

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

November 2012

Published monthly except June, July, August and December



Fall Fundraiser 2012 November 14th

With the fall season well under way it's time for PPTU's fundraiser event. This event allows our members to walk away with some exciting prizes and wonderful fishing adventures. This year we are raffling off some really great prizes from guided trips to fly fishing gear and collectibles. We are raffling off three really exciting fishing excursions this year. First prize is a two day, three night stay at the West Branch Angler for two. The second prize is a Float trip for two on the North Branch with Harold Harsh. The third prize is a guided trip for two with Mike Heck on some great south central PA limestone streams. Winners for these trips will be announced during our February 2013 meeting and folks do not need to be present to win.

We will also have some great bucket raffle and silent auction prizes. These prizes include fishing gear, a cooler, books and artwork and some Cal Ripken collectibles. We also can't forget to mention that there will be a flea market to pick up some fly fishing gear at better than bargain basement prices. Feel free to bring in items as well that you no longer have a need for. (We do ask for a 15% donation from the total sale of any flea market item that is sold)

No fall fundraiser would be complete without some stimulating conversation with some folks who have just about seen it all on the water. Members will have the chance to ask questions to a panel whose experience on the water and advice is always appreciated. Jim Robinson will act as our moderator for the panel that includes Jim Greco, Jay Sheppard, Nick Weber, Charlie Gelso, Bob Dietz and Ken Bowyer. Some come ready with any questions and comments.

PPTU's fall fundraiser is a way for the chapter to raise the needed funds that directly affect some very worthy causes. PPTU supports conservation efforts through a variety of efforts from stream restoration to making sure our elected leaders understand the importance of protecting our natural resources. Funds that are raised during this event also go to support Trout in the Classroom. Trout in the Classroom provides a great opportunity to introduce young people to not only fishing but also about the importance of conservation. By simply entering a raffle to win some amazing prizes you can make a real and lasting impact supporting your community.

– Marc Hutzell

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, Maryland

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 - Dennis Covert

By November my knees and shins ache, my hands are cracked from cold and ripped by thorns, and I'm the happiest guy on the crick, I've been waiting for this all year! I'm an autumn addict; my drug of choice and favorite season to be outside fishing, hunting and gathering mast. It's never long enough and every year I try to slow life down and savor every day, but they speed by anyway, until one day the unmistakable smell of winter is on the wind and I realize it's all over.

For fly fishers autumn comes in two parts, the first half made up of bright crisp mornings full of leaf color and ripening grain, and for me that means trips to the Alleghenies. Nothing defines autumn more than a small creek in Western Maryland framed with gold and scarlet leaves that can swirl to life as brook trout zigzag away well ahead of my clumsy stalking.

The second half is darker; the leaves are gone or mostly gone, and those left are brown and brittle and rattle like skeletons on stormy afternoons. It's these kinds of days that thoughts of Great lakes Steelhead and huge Brown Trout invade my daily routine. I'll linger for long minutes on my way in and out of the room where I keep all of my hunting and fishing gear to paw through drawers and boxes looking for all the Sucker Spawn, Crystal Meth, and Egg patterns I tied late last season. I stuffed them someplace, can't quite remember where, when I reloaded my vest with the dry flies of spring.

The older I get the bigger the fix needs to be and lately I've been day dreaming about chasing autumn from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico; fly fishing & gunning woodcock from September to well past Thanksgiving ending somewhere in Louisiana.

If there is a cure for this disease I don't want it. I'm an addict by choice with no thoughts or desire for rehabilitation. In fact I lean more towards complete surrender. Just close my eyes, take a deep breath thick with the aroma of decaying leaves, and let the season swallow me whole. 🍂



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 301-627-7154 or E-mail:
kenbowyer@verizon.net

Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

Some 200 rainbows were stocked in the Middle Patuxent Delayed Harvest section in the middle of October. Those fish should offer a little recreation during the rest of the fall and well into the winter. The nearest other fall-stocked waters are the Little Patuxent near Savage, MD and the Patapsco near Daniels Dam. Both of those waters are 2/day, bait allowed.

DNR and PPTU attempted to electro-shock the main Patuxent below Brighton Dam in early October, but the water was too murky that day to make it worth any effort. This survey has been delayed until later in November, although no date has been selected as we go to press. If you wish to help, let me know.

PPTU continues to work on Brighton Dam's operating systems. We hope to have a diver or a video camera go down in the next month or so to see why we are not having colder water exit the dam. If this can be solved, we should have a nice sport fishery below the dam all year long.

The upper Patuxent Special Trout Management Area (i.e., above Rt 97) is now in hunting season mode within the State Park. Wear a bright cap or fish only on Sundays. The only section where no hunting is allowed is below Howard Chapel Road to Rt. 97. There should be a fair number of trout in all the major holes from Long Corner down to rt. 97. Spawning by the brown trout is usually completed by the first of November on this stream. 🌸

Tackle and Tactics - Jay Sheppard

Fly rod selection is much like selecting a spouse or a car. Everyone has different needs and expectations. What is perfect for one is not a good match for another. With the holidays looming in the next month, I thought a little discussion on rod selection might be useful for those just getting into this sport.

The first consideration is for what type of fly fishing are you going to do. Are you chasing panfish in a farm pond or tarpon in the Keys? You would not use an ultra-light spinning outfit for the latter target species or a surf rod for the panfish. Although any fly rod can be used for a wide range of situations and target species, there is little sport in landing a small brookie on a salmon rod and in the opposite situation trying to land a 30-pound salmon on a very light rod.



Assuming that the reader understands the range of line sizes that are available, I will go over some of their purposes. Small line sizes (i.e., #1 through #4) are very light and can only carry small flies through the wind for distances usually less than about 40'. Large line sizes (#8-#11) can haul fairly large bugs through the air for much greater distances. The middle line sizes are just that—in the middle for casting various sized flies and bugs through the air. But line size also indicates how strong the rod that is needed to cast the fly and then fight the fish.

Angler's Corner

November Steelhead Outing

The water has been steadily clearing for the past 24 hours and the flows are almost back to normal. You're standing in shin deep water casting a bright colored fly close to the bank letting it drift downstream. A dozen dark shapes, torpedo like, two to three feet long have just moved up into the riffle you're fishing. Instantly the line goes tight sending a spray of water into the cold air and you can feel the violent head shake of the fish as it erupts out of the shallow water and tears off downstream the reel screaming the rod bending almost double.

That's a description of what we hope happens this November 15th, 16th and 17th as we trek our way up to the tribs of lake Erie. In years past we've battled warm weather and low water conditions, this year we are going a week later in hopes of better conditions. If you would like to join us just fill out a Liability Release form. From that we'll add you to the steelhead gang list and we'll let you know the details as we figure out. 🌻

- **Dennis Covert**
Outings Coordinator



Green Highlander
By Brian Ebert

Reminder

If you spot poaching please place a call to the

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



There is a limit of sorts of how large a fish can be easily landed with various sized rods. Landing any fish depends upon a multitude of factors. Having lots of room to fight a very large fish or a light tippet are two of the major ones that comes to mind. The less room to maneuver a fish means the more pressure must be applied, so the rod and tippet must be able to withstand that pressure. A #4 rod can land an 8 lb fish if there is reasonable room to fight and net it. I have landed 12 lb trout on such a rod, but it was not easy and many more were lost than landed. An 8-weight rod can handle a fair sized fish, especially if you have a strong tippet and lots of backing. Landing a fresh 25-lb king salmon on a large river can be dicey and one will likely lose a fair number before one is landed. I use a #6 rod for almost all of my steelhead fishing these days on the Great Lakes. I have not been fortunate to hook into some of the real monster steelies I have seen on those streams, but I suspect the rod or line would break for any fish over ~18–20 lbs.



There is far less discussion these days on rod length, compared to several decades ago. I have not seen any numbers, but clearly most fly fishers are using 8½' or 9' rods for about 90% of their fishing. There is an occasional need for the short rod on mountain brookie streams. The 9' rod is about all I use these days; I just change the rod and its line size to suit my needs. The long rods have great use to manipulate the lines in roll casts, mending, and other needs that a short rod cannot do well, if at all. I am not including here the really long specialty rods for either Tankara or Spey casting.

So pick a rod that will cast the fly sizes you will want to be using and still have the back bone to land a fish of a life time—if one is lucky to hook such a lunker. If you are going for delicacy in presentation and giving up a tiny bit in ability to land that monster trout under the log jam, just understand what goes into that decision. If I had to pick one rod for the immediate area (smallies on the Potomac, trout, and some striped bass in the Bay), it would be a #6 rod. But that rod over powers pan fish and small trout and can be overwhelmed by medium-sized stripers or salmon. Good luck. Hope you catch that fish of a life time this winter or next year. 🌻

Big Drawing Raffle Tickets Now Available!

Raffle tickets are now available for the big drawing to be held at the February chapter meeting.

Grand prize: West Branch Angler and Sportsmen's Resort & Float package for two; three nights in a large cabin on the West Branch of the Delaware River in Deposit NY; most meals and guide tips.

Option # 1 is for two days guided drift boat fishing for two

Option #2 is one day of fly fishing school and one day of guided drift boat fishing for two. Retail Value \$1700 approx.

Second Prize: Spring Creek Outfitters full day float fishing for two on the scenic rivers of Western MD; the North Branch of the Potomac, or the middle Youghiogeny River. Retail Value \$350

Third prize: Mike Heck's Trout guides full day fishing for two on one of the famous South Central PA trout streams; Falling Springs, Letort, Yellow Breeches, and many more. Retail value \$250.

Tickets are \$15 per ticket, or 2 for \$25, 4 for \$40, or 6 for \$50. Need not be present to win.

For tickets, contact any officer or director. Tickets will also be available at the monthly meeting. For more details visit www.pptu.org.

Upcoming Events

December 1st the Chapter will set up and operate a hotdog stand near the exit doors at Bass Pro Arundel Mills. We will need approximately 15 chapter volunteers to man the stand. If you cannot volunteer to work please show your support by stopping by and purchasing a dog or brat!



New Editor

Change in life is inevitable, sometimes welcome, sometimes not, and sometimes it just snatches you up and drags you along kicking and screaming all the way to whatever fate awaits you. Yea, that last part is me...the new editor.

Our longtime *Conservationist* newsletter editor, George Vincent, recently decided to give up his post. George did an excellent job with the newsletter during his tenure and deserves a pat on the back and our sincere thanks for a job well done. It is easy for us to read through the articles each issue and overlook the time and energy expended to make the newsletter come together. Having a background in art, print and multimedia, I for one appreciated all hard the work George did each month. Well done sir, and cheers! 🍀

- **Trout Wrangler**
Conservationist Editor



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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