

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

Nov 2023 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

“Latest News About Beaver Creek” with MD DNR's Matt Lawrence

November 15th, 2023

Matt Lawrence, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources cold water fisheries manager, will join us on Nov. 15 to discuss last month's fish kill at Beaver Creek, DNR's work to help the stream-bred brown trout population recover from the event, and take our questions. Beaver Creek is one of the few nearby all-season trout streams and is a real treasure. Please join us to hear about DNR's efforts to help preserve this fishery.

About Matt: Matt Lawrence is a Natural Resources Biologist with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Fishing and Boating Services. He joined the department in 2009 as the manager of the commercial striped bass permitting program. In 2014, he moved inland to serve as the benthic macroinvertebrate specialist in the Freshwater Fisheries and Hatcheries Division. In this role, Matt conducted benthic macroinvertebrate surveys in rivers and streams throughout the state. The results of these surveys were used to determine water quality and habitat health in streams of recreational importance and to identify new opportunities for coldwater species introduction. In 2021, Matt transitioned into the state-wide Coldwater Fisheries Biologist Position. In this role, he coordinates the management of Maryland's coldwater fisheries resources, advocates for the protection of coldwater resources, and acts as a liaison for regional efforts to conserve and improve coldwater fisheries resources.



– *Karan Singh*

November 15th Hybrid Chapter Meeting

Mid County Community Center

2004 Queensguard Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20906

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

Virtual Chapter Meeting Link:

[Join Us Virtually!](#)

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

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Presidents' Column - Joe Taylor



It's that time of year when we all start the transition from fall to winter. Personally, I can't wait for this time of year. Fishing in November through January used to be prime time for me when I was more of a saltwater kinda guy. I would chase stripers as they migrated down the coast and wintered off the Virginia coast. But those days are behind me (at least for now). My new interest takes me in the opposite direction. Steelhead are on my mind now, so upstate Pennsylvania and New York is where I'll be heading soon. If you haven't ever chased steelhead, I would suggest giving it a try, it's a blast! Don't forget our chapter outing to Erie is just around the corner, it will be a ton of FUN!!!

For those chasing trout, this time of year brings the need to change things up a bit. I'm sure some of our more experienced members could add a long list of tips for successful winter fishing, but I'll just highlight a few to get you started.

One thing to consider is stepping down with the size of your flies (think midge hatch in a snow storm). There aren't many hatches in the winter but when it does happen, it's usually small bugs (BWO, midges, etc). The same holds true for nymphs and sub-surface fishing. I'm not much of a nymph fisherperson, but there is no doubt this is the time of year to give tight lining a try.

The second consideration is to take 'er slow. When it's cold out, everything seems to slow down, and the fish are no different. Sure, spring creeks and even tailwaters have more stable water temps but as a general rule, water temps fall, and the fish aren't as inclined to chase food down. So, slow down your presentation.

Of course, it's paramount to be safe on the water. Think about having a spare change of clothing, know the water you're going to be fishing and let love ones know where you are heading. Hopefully the winter season doesn't mean you are planning to hang up your rod until spring but just the opposite. If you are thinking about heading out, reach out to the members (listserv, Facebook, WebSite, etc) to see if anyone is available to join you. As I mentioned, there are many other things to consider when fishing in the winter but hopefully this at least points you in the right direction.

Just a friendly reminder that we are now holding our chapter meetings live and virtually. Consider stopping by the Mid County Community Center in Silver Spring. Until next month, enjoy some time on the water and be safe!

Joe Taylor
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



Those Pesky Barbless Hooks - Alan Burrows

I recently had an opportunity to fish the St Joe river in Idaho for west slope cut throat trout, fly fishing and barbless hooks required. Great river by the way. We got to the river a bit after 10 to cool weather and light rain, fast cold water meant getting down so the call was for nymphs with some bigger

tungsten beads. I put on a size 12 anchor and tied a small one on point off the bend of the hook. After catching two, one on each fly, I lost the point fly for no apparent reason. Although I re-rigged a second point fly, I lost that as well. I may be slow but not stupid! I realized my knot was slipping off the bend of the anchor fly. What to do?



I came up with two solutions. The first is simple and the second a bit more elegant. My first solution was to tie on the anchor fly with a long tag end (12" or more) and then use the tag for the point fly. While it worked, I'm not sure the anchor fly benefitted from being tied that way. The good news was that I was no longer losing the point fly.

The second solution is a bit more involved but also a bit more elegant and, as you will see later, a bit more flexible. I needed to attach new tippet so I cut off what was left and put on 3 or 4 feet of 5X with a loop-to-loop connection. I then attached a 12 inch piece of 5X tippet about 2 feet up from where I would attach the point fly with an [Orvis Tippet Knot](#). I then attached the anchor to this short piece of tippet and my point fly to the end of the long piece of tippet. I believe this provides better natural action to the anchor fly and that short piece of tippet is still long enough for at least one fly change.

A bit later in the day we began to see some rises and our local rep suggested a dry dropper rig. Since I had already lost point or dropper flies because there was no barb or bump to stop the knot from slipping off, I used a similar solution to solution 2 above. With a fresh 4 foot piece of tippet connected to my leader, I measured up 30 inches from the end of the tippet and tied in a short piece of tippet with a another Orvis Tippet knot with the longer end pointing toward my fly line. I tied in a dry fly on the short piece of tippet and a dropper on the long end. It was a very effective way to rig a dry/dropper while not relying on tying the dropper off the bend of the dry.

I hope these solutions help you catch more fish and keep more flies.

FREE Trout Unlimited Membership! - PPTU

If you have ever wanted to join Trout Unlimited, let PPTU cover your first year's membership! FREE! No cost except your time to send an email to membership.pptu@gmail.com. You will become an active TU member almost in the blink of an eye. The only requirement is that you have never been a member of TU. Join now!



The Right Tool (line) for the Job? - Cortland Line Team

I ran across this podcast and thought I would pass it along to the group. Ever wonder why you're not getting the best cast out of your rod or a new line you purchased just doesn't feel right? This podcast may open your eyes a bit and help answer those questions and additionally, make you think a bit more about your next line purchase.

Caveat – initially, it's a bit annoying to listen to the opening fantasy football banter, but you can quickly scrub past that using your video/audio player tools. Unless you want to listen in. I scrubbed past right to the beginning of the main discussion, which after it started rolling, kept my attention the entire drive home. Lots to think about in terms of line selection. – Bob O'Donnell

In this episode of "Hooked" the Podcast, the Cortland team breaks down the importance of fly line design and understanding tapers, grain weights, and how to match the perfect line with your rod for any style of fishing.

[Cortland Line Team Discusses Fly Line Design and New Products](#)

Threading Small Flies - Brian Cohen/Bob O'Donnell

There was a short discussion on threading small flies. As mention in the thread, a lot of us are getting to the point where vision and unsteady hands makes tying smaller flies to tippet difficult. Brian Cohen chimed in and offered this comment and option:

As a person with chronically bad vision, I finally have something I can contribute to this group :)



These [C&F Threaders](#) work well, and come in multiple sizes for very small flies.

Additionally, I learned a few tricks and have another option for folks to explore. Earlier in the year I learned to trim my tippet at an angle to create a sharper point that helps thread the eye on small flies.



Here's the complete steps to make this work for you:

First, cut the end of the tippet at an angle to create a narrower sharp point for easier insertion into the small hole.

Second, do not stab the tippet into the eye. Instead, lay the end of the tippet against the eye with the eye canted slightly towards the tippet. Slowly and gently pull the tippet with light pressure against the eye until the end of the tippet bumps into the hole. Push the tippet through!

Check out the [video](#) of this procedure.

Optionally, there's always another tool for the job, check out the [The Eye Tie Threading Tool](#). This tool has magnets embedded in it that assist holding the fly while guiding the tippet into the eye.



Note: if anyone else has a great tip or unique solution to a fly fishing problem, please feel free to email me and I'll drop it into the next Conservationist!

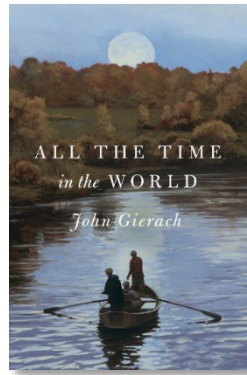
- Bob

TroutWrangler@Yahoo.com

"Fly-fishing is solitary, contemplative, misanthropic, scientific in some hands, poetic in others, and laced with conflicting aesthetic considerations. It's not even clear if catching fish is actually the point."

~ John Gierach

If you like or have never read any of John Gierach's stuff, check out his latest book, "All The Time in the World".



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!



Project Healing Waters Update - Mike Abramowitz

We recently finished a rod building class. The veterans all built 8 wt rods.

A number of volunteers participate with the TAPS Program. This is a compassionate care and comprehensive resources program for those grieving the death of military veteran or loved one.

On Thursday evenings there is fly tying at the [Armed Forces Retirement Home](#) (AFRH) in DC. During the Summer there was fly fishing at the AFRH ponds. In August, the Kent Island Yacht club hosted Veterans with PHW to an event fishing on the Chesapeake bay. "Stars and Stripes". Coming up in December there is an outing to [Harman's Cabins](#) in WVA.

Volunteers are always welcome!

Mailed a Copy? - PPTU Membership

If you receive this issue through the US Post Office, we need your help now! These mailings cost money to print and mail. We request your email address, so we can save that cost for our conservation and education expenses. To receive the Conservationist electronically, please send an email with your name to: membership.pptu@gmail.com.

DNR Regulation Definitions - Jay Sheppard

If you missed it, a recent discussion went on regarding what constitutes a fly vs a lure. Partly from someone wanting to enter a "Pistol Pete" lure in the PPTU One Fly contest.



According to DNR here are the definitions in their regulations for flies, lures and bait:

Artificial Fly

A lure constructed by winding natural or synthetic material such as feathers, fur, hair, tinsel, thread, fiber, wire, plastic, cork, or rubber on or around the hook, and designed to be cast by means of a fly rod.

Artificial Lure

The following are considered artificial lures: spinners, spoons, plugs and molded facsimiles of worms, insects and fish. For the purposes of these regulations, artificial flies and streamers are considered to be artificial lures.

Bait

Any item that emits an odor or scent such as worms, minnows, crayfish, insects, and food items. The addition of any scent to an artificial lure or fly to make it smell like bait, makes it bait.



Speakers Program Coordinator Needed - PPTU Board

PPTU is looking for a volunteer to assist lining up presenters on various topics for the New Year. Karan Singh and others will be available for guidance and assistance. This isn't hard, but requires a little time and effort to pull ideas together and coordinate with the speaker. There's a lot of good people out there with considerable knowledge on many topics and it only takes a little effort to ask if they wish to present.



If interested, please contact the president or any one of the board members.

PPTU Climate Change Coordinator - James Irons

The Trout Unlimited (TU) National Leadership Council convenes 15 Workgroups to address specific goals of the organization. A Climate Change Workgroup (CCWG) was formed in 2013 to help TU address the impact of climate change on cold water fisheries. In 2019 the CCWG developed the role of council and chapter Climate Change Coordinator to: “foster climate awareness among our members and in our communities, include climate mitigation features into conservation projects, and advocate for emissions reductions.” The Winter 2023 issue of Trout Magazine solicited volunteers to become Climate Change Coordinators and Jim Irons volunteered to be the PPTU Climate Change Coordinator. The PPTU board approved the role during the August board meeting.

What does that mean? First, please be aware that in 2015 TU established a Climate Policy that reads in part: “TU understands that avoiding the severe harmful effects that climate change will have on coldwater fisheries and their watersheds requires both a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from existing energy production as well as a fundamental shift in energy sources from fossil fuels to low-carbon technologies and conservation. Accordingly, TU supports policies and comprehensive systems mechanisms that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and hasten the shift to low-carbon energy

sources and conservation.” Resources relative to that policy can be found at the [CCWG Web Page](#).

Those resources include a link to an excellent video presentation by TU's Senior Scientist, Helen Neville, entitled “Climate Change & Trout: Impacts, Opinions, and Ways You Can Help.”

Since volunteering, Jim has participated in the monthly CCWG virtual meetings to understand the role of Climate Change Coordinator. He will work to increase chapter awareness of climate change, suggest projects and actions that the chapter can consider to mitigate impacts, and identify local organizations with which the chapter can partner. One organization may be the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay to follow up on the presentation by Kate Fritz, CEO of the Alliance, during the chapter meeting this past April. Future information will be published in the Conservationist and presented during chapter meetings.

New “In-Person” Meeting Location - PPTU Board

We're finally meeting again in person and additionally, doing a hybrid meeting via Zoom.



The new location is:

Mid County Community Center
2004 Queensguard Road
Silver Spring, MD 20906

[Visit the Web Site](#)

Our meeting room is located directly across from the front service desk as you walk into the building. The room is fairly large with a projection screen and projector setup. The technical kinks are being worked out and we should be ready to go for the next meeting on November 15th.

Maryland Stocking Update - MD DNR

Recently stocked streams are listed below. If the local stream has a low flow the fish may be a little spooky. If you find a pod of fish, hang back from them or create a low profile and you'll likely have a better chance at hooking up. MD DNR stocked the following streams:

Carroll County

Morgan Run: brown and rainbow trout

Montgomery County

Great Seneca Creek: rainbow trout

Garrett County

Youghiogheny River (catch and release):
rainbow trout

Lefty Kreh Statue Unveiling - Friends of Lefty Kreh

The larger-than-life bronze sculpture of world renowned fly fisherman and Frederick native, Lefty Kreh was unveiled early in October. Artist Toby Mendez did a great job capturing Lefty at his best and how we should remember him - casting a line to fish.

You can visit this statue by heading to Frederick, MD, only a 45 minute ride from the Baltimore area. The statue can be seen at [Culler Lake](#), in Baker Park at the corner of West College Terrace and West Second Street.



Rod & Reel Trade In Program - Precision Fly & Tackle

Looking to upgrade to a new rod or reel? Check out the rod and reel trade in program. Follow the steps below to receive an instant quote for your used rod or reel and get store credit to put towards new gear. If you do not see the rod or reel model listed that you are looking to trade in, you can submit a custom quote request and one of our team members will contact you with pricing!

Step 1: Get an instant quote for current model rods on our [instant quotes page](#).

Step 2: Ship your rod or reel to us at the Mt. Holly Springs store: 502 North Baltimore Ave, Mount Holly Springs, PA 17065.

Step 3: Get shop credit to put towards new gear!



Ask About Fly Fishing – Internet Radio - Bob O'Donnell

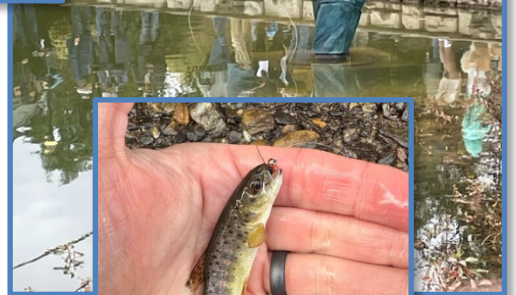
[Ask About Fly Fishing - Internet Radio](#) brings together the experts on fly fishing to tell you in their own words the secrets to their success in both Freshwater and Saltwater.

Covering fish from Trout to Tarpon, from tying flies to casting them - you'll find it all on Ask About Fly Fishing - the best fly fishing podcast for learning more about fly fishing.

Want to Catch More Fish? Just listen to any of the in-depth podcasts - the D. Roger Maves has over 386 shows in the [Archive!](#)

Members Catch - Bob O'Donnell

November is here and the holidays are right around the corner. Folks are still getting outdoors and doing some fishing. The scenery is gorgeous!



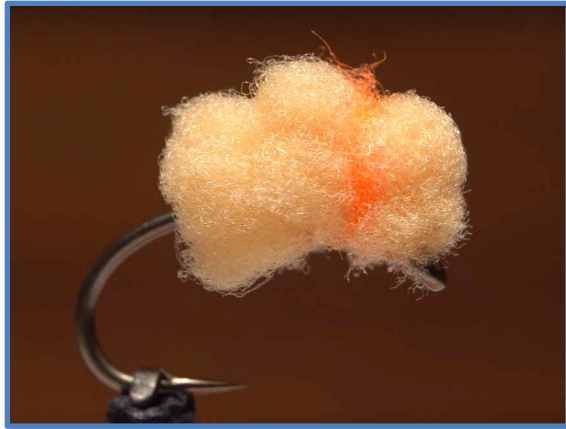
Contributions & Questions Welcome!

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.

Editor: Bob O'Donnell

Phone: 410-733-0638

Email: TroutWrangler@Yahoo.com



Jeff Blood's Blood-Dot Egg

Several species of fish—salmon, steelhead, trout, and more—will be spawning from fall through spring, so it pays to have egg patterns in your fly box. Here's a cool pattern by western Pennsylvania fly tier Jeff Blood tied by Tim Flagler of Tightline Productions.

Additionally, there's a full episode of The New Fly Fisher in which Blood describes how he came up with the Blood Dot Egg and how he fishes it for Great Lakes steelhead.

[Jeff Blood's Blood-Dot Egg](#)



Return Address:
Potomac-Patuxent Chapter TU
P.O. Box 2865
Wheaton, MD 20915