



April 2006

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

Fishing Alaska's Upper Kenai River

By Jay Sheppard

If you have always dreamed of going to Alaska or even if you have lived up there, here is a program that will encourage you to go there. This month's meeting will feature Rob Provost of Grand Slam Fly-Fishing Destinations. Rob has hosted guided fly-fishing trips to the Upper Kenai River in Alaska for the past four years, fishing the Kenai for late season Rainbow trout, Dolly Varden (char), Coho (Silver) salmon, and Arctic Grayling (from a nearby mountain lake).

Rob will present an overview of the 4-month Alaskan fishing season and the Kenai River, in particular. He will discuss in detail the species of salmonids available and the timing of each species' runs up the rivers, the various flies needed to get their attention, fishing tactics, and gear recommendations. For those who have never been there this will only add fuel to the fires to get there and fish these waters. For those who have been there, this talk will only remind us of what we miss in the Mid-Atlantic region. Bring a friend. Alaska is one place we all want to fish!

Rob is a lifetime member of TU and has been fly fishing since childhood. In addition to his time fishing in Alaska, he loves to share his fishing experiences from New England, Colorado, New Mexico, New Zealand, Hawaii and the Bahamas. Rob's latest passion is salt water fly fishing for bonefish. He is anxious to put his skills to the test on the stripers of the Mid-Atlantic.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

- **April 19th — Youth Fishing Camp Application Deadline**
- **April 22nd Outing — Shenandoah National Park/Rapidan River**
- **April 29th — Kid's Fishing Day - Help Volunteer — Martin Luther King Recreational Park, White Oak, MD.**



Meetings

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

Place: Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland

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

The Conservationist

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Contributions in the form of clip art, articles, conservation activities, trip reports, letters, fishing and conservation news, tying tips, book reviews, and essays about trout fishing should be sent to the Editor as plain text in the email body or Microsoft Word attachments. Authors should also include their phone number and a brief descriptions of the attachments. The deadline for submissions is the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Nick Weber

It might as well be spring. Spring or not, many of you have been on the stream by now. I even went south to catch a Quill Gordon hatch on the Davidson River in North Carolina with my son. Although most fish were caught on the nearby North Mills River, the best part was being on those streams with my son, and to enjoy seeing him catch trout and sharing those joys over dinner and the drive back to Chapel Hill. It is also important that so many of you help make our sport enjoyable by helping with our stocking efforts. This contributes to quality fisheries by good distribution of fish throughout the stream. Some of the stockers who enjoyed learning about our newest fishery in the tail water section below Brighton Dam, will hopefully have caught some of those beautiful fish by the time this is read, and that goes for yours truly.

April is a month when we reach out to the community and extend our efforts to share the joy of fishing with youngsters. Please sign up to help with Kid's Fishing Day and help inspire a young person to enjoy this special outdoor pastime and sport (see page 6 for details). Another important activity supported by the chapter is a fishing Summer Camp for area youngsters of high school age. The PPTU board has set aside funds to support all or part (depending on number of applicants) of the tuition for sponsored students at the nearby camps (See page 3 for more information).

As we draw closer to the end of our Chapter year, the board will be bringing some new ideas and a better understanding of some old ones before you at our April Meeting as well as with your May issue of The Conservationist. Some say that change is inevitable. However, change should not be for change sake, but to better our situation and to realign our actions with our intentions. Although the intended changes are not large, they will more closely align our actions with Chapter bylaws and reflect the interest of the board to serve all of our members. Our hope is to meet the needs of the chapter and its members and to serve them with the focused attention that they deserve. We believe that our members will find increased ways to support the chapter and at the same time experience increased value in their association with our chapter. You can help by your valued support and your invaluable comments. – And don't forget to go fly fishing. ■

Tackle and Tactic Tips

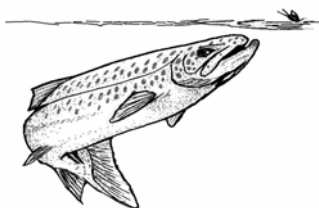
By Jay Sheppard

Ah, spring is here! Time for everyone to hit the streams and ponds! That brings up some fishers' ethics. What to do when you encounter a stranger fishing the water or another approaches you? This is an age old problem that likely predates the Neanderthals. And a few of the fishers you may encounter may not be much advanced past that period, either.

As a good rule of thumb, never do anything that you would not mind having done to you by a total stranger. This is especially true while standing in a nice pool with rising trout all around you. Naturally we cannot expect all trout fishers we see on our waters to have the slightest idea about good manners. Many are new to the sport of trout fishing. Many of them grew up with the experience of sitting on the bank of a pond or river with a bunch of other fishers waiting for their rods to bounce from a bite. Shoulder-to-shoulder crowds were just part of that experience. So a lot of tolerance will go a long way, and maybe we can educate a few new trout fishers along the line. Here are a handful of thoughts. Most of you who have been fishing for a long time will have many more.

Do not approach the stream in any way that may spook the trout that another fisher has been stalking. This means be careful while walking along the bank, especially while going downstream and where you cannot determine if there is anyone fishing that particular stretch. If wading, I suggest that you be very aware of the fishers both upstream and downstream of you who you do not know. Unless you see that it is well accepted by all the others fishing at that time, stay more than two normal casting distances apart from your neighbors, or about 90 feet. The extensive crowding for a spot on the Yellow Breeches during the white miller hatch in mid-summer will usually not apply there the rest of the year or anywhere else that most of us fish at any time.

Even if you see a fisher pulling out of the river, he may still be *fishing* that same spot and only taking a break while still watching the trout. If you have to cross the stream, cross at the riffle downstream of the dry fly fisher standing in a pool and upstream of anyone ►



working down a riffle or run with a wet fly. Do not become a "hole hog" and stand in the same spot fishing over the same fish all day. If there are others around and you have either been skunked or caught more than a few trout, give up and move to another hole. Ask any time you are in doubt. Communication is usually all that is needed to make everyone comfortable. You might even discover what other flies are working well. After all, this is a sport, and we all have to share our resources. ■

Youth Fishing Camps

By Paul Vicenzi

As in previous years, the Board of PPTU has again earmarked funds to provide financial assistance to chapter members participating in either of the two nearby fishing camps. A total of \$900 was approved and will be available for reimbursement of youth camp fees. In the event the chapter has multiple participants, the funds will be distributed on a pro rata basis.

High School aged girls and boys are encouraged to apply. **April 19, 2006** is the application deadline for the TU Conservation & Fishing Camp, in Syria, VA. The TU camp runs June 25-30, 2006 at a cost of \$450. For more info and application instructions, visit www.tucamp.org. PPTU is also sponsoring youth at the Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp located in Boiling Springs, PA. This camp runs June 18-23 and costs \$275. For more info and application instructions, visit www.riverscamp.com.

April Outing

Shenandoah National Park / Rapidan

Wild brook trout, twisty mountain roads, primitive camping. Great stuff for all you trout bums out there. April 22nd we will be meeting in Virginia to fish the mountain streams in and around Shenandoah National Park.

For more information, contact me at dennis-covert@hotmail.com or 410-740-8337. For more information visit the Rapidan link in the outings section of the PPTU.org web site.

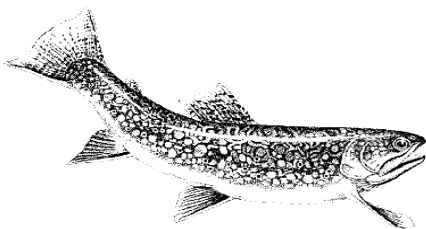
Patuxent Report

By Jay Sheppard

There have been three stockings of 1400

browns and 1250 rainbows on the upper Patuxent Special Area (above RT 97) this year. The average stocking rate was about 12 browns per 100 yards, with more in the lower and deeper sections. Most of the rainbows were not float stocked any distance away from the bridges. As for the past 15 years or so, 95% of the trout have been planted between Annapolis Rock (Rt. 94) and Howard Chapel Bridges. The main reason we do not stock above Rt. 94 very far is the good population of wild browns remaining in these upper sections that we do not want to stress any further. For some secluded fishing over very wild trout, try above Mullinix Mill Bridge for several miles.

Another 700 browns and 1000 adult rainbows were stocked from Brighton Dam downstream to just below the Haviland Mill Bridge. This new Flies Only section is a tailwater that will take some time to learn the hatches and other eccentricities of the water. We hope to have made arrangements for parking in the Haviland Mill section shortly, if not before this gets mailed. Watch for the DNR signs advising fishers they are on private property and to take responsibilities for their actions. Meanwhile, on the Middle Patuxent Delayed Harvest Section in south Columbia, about 1400 browns and rainbows will have been float stocked by the time this is mailed to our members. The stocked trout can be expected to scatter in all directions over the coming months as they compete for space among themselves and with other trout already there. In the past, I have caught rainbows about a mile below the lowest stocking point only 8 days after the stocking. So the trout can move quickly if the conditions suit them. There will be no further spring stockings on the upper Patuxent Special Area, the Patuxent below Brighton Dam or the Middle Patuxent. Go for it! ■



Prepare or Prepared?

By Tim Pembroke

Do you prepare on the day of your fishing trip or the day before? Upon reaching the stream do you watch for a while before tying on a fly or do you already know which one to use?

Those that know me would say that I am an avid fisherman that lives and breaths fly fishing. It's a multifaceted sport that consumes a great deal of my personal time. Over the years I have collected information about my time spent on the water. I use a journal to record my fishing trips, noting bodies of water, temperature, clarity, and flow. Special note is made of insects present and successful flies used. Utilizing the journal I have built several data bases, one on the flies that caught fish, another on the streams by date, even one on the equipment used.

What I have discovered is that by recording in the journal my days on the water, I have created a great resource. It allows me to plan on when and where to fish but also helps to jog my memory allowing me to relive the experiences of the day. Something I like to do during the colder months and periodically throughout the year. It's also a great planning tool.

Recording the flies that are successful has allowed me to identify my top ten flies. The patterns that I use yearly for over 90 percent of the trout brought to hand. So when it comes time to sit down at the fly tying vise I know which ones to tie, sizes and quantities to prepare for the upcoming season. The streams by date allow me to refine this even further to color variations needed to match the hatch. For example, take caddis. I will tie a dozen or two in gray, olive, tan and cream. I know that if I visit a favorite brookie pond in Vermont in May, I better have some size 14, black caddis on hand. So, I will tie up a half dozen or so just for Vermont.

Half the fun for me is the anticipation of going fishing. I like to prepare before hand, often gathering the gear the night prior, though it's not uncommon for me to be prepared days before hand. My biggest hitch being that if the tree trout have been especially hungry, a visit to the vice may be necessary to restock a pattern. Once at a favorite destination, I suit up and tie on a fly before leaving the parking lot. By consulting my journal before hand allows me to arrive more prepared often to extent of choosing a pattern that works throughout the day, changing flies only when conditions change or to present a particularly finicky fish something different. ■

NORTH BRANCH WHITEWATER RELEASE SCHEDULE

By Jay Sheppard

There are 4 weekends each spring when whitewater releases are scheduled to be on the North Branch of the Potomac below Jennings Randolph Dam at Barnum, WV. The Savage is not scheduled for any whitewater releases this spring.

Fishermen can fish the latter during the day and fish the former each evening after the water drops back to normal flow. Some years ago on Memorial Day weekend, six PPTU members fishing after that day's release had subsided (about 5:00 PM) caught over 120 trout in one large pool, about two-thirds on dry flies, before dark. The next morning (no releases) we only caught 6 or 7!

Call the tape at the Baltimore Office of the Army Corps of Engineers for current flow and future release schedules on these two rivers: 410-962-7687; also check the web sites (see links at www.pptu.org). Flows above 450 cfs on the North Branch and 150 cfs on the Savage are basically unfishable; flows of 300 and 110 cfs or less on each respective stream are a lot more fun and not so dangerous.

Tying Bench – This month's tyer, Bob Serrano, is going to tie examples of the AP series of nymphs. This series was designed by the late Andre Puyans who taught Bob how to tie. These simple yet effective patterns may be tied to imitate mayfly as well as stonefly nymphs. Bob believes that the success of this pattern is that it is one that most fishers rarely use. Sounds like a Gunpowder must try!

Angler's Corner - Dennis Covert, our outings chairperson, will again be in the Angler's Corner this month. Dennis will chat about the Gunpowder Outing, the Rapidan or Western Maryland Trips or anything else in his vest or experience that you want to discuss. His ideas on tactics and tackle to get a head start on the coming outings will be immeasurable whenever you go.

Note: These segments run concurrently the night of the chapter meeting from 7 to 7:30. See bottom of page 1 for meeting information.

CAUTION TO ANGLERS

Over the past several years there have been a small number of break-ins of vehicles at public parking lots used by anglers. Valuables have been lost. A number of cars have been seen at parking lots where the angler was clearly in a hurry and left a door unlocked or even a window down. We must not only secure our vehicles but also remember to not leave any valuables in the car. Take only the rod and tackle you plan to use on your drive to the stream. Do not leave any valuables in plain sight; if the rod case must remain visible, leave the end cap off to show it is empty.

Take your wallet and cell phone with you at all times; if concerned about getting them wet, drop them into a zip-lock bag. Do not leave any keys in or under the vehicle for a buddy—bring spares for them. Watch for unusual activity and immediately report it. Get the tag number! If you see a poacher or similar activity call Nat. Res. Police at 1-800-645-6124. Overall, the number of cases has been low, but those suffering the loss had no fun that day. We must all look out for each other.



PPTU President Nick Weber presents the President's Award to Jim Greene and Dave Wittman for their work on Trout in the Classroom, taken during the chapter's monthly meeting on January 18, 2006.

ADDRESS CHANGED?

If you have moved or see an error in your label on this issue, please advise both the National TU office (1-800-834-2419) and this Chapter (see PO Box below) with separate notices. Our mailing list is maintained separately from the National list; we do eventually receive word of the change from National TU, but it is often a few months before it affects your receipt of this publication and other mailings. Please help us help you. Thank you.

Subscriptions

The **Potomac-Patuxent Chapter** of Trout Unlimited has two subscription rates: **Regular or Family** (\$15/year) and **Student** (free). PPTU invites members of other TU chapter to subscribe to the **Conservationist**. The Chapter operates on a September-to-September basis. The subscription is totally separate from TU dues. Send all correspondence, changes of address, or subscription orders to our PO Box (below). Your subscription expiration for the Conservationist is indicated on the label as PP-0906 or PP-0907.

Join Us for PPTU's Annual Kids' Fishing Day!

On Saturday, April 29, PPTU will sponsor its annual Kids' Fishing Day at Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreational Park in White Oak, Md. The free event will be held at the park's lake **from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., rain or shine**. PPTU sponsors Kids' Fishing Day with the Maryland Department of National Resources and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission to introduce youngsters and their families to an appreciation of and respect for the environment through the sport of fishing. PPTU volunteers are needed to help the kids with their fishing, bait hooks and rig tackle. Bait (worms) will be provided. Participants should bring their own fishing rods, as well as warm clothing, drinks and snacks. The park is located at 1100 Jackson Road in White Oak, Maryland. To reach the lake, follow Jackson Road past an elementary school and swim center. The lake will be on the left across from the park's tennis courts. To volunteer for the event, contact **Paul Vicenzi at 301-650-2087**.



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