



February 2009

# *The Conservationist*

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

## ***A Fisherman's Winter – Fishing in Argentina***

***February 18, 2009***

It may be 6 degrees in Maryland and the weather is keeping us near the catalogues and tying bench, but below the equator under it is “Summertime and the Fishin’ is Easy” or as challenging as you wish in Argentina. At least that is what I expect to hear from Chip Drozenski at our February meeting. Chip is a member of Southern Cross Outfitters (SCO) and will share with us information and examples of the varied fishing experiences that SCO offers that include famous rivers, spring creeks, lakes and limited access fishing for brown, rainbow and brook trout December thru May. Patagonia offers the fly fisher outstanding fishing in beautiful surroundings during our winter, a chance to get out of the chilly weather and escape to a truly memorable fishing experience. Southern Cross Outfitters have been featured in AMERICAN ANGLER and FLY TYER magazine. They also offer world class Red Stag hunting, adventure and eco trips and luxury touring.

Chip will emphasize during his presentation that SCO will customize the trip for each angler whether that means floating, wading, dry fly action, or seeking a trophy fish of a lifetime. He will also emphasize several areas in Argentina where SCO can accommodate the fishing interests of virtually any fisher while accommodating a spouse or companion as well. Come hear and see all that Argentina has to offer during our northern hemisphere winter respite. – *Nick Weber*



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### Monthly Chapter 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, then go past Holy Cross Hospital and across Sligo Creek Parkway. The Center is on the right.

*The Conservationist* is published monthly, except December, June, July, and August, by the Potomac-Patuxent Chapter of Trout Unlimited. The content reflects the opinions and views of the authors and does not necessarily represent the opinions, views and policies of Trout Unlimited, the Potomac-Patuxent Chapter or their respective officers and directors. Copyright © 2008 Potomac-Patuxent Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

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Past-President:	Nick Weber	301-774-2806
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	Will Amland	240-375-7617
	George Vincent	301-249-6399
	Jim Robinson	301-490-5358
	Mark Silverman	202-429-6450
<b>Council Delegates:</b>	Bob Dietz	301-854-6893
	Larry Vawter	410-750-8264
	Nick Weber	301-774-2806
	Jim Greco	410-997-2787
Exec. Committee	Jay Sheppard	301-725-5559
	Carl Smolka	301-929-1365
Exec. Board	Jim Keil	301-588-8375
	Robert Simpson	410-461-8180
	Cathy Nutter	301-384-2431
	Dennis Covert	410-740-8337
<b>Committee Chairs</b>		
Speakers Program:	Nick Weber	301-774-2806
Listserves Moderator:	Robert Simpson	410-461-8180
Publicity:	Paul Vicenzi	301-650-2087
Membership Secretary:	Arnie Strand	301-490-3450
<i>Conservationist</i> Editor:	Joanne Kla	301-854-5053
Fundraising:	Bruce Eberle	301-854-3142
Raffles:	Bob Dietz	301-854-6893
Refreshments:	Cathy Nutter	301-384-2431
Water Quality:	Carl Smolka	301-929-1365
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Conservation Advocacy:	Jim Keil	301-588-8375
Webmaster:	Ken Bowyer	301-627-7154
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Patuxent:	Jay Sheppard	301-725-5559

## President's Column

### The Mid-Atlantic Council

Have you wondered how Trout Unlimited works beyond just our chapter? If you're a member of the national TI, you receive *Trout* magazine, and get an idea of what happens from the top down, but there's a layer of organization between PPTU and national that you might not know as much about. Maybe you're heard me or someone else talk about "the MAC" and wondered what they're talking about and why we need to support them.

Every state with a TU chapter has a state council, consisting of representatives of every chapter in that state. With a single exception, those councils are called by the name of the state, e.g., the Pennsylvania Council or the California Council. The single exception is Maryland. Much like the federal government, TU didn't know exactly what to do about statehood for the District of Columbia (or at least the National Capital chapter), so they added them to the Maryland Council and changed the name to the Mid-Atlantic, usually referred to as "the MAC."

If you're also a member of Federation of Fly Fishers, this can be confusing, since they have also a Mid-Atlantic Council, which actually covers most of the Mid-Atlantic region. Both print occasional newsletters, so if you receive one from "the MAC" it isn't always immediately obvious who it's from.

Representation on the MAC from each chapter is proportional to the size of the chapter. Since PPTU is one of the larger chapters, we get to send ten representatives with voting powers to MAC meetings, which happen four times a year.

What does MAC do? In part, they're TU's voice to state agencies. They can approach the state representing a lot more people than any one chapter can, and they won't be sending mixed signals when they do. They also coordinate conservation activities among the chapters – who is doing what on which streams, and does it make sense to pool resources? They're also a "sanity check" on chapters taking legal actions – PPTU can't sue anyone without MAC approval. (And if we ever did, MAC would be the channel through which we'd get financial backing from national TU.)

So, when you hear us trying to sell tickets for the MAC banquet coming in March, or tickets for the raffle to be held at that banquet, you now know who the MAC is.

**Bob Dietz**

## PPCTU 2008 Volunteer hours

One of our local chapter's annual responsibilities is to provide a detailed financial report to TU National. One segment of that report is a breakout of all of the hours that members of the chapter volunteer during the year. The chair of the committee or person responsible for each event is asked to compile all of the hours donated by those who worked with the chair on the event. We report our hours in five specific categories: Conservation, Fundraising, General Education, General Operations, and Youth Education / Outreach. In our chapter, 2870 hours were reported for our 2008 fiscal year – a little more than a single person working 8 hours a day for an entire year on activities that support our mission.

What kinds of activities are included in these hours?

- In the Conservation category, activities include stocking of fish in many of our local streams, posting of DNR signs near the streams, cleaning up the waterways including working with the Isaac Walton League, participating in several water quality activities, attending meetings on protection of watersheds, restoring habitats in various streams measuring of macroinvertebrates activities like that done by Stream Waders, and assisting with the electro-shocking surveys done with the DNR
- Our Fundraising activities include the finding and acquiring of merchandise for our monthly and annual raffles, begging merchants to donate products and services on our behalf, acquiring and selling refreshments, renting videos, acquiring and selling apparel, and running our flea markets.
- The General education area includes hours dedicated to sharing experience with others on tying fishing flies, making fishing rods, mentoring of new fishers on the local waters, organizing our fishing outings, working on the monthly and annual fly tying demonstrations at chapter meetings, and assisting with Project Healing Waters.
- Our Youth Education/Outreach category includes volunteer hours for our flagship Trout in the Classroom program, organizing Kid's fishing day, working with the Scouts on conservation, continuing our Youth fishing camp tuition program, and mentoring the Johns Hopkins students.

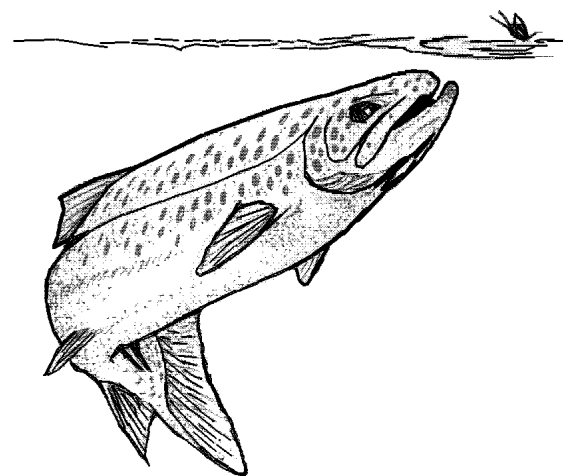
- General Operations contains a lot of the behind the scenes work helping the chapter core functions like creating and maintain our web site, keeping our membership rosters current, contributing to Mid Atlantic council meetings, creating and maintaining our list server, creating, publishing and distributing The Conservationist, keeping our finances in order, finding and scheduling the outside speakers for our chapter meetings and contributing to the governance at monthly board meetings.

Getting involved:

If you see something that appeals to you or where you can contribute some of your expertise, please step forward and let us know where you can help. Organizations like ours cannot survive on gravity alone—they require the talent, time and tenacity that each of us can bring to the overall good of the organization. We have the luxury of having many true experts in the field of cold water fisheries among our local chapter membership and volunteering for some of these activities will also give you the opportunity to work along side and learn from the masters. We can use your help!

Thanks,

Carl Smolka



## Patuxent Report

Spring stocking actually takes place before the end of winter on most of our waters that have special regulations (e.g., Delayed Harvest, Flies only). As we go to press, I have not received any dates for the stockings that may start as early as mid-February. Our chapter organizes float stockings on three local streams. The upper Patuxent Special Area (flies and lures only) is located upstream of Triadelphia Reservoir and forms the boundary between Montgomery and Howard counties. The flies-only section below the reservoir is a recent addition to our local list of trout waters. The third stream is the Middle Patuxent River in south Columbia in Howard County, which has a Delayed Harvest designation (no kill between Oct. 1 and June 15). If you are interested in helping to stock these waters, please email me at [jmsheppar@aol.com](mailto:jmsheppar@aol.com), so you can be placed on my mailing list. All stockings are weekday events, and you need chest waders to walk with the boxes for a mile or more down the streams. This is a great way to learn about new waters, where the holes are located, and how to access them later in the spring.

Jay Sheppard

## Tackle and Tactic Tips

This is a discussion on several aspects of using strike indicators. This is a topic that can consume much space. I will touch on a points that may be useful to the average weekend fly fisher. One of the first points I will mention is that I now use almost exclusively white indicators. Brightly colored indicators often attract the trout to hit them and sometimes I am using an egg or San Juan worms of the same color as those colored indicators—why ‘warn’ them of what is approaching them!? I also much prefer the solid indicators that require a tooth pick or similar device to hold them in place. I no longer use the sticky tabs, as they are difficult to move once placed on the leader.

Multiple indicators are useful in really deep and fast water where one must use a heavily weighted rig to hope to get it to the bottom. This works well where a fish may take the nymph at almost any depth. You do not have to use different color indicators. You need only to watch the indicator closest to the fly until it vanishes down into the depths and then switch to watch the next in line, etc. These are usually small indicators arranged at 12–20" intervals. Individually, they cannot support the weight of the terminal rig and would be dragged out of sight by that weight. I have seen 4 or 5 indicators lined up on a leader

from about the tip of the fly line to maybe a couple of feet above the flies and weights.

The use of strike indicators depends on a very large range of variables as to why they may work well in some situations and not in others. Some of those variables include water depth, clarity and velocity, how far you are casting, size and weight of the fly and rig, wanting to fish the fly by bouncing it on bottom or just suspended at some intermediate depth, and knowing if a hatch is about to start or not. There are also other factors such as tippet and leader diameters (monofilament has resistance to water based upon its diameter). If using an indicator, then how far to place it above the weight or fly? These and many other variables make detecting strikes easier or more difficult. One technique may not always work in the same piece of water using the same or different nymphs on different days. Fly fishers need to be good scouts and always "be prepared" to adjust! As a simple starting point for "typical conditions" of moderate flow and depth, I would set the weight (if needed) about 8–12" above the fly and set the indicator above the weight or weighted fly about 1.5 times the depth of the water. I like to see the weight or weighted fly ticking the bottom on most drifts through the pool. This is where most trout pick up the bulk of their food: just a few inches off the bottom as nymphs become dislodged and drift momentarily.

When casting weighted rigs, you must really open your casting loop. A tight loop is not a great way to spend the day—too many hangups and wind knots. Be sure to inspect your weights, if any, from time to time; knots can form AROUND them and may cut the tippet with a large fish or snag. Some fishers find casting multiple weights on the leader to create many knots. I tend to prefer to concentrate all my weights in one cluster on the rig to prevent them from winding around each other during the casting.

I think that one of the reasons beadheads work so well, besides their color, is that they orient the nymph in a more horizontal position as it drifts along. The weight at the FRONT end of the hook shank counteracts some of the lifting force of the tippet. Unweighted nymphs without any weight on the tippet often ride in an upright orientation (tail down, head up) that is unnatural for most insects.

Again, just SOME of the variables we have with which to contend! To me, that is what makes fly fishing so much a challenge.

Jay Sheppard

**Meeting Early Segments** – by Nick Weber (start at 7 PM)

**Stream Chat - Gunpowder**

This month we will have a new early segment as titled above hosted by an avid angler of the Gunpowder. Tim Pembroke has offered to share his experiences on the Gunpowder, one of our favorite and challenging streams. Tim plans to bring copies of his favorite patterns for the Gunpowder as well as second handout with a hatch and pattern chart for the Gunpowder that tracks successful patterns throughout the year. He also plans to share his knowledge of the stream along with the tactics and tackle that he employs on this, his most successful stream annually. This is a must hear and see segment!

**Angler's Corner**

Stop by the angler's corner and get the latest on the next outing to Big Hunting Creek. Dennis Covert with his wealth of information for this and other aspects of fishing the streams designated for this spring. Stopping by his early segment is a great investment in what's happening now and in the future. Dennis also is always up to hearing about a great prospect for a future outing – so stop by his part of our world.

**Online Delivery of *The Conservationist***

We now have an improved method for joining the listserv that announces the URL for each issue as it becomes available. If you are not already on this listserv and able to access the current issue online, but would like to be, please visit *The Conservationist* page on our website at <http://www.pptu.org/conservationist/conservationist.shtml> and follow the simple instructions for how to make this happen for you

Remember to return your videos and books on time. Many fellow members would like the opportunity to rent the books, tapes and DVDs that you rented. Late fees will be applied if they are not returned by the next chapter meeting.

**PPTU MENTOR PROGRAM  
BEGINNERS AND BEYOND**

One on one streamside fly fishing instruction is available to PPTU members. Participants must show commitment by having waders or hipsters, a rod and reel outfit, and leader. Discussions will include equipment, knots, casting, flies, dry fly and nymphing techniques, entomology, reading water, conservation, etc. at nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs.

Members who have not made their **Annual Supporting Contribution** will be asked to contribute \$20.



**ADDRESS CHANGE?**

If you moved or if the information on the mailing label on *The Conservationist* is wrong, please email Arnie Strand at [ArnzMail@Verizon.net](mailto:ArnzMail@Verizon.net).

You may also drop us a post card with the correction. PPTU maintains a mailing list separate from the national TU list.

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Existing members should renew their TU membership using any of the following methods:

- Mail your Renewal Statement to TU National
- Call Customer Service at 1-800-834-2419
- Navigate to [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org). Click on the **Join/Renew** tab at top, then click on the "Renew Membership" link on the left.

You will need your login name and password.



Return Address:  
Potomac-Patuxent Chapter TU  
P.O. Box 2865  
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