



November 2008

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

The Fall Fundraiser - November 19!

November is upon us and it is once more a time for a special program. This is an important opportunity to support our Chapter and at the same time obtain items we have been interested in or an experience we will remember for a life time. The possible experience of a lifetime may be the trip to the West Branch of the Delaware River for a three night two day guided fishing trip. I fished the West Branch this past June and it is a truly incredible fishery. The trip, along with a great rod and reel, as well as a waterproof digital camera are prizes that can be won by purchasing tickets for our raffle at the meeting. The prizes will be awarded at our January Meeting. However, tickets will be available at the Fundraiser. A 3wt rod and reel door prize as well as a great silent auction raffle made up of interesting and sought after gear will gain much attention. In addition, a flea market will offer many items at bargain prices. Bring your items as well and donate 15% to the Chapter. Word has it that a Thomas and Thomas Rod may be available. So bring your check book!

As a bonus, the Fundraiser offers an opportunity to ask questions to a panel of fishers whose expertise is legendary, at least to themselves. This gives many of us a chance to gain insight on a wide range of questions that arise on tactics, gear, and destinations which has led to head scratching for many of us. Come to hear this interesting Q & A segment of the meeting. You will definitely learn something, particularly if you bring a question. - *Nick Weber*

Special time for this event is 6:30 - 9:30.

Help wanted: We are in need of a person or persons who will step up and take the reins as our chapter Librarian. He or she would need to attend chapter meeting and rent videos and sell wares at the table. Please note the new librarian will not be alone — the current librarian will help out whenever needed and will be at the meetings with his laptop to help keep track of the video library. Yes, it's a big job but it can be a lot of fun. That's where I've met all you wonderful folks!

Larry Vawter

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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.

President's Column

Things are tough all over –

You probably don't need to be reminded here, but the economy is in a mess. As you may have heard, the Mid-Atlantic Council (MAC) of Trout Unlimited had to postpone their banquet because the large corporate donors that they were relying on for sponsorship had no discretionary money to spend on charitable causes.

It may be that our chapter will have to help MAC pay for the money they lost on a facility deposit on the banquet hall. This means we'll have to bring in even more money than usual this year.

Fortunately, PPTU doesn't rely on large corporations for our funding. We do, however, depend on our membership and the larger trout fishing community in the area. Most of our funds come from the Annual Supporting Contribution, and from the annual fundraising meeting we have in November.

So, plan on attending our November meeting. We've got a lot of good stuff this year to bid on, and some really good raffle prizes. The details are elsewhere in this issue of the *Conservationist*. Not only will you be helping the chapter, but walking away with some good stuff.

Bob Dietz

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 are always welcome and can be sent to the Editor as plain text in the email body or in a Microsoft Word attachment. Please include your phone number and a brief description of the attachments. The deadline for submissions is normally the 12th of the month before the chapter meeting.

Thanks!

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Phone: (301) 854-5053

earthmomjo@att.net

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	Dave Dunmire	410-765-5411
Patuxent:	Jay Sheppard	301-725-5559

WHAT KIND OF TROUT ARE YOU CATCHING?

(Reprint from April 2000 CONSERVATIONIST)

After many years of reports of "brook trout" being caught on the Patuxent and other nearby waters, it is obvious that many anglers do not know how to identify what they are catching. There are two basic identification issues for anglers: **wild vs. stocked** and **species or kind** of trout being caught.

Stocked trout usually have several major clues as to their origin. **Fins are frequently damaged.** Tails are usually rounded. The pectoral, in particular, or other fins are often **missing or misshapen.** The pectorals are the pair at the lower front of the fish. All fins are also **thick and cloudy;** it would be very difficult to read any small printed material that was placed behind them. All of these features remain relatively unchanged for the life of the trout. The fins may regrow their tattered edges, but they remain deformed and cloudy.

On the other hand, wild trout have nearly perfect fins that are **sharp edged and clear.** You could easily read a newspaper under the pectoral fins of any wild trout. The corners of the tail fin are relatively sharp and square. The dorsal fin can be raised easily above the top of the body.

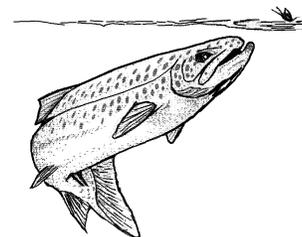
The only real problem in determining the source of a trout occurs where 4–8" trout are stocked (e.g., N. Branch and Youghiogheny Rivers; rainbows in upper Gunpowder in recent years). They have had little physical damage to their appendages while in the hatchery or being transported. They also tend to quickly acquire good body coloration. The only clues may only be their sudden appearance in high numbers, their eagerness to take a fly, and their location. After a year or more these may be indistinguishable from wild trout.

Brook trout are the easiest to identify to species as all members of the char group have **light markings on a dark background.** They are only stocked in Big Hunting Creek (a brookie over 10" is most likely one!) and in adjacent Pennsylvania waters where some may move into Maryland waters (e.g., Casselman River). Wild brookies, on the other hand, are relatively common in Baltimore Co. and down right abundant in many streams found in the Catoctins and Garrett Co.

All brown, cutthroat and rainbow trout (as well as all salmon) have **dark markings on a lighter colored background.** Browns usually have **no or few spots in the tail fin** (along the top edge, if any—and randomly placed), and the spots on the body and head are a wide range of sizes. Rainbows have relatively uniform **black spots covering the entire tail** and most of the body. Always check the tail: the easiest way to verify the ID of browns or rainbows for these two commonly stocked trout. Most wild browns in Maryland will likely be less than 13", unless you are on the lower Savage River. Wild rainbows are a real rarity in this State. A few reproduce in the upper Gunpowder and occasionally in Big Hunting Creek and a few other local places in Maryland. Cutthroat (a few may still be in the N. Branch and lower Savage) have the orange slash marks under the jaw.

Never attempt to identify a stocked trout by its overall coloration. This is the single biggest mistake most anglers make. Recently stocked trout are usually a dull gray regardless of species. Only those that have survived for more than a few months acquire some of the coloration appropriate for that species. This is why their physical structures and marking patterns have to be examined when fishing in our stocked streams. Study any angling magazine for trout pictures. Some were stocked, as can be seen by their rounded tails or other deformed fins. Holdover trout will have fins in better condition (smooth edges, tail nearly square) and with some color but still cloudy. Some holdover browns are hard to separate from wild trout; if in doubt, they are more likely stocked. Holdovers on the Patuxent typically get a dark straw yellow-brown. Stocked rainbows uncommonly survive our summers east of the Catoctins in freestone streams.

Jay Sheppard



FINAL NOTICE

Last Chance to submit Annual Supporting Contribution

The ASC is now payable. We have not had everyone renew in recent years, so we have had to reduce the size of the CONSERVATIONIST. Please help PPTU and send in your money today!! Check your label—if we have stamped it in **RED** with "FINAL NOTICE . . .," you must send your \$20 now or pay at the November meeting in order not to miss the January and the rest of next year's issues. Some members have already paid this year, so they show "PP-0909." Make checks payable to "POTOMAC-PATUXENT CHAPTER - TU" and mail to our chapter mail box. Full time students are waived the ASC, but you must send us your graduation date. The ASC covers only the CONSERVATIONIST and related administrative expenses; all donations at our raffles, etc., go to the resource and not to support our members with free newsletters, etc. **This is the final mailing** for those having "PP-0908" or no "PP-" date on their label.

There will be NO separate mailings to remind current members of this obligation. Please take note and action today!

Thank you.

Please advise if you wish to start receiving the CONSERVATIONIST via the Internet and give us your email address or you may later visit our web site to ask for this service.

REMINDER

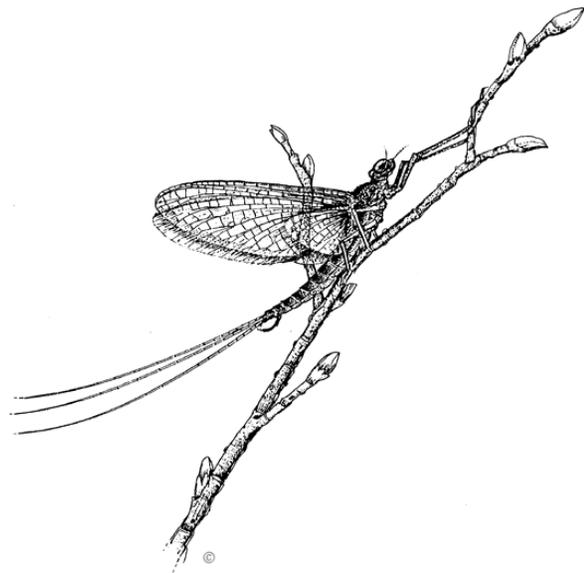
The next issue of the *Conservationist* will be in early January. There is no December issue or any monthly meeting. Have a safe and Happy Holiday!

Patuxent Report

The only local special regulation are that was stocked this Fall was the Delayed Harvest section of the Middle Patuxent River. Other local streams that were stocked included Little Patuxent in Savage and the Patapsco near Daniels and Old Frederick Road. Some of the trout were browns of good size.

Jay Sheppard

ANNUAL WARNING: Hunting goes through mid-winter in many sections of Patuxent River State Park, so be careful and stay alert. The firearm season for deer is still a way off, but squirrel hunting starts the first Saturday of October, and dove and archery season for deer will both be continuing as this is mailed. Suggest fishing on weekdays or Sundays; otherwise, wear a bright-colored hat on Saturdays, in particular. Sunday hunting for deer does not apply on public hunting zones, such as the Patuxent River State Park.



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.

Contact Ken Bowyer at 301-627-7154 or e-mail kenbowyer@verizon.net.

Autumn Outings '08

Don't miss out on all the fun. Sign up for the November steelhead trip to Lake Erie tribs.

Erie PA. November 9-12— Meet Sunday afternoon at the mouth of Elk Creek and fish area Lake Erie tribs Sunday afternoon, Monday Tuesday & Wednesday morning, heading back sometime around 12pm.

Requires Lake Erie Permit or Combo Trout-Salmon/Lake Erie Permit in addition to your annual or one-day Non-resident PA License or Non-Resident PA License and Trout-Salmon Permit.

Contact: denniscovert@hotmail.com
or 410-740-8337

Dennis Covert

Online Delivery of *The Conservationist*

The current issue of *The Conservationist* has been available online for the last several years upon request from members who are current with their Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC). This month we announce an improved method for joining the listserve that announces the URL for each issue as it becomes available. If you are not already on this listserve 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 quite simple instructions for how to make this happen for you. The front page of the current issue will still be available to the general public upon publication and all pages of prior issues can be found at this same webpage. We hope this new method will alleviate some of the problems that have interfered with our past efforts to grant online access and that more of you will be able to enjoy this benefit in return for you ongoing support of the chapter and its many programs. Give it a try and let us know what you think.

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.

ADDRESS CHANGE?

If you moved this or if the information on the mailing label on *The Conservationist* is wrong, please email Arnie Strand at 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. 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.

LAST CHANCE!

TYING FLIES FOR TROUT

We need to have at least 10 students committed to taking the class. With the number of great coaches we have, we can accommodate up to 20 students. However, 10 students is the break even point for us. If you are interested in becoming a better fly fisher for trout, you couldn't take a better path. If we don't have at least 10 students signed up by the end of November, we will have to cancel the class again this year, and once again return checks to those who have already signed up. Give it a try; you will be glad you did.

FOR THE NOVICE OR INTERMEDIATE FLY TYER --Tying Flies for Trout is designed for the tyer who wishes to learn new tying skills or improve the techniques they already have. The basic skills and materials for tying nymphs, emergers, duns, and spinners, coupled with basic wet fly and streamer construction will be covered. The class focus will be on proven local patterns.

Jim Greco, Dave Wittman, Robert Simpson, Carl Smolka, and Larry Vawter will conduct the class. The class will be at the Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, MD, from 7 to 9 PM on Tuesday nights: January 6, 13, 20, 27, February, 3, 10, 2009.

Tuition for this 6 week class is \$115.00. For TU members who have made a \$20.00 Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC) to PPTU a discount of \$20.00 applies, making the tuition only \$95.00. The tuition fee covers the room rental, class handouts, and tying materials for flies to be tied in the class with the balance of revenue going to the PPTU Chapter for use in its education and conservation efforts. Right now, joining National TU costs only \$17.50, which will also include the PPTU ASC, and entitles you to the \$20.00 discount and other benefits associated with it. Limited enrollment -- sign up now. Materials included. Students must supply their own tools. Optional tying manual available for \$11.00 -- Fly Tying Made Easy for Beginners, Randall Kaufmann (\$21.95 value)

To register, contact Jim Greco for information at a chapter meeting, or at Jimg6128@comcast.net..., or 410-997-2787.

By the way -- I should point out each student will receive enough material to tie at least 4 flies of each pattern we teach. That means you will finish the class with approximately 48 flies in your box you didn't have before taking the class. Have you bought any good flies lately??? Just the value of those flies makes the class tuition almost free, and you will have a new skill to practice for the rest of your trout fishing future.

Jim Greco



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

FIRST CLASS MAIL