

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

Apr 2025 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

“2024 Trout Population Surveys for the Catoctin Streams” Guest Speaker: Michael Kashiwagi

April 16th, 2025

For our April meeting we are happy to host Michael Kashiwagi - Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Western II Regional Fisheries Manager for Frederick and Washington counties and the upper Potomac River. Michael will present the results of the 2024 trout population surveys for the Catoctin streams, talk about the conditions affecting the streams, and answer any questions you may have for him.

Michael was born and raised in Montgomery County. He has a graduate degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from Mississippi State University and has been with the Maryland DNR for the past 18 years. Michael initially worked with the Maryland Biological Stream Survey before transferring over to the Freshwater Fisheries Program.

– *Scott Cernich*



April 16th Chapter Meeting

Laurel Volunteer Fire Department

7588 Van Dusen Road, Laurel, MD 20707

Time and Day: 7:00 PM, Third Wednesday of the month except June, July, August and December

[Online Chapter Meeting Link](#)

Visit our website: PPTU.org

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Contact Us:

mail@pptu.org

Presidents' Column - Craig VanderKolk



I'm sitting next to my fishing equipment trying to organize my gear from the last trip and prepare for my next trip. Its something that doesn't come easy to me, since I'm a last minute packer and fairly disorganized. Fortunately that doesn't hold true to many of our members, our chapter and Trout Unlimited as an organization. We have many dedicated members working on activities, often behind the scenes to make things run smoothly. Recently we had many volunteers work to float stock various parts of the Patuxant. A difficult job that works well with the long term dedication of Jay Shepard and Peter Schuler. We have the largest Trout in the Classroom program on the east coast thanks to Alan Burrows and a dedicated group of volunteers that start the school year delivering eggs to fill tanks for kids. They learn about trout growth and development and what a good environment means to a healthy population of trout but also what it means to our children's future. Please consider signing up to help out this spring with the next step, releasing the fish into the streams.

One of my goals this year was to build on these conservation and volunteer projects with some new ones of our own. Our conservation group made up of Tom Brosnan, Peter Harrington, Kevin Haney and Jim Irons, have been reaching out to local and national organizations to identify needs and opportunities. They've visited past projects like the ones in Western Maryland supported by TU National and a local tree planting project organized by MDTU. They're looking at what we at PPTU can do the gain experience in these projects and ultimately plan, fund and complete projects that continue the tradition of conservation projects modeled by the ones mentioned above.

Unfortunately, many conservation projects by TU, including those in Maryland are challenged by the current pause in federal funding. Our Climate Change representative to PPTU and the Mid-Atlantic Council, Jim Irons recently summarized a Town Hall presentation by TU President & CEO Chris Wood and an Action Alert email. “Basically all TU plans to support conservation project funded by \$230M+ in federal infrastructure funding has been postponed. This is an existential threat to TU's ongoing efforts to preserve and enhance cold water fisheries”. I

joined that Town Hall and was truly impressed with the breadth and scope of projects already planned and contracted. As we all know, the cold water fisheries that we love here in Maryland and throughout the country are overwhelmingly in rural areas. These conservation projects that restore streams have a tremendous impact on local economies. As Chris Wood pointed out, "By partnering with federal agencies, we (TU) work on the ground with (local) contractors, engineers and small businesses to restore rivers and trout habitat, bringing lasting benefits to places we live, love and fish".

So what can we do? Take a moment to look at your schedules to see if you can [help TIC](#) with trout releases. Recognize and appreciate the many conservation projects that frequently are highlighted in PPTU notifications and emails or TU mailings. Consider making an additional donation to TU so they can lobby on our behalf and support the full time staff they rely on. Finally, consider joining me and many of your fellow anglers in Maryland and reach out to your member in [Congress](#).

[Stand Up for Clean Water and Healthy Fisheries!](#)

Craig VanderKolk
President, PPTU

PPTU Mentor Program Beginners & Beyond

PPTU 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. all on nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs. Members who have not made an **Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC)** will be asked to contribute \$20.

Contact us by e-mail: mentor@pptu.org



Volunteer for City Catch! - MDTU

We need volunteers on two days:

Day 1 - [Stocking the Stream](#). On Friday, April 11, we need help stocking the rainbow trout in Dead Run. Fish stocking, always a fun time, will begin at approximately 12:00 pm. Specific details will be sent to volunteers after sign up.

Day 2 - [City Catch](#). City Catch 2025 is on Saturday, April 12. Volunteer orientation begins at 8:00 am and the students arrive at 9:00 am. Lunch is between noon and 1:00 pm. Please bring a fillet knife. Volunteers will clean fish that are caught so the kids can take them home.



Please consider volunteering for one or both days. The more volunteers we get the better the experience for the kids!

Click the links above to volunteer!

Abel Vise Base - Abel

Well, there's always something new out there for you fly tiers. If your birthday or other special occasion is coming around and people are asking you what you want, this could be a good suggestion, assuming they all chip in for the artistic version. Abel came out with a fly tying base last year and they upped the game this year to include prints.

It seems like the common question asked of Abel when it's customers heard about the Abel quality fly tying base launched last year was "When can we get one in a custom anodized finish?"

Well, the answer is now you can.

The seven new finishes below are now available to order on the [Abel website](#).



Pricing varies by finish, and the length of time required by our artistic team to hand anodize each individual vise base. Artist finishes are:

- Bonefish
- DeYoung Brook Flank
- Flats Fade
- Native Brook
- Native Cutthroat
- Native Rainbow
- Redfish

Look for updates later this spring regarding several additional finishes we'll be adding to the Abel Base lineup.

Video Diversion - Joe Robinson

A bit of encouragement during these trying times... Learn about the efforts to monitor the native sea run brook trout population of Red Brook in southeastern Massachusetts, and protect and enhance their habitat. These rare and wild trout, which spend their winters in marine waters, face numerous threats ranging from habitat loss to pollution to climate change, yet have managed to survive in a challenging and changing environment thanks in large part to the efforts of dedicated biologists and conservation groups.

[Watch the video](#)

"It is impossible to grow weary of a sport that is never the same on any two days of the year."

~ Theodore Gordon

If you spot poaching please call or text:

**Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers At
443-433-4112**



Add this number to your cell phone contact list!



Wading Staffs - Bob O'Donnell

There was quite the discussion on our list serve recently regarding wading staffs. Thought I would post a few notes and options for you to check out.

Wading staffs serve multiple purposes, and for arguments sake, it's not just an old person's cane, it's a wise person's tool.

Uses - A wading staff can act as a third leg for balance, and it also allows you to probe ahead of you for water depth and bottom structure. It can also be used to free snagged flies.

The discussion generated a lot of options for people to consider from using Bamboo, Ash, Ski Pole, Old Spinning Rod, to a downed Tree Limb. Which wading staff is best for you depends on a number of criteria: which one gives you the most confidence, which is the most trouble free, price, and of course which one is more portable in your luggage.

Whatever you choose its best to use a retractor to keep the staff always in the same spot. Easy to reach as needed. In recent years, folks have been using hiking/trekking poles as an option. One inexpensive option in that group is folding pole from



Trekology. Its inexpensive and you should get many miles out of it before it needs to be replaced. All the major fly fishing retailers have their own offerings for you to check out as well. If you're not certain, borrow one from a friend and check it out before committing to a purchase.

Here's a list of a few other options for your consideration:

- High Stream Gear Trekking Poles
- Black Diamond Collapsible Trekking Poles
- Cascade Mountain Trekking Poles
- X Carbon Stick
- Coldwater Wading Staff
- Harvy Backcountry Adjustable Hiker

And of course, someone always chimes in with a wise crack to keep things light and laughable. Like the follow line added to the chat: "I find my wading staff to be very helpful. They are well practiced at keeping me upright on my feet and preventing a spill. The kitchen staff of course, always has a fine table laid out for a refreshing picnic at the end of the day."

And... I'll leave you with that thought. ;)

Trout in the Classroom Releases - PPTU

Trout in the Classroom is one of PPTU's and TU's premier programs. All should be finding one or more dates to help out during the releases of the fish raised from eggs in middle school classrooms throughout Maryland.

It's a fun 1/2 day doing demonstrations of tying, macro invertebrate identification, fly casting, and more. More information is on our [PPTU](#) web page.

Email **Alan Burrows**, our Maryland statewide coordinator at aburrows53@gmail.com to find dates that work for you!



Another Successful Fly Tying Class! - PPTU

We wrapped up another successful fly tying class this year. The student's watched, listened and learned from our key instructor, Bob Dietz. Starting with a San Juan Worm and working their way up to tying a Catskill Dry Fly during the last class, our students experienced a solid foundation for tying on their own. Many of the flies they tied were quite impressive for beginners! No doubt that any of those flies will land them a fish this year.



April Chapter Outing - Ron Kerrick

Our next chapter outing is planned for Saturday, **April 26 to Sunday April 27** to fish the Casselman River in Grantsville, PA. We will be getting together for dinner at the Casselman Inn on Saturday night. So, please let me know if you plan to attend dinner. I posted a write up and map details via email. If you did not see it let me know.

To register for this Outing, go to the PPTU website or just use this [Link](#) and select Casselman Rivere.

If the weather is right and the hatch is on, there should be an intense emergence of #14/16 mottled brown/grey wing dark body American Grannon (genus *Brachycentrus*) Caddis flies from early to late afternoon. During the hatch, the caddis flies swarm up and down the river in fast flight, sometimes in a blizzard of flies with eventual egg laying taking place late afternoon and evening. Even during this swarming period there can be a mid-day lull in surface activity and a good time to switch to

subsurface flies. This is one of the best spring hatches in Maryland and the classic dry fly experience. The river is mostly open, easy for casting.

Meeting Area: We will meet in the parking lot at the Casselman River Bridge State Park on Saturday morning at 9:00 AM. The address is 10240 National Pike, Grantsville, MD 21536. It is located off Rt 40 as it crosses the Casselman River at the historic stone bridge.

If you have any questions, please contact me for more information.

dron224@outlook.com

(240) 423-8375

Hope to see you there!

Fly Casting and Collaborating with Lefty: A Conversation with Ed Jaworowski - Ross Purnell, Fly Fisherman Magazine

In this episode of the “Loop to Loop” podcast, Ross Purnell talks to Ed about his five-part 2025 casting series in Fly Fisherman magazine titled *Functional Fly Casting*. Ed also discusses his career as a classics professor at Villanova University, how he approaches his research and his teaching philosophy, additionally, Ed talks about his long friendship and many collaborations with Lefty Kreh.

[Watch the video here.](#)



Essential Knots - Fly Fish Food

While a couple of knots will often suffice, there are distinct advantages to mastering more knots than just enough to get by. For example, simply learning to tie a stronger knot to your fly can land you more fish and save you some flies.

In this video, Lance Egan walks you through step-by-step on several knots and loops. Learn to tie a few this year and advance your fly fishing toolkit. I've

found several of these, like the Uni Knot, to be useful for various scenarios:

- Clinch Knot
- Uni Knot
- Triple Sugeons Knot
- Blood Knot
- Double Uni Knot
- Nail Knot
- Perfection Loop
- Surgeons Loop

[Watch and learn](#), then practice, practice, practice, before you hit the stream.

DISTRICT ANGLING



Shop and Fish Local - Bob O'Donnell

Once again I'll spotlight several great shops for members to get what they're looking for and also support the local small business community.

District Angling - District Angling offers a personalized team of instructors, craftsmen, and fly fishing experts. They're here to help you get on the water and be successful.

The staff are fly fishing junkies who love the sport, and try to fish as much as they can. They fish both locally and in exotic destinations. There is over 100+ years of combined fly fishing experience, knowledge, and expertise among the staff.

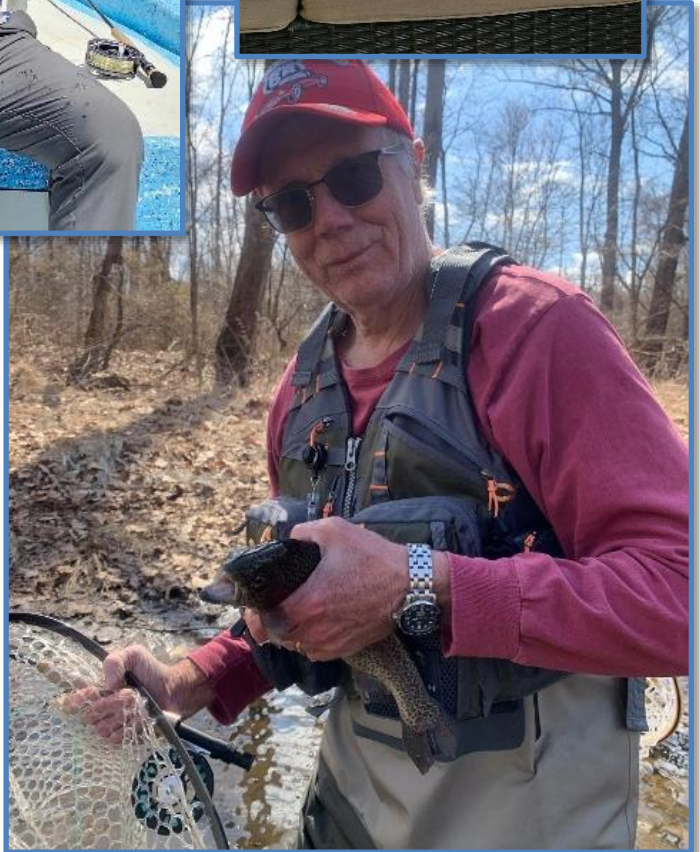
Take some time and go visit the shop. They love to help put the right tools in your hands so you can get out and catch fish.

<https://districtangling.com/>



Members Catch - Bob O'Donnell

Great shots from our folks! re either busy or staying indoors. Some nice weather rolled in, perhaps folks will get out fishing. Speaking of... check out the pictures of our volunteer members stocking trout!



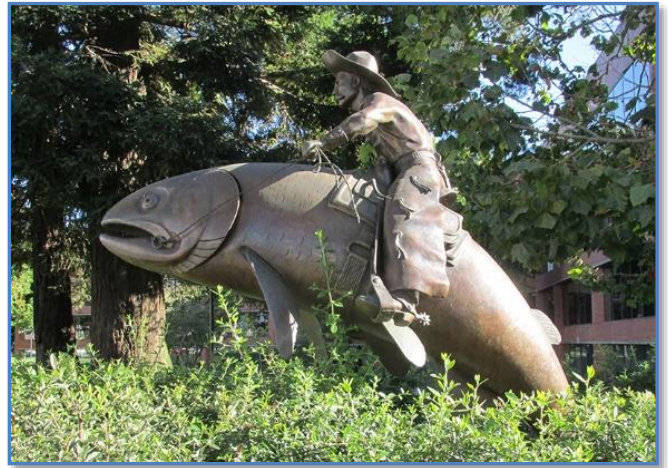
Contributions & Questions Welcome!

Send your contributions, article suggestions or fly fishing questions to the Editor in an email or as an MS Word.doc attachment. The deadline for submissions is typically the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication.

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Cased Caddis

Caddis flies are a very important part of the biomass of many of our trout streams. Cased Caddis are often overlooked by anglers, but they definitely are not overlooked by the fish.

Cheech from Fly Fish Food demonstrates how to tie them quick and simple due to the fact that you will likely be dragging these along the snaggy bottom.

[Cased Caddis Video](#)



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