

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

Sep 2024 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

“On the Water Vacation Stories” With PPTU Members September 18th, 2024

It’s been a long, hot summer. Time to catch up with friends old and new at our new meeting location. Many of us vacationed this summer to exciting locations. As we get together for the first time in several months, the time has arrived for us to channel our inner child and show our friends and family of PPTU members what we’ve been up to all summer. Tall tales and photos will vary from close to home trips to wonders outside the state lines. Several members have great trip information to share with others in search of relaxation, sightseeing, and the occasional trophy fish. Come on by, put your feet up, relax, and imagine yourself in the waders of your fellow PPTU members. Grab some popcorn and a cool drink, ask questions or just relive some of the fascinating places our members will be sharing.

And more! Here’s a preview of our upcoming fall speakers:

October: Matt O’Neal on fishing Western Maryland’s Savage River. Matt is owner of [Savage Flies](#) and a PPTU member.

November: Monte Burke, author of *Lords of the Fly: Madness, Obsession and the Hunt for the World-Record Tarpon*

[MonteBurke.com](#)

– *Scott Cernich*



Sep 18th 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

[Chapter Meeting Link](#)

Visit our website: [PPTU.org](#)

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS 2023 – 2024

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Past-President: Joe Taylor
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Secretary: Pete Anderson
Directors: Ron Briggs
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Bob Bokulic
Ron Kerrick
Ray Miller
Jim Senker
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Forum Moderators: Sean Beck, Motti Tadmor
Librarian: Lou Reichel
Mentor Program: Ray Miller
Membership Secretary: Jay Sheppard
Conservationist Editor: Bob O'Donnell
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Climate Change Coord: James Irons
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Northwest Branch: Joe Robinson
Middle Patuxent: Bryan Sirotkin
Patuxent: Jay Sheppard

Mid Atlantic Council Delegates:

Alan Burrows
Bob Dietz
Randy Dwyer: Council Chair
Marc Hutzell
Lou Reichel
Joe Taylor
Nick Weber

Contact Us:

mail@pptu.org

Presidents' Column - Craig VanderKolk



September feels like the beginning of a new year. While the days get shorter the air cools down and fish seem to be more interested in looking at a fly. You can dry fly fish with terrestrials but also still wet wade if you're so inclined. I hope all of you can find some time to get out and fish. I know I look forward to a trip west to fish the Savage and the North Branch of the Potomac. In addition, our annual Columbus Day (October 11-14) trip to Big Run State park is also coming up.

September marks the end of summer, but also the transition to a new Board and Officers of the Potomac- Patuxent Trout Unlimited Chapter. In this instance, it's not too dramatic, I take over as President and the Board stays the same as members agree to extend their terms. They're all amazing individuals with tremendous experience and knowledge. I look forward to working them.

Before, I introduce myself to you, I'd like to acknowledge the great leadership of Joe Taylor. Joe has managed this organization through the last phases of COVID and continued the tradition of guiding this organization forward. During his tenure our membership has grown, we have new mentor program that continues the amazing work of Ken Bowyer, a more robust outreach through our list serve, new social gatherings and a Facebook page. We have new and ongoing conservation activities. As your new President, I have big shoes to fill and I look forward to his advice and experience. We all thank him for his work on behalf of the membership, trout and cold water fisheries in our area.

A little about myself. I grew up in Michigan in a family with varied interests in the outdoors. My father was a hunter and a fisherman. He took me fishing and hunting, but I did not actively pursue these sports as an individual. In retrospect, I missed out on an opportunity to visit numerous world famous rivers including the Pere Marquette, Boardman and the Au Sable (the home of Trout Unlimited). I fished some in my thirties and forties, mostly the Gunpowder, realizing I could fish early in the morning and still make it to work later in the morning. As most of us know, a career and family often take precedence so fishing was a rare and enjoyable treat. I became a more avid angler in the

past 6-7 years, which became more focused during COVID when I couldn't work for 8 weeks and I found ways to get out and fish for fun and "sustenance". This corresponded with an invite by Tom Brosnan to attend a meeting of PPTU in 2019. I found a welcoming home to make new friends, try fly tying again, share fishing stories and learn about fly fishing from some of the most knowledgeable anglers in the country. Over the years, I had never fished a wet fly or soft hackle in my life and now it's one of favorite ways to fish – thank you Bob Dietz for taking me out several years ago to show me how and help me tune my bamboo rod. It's all been a great learning activity and even though I still consider myself an advanced beginner, I've treasured the opportunity to be part of PPTU.

While fishing had been slow, the chapter has been busy over the summer. Jim Senker, Bob Kaiser, Alan Williams and others spent countless hours putting together our Swap meet that put old equipment and materials into new hands. It was a great success for sellers and buyers, while providing funds to the chapter. Bob Bokulic, Bob O'Donnell and a small committee of members put out a questionnaire that gave us new insights on where we should focus some of our attention to meet the needs of our membership. We've begun to develop a plan to move forward with more volunteer opportunities in conservation projects. We have an exciting speaker series for the fall in a new location that should be provide easier access for our members. Our next speakers will be our own members sharing their experiences over the summer and I hope to see you there to introduce myself to you and renew our friendships.

While we have much to offer our members, we rely on our members to help support our mission. I hope you are able to contribute your time to our many activities and volunteer for our educational and conservation projects. It's an exciting time for PPTU. We welcome your suggestions and insights you may have as we begin our fall programs and activities.

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

NEW Meeting Location!!! - PPTU Board

We found another location to try out for our meetings. The previous room seemed a little small with folks starting to once again come in person, plus additionally they shoos us out before 9pm. All of us like to talk and BS both before and after the meeting. So, our [new location](#) should give us some flexibility.

Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
7588 Van Dusen Road
Laurel, MD 20707



Results of Questionnaire on Member Interests - Bob Bokulic

Many thanks to all of you who responded to the questionnaire sent out in April!! Your inputs were very helpful in understanding what our membership wants from the chapter. The questionnaire results produced a number of insights that the chapter leadership is exploring. Some members, both working and retired, expressed a desire to hold a subset of chapter fishing outings during the week instead of the weekend. Member interest was strongest in speakers and outing events that focus on wild trout and local fly-fishing opportunities. Member interest was also strongest in conservation activities related to tree planting, stream cleanup, and cold-water habitat restoration. Please consider attending chapter meetings, social events, and outings this year to explore one or more of your interest areas!

We also learned that most chapter members use email as their primary source of information about chapter events. In response, the chapter plans to focus on email as the primary way to communicate information about future meetings and outings. On a related note, the PPTU Listserv, which is an email-based service that allows members to cross-communicate, is a great way to get daily information on recent fishing results, locations, techniques, and other experiences. You can subscribe to it for free at: <https://groups.io/g/ppctu> and manage your subscription to receive messages either in real-time as they are posted or as a daily summary. Our webpage PPTU.org is another great source of information on PPTU activities and includes a link to The Conservationist newsletter and an extensive knowledge database. The chapter also plans to continue outreach through Facebook and Instagram for members who prefer social media.

Lastly, congratulations to two of the members responding to the questionnaire, Bob Kaiser and Alan Burrows, who won fly fishing gift certificates at the random drawing that was held in June.

" Often I have been exhausted on trout streams, uncomfortable, wet, cold, briar scarred, sunburned, mosquito bitten, but never, with a fly rod in my hand have I been less than in a place that was less than beautiful."

~ Charles Kuralt

Quick BOA Repair - Motti Tadmor

I had a trip to Yellowstone coming up in a week, and me being me, I always like to check all my gear before going on a trip to make sure everything is in order.

Luckily (or not) for me, I found that one of my Orvis boa boots wire broke! Looking online, the wire replacement has been out of stock for several years, not really sure what's up with Orvis, I looked for this item in the past and it's always out of stock. Anyway, I did have the repair kit, including the little screwdriver, just not the wire, so took the whole thing apart, took whatever is left from the wire and headed to home depot to see if I could find something close to the wire. See the photo, diameter is the same, strength should hold 50 lbs and it felt very similar, so I picked it up, went home and replaced the wire on the boot, pretty easy task, the biggest pain was threading the wire through the holes.

It works, I tested it! The question is, will it hold for some time? In the water? Anyone who had a similar experience and tried what I did before please email the group and let us know.

If this holds up, that's the best \$6 I've spent, and it came with 9ft of wire.



Upcoming PPTU Outings - Lou Reichel & Ron Kerrick

We have several outings scheduled in the next couple of months. Get them on your calendar. We will send out notices prior to the events. If you have any outing suggestions please send them my way.

Sept 14th - Big Spring, PA

Oct 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th - Savage, Western MD

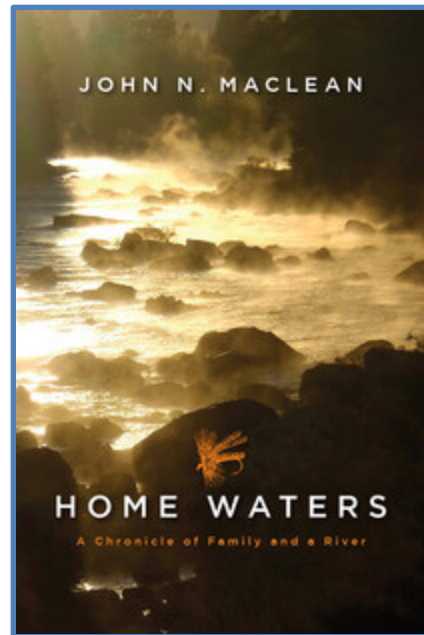
If you spot poaching please call or text:



Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers
At 443-433-4112



Add this number to your cell phone contact list!



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. Optionally, you can sign up on line directly at Trout Unlimited's web site for half price - \$17.50. Scan the QR code below. Join now!



Copies of "Home Waters" Available **- PPTU**

We have some copies of John Maclean's "Home Waters" available for sale. John was one of speakers not long ago. John is the son of Norman Maclean, author of A River Runs Through It. If you're interested in a copy reach out to us and we'll set one aside for you.

Tips and Tricks – Dry Fly Stealth **- George Daniel**

Low water and skittish trout are common during the late summer and early fall. While most any fly fishing tactic will produce results at those times of the year, dry flies are often an excellent option. Although some hatches still occur, reduced activity of aquatic insects both above and below the surface often leaves trout looking up for food, specifically, for terrestrials. But while trout are looking up to feed, they are also on the lookout for predators, thanks to low, clear water, which puts their evolutionary protective alarms on high alert.

Having success with dry flies during these times of the year means being stealthy. Employing a few common sense tips to help stay out of sight and out of mind of the trout you're chasing can significantly improve your dry fly success during the late season.

Lengthen Your Leader

Fly lines landing on the water during the cast or presentation is perhaps the most common way to spook trout, especially during times of low and clear conditions. No matter how delicate the angler lays the line on the water, every fly line has mass and—unless you're able to defy gravity—will land on the surface, displacing some amount of water and causing a disturbance. If you find your cast spooking fish, lengthen the leader by adding a heavy butt section to the back end of your leader. The longer your leader, the farther the mass of the fly line will

be from the fish you are targeting when it impacts the water, and the less likely you will be to send it fleeing for cover.

Start off with a standard 7 1/2' 5X or 6X leader and add anywhere from 4-8' of 50lb tippet. Lengthening your leader by extending the butt section allows you to minimize the number of leaders you need to carry. If you're new to fly fishing, I would recommend keeping your leader no longer than 9-12' in length. As you develop better casting, along with better line and leader control skills, you will be able to fish leaders in excess of 15'.

A Quiet Pickup

A heavy fly line landing on the water will spook fish but so will a partially sunken fly line being pulled out of the water as an angler prepares to backcast. A sunken fly line—or even a submerged leader—must break the water's surface tension before it can be lifted off the water, which often causes a loud disturbance. If the line and leader cause too much disturbance during the pickup, fish in the immediate area are likely to spook before you present the fly again, robbing you of that second (or third, or fourth) opportunity.

2024 One-Fly Contest Winner: Bob Dietz - Ron Kerrick

Our 1st Place Winner was Bob Dietz. Bob skillfully landed 6 trout, with a grand total of 34 1/2 inches. He used a size 14 Tup's Spider (a classic English fly pattern) and fished in the Bunker Hill Road area, upstream of the old bridge abutments.



Please feel free to ask him all about his winning fish stories. Bob may have had an unfair advantage though, he brought along Brody, a well-trained "fish spotting" dachshund, and his wife for moral support and to cheer him on (the strategy seems to have paid off).



Streamside Etiquette - Amelia Jensen

The first rule of etiquette is to acknowledge that you're not the only one looking to enjoy your time on the water. There are always other people who want to enjoy the same water you're on, and they have as much right to the resource as you do. So be observant, and take the time to talk to other anglers and recreationists on the water. Talking with others can not only improve your day, but often save you from unneeded conflict, as well.

Make it a priority to ask a few targeted questions while you're at it, such as, "have you seen anyone else out here" or "how far up/down do you plan to fish?" Not only will this help you to better understand their intentions, but you'll also get the chance to express your own. It also gives you a chance to potentially learn something new, especially if you haven't spent much time fishing in that particular area.

If you're brand new to fly fishing, the one big no-no when encountering other anglers is to walk up and start fishing right next to (or directly across from) them without saying anything. No one responds well to "hole-jumping." Exactly how much space to give another angler will depend on how busy that particular river is, and what you both can agree on if you just talk.

Student Outreach – Fly Fishing - Maryland DNR

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources Office of Outdoor Recreation partnered with several universities across the state to not only teach students the basics of fly fishing, but also to inspire them to be [stewards of our streams](#).

Clouser's Flyfishing School - Bob & Jackie Clouser

At [Clouser's Flyfishing School](#), you will receive expert instruction on a wide range of topics. From understanding the equipment and gear needed for fly fishing to mastering different casting techniques, you will gain the knowledge and skills necessary to become a proficient fly angler.

Whether you're just starting out or looking to take your skills to the next level, this comprehensive flyfishing school can provide you with the knowledge, experience, and support you need to succeed.

Cost is \$300 per Student (of course if you live here you need to fly to Florida) Still not a bad fee to learn from a legend. September 20th & 21st, 2024.



Party On the Pier - Potomac Riverkeeper Network

September 14th – our Annual Benefit Gala Party on the Pier is less than a month away! Please join us and your fellow river enthusiasts to celebrate our successes and the 14,700 square miles of rivers that we protect in the Potomac and Shenandoah watersheds.

This year, we will enjoy a pleasant late summer evening at our favorite venue: District Pier at the DC Wharf. The festivities include cocktails and socializing, an extraordinary supper, and late night dancing to DJ Gemini!

September 6 is the last day to grab your tickets, so do it today! We always sell out.

Party On the Pier

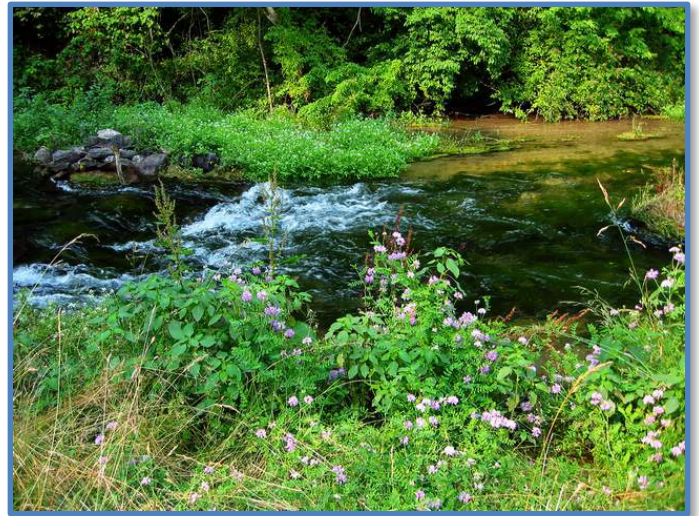
Annual Benefit Gala for Clean Water

Saturday, September 14, 2024

6:00pm - 10:00pm

District Pier at The Wharf

101 District Square SW, Washington, DC 20024



Big Spring Outing - Ron Kerrick

Lou and I have planned a chapter outing for **Saturday, September 14th** to fish Big Spring Creek in PA. It can be a challenging stream, but it is a great place to test your skills and get some fishing in after a slow hot summer. We will be cooking Brats for lunch but bring your own drinks. More details can be found on the chapter web site or feel free to email me - dron224@outlook.com

[Click here](#) to register for this Outing, or go the PPTU web site.

Swap Meet Success - Jim Senker

Our Swap Meet held at Waredeca Brewery was a success on many fronts. New friends/anglers were made. Old fishing friends were reacquainted and



Funding Announced for Dredging at Fletcher's Cove - National Park Service



Fletcher's Cove, a beloved part of Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, is set for an important restoration funded by fees that park visitors pay for park entry, camping and special activities through the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). The money is used for facilities and services that improve visitors' experiences.

Over time, sediment accumulation has made boating and fishing on the Potomac River difficult in a part of the park popular with kayakers, row boaters and stand-up paddle boarders. The dredging will improve access and restore these activities.

The project will start with dredging the cove to remove built-up sediment and repair worn-out infrastructure.

The dredging is just the beginning, setting the stage for a long-term plan to address ongoing sediment issues and restore Fletcher's Cove to a more natural state. The National Park Service and its partners are committed to improving public access and preserving this historic site for future generations to enjoy.



many fishing stories were told! Additionally, thanks to you, many sales were made once again renewing anglers' enthusiasm to catch the "big one that got away last time!" The chapter and sellers made good money from the event which will get put to chapter use in the future.



Kudos to Alan W, Bob K, Bob O, Randy D and many others for their hard work and diligence! They did all the heavy lifting!

We'll be doing another one for sure.



Located about 2.5 miles upstream from Theodore Roosevelt Island in northwest Washington D.C., Fletchers Cove has been popular for outdoor activities since the 1850s. Despite previous dredging efforts, sedimentation has continued due to changes in the floodplain over the years.

Inner Harbor Wetland – 1st of its kind! - National Aquarium

Immerse yourself in a re-created salt marsh habitat like those that existed in Baltimore City hundreds of years ago. The National Aquarium created an 8,000 square foot Inner Harbor Wetland attracting nature to downtown.

The [National Aquarium Harbor Wetland](#) presented by CFG Bank is a free, outdoor exhibit between Piers 3 and 4 of the National Aquarium campus on Baltimore's Inner Harbor. This latest exhibit allows visitors to the harbor to step onto floating docks and experience the diverse plant and animal life filling this innovative, re-created salt marsh.



Check out the [video report](#).

Too HOT to Fish? - Bob O'Donnell

If you're uncomfortable the fish probably are too! Be mindful of the water temps before fishing. No sense stressing the fish out or possibly killing them by accident.

Check out this [temperature chart](#) for some guidance on when and when not to fish during different temperatures.



Tarpon in the Bay! - Maryland DNR

Scouting for red drum near the Hoopers Island Lighthouse on Aug. 1, Capt. Tom Weaver saw something roll in the flat, calm waters a couple hundred yards away.

He looked for the wake and followed a disturbance in the distance. When he got close and shut the motor off, he saw huge shapes under the water. The fish looked familiar—and Weaver soon realized he recognized them from his years fishing in the Florida Keys.

“When you run out of Annapolis, you don’t expect an hour and a half later to be running across a tarpon,” Weaver, who runs a charter business [Fish With Weaver](#), said. “My brain took a few minutes to process.”

Tarpon are large, athletic fish renowned for how they fight the line, with both incredible stamina and an ability to leap out of the water, their bodies thrashing in the air.

In a video Weaver recorded, hulking 6-foot-long fish lurk motionless under the surface. They were tanks, he said, each maybe 80 to 100 pounds. He went after the group of seven or eight tarpon for a while and got a bite, though he didn’t have the right gear to pull one in. “Really, we were not ready to see tarpon,” he said.

Read the [full article](#) and see the video here.

Volunteers Wanted! - PPTU Board

We’re always looking for members to volunteer in any capacity they can, whether it be for some of our programs like Trout in the Classroom, Fly Fishing 101 classes, or to assist on the board itself.

Currently, we have an opening for Vice President. If you feel you have time in the future to step into the President’s role, please contact us. You’ll have two years to observe and jump in as needed until the time comes to take over the reins.

We have good folks available to guide and assist any of you if you choose to volunteer. If interested, reach out to any of the board members either by email or pull them aside in person at the next meeting and shoot the bull a while for the insider’s opinion.

1st Girl and the 1st Kid to Reel in a Master Angler Milestone Award **- Sheena Goodyear · CBC Radio**

When Lucy Moore, 12, was asked who is better at fishing — her or her dad — she did not hesitate to claim her crown.

"Me," Lucy replied immediately during an interview with As It Happens guest host Catherine Cullen.



Her father, Nick Perez, paused for a moment when asked the same question, but ultimately conceded that his daughter had long surpassed him in fishing prowess.

"He doesn't have a Master," Lucy quipped.

She's referring to Maryland's prestigious Master Angler Milestone award, the state's top fishing prize, which she snagged in May.

Only 11 others have claimed the title since its inception in 2019, and they're all grown men. That makes Lucy the state's youngest, and only female, Master Angler.

"I really felt like I did something that was like a really great accomplishment for me," she said.

[Listen to the Interview](#)

Underwater Grasses Are Key to Chesapeake Bay Health **- Joe Zimmerman - MD DNR**

Across the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, below the water's surface, ribbons of green sway in the current.

They are stems of pondweed, eelgrass, widgeon grass, stargrass, and a number of other species.

Together they make up the underwater grasses that form a crucial habitat for Bay life, help clean the water, and mitigate effects of climate change.

For such fragile blades, the grasses carry a lot of weight in the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, and Brooke Landry, program chief of Living Resource Assessment at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), said underwater grasses are sometimes overlooked for their critical role.

[Read the full article here.](#)

6 Anglers Found Guilty of Netting 74 Steelhead **- Brian Whipkey**

Three anglers have lost their fishing privileges for five years and three others may lose theirs as well for an October incident involving 74 steelhead and more than \$5,500 in fines in Erie County.

The revocations were discussed during the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Law Enforcement Committee meeting. It was held just before the agency's full board meeting where the revocations were approved, pending final appeals.

"Six individuals were involved with netting illegally 74 steelhead out of nursery waters and all six individuals were found guilty of not having fishing licenses, fishing in hatchery or nursery waters and being over the daily limit of steelhead."

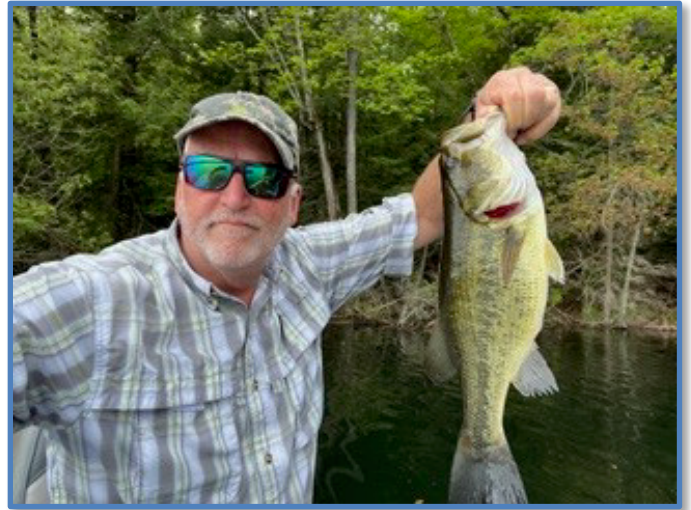
The incident happened on Oct. 18 in Trout Run at Avonia Beach in Erie County. It is a narrow creek that is used by the agency for nursery waters and fishing is prohibited there. Anglers in the fall and winter are permitted to keep three trout a day where fishing is permitted.



[Full Article Here](#)

Members Catch - Bob O'Donnell

Looking forward to the September meeting. A lot of folks seemed to have a good time since we last met. Can't wait to hear about and see pics from their adventures. These are just a few teasers.



Contributions & Questions Welcome!

Send your contributions, article suggestions or fly fishing questions to the Editor in an email. Deadline for submissions is typically the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication.

This newsletter is available online at PPTU.org

Editor: Bob O'Donnell

Email: TroutWrangler@Yahoo.com



Bead Head Yellow Soft Hackle Caddis Pupa

Our friend Matt O'Neal has a cool fly for you to try out now that Fall is approaching. Matt said he couldn't think of a good name so I took the fly's acronym letters (BHYSHCP) and read it as "Bishop". Matt – take it or leave it. I'm tying some up. ;)

Matt says, what I've always just called a Bead Head Yellow Soft Hackle Caddis Pupa, has been one of my top nymphs for fall fishing. I'm not sure if it imitates an October Caddis, or just looks like a tasty bug, but I know it's caught plenty of fish for me.

[Bishop Soft Hackle](#)



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