

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

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Beaver Creek, Maryland Spring Creek Fishing with James Harris April 16th

Please welcome James Harris to PPTU's April meeting. James owns the *Beaver Creek Fly Shop* located on Beaver Creek in Hagerstown, Maryland. James is also a guide on Beaver Creek as well as other local Maryland Waters.

Beaver Creek has a rich history and is a great example of folks concerned with conservation and private landowners working together for the benefit of everyone. James will be talking to us about the history of Beaver Creek and it's progress. Beaver Creek offers great spring creek fishing only an hour from DC. The stream gives any angler a challenging and beautiful day on the water. James will offer his expert advice to PPTU members on how to approach and fish this cold water gem.



The *Beaver Creek Fly Shop* is located at 9720 Country Store Lane, Hagerstown, MD 21740. Drive by to check out the shop, the beautiful surroundings, and talk some shop with James. beavercreekyflyshop.com

On the Bench – As a professional tyer, James will be tying a few spring creek patterns for us in the 7pm hour.

– Marc Hutzell



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

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Presidents' Column - James Robinson

As I write this, we've just experienced what many are hoping will be the last snow of this winter. Sometimes when it's cold outside, it's nice to hibernate by a warm fire. We haven't had that luxury, too many things to do. Here's a recap ...

We started March with our bratwurst & hot dog sale on March 1st at Bass Pro. The weather was cool but the sun, when it came out, was warm and the crowds exiting past our stand were in a buying mood. This was our 3rd or 4th time trying this and we're getting it down to a science. I need to say thanks to all of the people who make this happen and give special kudos to a few hardy souls ... Dennis Covert & his wife, Sheila, have put a lot of effort into this fund raiser since its inception; Alan Burrows & Lou Reichel were the grill masters for this round, turning 60 dozen brats & dogs; Carl Smolka moved the dogs to the buns and smothered them in kraut (on request of course); Bob O'Donnell prepared the signs & visuals; and the list goes on ... Nick, Ken, Roger, Joe ... I know I've missed some but I thank you all none the less.

Less than a week after Bass Pro, a group of hardy folks braved temperatures in the low 40's and a water temperature 38-39⁰, distributing about 1800 brown trout in the Patuxent. I'm glad my waders didn't leak. Thank you Jay Sheppard for coordinating this with DNR and getting the stocking crews together.

The next big event of the month has been the MAC banquet – March 29th. For those of you who are not familiar with MAC, it is the Mid-Atlantic Council of TU, an umbrella organization over the seven chapters of TU in Maryland. You can read more about MAC by going to <http://www.tu.org/connect/groups/node-20>. The banquet is the only fund raising event for this organization, supporting the Council activities such as Trout in the Classroom.

And looking forward ...

Spring is just around the corner. It's time to shake out the cobwebs and throw some flies.

April 5th is GreenFest in Howard County. We'll have a table there with Trout in the Classroom. We get quite a bit of attention sitting next to the tank of Kamloop Rainbow Trout. This is run by the Department of Environmental Sustainability. There are lots of interesting things to see here.

Also, on April 5th 9:30 a.m. to Noon. (Sunday, April 6, rain date), there will be a cleanup of the upper Patuxent River organized by the Wildlife Achievement Chapter - Izaak Walton League of America 26430 Mullinix Mill Rd., Mt Airy, MD 21771.

Directions: <http://www.damascusiwla.org/#directions>.

Focus will be on roadsides and river crossings. Meet at the green maintenance shed on the Chapter property. Gloves, trash bags, and water are provided. Lunch at noon for all participants. PPTU members are strongly encouraged to help in this annual effort. This chapter of the IWLA has contributed large amounts of money to PPTU over the past several years for our use on our stream & education projects. Now it is time for us to support them in their efforts to make this a nicer place to live. PPTU members may want to bring their hip boots and a heavy rake to help pull debris out of the stream near the bridges. This is an excellent activity for the whole family. Bring your friends, too! See you there!

We have two outings planned in April. First is a shad trip from Fletchers Boathouse in Washington DC on April 5th. The second is to the Casselman River in western Maryland on the 25th-26th. Check our web site for details.

Finally, our guest speaker at our Chapter meeting on April 16th is Jim Harris. He'll be talking about fishing on Beaver Creek. This should be very interesting. I hope to see you there.

Until next month, tight lines ... 🌻

Jim Robinson
President, PPTU

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 🌻

Tackle and Tactics - Jay Sheppard

Spring has started to spring! Now is the time to really go fishing in earnest! With the longer days and warmer temps come the bugs and an increase in solar radiation. Refrain from applying the repellants and lotions using the PALM of your hand. Use the BACK of your hand to smear such materials over your face, neck and arms. Newer fly lines are more immune to chemical attack, but one needs to still be careful. Some fly lines are still susceptible to chemical attack by such material. Also, one does not get these chemicals in his or her eyes as easily if the back of the hand is used.

The roll cast is one of the more frequently used casts on our local waters. It often is the only cast for long periods of time on the Patuxent River and similar small streams. The typical roll cast starts with the rod tip over the shoulder or slightly behind

that point. Learn how to do a side roll cast. This is very useful when the overhead trees make it difficult to raise the rod over your shoulder. It is also useful to know how to do when the out rolling loop of line needs to slide under a low hanging obstruction (bridge, branch, etc.). Instead of having the rod tip snapped forward in a near vertical plane, the rod is leaned strongly to one side or the other and brought back just behind the body before the snap forward. With practice, the rod can be in an almost horizontal plane as it is snapped forward. Try this cast on open water some time to see how the loop unrolls in a lower profile. It does take a little practice, but once learned, it can be very useful for dropping a fly under an overhanging tree, avoiding winds, etc.

If you have not already done so, now is the time to both organize your fly boxes and take an inventory of what you have or don't have as the new season starts. I lay out all my boxes on my work bench and go through them to make sure that what is in each compartment or under the clips, etc., is where it should be. Whether you have 50, 500, or a couple of thousand flies, having them sorted makes for less time wasted during a hatch when searching for that right fly. The sun will set even if you cannot find the fly you need. Having your dries and wets sorted before you get to the stream saves precious daylight, especially when the fish are rising all around you. You may also find a few ragged flies that are still serviceable, if only in need of a touch of head cement, etc. Others may have busted hook points or other severe damage and do need to be tossed.

Leader straighteners are never to be used! I suspect that we all have or had them at some point. They simply put too much heat into our leader material and that makes the mono weaker over time. Just use your fingers and thumb to apply a little heat to a curled leader. As you finish pulling the mono through the fingers, hold the leader as tight as possible with outstretched arms, and let it cool in that straightened position. So throw away those flaps of leather or rubber. That is, unless you like buying lots of leader material all summer long.

Now lets all go fishing!! 🐟

Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

By the time this issue is mailed, we will have float stocked the Middle Patuxent Delayed Harvest in south Columbia, the Patuxent tailwater below Brighton Dam (flies only), and the upper Patuxent Special Area (lures & flies) above Rt. 97. Both rainbows and browns were stocked the last week of February. Another stocking will take place in the tailwater and Delayed Harvest sections at the end of March or first of April. Float stocking only spreads out the trout initially. They can still swim! Some may move a significant distance upstream or downstream from where they were released. I have recorded movements of more than a mile in just one week after stocking in past years—that is, finding trout a mile or more from the nearest release point. After several weeks or longer and with good flows, some trout may shift up or down a stream a couple of miles or more. Floods in and of themselves do not 'flush' trout downstream never to be seen again. If that were the case, there would be few fish of any kind left in our streams. They just hunker down and wait for more moderate flows to resume feeding and looking for better places to find food and shelter.

Please carry your cell phone with you on the stream (and in a ziplock bag!) to be prepared to report any poachers to the Natural Resource Police. Be sure to have the NRP's number already in your phone list: 800-635-6124. Try to get a fix on the vehicle involved, if possible. Reporting poaching is one of the more important things you can personally do for our resources. You may not get an immediate response from NRP, but a record will have been made to draw attention to the problems in that area.

Argentina Trip Report - Michael Saylor

Although I'm not a member of your chapter, some of your members (Mike and Judy Abramowitz and Jim Crowell) were on the trip so I thought that I'd send a little trip report regarding our recent trip to Patagonia. On March 4, nine intrepid fisherman set out from BWI and left behind zero degree temps in Maryland. About 36 hours later we arrived at our lodge in San Martin de los

Andes, Argentina. This is in what is considered to be northern Patagonia. San Martin is a very nice ski resort town on a 60 mile long lake. After a few hours to get cleaned up we were greeted with a wine tasting by our host, Gustavo Heibaum. He had multiple bottles of various Argentine Malbecs which we all developed a taste for as the week went on. We then had a filet mignon dinner and crashed.

The next morning we paired up with a guide and we all headed for various rivers in the area. Most went on floats on either the Alumine or Chimehuin Rivers but several had wading trips on smaller waters(Malleo and Callefu Rivers). The two float rivers are quite large, approximately the size of the Delaware. The terrain was very dry(think Wyoming) and the banks willow lined. In eight days of fishing I saw one other raft and that was just for about 5 minutes at the put-in). Most of the fishing was hopper/dropper stuff with probably more fish taken on the nymph but some on the dry fly. There weren't a ton of rising fish but enough were around that I switched over to tiny CDC caddis and could catch just about every riser that I saw. The hoppers had unfortunately petered out a week or so ago and there weren't many mayflies around. The rainbows averaged 16-20 inches with occasional ones slightly larger. I'd say that most guys caught 5-10 fish per day during this part of the trip. The weather was fairly breezy the first few days of the trip, particularly in the afternoon and that made casting somewhat challenging. The guides called that a "little breeze". Little did we know that the wind would get a lot worse by the third day of fishing. At that point the wind kicked up to a constant 30-40 mph and what had been a nuisance became a royal pain in the ass. One my day on the Malleo River there were whitecaps on the surface and the only thing I could fish with was a heavy leech streamer. I did manage to pick up a big brown of about 21 inches on the leech. We were told that winds of this velocity were an anomaly for September (unlike southern Patagonia/Tierra del Fuego where they fish for the sea run browns).

Every night we would get back to our lodge around 2030 and they would begin to ply us with alcohol (microbrew or Malbec) and serve appetizers a little after 2100. We'd eat dinner around 2200. Dinner was always good and the food too copious. I gained 5 pounds on the trip. They had 5 people

cooking and serving us every night. The second night they brought in two professional Tango dancers and they put on an exhibition for us. Having an erotic dance exhibition is probably not the best kind of entertainment to put on for a bunch of upper middle age guys who are separated from their wives by 7000 miles. Where were the flyfishing videos? On another night they brought in a group of 4 guys who played a bunch of local/regional Spanish songs.

After 4 days of fishing around San Martin we left Mike and Judy behind and headed for the Limay River, the "River of Monsters". As soon as we got to the river the guides told us that we all had purchased the wrong fly lines but they had reels with sinking lines so it wasn't really a problem. They had several large "barge rafts" stocked with provisions and 4 guys to just run the camp. They set off down the river to the first night camp site and we started to fish. They only fish this river in later February, March and April when minnows migrate out of a large reservoir about 50 miles downriver and big trout follow the minnows upstream. We fished mostly minnow patterns with sinking lines but also on occasion you could find trout busting into minnows in the riffles and you would fish a floating minnow with a small minnow trailer.



The Limay River is quite large. I would say that it is similar in size to the Missouri and the terrain is also similar. The fishing with the sinking lines was interesting. You would make a water haul cast down and across and immediately put the rod under your arm and at the end of the swing do a two-handed strip back to the raft. When you got a strike you would keep stripping and the fish would almost

follow the fly back to the boat before it knew it was hooked. Once you got it on the rod you'd have a pretty good fight. The guides characterized our fishing results as poorer than average but over the next 4 days we probably caught 10 browns over 23" with the biggest being 28". We probably caught 8 rainbows for every brown that was caught. The biggest rainbow was probably 24". The wind was terrible for the first 2 3/4 days but it finally died down on the last day. Trying to handle all of the running line in that wind was ridiculous and more often than not the guy in the back wouldn't even try. I got the hang of it by the second day and managed reasonable well when I was in the back of the raft. One of the fishing highlights was fishing the floating minnows in the riffles. I had a 23" brown just blow up on the trailer and go airborne numerous times before I landed him.



Anyway, we'd usually fish until about 2000 and arrive at camp that had already been set up by the camp staff. We had tents with cots, mattress pads and sleeping bags. There was a shower tent and a potty tent with a chemical toilet. Trying to balance on that thing was interesting. No one wanted to be the first one to knock it over onto their feet. As soon as we got out of our waders Umberto would be there with a glass of wine and then he'd just give you the bottle to chase down the first glass. The dinners on the river were quite good. Seeing the Milky Way on a dark night is always a highlight of being in an area with no light pollution. One of the guys in our group took some beautiful pictures of the Milky Way.

It was amazing to see the logistics necessary to allow a group of 7 guys go fishing and camping for 4 nights. The outfitter that we used was Andes Drifters and I couldn't be more complementary about them. Gustavo Heibaum, the owner was incredibly nice and accommodating and I would highly recommend his company to anyone who might want to go down there.

After we got off of the river we stayed in a hotel overnight and flew back to Buenos Aires, the next morning. We had a 8 hour layover so Gustavo arranged for us to have a van and guide to drive around BA and get some souvenirs for our wives so that they'll allow us to go again sometime. Overall, I think the guys in the group felt that the trip was a blast despite the fact that the wind was a big issue.

Fly Tying Videos

In the Media - Marc Hutzell

Just passing along a link to the high quality fly tying videos that the guys from Tightline Productions create. They have recently partnered with Orvis to host their videos on the Orvis Fly Fishing Learning Center. I really like these guys and the quality of the video.

Take some time to explore the Orvis site. It is filled with lots of good information for both the beginning and experienced angler. And be sure to check out these fly tying videos!

<http://howtoflyfish.orvis.com/fly-tying-videos>



Reminder

If you spot poaching please place a call to the

Catch a Poacher Hotline

At

1-800-635-6124

Add this number to your cell phone contact list!



Big Spring Outing (not Town Creek) - Bob O'Donnell

Another great outing was enjoyed by many PPTU members on March 15th. Many thanks to all that participated. Once again Dennis Covert and Lou Reichel outdid themselves with the food service and a special thanks to Steve Fletcher for the awesome chili with fixings and Joe Robinson for corn bread muffins. We made many friends with other anglers and yes, we did get around to fishing!



Town Creek was our original destination but the water was running too high for group safety so we opted to head to Big Spring. If you've never been there its worth a visit. With the temperatures reminding us Spring was just around the corner, a good group of us hit the water and got some good fishing and camaraderie in for the day. Between the weather and Mike Heck's recent article in Fly Fisherman magazine on the creek improvements, there were plenty of people enjoying the day.

Third time a charm? For me it was. The last couple of times up there all I could do was watch others catch fish and get some casting practice in. This time I was rewarded with a several beautiful brown and brook trout, and additionally got to observe some monster rainbows feeding right in front of me.

Join us on the next outing and have some fun!

PPTU Outing Schedule - Fish On!

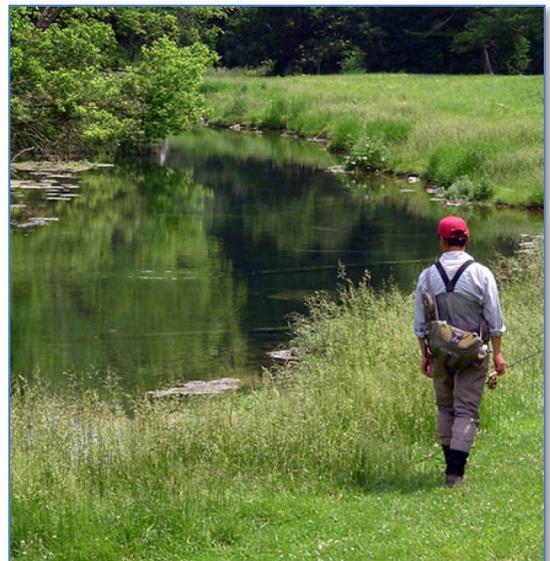
Dennis Covert is our Outings' Chairperson for PPTU. Periodically, photos and descriptions of the monthly outings will be posted to the Outings section of the web site and to our monthly publication, *The Conservationist*. If you plan to attend an outing, please complete the on line Liability Release form.

<http://pptu.org/outings/Release/release.shtml>

Potomac Shad, DC	April 3
Casselman, MD	April 26-27
Penns Creek, PA	May 9-16

For more information on these outings or suggestions for future outing events, please contact Dennis Covert at: denniscovert@hotmail.com or 410-740-8337.

We're also still looking for a new Outings Coordinator. If you think you might be interested in this position please let Dennis or any of the other board members know.





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
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Humphreys Cress Bug

This cress bug pattern, developed on the eastern spring creeks for finicky trout, has become a standard fly for tailwater and spring creek anglers all across the country.

Tie one on, and become a part of history!

Be the first to identify the tier and win a prize!
Email or call the editor with your answer.



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