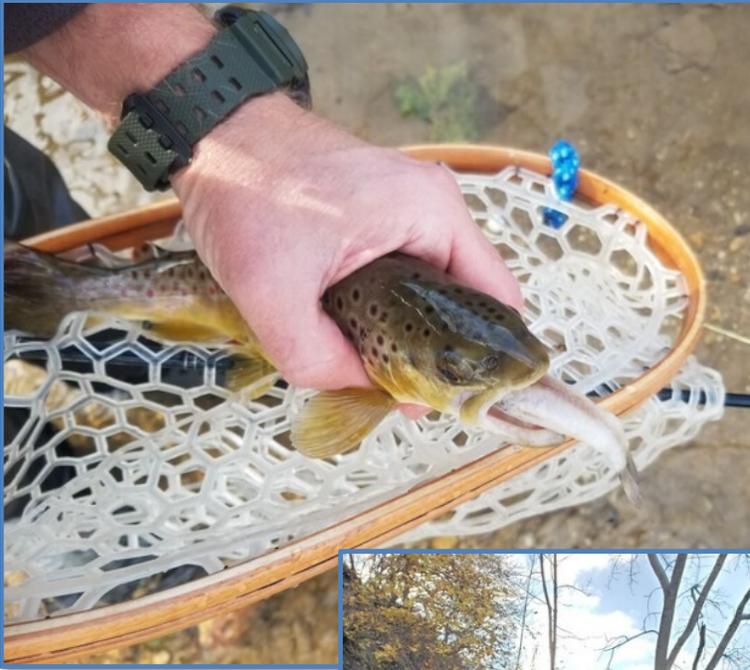
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-csJ\\_k6xaU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-csJ_k6xaU)



## Members Catch - Bob O'Donnell

Looking forward to hearing about and seeing all the fishing adventures in 2022.

Happy New Year to all!



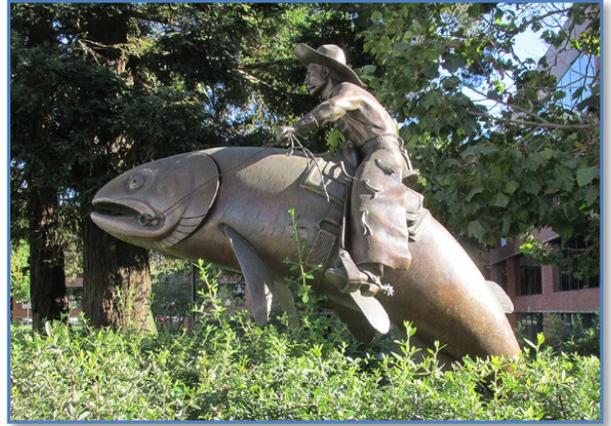
## Contributions Welcome!

Send your contributions or article suggestions to the Editor 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: Bob O'Donnell**

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## Simple Midge Pattern

Midges can be an important food source for trout and also your key to some good fishing during the winter months. No need to get out early to beat the crowd. During the winter months between noon and 3pm you'll most likely find solitude along with a good midge hatch and feeding fish.

Here our speaker, Phil Gay of Trout and About ties a simple midge pattern you can add to your fly box.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYWJo-yfHzo>



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