

September 2007

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

Fishing in Fabled Patagonia

Who hasn't heard of fly-fishing in Patagonia, where the trout grow as long as your leg? And who hasn't dreamed of going there to cast a line in those cold, pristine waters and see a tackle-busting rise form boil on the surface to engulf a tiny mayfly?

If so, you won't want to miss our September 19 guest speaker, Gonzalo Cortes, from Santiago, Chile. Gonzalo, Chile's leading fly-fisher, will give a DVD presentation on: Flyfishing in Chile – Where to Go and What To Do.

A guide for 18 years and owner of two lodges, Gonzalo has opened up several areas of the country for fly-fishing. He also is the noted author of two recent fly-fishing books, Fly Fishing in Chilean Patagonia and Best Rivers in Chile. He will take us on a national photographic tour of Chile's best waters from the rainbow-rich rivers of northern Patagonia to the storied Rio Grande in Tierra del Fuego, where double-digit sea run brown trout can be taken daily on small flies.

In addition to being an expert on Chilean fly-fishing, Gonzalo has fished in Alaska and other U.S. states, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Iceland, Finland, Russia and Spain. He opened and for 20 years has owned Santiago's leading fly shop and is the Sage and Simms distributor for both Argentina and Chile. This is certain to be an exciting presentation. Be sure to attend the September 19 PPTU chapter meeting so you will not miss it. ■



Fly Fishing Patagonia Wednesday, September 19

7:00 PM
(see bottom of page for directions)

****Guest Speaker****

Gonzalo Cortes
Chile's Leading Fly Fisher

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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

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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.

EDITOR: Shawn Jensen

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Bob Dietz

The summer is already drawing to an end. Where did it go? I hope you got to fish more than I did.

The end of summer means several things in the life of our chapter. It means you start getting the Conservationist again, or at least read a new one on our website, if that's the way you get them. It means you're supporting contribution to the chapter is due if you did not pay it last spring.

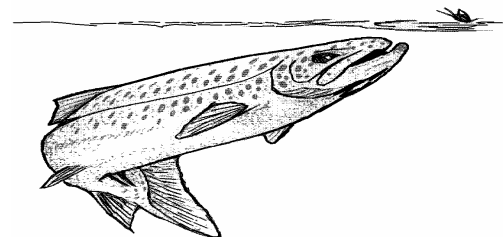
It also means we start having regular chapter meetings again. The September meeting promises to be a good one if you dream of fishing for big trout in far away places. Gonzalo Cortes will be speaking about fly fishing in Chile. (That would be the country; you can't actually fish in hot peppers.)

We've had several things of note happen over the last few months. We've become involved in Project Healing Waters, a program started to benefit combat wounded veterans, but is now expanding to include all veterans in the VA system.

We've also received a bequest of several hundred angling related books. We'll be making these accessible to the membership in various ways. Some of the more valuable ones will be auctioned off at our November fundraiser. Others may be offered as prizes in our monthly raffle, while others will be made available for sale. Watch this publication to see what is being offered each month.

We've also supported the Baltimore Area Council of Boy Scouts of America in teaching the Fly Fishing Merit Badge at Broad Creek Boy Scout Camp in Harford County. Reports so far indicate that it went very well, with the fly fishers catching more fish than the boy in the all tackle merit badge program. See more details in a later issue.

Hope to see you soon! ■



Patuxent Report

By Jay Sheppard

My expectations are that maybe 5% of the brown trout may have survived this summer's flows. In a normal year, we might see 20% of the stocked browns to survive. The low flows of this summer caused the algae to bloom in the longer pools.

This, in turn, means that the oxygen levels every night can drop to untenable levels for trout. The minnows survive, but the trout have a terrible time unless there is a log or rock over which water falling into the head of the pool injects oxygen for several yards below that point. I doubt if any rainbows have held over this summer.

The wild browns above Rt. 94 usually survive these low flow summers, as they have a higher gradient to keep the oxygen at survivable levels. Temperature of the water has rarely been an issue over the decades. The water temperatures in the upper Patuxent above Triadelphia Reservoir reach about 74° on hot afternoons for a few hours, which is usually not enough to kill trout.

If you are interested in helping in the annual electro-fishing surveys of this stream, please contact me by the September meeting. This is always a good opportunity to help and also to see where the trout are (or are not).

This is a weekday pursuit with chest waders required. Dates and times have not been determined as we go to press. Similarly, if you have any interest in the Gunpowder surveys on Sept. 24-26, let DNR know also by September 14 at 301-854-6060, cgougeon@dnr.state.md.us.

There may be some trout stocking of the Patuxent River system (including the Middle Patuxent River delayed harvest section) in October. I do not have any schedule or numbers yet. If you are interested and have not been contacted in the past about such activities, please get in touch with me. ■



ADDRESS CHANGED? MISSING AN ISSUE?

If you have moved or see any error in your label on this newsletter, please advise both the National TU office and this chapter with separate notices.

Our mailing list is maintained apart from the National list; we do eventually get the notice of address change from National TU, but it is often a few months before it affects your newsletter and other mailings. Please help us help you. Thank you.

Last year we had several reports of members not receiving their newsletters. First, make sure we have your correct address, including ZIP, and that your dues are paid up (label reads PP-0906 until this November, then PP-0907 after that).

If you are missing a back issue, please contact us for a copy. For future reference, we try to mail the newsletters to our active members about two weeks before the next meeting. Remember, we have no newsletters or meetings in December or during the summer months of June, July and August.

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 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 \$15. Contact Ken Bowyer at 301-627-7154 or e-mail him at: kenbowyer@comcast.net



Fall PPTU Outings Schedule

By Dennis Covert

September 8— Gunpowder River

We will meet at Masemore parking lot at 8:00 am. Flows on the GP at this time are good. However, in the event that the drought continues and flows on the GP are very low in September, we will substitute the Yellow Breeches in Pennsylvania as the alternate outing site.

October 5-6-7—Western Maryland

A four day three night camping trip to Garrett County with tent camping at the pavilion in Big Run State park. This is my 3rd year doing this outing and we really have a lot of fun, splitting up to fish area streams throughout the day and then recounting our adventures around the fire at night. This is a wonderful time of year to be in the Alleghenies. The mountains are splashed with color and drumming grouse can be heard on the hill-sides. We have had bear sightings in both of the past two outings along with countless deer and wild turkeys. There are no services at the camp site other than an outside toilet, so you need to bring everything you will need for the weekend, food, water, etc. The cost of the pavilion for the three nights is \$180 split however many ways we have campers.

November 11-12-13—Elk Creek Pennsylvania (steelhead stamp required)

A mid-week steelhead outing. The plan is to arrive sometime Sunday, then fish all day Monday & Tuesday, check out Wednesday morning and fish some more before heading back. This will probably be a brisk outing with cold temps rolling in off the lake. So pack all your winter clothes and some 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 additional information or to sign up for an outing, contact Dennis Covert, the outings coordinator, by email at dennis-covert@hotmail.com or by phone at 410-740-8337.

PPTU Fall Fundraiser

By Bruce Eberle

Even though it is summer and folks are spending more time at the beach or the pool, it is not too early to begin thinking about what to get the kids and grandpa for Christmas! 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 in the fall.

In addition there will be a wide range of 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. ■

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.

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.

Tackle and Tactics Tip

BY JAY SHEPPARD

Fishing in the rain is usually very rewarding.

With the falling rain the insects can become quite active, especially in warmer weather. The cooling effect of a falling summer rain seems to spur the insects to become very active and the trout respond to the increase in insects on the water.

I watch the weather forecasts very closely at all times of the year, and one is often rewarded if he or she can plan a fishing trip on a damp day that has cloudy skies and intermittent bouts of rain.

The little *Baetis* mayflies, aka blue winged olives, seem especially active during such weather at almost any time of the year. In late May and early June and again in September and early October, the *Isonychia* mayflies, aka slate winged drakes, willingly hatch all afternoon in such weather versus hatching at dusk on clear days. The darker skies also make the trout feel less wary and exposed than they would in bright sun.

In warmer weather, I carry one of those very cheap plastic ponchos that folds into a pocket. Since I wear chest waders and do not need to keep anything dry below my vest, the bottom half of the poncho has already been cut off. These offer excellent protection against sudden afternoon thunderstorms. Such storms seem to spring from nowhere when you are intently fishing in a deep canyon, such as on the upper Gunpowder or the lower Savage River.

After a storm, the water may become discolored from the runoff. Yet, trout will continue to feed in such water. I really like fishing in water with about 18–25" of visibility, as it can often be surprisingly rewarding. Fly or lure offerings need to be seen to be attacked by a trout. Such conditions allow the larger trout to feel safer and remain out of their hiding places to actively feed. A further advantage to the fisher is that one can approach trout a lot easier if their vision is impaired. Tactics under such conditions must allow for the reduced visibility.

Stripping woolly buggers or streamers more than the visibility allows may take the offering past the fish, which is then unable to follow the fly. A dead drifted dry or nymph needs to go right over or past the fish. ►

Although light or bright flies may work on occasions, I much prefer the darker shades for all my flies: olives, black, dark browns, and even purple or magenta. A rainy day is a great day to go fishing! ■

TU Membership

Using Membership Application – New members can join TU using the special introductory membership application. This membership application offers a special rate of \$17.50. To ensure our chapter is credited properly for rebates, please ensure our chapter's 3-digit chapter # appears in the code box: 236. Also ensure the application is mailed to the proper address: Trout Unlimited, PO Box 7400, Woolly Bugger, WV 25438.

Joining Using the Website – New members also can join TU online at www.tu.org/intro. The special introductory rate of \$17.50 for new members is only offered through this link. To ensure our chapter is credited properly for rebates, please ensure our chapter's 3-digit chapter # appears in the **Chapter Number** field: 236. The new member enters their name, address, email, and credit card information. NOTE: Please ensure spelling is correct as this information is automatically added to the TU database system with what is entered.

Changing chapter affiliation — National TU has had a process where members who renew are cross checked for their ZIP codes. If the ZIP falls in another chapter's jurisdiction, the member has been re-assigned automatically to that other chapter. When you receive your membership card after renewing, verify to what chapter you are assigned. Call the membership number above to have your affiliation changed to any chapter at any time. Ask that your membership record be flagged so that no changes in chapter affiliation will happen in the future without your specific request.

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.

CONSERVATIONIST SUBSCRIPTION NOW PAYABLE

The "Annual Supporting Contribution" is now payable. Check your label—if the "PP-" date is "0907" (or there is NO "PP-" and date), you can send your \$15 now, and you will not have to worry about paying at the September meeting. Some members paid twice this past year, so they already show "PP-0908" and should not send another check this year. Make checks payable to "POTOMAC-PATUXENT CHAPTER - TU" and mail to our chapter mail box. The ASC covers only the Conservationist and related administrative expenses; all donations above expenses at raffles, etc., go to the resource and educational programs and not to support our members with free Conservationists. **Final mailing** for those having "PP-0907" on their label will be the November issue. If you wish to receive the Conservationist via the Internet, please indicate this with your check and provide your email address. **There will be NO separate mailings to remind members of this obligation. Please take note and action today! You will not want to miss our January issue and all the other 2008 issues with their announcements, reports and tips. Thank you.**

Tying Bench & Angler's Corner

By Nick Weber

These segments occur at 7 p.m. on the night of the monthly meeting, Wednesday, September 19, and they run concurrently. See front page for directions to the meeting.

Tying Bench

This month's Tying Bench will feature a proven pattern for this time of year. It is a Clouser type tie that is touted by my buddy as a killer pattern for big trout and smallmouth bass. In Indiana it is known as the Sugar Creek Special. I'm sure that similar type patterns employing zonker materials are widely tied as well. Stop by the Tying Bench and see me tie this easy but effective "Big Fish" pattern.

Angler's Corner

Stop by to chat with Dennis Covert about the upcoming October trip to Western Maryland, or even the Steelhead trip in November. Dennis is also up for 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 comments on some memorable days on the stream this year, but you will have to divulge a few secrets.



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