



The **Conservationist**
Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

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***Brook Trout Fishing in
Shenandoah National Park - April 20th***

Native brook trout fishing is about as pure as you can find in the sport. Our speaker, Paul Kearney, has been infatuated with brook trout fishing almost forever. In fact he says that his first and last love is fishing for brook trout in eastern streams, particularly in the Shenandoah National Park. Paul is a lifelong Virginian and has over 40 years experience in trout fly fishing. He has been a professional guide and casting instructor, a fly shop owner, and has worked for several tackle manufacturers. He currently serves as the director of the TU Tri-State Conservation and Fishing Camp and is a member of the Rapidan Chapter of TU.

Paul's presentation will cover information you need to know about fishing in Shenandoah National Park, as well as some tips and tricks. Paul believes that we are very lucky to live within a few hours of the "last best place" for native brook trout in the Mid-Atlantic region, and this presentation will help prepare you for enjoying all the Shenandoah National Park has to offer. As time permits, Paul will share some of the experience that he has grown to cherish with the young people who attend the Tri-State Conservation and Fishing Camp and why it is special to the young people who attend as well as the older fishers who mentor their charges. Come and savor a special part of what the Shenandoah National Park has to offer as seen through Paul Kearney's eyes.

Monthly Chapter Meetings

Time and Day: 7:00 PM, Third Wednesday except June, July, August and December
Place: Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland

DIRECTIONS TO THE SENIOR CENTER

From Capitol Beltway: North on Georgia Avenue (Rte. 97). First Right on Forest Glen Road, then go past Holy Cross Hospital and across Sligo Creek Parkway. The Center is on the right.

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

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President's Column - Larry Vawter

Can you hear it? The birds are chirping. The trees are budding, and I think spring has finally sprung. I am putting away my snow shovels for the season and getting ready for a new year of outdoor activities. First, however, before I head out to the streams or any of my favorite fishing holes, I have a "Honey do list" to complete.

When that list is done, (in case my wife reads this) I am looking forward to a whole cornucopia of upcoming PPTU activities each of us should enjoy. PPTU is sponsoring the first Trout in the Classroom Fishing day. This will be held on Sunday, April 10th at the lake on the property of The Isaac Walton League in Rockville. Kids may fish either of two sessions -- one session from 9 to 12 or one session from 12 to 4. Hot dogs and drinks will be available for the anglers. We are looking for mentors and others to help out that day. If you are interested, feel free to contact me or Jim Greene

The Shad are coming soon, so you need to look for our list server reports to learn when the run begins. Our local streams have been stocked with trout or are in the process, so you may want to check the DNR web site to verify if your favorite stream is ready for a visit.

The PPTU Outings Chair has many trips planned: April 10 thru the 13th, fishing for steelhead on the Salmon River in NY, April 30 thru May 1st, is fishing on the Casselman, then June 11 thru the 12th, Ken Lockwood Gorge in New Jersey. If you want to join the group, give Dennis Covert a shout.

Project Healing Waters is having its 5th annual Two Fly Contest for our Wounded Warriors. It is being held at the Rose River Farm in Madison, Virginia on Sunday May 1st.

You can see there are many rewarding activities in which you may participate. Don't be afraid to pitch in. The rewards are too many to mention. Now I have to finish the "Honey do list" so I can go fishin'. When you finish your list, join us in the fun. 🌻

PPTU Mentor Program Beginner's & Beyond

Ken Bowyer 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. at nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs. Members who have not made an Annual Supporting Contribution will be asked to contribute \$20. Contact Ken 301-627-7154 or E-mail: kenbowyer@verizon.net 🍄

Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard



Please mark your calendars for the second Saturday in April as a stream cleanup. The Upper Patuxent Watershed Clean-Up will be on Saturday, April 9th (rain date: Sunday, April 10th) from 8:30 AM to Noon. Meet at the Wildlife Achievement Chapter, 26430 Mullinix Mill Rd., Damascus. Gloves, water, and lunch at noon for all participants will be provided. PPTU members bring hip boots or chest waders (felt free!) and a heavy rake to pull human detritus from the stream. Anyone with kids can join other groups cleaning road sides and parking areas. A great family activity.

The last stocking was made on March 28 with a total of 1500 rainbows going into the upper Patuxent Special Area (above rt. 97), the flies-only segment below Brighton Dam, and the Middle Patuxent in south Columbia. The fish stocked a month previously should be very well acclimated and more than ready to provide a little sport to the fisher who pursues them. 🍄

Address changes? Moved?

Please keep us up to date on your addresses.

We have saved a lot of money in recent years by using email to alert members that their Annual Supporting Contribution is expiring or some other important information. We frequently have the Post Office returning undeliverable copies of the Conservationist from members who have moved without letting us know. Just drop us a post card or send an email to Jay Sheppard (jmsheppar@aol.com) with any changes to your email or snail mail addresses.

Tackle and Tactics (rev. from November 2002 Conservationist) - Jay Sheppard

Some ten years ago we had an exchange of ideas on strike indicators—types, colors, use, etc.—on the chapter's Listserve (to subscribe, send email to ppctu-subscribe@yahoo.com). I will try to synthesize the suggestions and questions several members had about this tackle tool. I have seen estimates that about 80% of a typical trout's diet comes from below the water surface. By and large, nymphs are going to produce trout when little or no surface activity is happening. First, I would offer that before these indicators came into widespread use most fly anglers fishing with a dead drifted nymph had marginal success in detecting subtle takes by trout. I am firmly convinced that strike indicators have greatly improved the catch rate for the average fly fisher.

Strike indicators can be special devices (yarn, small plastic "bobbers," dry flies, etc.) or just the leader and tip of the fly line. The problem is knowing when a fish is toying with the fly. Dry flies are very simple to use, as any strike is easily seen. We can rarely directly observe dead-drifted nymphs. Infrequently the trout turns and flashes



where we may see that movement and suspect it is taking the offering. Otherwise, we have no real way to detect the take of a nymph. Experienced trout are not about to take the fly and move any distance with it for more than a second. They can spit out a fraudulent food item very quickly.

When using a dead-drifted nymph, there must be a light but constant tension between the indicator and the weight or fly. If not, the fish may not instantly telegraph any disturbance to the fly. The fly or weight above the fly must be upstream of or directly below the indicator to maintain that subtle tension. If the fly precedes the leader or indicator down the stream, then the fish may take the fly and cause slack to occur between it and the surface indicator: that results in no detected strike.

The simplest strike detector is the leader and fly line. As it rests on the surface, a strike may be detected when the terminal point on the surface suddenly changes direction or disappears below the surface, often with a little series of “V”-shaped ripples coming off the tip of the remaining line. This may work well under some circumstances, such as very flat water flowing at a constant rate. The usual slack in a leader after it is cast may negate any activity at the fly being detected until that slack is removed. The various strike indicators are intended to more quickly detect the take of the dead-drifted nymph, as there is usually less distance between them and the fly. For the average nymph fisher, use of an indicator greatly increases their catch rate. It takes a lot of experience and a good eye to detect a strike on a leader and fly line without such a device.

I personally like the little plastic ball indicators that have a hole through them to wedge a toothpick tip on the end toward the fly. These are easily adjustable up or down the leader. For colors, I do like the various

brightly colored ones, but they seem to attract the attention of stocked trout, in particular. So I have gone to almost exclusively bright white, which is sometimes hard to spot until suddenly a white "bubble of foam" starts heading down or upstream! I get about one or two hits per year on the white vs. several a day on stocked streams with the various reds and greens. I use the large yarn indicators on really large rivers when fishing heavy nymphs in deep, fast water. In the past several years a small plastic bubble with a tab on one side have become popular; the leader can be doubled over, slipped through the grommet of the tab and then looped over and around the bubble to lock its position. Another popular technique is the use of a tandem rig where the indicator is actually a large dry fly to which a small nymph or tiny dry is attached—giving two choices to the trout.

Next issue I will try to cover some other aspects of strike indicators and their use with a dead-drifted fly. 🌸

QUOTE

“The great charm of fly-fishing is that we are always learning; no matter how long we have been at it, we are constantly making some fresh discovery, picking up some new wrinkle. If we become conceited through great success, some day the trout will take us down a peg.”



-Theodore Gordon 1907





Help To Stop Poachers

Reminder - If you spot poaching please place a call to

Catch a Poacher Hotline at 1-800-635-6124

A cash reward is available for information leading to an arrest and conviction of a violator.

REPORT POACHERS!!

Poachers love spring, too! Streams have been stocked. Lots of opportunities to catch a few trout illegally for anyone so inclined. There is simply too small a number of Natural Resource Police (NRP) available to cover the whole state of Maryland. All sportsmen & sportswomen must keep our collective eyes open to note any illegal activity, especially on our trout streams and ponds. With most fishers now using cell phones, it is even far easier to immediately report suspicious activity. Please carry your cell phone on the stream. You can turn it off if you wish, but be sure to drop it inside a zip lock bag! I have the NRP phone number (1-800-635-6124) stored in my cell, so I can call them immediately to report problems. That NRP calls center is manned 24/7/365. Last summer I found some bait fishers on the lower Savage River and had a NRP officer on the scene within 30–45 minutes. I constantly get reports long after the fact of fishers seeing poachers working a stream.

Here are just a few of the more frequently observed poaching activities I hear about every year:

Use of a cast net or seine in trout waters; taking trout from no-kill waters;

keeping more trout than allowed; using bait on special regulation waters; fishing a put-and-take trout stream during the closed periods; and fishing for trout between the hours of 10:00 PM and 5:30 AM. This problem can only be kept to a minimum with constant surveillance and immediate reporting by the law-abiding public to the proper authorities. 🌸 - Jay Sheppard



Early Meeting Segments - begin at 7 pm

Tying Bench

This month finds Charlie Dissinger, a 9th grade student from Carroll County and a member of PPCTU at the Tying Bench tying the Patriot, a favorite brook trout fly of our speaker, Paul Kearney. Paul says it is a go to fly in his box. Charlie attended the Tri-State Conservation and Fishing Camp last summer and widely expanded his passion for fishing that includes fly fishing. Stop by the bench and enjoy a tying session with Charlie and learn to tie a very special fly that was developed by Charlie Meck who says that it out fishes most all of the dry flies in his box on many occasions. 🌸

Angler's Corner

This is a very special and active month for fishers. The outing to the Salmon River in New York April 10 -13 will be

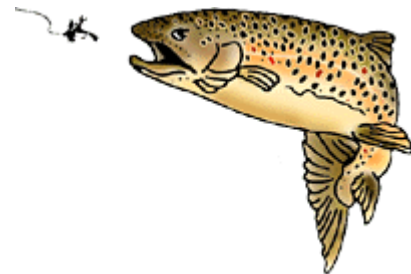
only fond memories by the time the “Corner” meets at our April 20th meeting. In addition, Dennis Covert, our outings chair, will be tantalizing our fishers to attend the planned outing to the Casselman River April 30 - May 1st. All are hoping that the Mother’s day hatch will come early and every fish in the river will rise to the call of naturals and your imitations. Folks say this is one of the best times you can experience the Casselman, if the trout gods are aligned. Stop and talk to Dennis about the fun expectations that this outing may provide. Don’t hesitate to suggest a potential outing destination to Dennis at denniscovert@hotmail.com. See <http://www.pptu.org/outings/outings.shtml> for more outing listings. 🌸

Contributions should be sent to the Editor as plain text in an email or as a Microsoft Word attachment. The deadline for submissions is the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication. 🌸

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