

October 2007

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

Project Healing Waters

At the October 17 chapter meeting, a presentation will be given on Project Healing Waters, Supporting Our Wounded and Disabled Veterans, Fly Fishing and Tying Towards Recovery. There is a special group of men and women who have sacrificed much to make us and our sons and daughters safer, and continue to fight every day to protect our way of life here in America. Through Project Healing Waters, we now have the opportunity to offer these amazing warriors our gratitude and respect for all they have done on behalf of our country.

Captain Eivind Forseth, along with our own John Colburn, will give you a glimpse of the way these wounded soldiers have risen to the challenges their wounds present. Project Healing Waters is a program which began right here in our back yard at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and is now spreading across our country to state after state. Captain Forseth will fill us in on how these fine men and women of our armed forces have used fly fishing, fly tying, and fly casting to continue their rehabilitation, and provide all of us with example after example of the "can do spirit" which makes these warriors so special.

Come see what this program is all about. You won't be sorry. Our chapter has embraced Project Healing Waters with enthusiasm and determination to do what we can to support it financially and with the services of our members who are now providing mentors, tying classes and help with outings. Now is the time for you to step up and get involved in the most rewarding endeavor you may ever undertake. On October 17th, come see what is good in this world. Come learn how we can help. Come and say thanks! *By Jim Greco.* ■

Project Healing Waters Wednesday, October 17

7:00 PM

(see bottom of page for directions)

****Guest Speakers****

**Captain Eivind Forseth
and John Colburn**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Column, by Bob Dietz - Page 2

September Outing Report, by Dennis Covert - Page 3

Fall PPTU Outings Schedule - Western Maryland Camping, Elk River Pennsylvania Steelhead - Page 4

Tackle and Tactics Tip, Insect Identification, by Jay Sheppard - Page 5

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

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

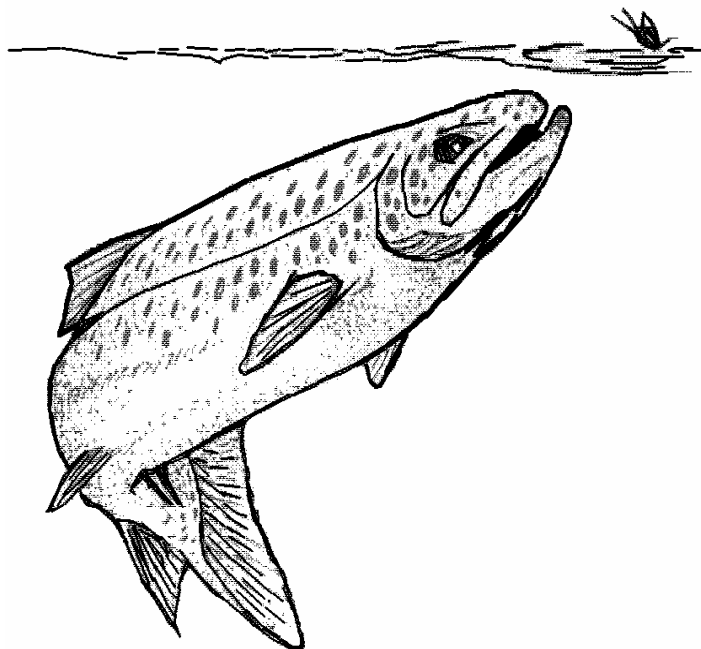
By Bob Dietz

As I write this, it's September 11th. I can't help but being reminded everything that means, including the fact that we now have tens of thousands of more wounded veterans than we did on that day. What does this have to do with PPTU? Well, our October meeting will feature a talk on Project Healing Waters, an effort to help some of those veterans through fly fishing. It's a worthwhile project, and I hope you'll come to the meeting to listen to what's been done and is being done.

This meeting also marks the time that we really start begging in earnest again for your annual supporting contribution to the chapter. The money goes, among other things, the printing and mailing of the publication you're now reading, and rental of our meeting room. It also entitles you to discounts on our fly tying classes, and book sales. (I don't know, maybe we should give away free mugs, but it's only \$15.)

Now that I'm done asking you to do things, I'll ask what you would like to see the chapter do for you, or for trout fishing in general. Are there any activities or projects you'd like to see us involved in?

Looking ahead to next month, don't forget to start saving up now for our annual raffle in November – just it time for the holidays! (You really wanted to think about that, right?). ■



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 in a Microsoft Word attachment. 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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September Outing Report

By Dennis Covert

It was a beautiful morning, clear, no wind, my truck thermometer illuminating a very comfortable 69 degrees as I pulled into the Masemore parking lot. Will Amland, Art Friedlander, Tim Pembroke and Jack Benoit were already there, trunks open and pulling out gear, with Ken Bowyer rolling in soon after. We were in no hurry and enjoyed the coolness of the morning while tugging on our waders and chatting about George Black's book on American bamboo rod makers; *Casting A Spell*, while admiring the beautiful bamboo rod Tim recently built himself and was fishing this morning.

Waders on, rods strung, we performed that parking lot ritual where everybody just sort of stands in a loose circle looking at everybody else wondering who is going where and who'll say it first. There was some inaudible murmuring, hat adjusting and weight shifting, some looking up river then down then back at each other until finally some one said "I think I'll head down" then everybody else voicing an up or down, and we were off.

Choosing to go up river, I followed Tim on the path for about 1/8th of a mile before slowing and cutting into the river at a promising looking riffle. I paused momentarily enjoying the spicy aroma of late summer air mingling with smells of the river, then thinking I was hearing some slurps in the riffle below I tied on a realistic caddis. I made several drifts through the run and those close to it, but lack of any response had me changing flies, something I did a lot of for the next three fishless hours.

Heading up river I came across Will who was reporting the same success I was enjoying; no fish but a great morning to be out anyway. Deciding to head to the large pool below the bridge I stopped along the way to take a couple pictures of Art casting a custom fiber glass rod. From my vantage point on the path above, the sunlight was catching the line as the loop shot forward unfolding to settle lightly on the water. After a couple of minutes of watching, I broke in and asked: "What's doing Art?" "A couple on ants." he said. Proof there were fish is the river after all.

Tim and I reached the pool at the same time. He was working his way from the riffles where he took two browns on a #16 realistic caddis. He said >

an hour before he had been fishing to risers in this pool and netted four on # 20 blue winged olive emergers. While we were talking, a couple of splashy rises interrupted us. Tim said, "Go get'em" then headed for the flat water below. I did try to get'em, but all they would do was come up and look at my emerger, refuse it, then settle back into their holding position. Changing flies I got a false take on # 20 BWO dun. A little frustrated and a lot stumped, I stopped to stretch my back and watched Tim unhook another below me, then heard a little whoop from up stream and turned to see Art standing on the big rock below the bridge rod bent and throbbing with a fish. I watched him work the fish along the side of the big rock as he descended it in small leaps down to the waters edge and land it. Yelling to him after the release, he said "took those last two on small brown caddis nymphs." "Good," I said, "Because that's what I'm tying on right now".

On the second cast I took my first fish followed by another, then they turned off completely. Switching to a foam beetle I popped off a third fish by striking back on the rod with too much gusto which turned out to be my last chance of the day. It was 1 pm by then, my water bottle was empty and the heat was gathering some momentum so headed down the path back toward the truck for replenishment.

Along the way I came across Ken, the first I had seen him since the morning's parking lot ritual. He began the day going down river and fishing it back up and was a little past the iron bridge when I met him. He was working a beetle close to the bank. Ken said he landed four browns earlier, three on a #18 prince nymph, one on a beetle, and lost two more after savage strikes. He said one of the browns leapt three times before he netted it, making him wonder if he might be shirttail relation to some rainbows.

By 2:30 pm everyone was back at the parking lot ready to call it a day. We hung around talking, while Jack played the old hide my keys down my wader leg trick. I fell for it completely; watching him go through all the pockets in his vest and shirt, walking around his truck several times, looking under it and in the grass around it before Jack finally saying " Oh!, here they are!" Whatta'kidder Jack!

The next outing is the camping trip to Garrett County in Western MD. Anyone needing info can contact Dennis at denniscovert@hotmail.com or, by phone at 410-740-8337. Hope to see ya'all there. ■

PPTU MEMBERSHIP FEES AND BENEFITS

After the September issue of *The Conservationist*, some members requested an explanation of the fees and benefits. The only "membership" fee is to national TU for \$35 per year. So if you are a member of national TU, then you are also a member of our chapter, the Potomac – Patuxent Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

The ASC or Annual Supporting Contribution, is the contribution our chapter asks for from each member as an annual contribution of \$15 (which is going up to \$20 next year). Members who make this contribution get the *Conservationist* (either print form or in a timely manner on the web), get discounts if they attend our fly tying class, plus discounts on books, etc. For reasons dealing with mandatory clauses in our by-laws, the ASC is not called dues or a membership fee, and the *Conservationist* is not called a newsletter. Members are still members even if they do not make an ASC.

There is no "subscription" to the printed newsletter. The only newsletter we publish is an annual one, which is also on our website. It is freely available there to chapter and non-chapter members. Members who make an ASC can receive our publication as a side benefit. To some, this might not make sense, but after hundreds of hours of discussion last year, this was the best we could do to be in compliance with the National rules.

PPTU MENTOR PROGRAM: BEGINNERS AND BEYOND

One on one stream side 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, knot tying, 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 \$15.

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

PPTU Fall Fundraiser

By Bruce Eberle

With fall coming on strong and the color

of the leaves changing daily, it is not too early to begin thinking about getting some Christmas gifts together for the relatives and friends. The November chapter meeting will offer a wide range of gifts for family and friends and yourself! In addition to a raffle with a fishing destination prize, there will also be a second prize of a quality rod and reel. Tickets will be available for purchase at the October and the November meeting.

There will also be many other items at our Silent Auction including: travel fishing guides by Ken Penrod and Ann McIntosh; fly tying books by Dick Stewart, Gary Borger and Randall Kaufman; casting by Lefty Kreh; and Patterns of the Masters for expert tiers.

Also, back by popular demand will be PPTU's Flea Market where members and guests can sell items that are gathering more dust than use and/or buy items that you had forgotten that you need. The November event will be fun, exciting, and best of all the proceeds will further PPTU's conservation program and cold water habitat improvement work. ■

Fall PPTU Outings Schedule

October 5-6-7—Western Maryland

Four day three night trip to Garrett County. Camp in the pavilion at Big Run State Park. Bring what you need and split the \$180 fee between the campers. A chance to see bear, deer, turkey, great scenery, and of course beautiful trout.

November 11-12-13—Elk Creek Pennsylvania

(steelhead stamp required). This will be a mid-week steelhead outing. The plan is to arrive sometime Sunday, fish all day Monday & Tuesday, check out Wednesday and fish some more before heading back. This will probably be a brisk outing with cold temps. So pack winter clothes and ice free for your rod guides. We are staying at the Red Roof Erie #54 located at I90 at Perry hwy/sr 97, exit #27. (814) 868-5246 FAX: (814) 868-5450. Rooms are \$60 per night plus tax for a double room, and single room rates are also available.

For more info or to sign up for an outing, contact Dennis Covert, coordinator, by email at dennis-covert@hotmail.com or phone at 410-740-8337.

Tackle and Tactic Tips

BY JAY SHEPPARD

Most anglers have little or no experience in insect identification. It is a useful art, as we all benefit when a report comes to our attention that the "Hot Pink Mayfly" is hatching in great numbers on a local stream. If the identification is correct and we proceed to the stream with the correct flies, then one can expect to have some serious action. However, if we either have been given a wrong identification or misinterpret the report and bring flies that match another aquatic insect with a similar name, we may have no success at all.

Researching flies that we need on our streams to match the hatches can be time consuming and confusing. I wish there were some shortcuts. There are perhaps several dozen mayflies of importance on the trout streams within a hundred or two miles of our area. Then there are the caddis and stoneflies, let alone the midges. In warmer weather we have the terrestrials with grasshoppers, crickets, ants, beetles, inch worms, moths, etc.

Regrettably, hunters and fishers have been using their own names for the animals they see out in the field or on the stream. Fishers in New England may call a particular mayfly hatch with one name, while those in this area or the Midwest use one or more other names. One of the more common names we see regarding mayfly hatches is the "blue-winged olive (BWO)." This name can apply to a number of mayflies in the U.S., each of which has slightly different characteristics. Some hatch in the early AM or late PM, while others hatch in the middle of the day. Some are very tiny (down to size 22 or even 24), while others are more moderate in size (e.g., #14). Some have a bright olive body, others range to nearly pure gray. There are variations in the color of the wings, too: from dark slate to pale gray. So when you hear "BWOs" are hatching, you need to know which one of maybe a dozen variations you need to have and when they are emerging to match that hatch properly.

There are a number of useful books written about mayflies and other aquatic insects. I urge you to at least look them over to know where you can find specific information on insects that anglers see on our waters. My new key to eastern mayflies of interest to trout fishers is one small tool that I hope >

will overcome some of the problems with identifying and reporting mayflies on our streams. I wish I could come up with a simple key for the caddis and stoneflies, as well as the midges, but the trout seem to be less selective on these—as long as you match size and general color. Be sure to pick up a copy of the key at the next meeting to carry in your vest. Then next spring you can report with some knowledge what you see fluttering around our trout streams. ■

New Key to Identification of Mayflies

A new one page key to identifying our local mayflies found on trout streams has been prepared by Jay Sheppard. It will be on sale for a nominal cost at each meeting in a laminated form for packing in your vest and taking onto a stream. The key has also been posted on the chapter web site in a downloadable file. This is a useful tool to have with you while you are fly-fishing many of our streams in the mid-Atlantic. The laminated sheets are about six inches by nine inches and have the date of September 2007.

Pautexent Report

BY JAY SHEPPARD

Flows at the end of the summer have been abysmal. I suspect few trout will have survived below Hipsley Mill. Fall stocking may take place, but only if we receive a reasonable influx in rains and the flows get back to a more reasonable level (maybe 12–18 cfs as a minimum?).

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. Try fishing on weekdays or Sundays; otherwise, wear a bright-colored hat on Saturdays, in particular. Sunday hunting for deer does not apply, to my knowledge, on public hunting zones, such as the Patuxent River State Park.



NOTICE TO PPTU MEMBERS

Just a reminder 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 the month before. Late fees will be applied if they are not returned by the next chapter meeting.



Renewals for TU Members

Existing members should be renewing their membership to TU by any of the following methods:

- Membership Renewal Statement that is mailed to them,
- Call Customer Service at 1-800-834-2419 to renew by phone, or
- Online at www.tu.org.

For online renewals, click on the **Join/Renew** tab at top, then click on the "Renew Membership" link on the left. You will need to know your login name and password.

Tying Bench & Angler's Corner

By Nick Weber

Tying Bench

Lake Erie Steelhead consume lots of eggs in their lifetime. The most popular egg pattern is the Sucker Spawn, with the Crystal Meth a close second. To get ready for our November steelhead outing to northwestern PA, Ken Bowyer will be tying one of his favorite steelhead patterns, the Crystal Meth. Stop by the Tying Bench and see how easy it is to tie this pattern.

Angler's Corner

Stop by to chat with Dennis Covert about the upcoming Steelhead trip November 11 -13 to Pennsylvania, and see and hear about the trip to Western Maryland. Dennis is also interested in suggestions about new water for our outings. So don't hesitate to chat with him about an idea for an outing. He and others would also welcome your reports of some days you have had on the stream as well.



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