



May 2008

The *Conservationist*

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

Whirling Disease Presentation,

Wednesday, May 21

Susan Rivers, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fisheries Biologist, will present a program on Whirling disease in state waters at the May 21st chapter meeting. Susan has been a Fisheries Biologist for more than 30 years. One of her major responsibilities is working on invasive diseases including Whirling Disease.

She also plays a significant role in Fish Health, Macro invertebrate analysis, Hatchery drug trials, Regulations and Grant Management.

Myxobolus cerebralis, the causative agent of Whirling disease, was first discovered in 1903 in Germany. The disease was found in Pennsylvania in the mid - 1950s and was subsequently distributed to surrounding states. Whirling disease is known to exist in 24 states. It first appeared in a Maryland stream in 1995. The disease is caused by a parasite whose spores can be transmitted from location to location by various means.

DNR takes the presence of this disease seriously

and is continuing to work on its eradication while educating our anglers about the disease.

Susan will also give us an update on other important invasive species such as Didymo and discuss issues with viral hemorrhagic septicemia.

As we begin our fishing season, please inform yourself about important disease issues that impact our fisheries so that you can do your part in curtailing their spread and help educate others. – *Nick Weber*

LAST ISSUE UNTIL SEPTEMBER

The Conservationist does not appear during the months of June, July and August – we all want to be fishing, too! So look for the next issue to appear around Labor Day. Have a great summer and leave a few uneducated trout for us to chase!

Reminder

Annual elections will be conducted at the May 21st chapter meeting.

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Monthly Chapter 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, then go past Holy Cross Hospital and across Sligo Creek Parkway. The Center is on the right.

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President's Column

Recruitment. The word is loaded with meaning for any chapter of Trout Unlimited. There's the obvious – getting new members to join the chapter. We go about this through various methods – setting up tables at shows, word of mouth, etc. We do ok; our membership stays fairly stable from year to year.

But “recruitment” also has a technical meaning in fisheries management: “The amount of fish added to the exploitable stock each year due to growth. This term is also used in referring to the number of fish from a year class reaching a certain age. For example, all fish reaching their second year would be age 2 recruits.” (This is a paraphrased quote of the definition on the NOAA website.)

Although I'm not sure “exploitable” is quite the word, the rest of the definition also applies to a different kind of recruitment. We, as anglers and conservationists, need to ensure that at least some of the children of today become interested in fishing and conservation and then retain that interest into adulthood. We as a chapter need to make some effort to introduce youth to fishing. We're involved in the *Trout in the Classroom* (TIC) program, hold a “Kid's Fishing Day”, support the Boy Scout's Fly Fishing Merit Badge and involve the schools in some of our conservation projects such as the Hawlings River tree planting.

But most of these are “one shot” efforts. (TIC may be the exception.) It's one thing to spark a child's interest through, say, a kid's fishing day, but quite another to maintain that interest into adulthood – that is, “recruit” the age class. I'm not sure that there's a lot that we can do as a chapter but there is plenty you can do as an individual. If you know a person in the “impressionable years” age class, offer to take that person fishing or even just for a hike in the woods. Repeat as needed. – Bob Dietz



You Might Have a Fishing Problem . . .

... If your boat is worth more than your house.

The June PPTU Outing

Our outing for June will be to the Ken Lockwood Gorge, South Branch of the Raritan River, near Califon, New Jersey. The trip is scheduled for June 7-8 to take advantage of the fish-for-free weekend in the Garden State (no license or trout stamp required.) Camping is available in nearby Vorhees State Park and there are motels in Clinton, about 5 miles away. For the past 2 years, some of us have stayed at the Hampton Inn Clinton. Check out these two website for more information about the area we will be exploring. We will meet at the Trestle Bridge Pool at 5 PM Saturday to fish the evening hatch. Afterwards, we will meet for dinner at a nearby restaurant. For more details, contact Bob Dietz at dietzredietz@cs.com or (301) 854-6893.

South Branch of the Raritan:
www.flyfishingconnection.com/southbranchraritan.html

Vorhees State Park: www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/voorhees.html

Visit the Tying Bench and Angler's Corner, 7 PM, at the May Chapter Meeting

Tying Bench This month's killer pattern is a favorite of our President Bob Dietz. The "*Sparkle Grub*" is his go-to smallmouth bass fly. He highly recommends it for this species and says it can be fished as a jig or as a streamer. Others have used this pattern for many additional species as well.

Although Bob said that he may not be able to demonstrate it, he assured me that even I can master it. Come see the demonstration so that it will be in your box this season. After you learn to tie the Sparkle Grub, you can purchase a tier's bag!

Angler's Corner The active fly fishing season is upon us, giving you the opportunity to join in fun outings, interact with fellow fishers, learn new waters and improve your skills on previously fished waters.

Come chat with Dennis Covert, our Outings

Chair, to sign up for an outing or gain some insight on one or more of the many streams he fishes. Outings suggestions are always welcome. — *Nick Webber*

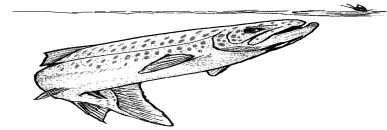
So Long, Shawn

We have a new editor at the Conservationist! Shawn Jensen has done a superb job for the last year but has decided to let real work get in the way of continuing. Thanks, Shawn, for the hard work.

I want to welcome our new editor, Steve Graves. If anyone has anything they'd like to contribute, please send it to:

sgraves@cri-solutions.com.

Please submit in Word or text format and limit contributions to around 450 words. All articles will be edited for clarity, brevity and style. Deadline is about three weeks prior to the monthly meeting. — *Bob Dietz*



You Might Have a Fishing Problem . . .

. . . *If you send your kids off to school with their shoes tied with Palomar knots.*

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 in a Microsoft Word attachment. Authors should also include their phone number and a brief description of the attachments. The deadline for submissions is normally the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication or 3 weeks before the chapter meeting.

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Tackle and Tactics Tips

I have praised soft hackle wet flies many times over the years. These flies are easy to fish on a semi-tight line – the fish usually hook themselves. I tend to prefer flies that are one size smaller than the dominant hatch but almost any small size and color will usually elicit a few takes.

One other factor needs to be pointed out. Adult insects are not always able to maintain themselves on the surface of the water. Small waves to us are monster tidal waves to them. Many emerging insects are swallowed up by the water action. Trout want to eat the most food for the least amount of energy expended. (Sounds like many of us!) Why should they swim up to the surface where predators and faster currents are often present if the very same insect is being drowned right in front of them?

I have stood on bridges during heavy hatches and watched pods of trout suspend a few feet below the surface. They are clearly feeding but rarely come to the surface. This phenomena almost invariably takes place at the head of a pool. I caught a couple of the trout, flushed their stomachs and confirmed my suspicions: They were taking drowned adults, emergers or nymphs that had not quite made it to the surface.

For such situations you might try submerging your dry flies. Unfortunately, a drowned may-fly dun pattern is usually not very effective. The main reason is that once the naturals get sucked below the surface, their wings become

like flags in the wind . . . very soft and flexible. One of the old standard wet flies with a down wing and a body of the appropriate size and color may work very well. If you tie your own flies, make the wings a tad narrower and longer. Naturals appear to have long, thin wings that are rolled up and flop all over the place. A clump of soft hackle, e.g., partridge, hen, even marabou of the right color, might work. I dead drift soft hackle flies at the heads of pools, often with a tiny split shot a foot above the fly and a strike indicator a foot or two above the weight.

I stood at a small hydraulic water fall while a heavy hatch was under way. The hatching insect was dark and the white water revealed thousands of dark spots swirling in the foam. Upstream, the trout were actively taking duns on the surface. Surface activity was almost invisible for the first 50 to 75 feet below the head of the pool. Regular flashes told me that the trout were gorging on drowned duns.

So keep a few "drowned duns" in your boxes this spring. Sulphurs, Blue Winged Olives and other insects often drown in the faster stream sections. This is a major feature of such high gradient waters like Big Hunting Creek, the Savage River and Gunpowder Falls above Falls Road.

Simple patterns are often all that are needed in the faster waters at the head of a pool. Come summer, try drowned ants and beetles when fishing fast trout water. And please do not become a drowning victim yourself – wade safely at all times! - Jay Sheppard

ADDRESS CHANGE?

If you move this summer or if the information on the mailing label on the Conservationist is wrong, please email Arnie Strand at ArnzMail@Verizon.net. You may also drop us a post card with the correction. PPTU maintains a mailing list separate from the national TU list.

You Might Have a Fishing Problem. . .

...If the president of Bass Pro sends you personally signed Christmas cards.

PPTU MENTOR PROGRAM

BEGINNERS AND BEYOND

One-on-one stream side fly fishing instruction is available to PPTU members. Participants must show commitment by having waders or hipsters, a fly 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. Members who have not made an Annual Supporting Contribution will be asked to contribute \$15. Contact Ken Bowyer at 301-627-7154 or send e-mail to kenbowyer@verizon.net.

Patuxent Report

Please remember to carry the Report-a-Poacher number in your pocket at all times. If you carry a cell phone, have it logged into the phone's memory. The statewide 24/7 Natural Resources Police (NRP) number is 1 (800) 635-6124. NRP has made a number of arrests and issued citations in the Rt. 94 area this spring and I have heard reports of poaching in other sections. NRP has also made some efforts down on the Middle Patuxent and caught several folks who were poaching. NRP supervisors say they would love to catch more of these 'fishers' but need our eyes and reports. Even if they are not able to catch the poacher, they monitor where the reports are coming from and try to concentrate future patrols in those areas.

If you have not tried the section of the Patuxent below Brighton Dam, you should. It has been well stocked this spring with browns and rainbows. We are hoping for reasonable flows from now until mid summer. The two main access points are the WSSC Brighton Dam parking area (walk downstream from the picnic area as far as you like) or at the Haviland Mill Bridge. There is a small parking place on the Montgomery Co. side of the bridge. From this bridge, most of the stocked water is upstream to the dam. Please respect all private property where posted. – Jay Sheppard



Mayfly Key Available

A laminated card that will help a fisher identify the mayflies encountered on a stream is available at all chapter meetings for just \$3 (2 for \$5). The card can be easily carried in a vest and will help you select flies and report hatches encountered on our eastern trout waters. If you can't make the meeting, contact Jay Sheppard to order one by mail.

NEW ASC RATES

Because of the increased costs of postage, printing and other administrative expenses, we reluctantly have decided to increase the Annual Supporting Contribution (ASC) from \$15 to \$20. This new rate will apply to all renewals re-

ceived after the May 21, 2008 general membership meeting. So now is the time to take advantage of the lower rate. Please send in your ASC check now.

Online Delivery of *The Conservationist*

Members who have made an ASC for the current year or just joined Trout Unlimited and are assigned to PPTU, have the option to access the complete current issue of *The Conservationist* online. This saves PPTU the printing and mailing costs and allows members to access the issue before it is mailed.

Send your request for access to:

pptu-owner@yahoogroups.com

and indicate the email address you wish to use and whether you want to continue or suspend mail delivery of the paper copy. A listserver is used to send an announcement with the link for each new issue.

Those who request online access will be sent an email alerting them to be on the lookout for an invitation to join the listserver. This will be followed by an email from pptu@yahoogroups.com that contains the official invitation.

You must reply to this second email to accept the invitation and be placed on this list. No reply is interpreted as a declined invitation. Spam filters may intercept either or both of these messages. Please check your junk mail or spam folders if your invitation doesn't arrive normally. Failure to accept the invitation means you won't be included when the announcements go out and you will not have access to the new edition. Report problems to pptu-owner@yahoogroups.com and we'll do our best to help. But please help us by being diligent in responding to the invitation. We hope you find this new distribution channel useful and effective. And remember, complete past editions as well as the first page of the current edition are available at www.pptu.org.

Quick Tips

Save gas and aggravation and catch more fish per outing by checking USGS Real-Time Water Data before driving to the stream. Visit <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/rt>. (Or call your favorite fly shop)

NOTICE TO PPTU MEMBERS

Remember to return your videos and books on time. Many fellow members would like the opportunity to rent the books, tapes and DVDs that you rented. Late fees will be applied if they are not returned by the next chapter meeting.



Renewals for TU Members

Existing members should renew their TU membership using any of the following methods:

- Mail your Membership Renewal Statement to TU National
- Call Customer Service at 1-800-834-2419
- Navigate to www.tu.org. Click on the **Join/Renew** tab at top, then click on the "Renew Membership" link on the left. You will need your login name and password.



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