



# The Conservationist

## Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

April 2012

Published monthly except  
June, July, August and December



## *European Nymphing – A Tactical Approach - April 18*

We all have used various nymphing techniques when fishing for trout. There are many approaches that we use from high sticking, down and across, and many others. Most of us have heard about Czech nymphing and have heard reports that it is the very effective technique that many trout fishing tournament contestants employ in this country and abroad. It turns out that there are several variations that collectively some call European Nymphing. Our program speaker, Aaron Jasper, has become not only a devotee of these techniques, but also a major advocate of them through his development work, and videos with Trout Predator Online [www.troutpredator.com](http://www.troutpredator.com). See his fly tying and fishing on YouTube as well.

A major influence in Aaron Jasper's life was his grandfather who taught and mentored the young fly fisherman. Aaron fondly remembers his grandfather as a true Trout Predator on the stream. He taught Aaron that no matter what he did, to do it on an all or nothing basis, and to be the best at what he does. In 2007 Aaron and a good friend Justin Massimo founded Trout Predator Online. With fishing 200-250 days a year, Aaron has extraordinary experience in developing his techniques and expertise and it shows in his videos and communications.

Aaron has become a true student of many European nymphing techniques and other methods of trout fishing. Along with traditional style wet fly fishing, Aaron has become a great source of Euro-Nymphing knowledge. He uses the Euro-Nymphing techniques from short leader Czech methods to longer leader Spanish and French techniques. Aaron and Justin have developed many short videos and recently two DVDs. One deals with the styles, flies, and techniques and the second one showing you how to apply the techniques in ten unique scenarios. This is truly a program that will change the way you think about nymphing. **You must come and see this presentation.** Aaron is coming from New Jersey to share this program and his videos with us. - Nick Weber

### 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](http://www.pptu.org)**

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## President's Column - Dennis Covert

For the Maryland sportsman or sportswoman April can be a crowded and complicated month but in the best of ways. The first of the mayflies and caddis will appear, our streams will have been stocked, and fish will be rising. Warm spring days will summon the forsythia and dog wood that brightens our road sides, and as the month matures and the water warms another rite of spring will occur. Shad will return to spawn in the Bay's tributaries giving anglers another option of fast action on colorful flies. Mid month the spring turkey season begins presenting a great opportunity for a blast and cast trip.

This bounty of outdoor opportunity, wonderful as it is, can complicate our lives when trying to decide whether to fly fish for trout, hunt mushrooms, or go for shad? Some of these activities can be conducted simultaneously. I always carry a bread sack or plastic bag of some kind when tramping along the streams or through the woods in April. I walk a little slower and make small detours to glance around any dying trees. On a TU chapter outing to the Savage River in April 2006 I found about pound of morel mushrooms as I walked the path leading to the river. They were the large yellow phase that pops up at the end of the season, fragile and moist with a delicate aroma. A couple of the larger ones were about half the size of my fist and nothing says spring to me more than the combination of morel mushrooms fried in butter with fresh caught crappie on the side. Getting them back to camp I pinched the mud off the stems before securing them in my cooler while Ken Bowyer and Tim Bowers watched with suspicion, asking; "how can you be sure those things aren't poisonous?" I paused to consider that, saying, "Hmm...well...you could be right..., tell you what, just to be on the safe side if you guys find any give them to me and I'll let ya know." I always take care of my friends.

The March 2012 board meeting yielded two significant changes; a motion was passed to discontinue the printed & mailed version of the *Conservationist*, and a new PayPal option will be made available on the PPTU website to make it

more convenient for members in making their Annual Supporting Contribution.

The Conservationist issue is not a new one. For the past few months we have posted articles in the Conservationist and on the List serve of the possibility of discontinuing the hard copy to save printing and mailing costs. These costs are approaching \$3,000 annually. At the March board meeting the board decided through majority vote to discontinue the printed mailed hard copy version of the Conservationist in favor of electronic distribution only. As it stands, starting September 2012, only the electronic version will be offered and available to any member or supporter who has paid his/her ASC. The last hard copy mailed will be the May 2012 issue.

PayPal is new, and will be implemented on a trial run for a period of two years. After which the board will revisit the issue and determine whether to keep or discontinue it. No firm date has been set for its arrival on the Chapters homepage, however I think it's anticipated it will be available on or before September 1st 2012. 🌸



## **PPTU Mentor Program Beginner's & Beyond**

**K**en 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**

**T**he final stockings of the Patuxent and Middle Patuxent Rivers are scheduled for the first week of April, or about the time we drop this issue of the Conservationist in the mail. The Patuxent below Brighton Dam will be stocked with a few hundred rainbows and a similar number in the Delayed Harvest Section of the Middle Patuxent. This spring we helped float stock 2700 rainbows and 2500 browns into the upper Patuxent Special Area (lures & flies only), below Brighton Dam (flies only) and the Middle Patuxent in south Columbia. That is approximately 8 miles of streams or about 600 trout per mile. We stocked the river below Brighton Dam with approximately 2200 trout, so that mile or two of river has a lot of trout.

We will be altering the source (i.e., depth) of the water from which the releases are to be made this summer from Brighton Dam. WSSC will not open the dam's lowest gates until we see river temperatures reaching about 68°–70° F in the afternoons at Haviland Mill. That should keep the river a little cooler as we move into the months of July and August. We do see some holdover in this section, but they have not been in the numbers we would really like to see. As has been mentioned previously, PPTU is investigating how to fund a modification to the valves in the bottom of the dam that could be used to supply almost unlimited quantities of really cold water during the summer. The current estimate of the total cost to design and do the modification is \$80,000. Obtaining the funds is the first priority, but then we must design the modification, obtain permits, and then do the actual retrofit of the dam. Obviously, this is not going to be this summer, let alone by summer 2013.

All three sections of these two streams discussed in this column are worthy of some fishing time. The Patuxent upstream of rt. 94 (Annapolis Rock) to well above Long Corner Road is home to a good number of wild brown trout. These are as tough to catch as any trout—they are very wary of anything prowling the river and will flee to cover with any sloppy casts or shadows that fall in the stream bed. We stock only below this section, but wild browns can be found all the way to rt. 97 (Georgia Ave.). Check

out some of the reaches that are far from the roads and bridges and look for deep holes with lots of cover under log jams or root balls.

The section of the Patuxent below Brighton Dam has two types of water: long, very deep pools and faster water with riffles and runs. When walking upstream from Haviland Mill, stay on the Howard County (right side). Remember there is a new foot bridge over the gully about 500-700 yards upstream, but you have to turn inland about 50 yards to find it. The long, deep pools are tough to fish as they are heavily lined with trees and too deep to wade except at the lowest flows. The water nearer the Haviland Mill Bridge is a little friendlier to wading fishers, so it receives a lot more attention.

In the Middle Patuxent, trout will spread to above rt. 29 and below Murray Hill, the legal limits for this Delayed Harvest section. Most will be in the deeper pools and runs later this spring. After June 1, bait fishers can remove 2/day and the river warms considerably, so the stream becomes largely devoid of trout about that time.



## Tackle and Tactics - Jay Sheppard

As a whole, April and May are our two best months for trout fishing. The first half of June is close behind, as are the fall months of September and October. If you have not gotten all your gear ready by now, you will be missing some good fishing on our local waters. All our preparation, reading, tying flies, practicing and cleaning our gear will now be pressed into service.

One problem that plagues us all is a curled leader. Even if the leader was used the day before, when it is wound back onto the reel, it will become curled. Shops and catalogues offer leader straighteners. These are usually a flap of rubber covered by leather. These work very well. Actually, too well! They can generate so much heat in a short pull of mono through them that the

mono can be altered forever. A far simpler means of straightening your leader is something we have had since birth: our thumb and forefinger. Find the place in the leader where the curl starts, grab the leader just below that point with the other hand and pull over your thumb. As one builds a little heat in the thumb, one is also pulling heavier and heavier mono over the thumb until the butt is reached. Hold the leader very tightly with both hands at that instant for a number of seconds to let it cool in a straighten position. Rarely does one have to repeat this on a given day.

Straightening the fly line is also a frequent issue. The curls do not pass through the guides very smoothly. As one strips line off the reel, one can give it a small but hard tug, and the curls should vanish. Both of these activities make for better presentations and easier casting for the rest of the day.

Everyone uses fly floatant to keep their dry flies riding high. I avoid the sprays, as much of the spray actually goes into the air and not into the fly. I much prefer the oozy greasy stuff that is squeezed out of a small, soft plastic bottle. One works the floatant into the fly as it melts on your finger tips. After thoroughly pressing the fly and trying to get as much of the now liquefied floatant into the body of the fly, one must allow it to cool before letting it tumble onto the water. In cool weather, one can do a few false casts to simply air cool it. In warmer weather I grab the tippet and drop the fly several times into a slow section of the water going past me. The cooler water will help solidify the floatant, so that water will not invade the microscopic spaces within the materials. If this cooling period is not employed, then much of the floatant will become a large oil slick when the fly splashes down on the water on the first cast. I think many of our more experienced trout recognize that oil slick and will avoid anything floating within it.

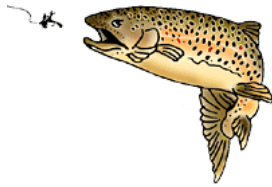
Those bottles of floatant are best stored upside down so the material is ready for immediate dispensing. I take a small screw eye and thread it into the bottom of the bottle. To that I attach a short section of old fly line which can be hooked inside my vest. I never throw away old fly line...it has all sorts of uses, and this is just one of them.

Enough reading –go fishing!! Leave a couple of uneducated trout for me! 🍷

## Early Meeting Segments Begin at 7 PM - Nick Weber

### Tying Bench

This month finds Pati Nicholson tying the Rubber Leg Stone Fly Nymph. When Aaron Jasper our Euro-Nymphing speaker was asked about a killer pattern that will work well here on our streams like the Savage and others and he said the rubber leg stone fly nymph is a staple in his box. This and other patterns have a lot of lead and heavy heads to get them well down in the water column which is a must for all of your Euro-Nymphs. Come and see Pati tie this important heavy addition to your Euro-Nymphing pattern box. 🍷



### Angler's Corner

This is a very special and active month for fishers. The steelhead outing to the Erie tributaries in late March will be active fond memories by the time the "Corner" meets at our April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. In addition, Dennis Covert, our outings chair, will be tantalizing our fishers to attend the planned outing to be Gypsy Fishers on Pennsylvania trout waters April 25-28 as well as a Sulfur Excursion to the Gunpowder on May 12. Stop and talk to Dennis about the fishing expectations that these outings may provide. Don't hesitate to suggest a potential outing destination: Dennis at [denniscovert@hotmail.com](mailto:denniscovert@hotmail.com). See <http://www.pptu.org/outings/outings.shtml> for outing listings. 🍷



### Help To Stop Poachers

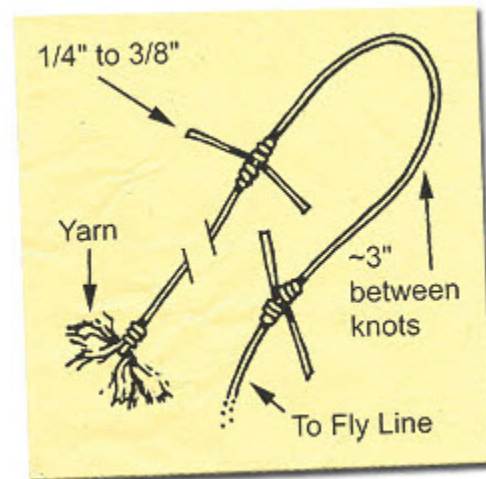
Reminder - If you spot poaching please place a call to

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



### Grass Leader - Carl Smolka

At the recent 2012 NCCTU fly show at Georgetown Prep, Philip Krista from Ellicott City gave a Spey casting demonstration outside on the grass using a "Grass leader" to simulate the resistance that water imparts to a fly line on its surface. If you have ever tried to practice a roll cast on grass, you understand the issue. When I got home, it was off to Google to find a recipe for a grass leader. Success with Al Buhr's Summer 1998 "A Grass Leader for Rolls and Speys" article in *The Loop*. Having no 30 pound Trilene XT Solar handy, the spool of 20 # Amnesia from my Steelhead gear seemed appropriate. Thirty five blood knots later, I now have a twelve foot leader ready for some roll and spey action and can tie a pretty decent blood knot. Tight lines. 🍷



## NOTICE TO ALL HARD COPY RECIPIENTS

The Conservationist is going to an electronic mailing starting in September. All active members will be sent detailed information about this switch later this summer via email. We note that our files do not indicate everyone has an email address and for those addresses that we do have on file, some may be wrong.

For those receiving this issue via hard copy (mailing label top line reads "PP-0912..."), we have provided what we have on file for your email address. There is a second label placed above the masthead on this hard copy's first page. If this second, inside label has the correct email address for you, you do not have to do anything further at this time. If it is incorrect or there is no email address printed under your name, then please send us an email from the address you wish to receive the electronic Conservationist starting in September. For a few members, we may have two or more email addresses indicated. Again, send us an email from one of them. Send this email with "Conservationist" in the Subject line to *membership@pptu.org* and include your full name in the text.



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