

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

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Fly Fishing Adventures From Yellowstone *Nov 18th 2015*

If you love adventure and great scenery you'll need to make time for our next meeting. It promises a round-up of timeless action-packed adventures crackling with mystery, intrigue, and excitement. A long planned horse pack trip into the East Yellowstone backcountry proved to be the adventure of a life time for a group of us and we all lived (barely) to tell the tale. Plus, covering West Yellowstone, Gene Cyprych will share his experience fishing some of the major streams while focusing on the Madison River.

Come enjoy an evening filled with beautiful scenery and some tall tales told by the adventurous group of fellow PPTU members. Sit back and enjoy a visual evening featuring our great country from Maryland to both East and West Yellowstone. Get a taste of these destination trips and wet your appetite for the next adventure in 2017.

Where else on a Wednesday night could you vicariously fly fish the Madison, discover mouse eating trout, see Cujo the rabid dog, Bill the Bison, whispering Elk, bubbling cauldrons, and scenic grasslands that turn into Martian-like terrain. The sheer beauty of being miles deep into Yellowstone's Lamar Valley is just awe inspiring. Come enjoy the show and meet our new friends Poncho, Tonto, Blade, Pete, Badger, Bear, Cagney, and Lacey; and of course, Kipp our guide and his excellent posse. And have I mentioned the flying cows??? Ahhh.... Got you with that one, didn't I?

Just come and see!

— Alan Burrows



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, MD 20901
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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Presidents' Column - Bob O'Donnell

The cool morning air drifted softly through a window left ajar from the night before. I tucked my head tighter in the blanket before blindly reaching out to close the sash, putting a stop to the chilling intruder. Bundling up and half asleep, the kiss of cold air must have triggered some memories. My mind and body slowly floated off to the North lake country to pursue steelhead dreams.

No one dreams of being cold and miserable. Well, almost no one. The cold water, wind, and the numbing feeling one gets while casting repeatedly to a quarry that may or may not cooperate is but a meager inconvenience or test of mettle for the steelhead chaser. It's often written that steelheading is an "addiction" much like getting hooked on drugs. I heard the bragging, read the stories, researched what I could but none of it compared to the reality of standing in ice cold water for the first time and then hooking into a big fish. Wow... Give me more!

It was classic. Within a half hour of my first steelhead trip the weather had changed 4 times. It rained, it sleeted, sleet turned to snow, and then the snow gave way to sunshine. I stood there in awe, shaking my head and watching the other anglers. Occasionally you would get a smile and an approving nod from another angler. Crazy recognizes crazy.

I could see fish swimming by and I offered up almost the entire contents of my fly box. I had so many flies stuck to the outside of my vest and was so stiff with cold that I could have taken the place of the mannequin in the display window of the local fly shop. With the first big tug on my line, the cold faded away and was quickly replaced with the warmth of exhilaration as a big steel bruiser took me to school. Right then I was hooked, literally and figuratively.

I've repeated this steelhead adventure multiple times now; some days successful and many others not. I keep punishing my body for a few minutes of unriveted satisfaction. Even watching your angling buddies get into fish spreads a bit of warmth through the cold. The scenery itself is simply breathtaking

and sometimes magical to take in. Who doesn't love fishing in the middle of wine country?

They say, "tug is the drug". It only took one outing for me to get it. The tug in my cool early morning dreams however faded from a nice fat steelhead to a hungry fat cat pestering to be fed. He tugged at the blanket and meowed in my face so I roughed up his fur, promptly picked him and up, stretchd him out and struck my best fish magazine glory pose. It was all good fun until out of the corner of my eye I caught my wife staring at us. She just stood there smiling and shaking her head saying, "time for work fisher boy". I kneeled there for second longer, nothing to say, sheepishly smiling myself, and then slowly released the cat for another day.

Until next month, tight lines!

Bob O'Donnell
President, PPTU

PPTU Mentor Program Beginners & Beyond

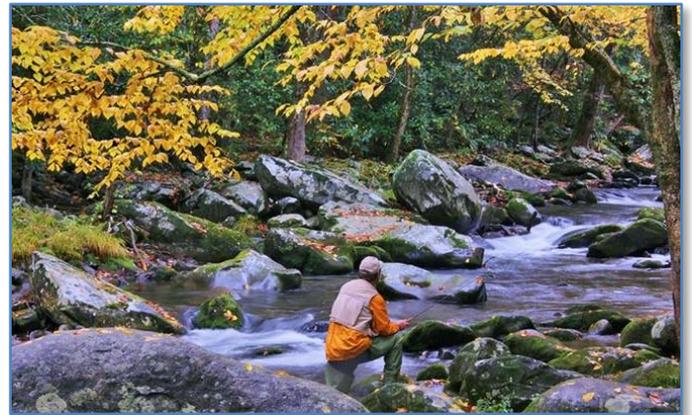
Ken Bowyer provides one-on-one streamside fly fishing instruction to PPTU members. Participants must show commitment by having waders or hip boots, a rod and reel outfit, and leader. Discussions will include equipment, knots, casting, flies, dry fly and nymphing techniques, entomology, reading water, 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 at 301-627-7154 or by E-mail:
kenbowyer@verizon.net 

Tackle and Tactic Tips - Jay Sheppard

I live in trees and shrubs when I am fishing our local waters. Not literally, but that is where my flies spend a lot of their time. I know, they should be on or in the water not lodged somewhere a trout is not going to be able to reach! Our local waters are surrounded by large trees and thick brush on the sides. I can get too focused on the target I want to cast to that I forget to look up or check behind me! I have had to cope by learning a few tricks on getting my flies back. As you all have heard before, a fly on the stream is worth many times what one at the tying bench or at a shop is worth. Obviously, if a large fish is working the spot and you have many copies of that pattern, feel free to leave it where it landed and tie another onto a fresh tippet.



First, one has to develop a sixth sense when the fly is being captured by some object above the water. So stopping the cast stroke, instantly releasing the fly line and any hard pressure the moment it is getting caught is the most important trick to increasing the likelihood of getting it back. Tugging hard only makes most situations worse. Once everything has settled down from the original cast that started the problem, several very light and small tugs or twitches are often all that are later needed to free a weighted nymph or woolly buggler from the tree. Some dry flies may only be captured by a leaf and can usually be ripped out of the foliage—but close inspection is usually needed to verify how the fly is hung up before any strong pulls or tugs are given.

I have two basic tricks that I use most often. One is to wade over towards the fly, keeping the line relatively taught—so as to keep any slack from bouncing around and catching onto more snags. The

rod tip ends up right at the fly. PUSHING the rod tip, never pulling, usually results in the fly being snugly ensconced into the tip. The second trick is to pull out a lot of line and then loop the fly line (not the leader) over and above the branch where the fly is resting. This can take a little finesse in placing the fly line over the branch. The object is to use the strength of the doubled fly line to pull the branch down within reach where you can grab it and then remove the fly and leader. Never use the line in the rod to pull the branch. Keep the rod out of the whole situation once you have lead the line up and over the branch. Keep it safely away from all the pulling, moving branches, and fly removal—it is one thing to lose a fly, a totally different thing to have a busted rod!



Recently some conversation on the PPCTU list serve had anglers discussing how to fish woolly buggers. First suggestion: vary the presentation all the time until you find what yields fish at least attacking it. Always wear Polarized glasses to see any fish chasing the fly. There are at least three variables one uses in presenting a woolly buggler or similar attractor: depth, distance moved, and speed of movement with the strips. As a general rule, the faster the water, the slower the action needed on the fly. In deep slow pools one can strip it back about as fast as possible and still not be fast enough. In fast or turbulent water you may only need to show the fish that it is ‘alive’ and not much else. In the latter case, a tiny twitch every 2 seconds or so that makes the fly jump just an inch or three is all that may be needed. I use the rod tip to tease the fly and make it act erratic like an injured prey. In most situations I want the fly heavily weighted, as it will otherwise rise towards the surface more than move horizontally on each strip or twitch of the rod tip. If the bottom and slow currents permit, try twitching and crawling the fly along the actual bottom. Most streams do not allow for letting any fly rest on the bottom, but some spots in deep pools might. As for colors? “Anything,

as long as it is black” has been the mantra for many fishers. Although I do use black almost half the time, I use olive, motor oil, brown, and even white, purple, or chartreuse many many times over the season. I even use a couple of contrasting woolly buggers: chartreuse and black. One color as the body and hackle and the other as the tail.

Good buggering.....if that is a valid word!?

Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

The Middle Patuxent Delayed Harvest, Savage Mill (Little Patuxent) and Daniels Dam area on the Patapsco were to have been lightly stocked in October with some rainbows. Main stockings will not be until late February, I suspect. If you are trying the main Patuxent above rt. 97 this month, just try the deep pools. The fish will have finished spawning and will look to spend the winter in a deep pool that has a lot of bait fish also spending the winter. I have found some really large trout in early November on that stream in the larger ‘sucker holes.’ If you can see pods of fish moving slowly around the bottom of the hole, likely as not there is a big brown also watching over his ‘protein bar’ for his winter snacks. If the pool is large and too deep to see, it is even more likely that fish are trying to spend the winter there!



All fish will have moved out of the runs and faster water when the water temperatures get below approximately 45°. The state park is a public hunting zone, so either fish with a bright cap or only on

Sundays. Also, no need to get out there at dawn! Fish late mornings until late afternoons with the warmest water of the day. Any hatches at this time of the year are during those hours: blue-winged olives, winter stones, and midges.

From the Web - Trout Wrangler

I think we ran across this video a long time ago, but its worth resurrecting. If you haven't seen it, take a gander at some fly fishing history recorded on film. Enjoy watching Lee Wulff and Curt Gowdy flying into the Labrador bush in search of huge, wild brook trout.

<http://www.orvis.com/news/fly-fishing/video-lee-wulff-and-curt-gowdy-catching-huge-labrador-brook-trout/>

Take a few minutes, sit back and enjoy this amazing piece of television history. 🐟



If you spot poaching please place a call to the

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

Add this number to your cell phone contact list!

Kenya Adventure - Josh Loh

This is by far the best story I've heard in a long time so I had to include it. Thanks Josh! – Bob O.

"How about a vacation to Kenya?" my wife said. "I've always wanted to see the Serengeti."

"Yeah, well," I hedged, brief visions of Alaskan streams dancing behind my eyes. "Do they have any trout there?"

"Absolutely they do," she said, pushing the guidebook across the table. "Right here--trout fishing near Mount Kenya."

I didn't have a lot to follow that up with.

As it turned out, bored British colonial administrators had in fact stocked several lakes and streams around Kenya with trout, and we could even find guides willing to take us there.

The first sign that fishing might have once more led me into making some questionable decisions came when the recommended guide called to cancel the morning of our trip--but with a suggested substitution. We met our new buddy, Franklin, in Nanyuki, a small city three hours north of Nairobi. Due to another miscommunication, we each thought the other was going to provide transportation, but another few thousand shillings found a driver, who promptly borrowed a car from a neighbor.

Online maps may tell you that the distance from Nanyuki to Mount Kenya is about an hour. This does not take into account traffic, which is severe, the Kenyan proclivity for using speed bumps rather than signs along the highways to control the rate of travel, and the occasional police checkpoint for Somalian terrorists.

It was about a four and a half hour drive. It might have been shorter but for the fact that neither our guide nor the driver actually knew the way to the national park. I may not speak Swahili but I suspect the cadences of "Hi, we're lost. Can you tell us how to get to Mount Kenya National Park?" "Where?" "Mount Kenya National Park." "Oh yeah--go back up the road, then turn left, then--did you see the gas station on the hill as you came down?" turn out to be surprisingly similar in any language.



Eventually I suspect they just gave up, which is how I account for the third guy we picked up along the side of the road. With Third Guy's assistance, we made it to the park entrance, paid the entry fee, and proceeded down into the park. We shot along the park trails until we reached an incline at which our intrepid driver's well-founded desire to protect his



borrowed automobile overcame his sense of his professional obligations. Nothing daunted, we ate lunch and continued to follow Third Guy down, and very shortly up, and up, and up, what was either a very rutted road or a surprisingly smooth boulderfall. It was a two kilometer hike if you believe the guide and a five kilometer hike if you believe Third Guy. At length Third Guy indicated a sudden turn off the trail. We followed him, and saw Lake Ellis for the first time.

The lake itself looked very much like a highland loch in Scotland, and I could well understand the immediate desire of a homesick Briton, many years ago, to plant some trout in the water. The guide and Third Guy began to unwrap their own fishing gear. It'd taken us about an hour and forty-five minutes to hike in. "Where's good?" I asked hopefully. "Oh, anywhere!" Franklin replied.

I was skeptical, but had to admit that Third Guy had already caught a monster of a rainbow trout on what looked like a speckled chicken feather wrapped around a 3/0 saltwater hook, using what looked like about a foot of tree branch as a reel. It was about 20 inches long with a pronounced kype, and so fat it looked like it had swallowed the type of dictionary your aunts and uncles pitch in to buy you as a holiday present. At this moment I had severely mixed feelings, some of them very uncharitable, competing in my heart. On the one hand, we wouldn't have found the lake without Third Guy, and Third Guy was clearly several times the fisherman that I was.

On the other hand, I had hardly finished stringing my rod, our time was limited as a descent in the dark would be dangerous, and a large storm cloud looked like it was moving in over the crest of Mount Kenya. I tied on a white woolly bugger, and lost it on the bottom. I tried a black woolly bugger, zinging it out as far as I could towards the center of the lake. On the third or fourth cast I felt a hard strike, set the hook, and had a great fight in a beautiful (if smaller) rainbow, who made several runs back towards the center of the lake.

Kenyans do not practice catch and release, and Franklin was clearly looking forward to a trout dinner as he took the fish off my hands. Sadly, that was to be the last fish on the day, as the storm clouds moved in, the temperature dropped at least ten degrees, and the bite shut off for rod and stick alike. We only got in about two hours of fishing before we had to retrace our steps back down the mountain for two (or five) kilometers to the car, and had an additional four hour drive back to Nanyuki, dropping off a triumphant Third Guy along the way.

All in all, it was an absolutely beautiful lake and a unique experience. There are other trout-populated lakes and rivers in the Kenyan highlands, and I hope someday to have the opportunity to return--hopefully for slightly longer than the first time!



Stream Restoration by TU - Bob Kaiser

Baltimore Sun article and video on the Little Tuscarora Creek restoration project.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/features/green/blog/bs-md-trout-stream-restoration-20151006-story.html>

Members Adventures - Bob O'Donnell

Once again our members have been very busy enjoying the outdoors. Great shots folks! Not being able to go fishing for two months - I lived vicariously through your photos and posts. Keep them coming and share the adventure.

Lawsuit Forces Potomac River Plant to Halt Pollution - courtesy of Jon Griffiths

<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/53eb81bee4b09b04f42e0b9e/t/5627eface4b03ba57bbb8579/1445457836183/151020+PRK+WSSC+Consent+Decree.pdf>





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

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Fly Tying Kits

There are a number of sources of fly tying kits that include instructions and all the materials necessary to tie several flies. Orvis, Glenn River, Mudhole, and Spirit River have many selections. Search the web for many more.

<https://spiritriver.com/materials/tying-essentials/tying-kits/individual-fly-tying-kits>



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