

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

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“Steelhead” Richard Farino *October 19th, 2016*

Have you ever wondered why some people leave a nice warm house to go stand in an icy river when the air temperatures hovers below freezing, navigate banks covered with snow, and deal with the frozen tackle while trying to catch steelhead? Richard Farino of District Angling will fill you in.

These powerful migratory rainbow trout that can reach as long as your arm can quickly have you racing along the icy rivers' edge, your rod held high as this powerful fish strips line from the reel at an alarming speed. The subtle presentation, the excitement of a strike, and the thrill of battling an acrobatic and powerful fish on light tackle are all part of the excitement of steelhead fishing.

Richard is an avid fly angler who spent most of his free time fishing and guiding the fresh and salt waters of the NYC metro area, the Catskills, and the Pocono mountains. He is a registered Maryland guide who runs most of his trips in Washington DC, Virginia, and Maryland fresh and salt waters. He books and runs fly fishing travel and outreach programs with non-profit organizations, is both a casting and fly tying instructor, and is also an accomplished fly tyer. He took the initiative to start his business after spending 15 years in the fly fishing industry and a shop closing left the Washington DC metro area without a full service fly shop.

District Angling is the only fly fishing retail business and guiding service in Washington DC.

<http://districtangling.com>

– Alan Burrows

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, MD 20901

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 - Bob O'Donnell

I arose early, poured a tall cup of coffee and slid open the window in our living room. Cool fresh air flowed in filling the room with the vibrant smell of fall. The warm coffee wafted in the breeze as well adding a subtle footnote to a day where you feel alive and awake.

The crisp fall air means more days with the windows open, both in the house and driving down the roadside. Pumpkin spice lattes, mulled cider, hot apple pie... bring it on! Fall couldn't have come any sooner. Who doesn't like fall? The refreshing air, changing colors of the leaves, one can almost forget for a few minutes that its going to get colder. Right now, the sun pouring through the trees of orange golden hue will make you smile as you reach for a rake instead of a snow shovel. And its still fun to kick through a pile of leaves no matter your age.

Fall fishing is also a great time to spend on the water. You're likely to have sections of the river to yourself. No pity for those folks raking leaves instead of fishing or hiking about. Give the neighbor kids a few bucks to rake up and go out and enjoy yourself. Fall stockings are coming to several of our local streams, the slight breeze blowing through the trees is filling the water with bugs for hungry trout to gobble up. Don't miss out. There's still plenty of action to be had and not a float tuber in sight.

Some good dry fly fishing can be had in the middle of day, no need to wake up too early now. Temperatures start to play a part in the fish's feeding behavior. And mind the sun! The low angle of the autumn sun casts long shadows, and your moving shadow can easily spook fish.

Some trout start to get aggressive in the fall by nature. Spawning changes kick in and they can get to be quite territorial. This is a good time to toss streamers when nothing else seems to be happening. Anything representing a threat is likely to be chased

down, attacked and provides for some real excitement on stream.

A couple of things you can't do without – eggs, beetles, and ant patterns. Eggs from spawning fish are hard to pass up by those downstream. I've had a lot of good action in the fall tossing egg patterns. A fat beetle plopped in the current is likely to grab a trout's attention. And early on you may find yourself surrounded by fish just barely sipping the surface. Take a close look at your feet and you may be surprised to see some flying ants drifting by in the current. Ants are good bet almost any time, but with the fall migration and slight wind in the air, there's a good bet those little guys are in the trout's feeding lane for sure.

Get out and enjoy the fresh air, whether fishing, hiking, or just sitting streamside reading a good book. Let the fresh air recharge your soul and minds. God forbid you're raking leaves.

Until next month, tight lines!

Bob O'Donnell
President, PPTU

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 (ASC)** will be asked to contribute \$20.



Contact Ken at 301-627-7154 or by E-mail:
kenbowyer@verizon.net 🐟

Tackle and Tactic Tips - Jay Sheppard

Rain is always a good time to fish. It may not be comfortable for many fishers, but the trout do not mind! Actually, many insects become very active during rainy days. Even in a total downpour I have seen many insects going about their business and trout munching on those that landed in the water.



Blue-winged olives (Baetis) seem to only emerge when it is very misty or even raining. Other insects appear to also want the high humidity that comes with the rain. In many cases the high humidity these insects desire happens right at dawn. For an hour or so they do their thing, and the trout will gorge on them until the humidity drops with the rising sun and temperatures and the insects stop their activity. Arrive at a stream on a summer morning a few minutes late and the water will look placid where dozens of trout were activity feeding only an hour earlier. Rainy, drizzly days are my favorite at any time of the year. Even in the middle of winter a warm rain can get the Baetis and other insects active, which, in turn, gets the trout moving to the surface. Rising trout can be spotted in such light rains, but downpours are usually too disturbing of the surface to see most rises. Watch the forecasts and go try a rainy day on your favorite trout water.

The main requirement for fishing in the rain is having gear to keep you comfortable and dry! No need to drown! The new breathable rain jackets are very good. I always debate whether to get a jacket large enough that will also go over my vest (which is always stuffed with fly boxes & lunch) or leave the vest outside the jacket. I have never quite settled on the best option.

One item I carry with me during the summer is a cheap rain poncho. The breathable jackets are just too warm for me during the warmer months and take

up a lot of space in the back of my vest. I take one of those cheap, clear plastic ponchos and cut off maybe a foot of the bottom, leaving more than enough to cover me and the vest. These ponchos take up almost no room in the vest and are usually more than adequate for a heavy afternoon thunder shower. They are easy to pull out of the vest and get under for a passing shower and then pop off when the clouds pass.



Even if you do not see any active insects during a rain, be alert. Heavy rain drops and winds carry many terrestrial insects into a stream in the warmer months. Ants, beetles, and hoppers can be plopping into the stream. The combination of a hi-viz foam beetle and a small ant pattern as a trailer can be a good combo to try during and right after any rain during the warmer months. Hoppers and crickets work well in the late summer and well into the fall. They can be followed by a beetle or an ant.

Do not despair when the weather forecast suggests rain. Might be a good day to go fishing! One might find a stream to himself or herself with trout rising everywhere but inside your waders! Stay dry and enjoy!

If you spot poaching please place a call to the

Catch a Poacher Hotline

At

1-800-635-6124



Add this number to your cell phone contact list!

Patuxent Report **- Jay Sheppard**

Not much activity to report. We did survive the summer with average flows on the upper section of the Patuxent. I would expect a fair number of browns to have survived in and around the deeper pools. With cooler temperatures and increased flows they should be looking for lots of food and maybe a place to spawn later this month and into November. Just be careful during the hunting season, as the river is in the park's public hunting zones. No hunting is allowed on Sundays, but otherwise suggest a brightly colored hat and avoid the firearm season coming in later half of November.

Fracking News **- Nick Weber**

Good news on the Fracking front! Dave Vanko was Chair of our Commission. I got them to do a risk assessment and am pleased that David is using those results to make statements

Chair of gas drilling panel critical of draft regs for western MD.

HAGERSTOWN, Md. (AP) — The chairman of a state panel that made recommendations for natural gas drilling in western Maryland is highly critical of draft regulations proposed by the administration of Republican Gov. Larry Hogan.

David Vanko's letter to the Department of the Environment is among hundreds of pages of public comments obtained by The Associated Press. Vanko says the draft regulations, if adopted, would significantly weaken protections that most members of his advisory commission thought were needed to lower the risks of hydraulic fracturing to an acceptable level.

Department spokesman Jay Apperson says in an email that the agency won't meet the General Assembly's deadline to adopt by Oct. 1 drilling regulations that would become effective a year later. He says MDE will likely issue the proposed regulations sometime this fall.

Congratulations BBQ Raffle Winners! - PPTU Board

Congratulations to the prize winners of the BBQ raffle last month! Even though we had a small turnout we still had fun. We even fed the homeless.

Top prize of the West Branch Angler Resort float fishing trip went to Alan Burrows. Adam Rice won the second prize of lodging and guided fishing at Savage River Outfitters, and Gail D'Ambrosio of NY happily walked away with the new Orvis Recon fly rod.

Make sure to get next year's BBQ date on your calendar! We're already planning for next year. The food was great and there were many smiling faces to be seen. Congrats to all who won prizes and a big "thank you" to our sponsors, donors, all the members and friends that came out to support the chapter.

handcrafted downhill ski with camRise camber technology and a wood-core laminate. Boards are also available! Looks like a great holiday present.



<https://meierskis.com/collections/limited-edition-skis/products/fishsticks-rep-your-water-limited-edition-ski-for-2016-17>

This Land is Your Land - Mia Sheppard, Gink & Gasoline

Have you ever wondered where you would go fishing or hunting if you didn't have public access? We can't just take this lifestyle for granted. Check out this informative article and animated video clip.

<http://www.ginkandgasoline.com/fly-fishing-news/this-land-is-your-land/>

Tri-State Conservation & Fishing Camp - George Gaines

Developed with the joint resources and manpower of the Trout Unlimited State Councils and local Chapters in Virginia, Maryland/District of Columbia, and West Virginia, the TU Tri-State Camp provides male and female teenagers (ages 13 to 17) with an exciting week of hands-on action-packed fun in a mountain stream environment designed to encourage them to become skilled and responsible anglers and informed and committed conservationists.

Founded in 2005, the Camp each June offers an exciting six-day, five-night residential experience conducted by a staff skilled in leading youth groups and their activities, and a faculty of knowledgeable instructors of conservation and effective and

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#236 of Trout Unlimited**

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Fish Sticks - RepYourWater

No, We're not talking about the frozen food! For those of you that ski or snowboard, and fish, you might find these pretty interesting.

RepYourWater teamed up with Meier Skis to combine their love for fishing with Meier's ski expertise into these limited edition Fish Sticks. With two designs to select from, brown or rainbow trout, they will make for the perfect run downhill. Designed on Meier's own The Doc, named after Doc Holliday, this all terrain, all mountain ski is a

responsible fishing. Using a proven curriculum of both theoretical and field practical conservation and fishing educational experiences, the Camp informs and motivates campers to pursue the goals of protecting, reconnecting, restoring, and sustaining coldwater fisheries and their watersheds, especially in this region.



Campers learn firsthand from officials of the National Park Service, professional conservationists with state natural resources agencies, environmental educators, professional fishing instructors and guides, and experienced members of Trout Unlimited, who teach them successful fishing, responsible conservation, stream life and restoration, wildlife, outdoor skills, team challenges, leadership, and lots more, all while having fun. Located at Graves Mountain Lodge, they enjoy delicious generous meals and snacks, and sleeping in modern lodge facilities overlooking the Shenandoah National Park mountains and valleys.



The Camper fee for the comprehensive six-day, five-night Camp is \$850. Determined to make it possible for interested students to have the Camp experience, full or partial funding is provided to any camper who needs it to attend. Over the past 12

years, annually an average of at least half of the campers have received funding support to attend.

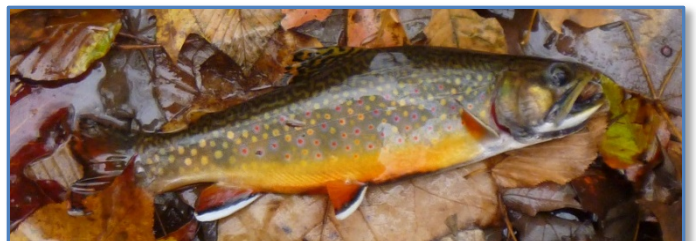
While evaluations have consistently shown that nearly all campers increase their knowledge of, and commitment to, conservation, it is particularly rewarding that over 30 campers have reported that their Tri-State Camp experience ignited a spark that led them to pursue a college professional career in a field directly related to conservation or environmental sciences. The Camp was the sixth founded of the 24 Trout Unlimited youth camps established across the country. While the large majority of campers are from the Tri-State region (VA, MD/DC, and WV) the reputation of the Camp has attracted campers from as far away as Alaska, Maine, Florida, California and Puerto Rico.

Visit the Camp website at tucamp.org for additional information. To assist with camper recruitment, volunteer to work at Camp, or to make a donation contact: Executive Director George Gaines at gaines@tucamp.org or 202-904-3547, or Director Paul Kearney at kearney@tucamp.org or 540-229-0563.

October Campout – 10/21-23 - Bob O'Donnell

The annual October campout is rapidly approaching. Join us out in Western Maryland for what should be a beautiful Fall weekend loaded with gorgeous scenery and hopefully some hungry trout. And if you show up hungry, there's usually plenty of food to be shared. Of course, you can bring your own steaks or other grub to cook out. Last time there were plenty of hot potatoes, drinks, and smores alongside witty chat by the fireside.

Mark **October 21, 22, & 23** down on your calendars and make an effort to get out there with us. We're once again staking our claim under the Monroe Run Pavilion inside Big Run State Park. More info can be found on the PPTU web site.



Congratulations Larry! **- Carl Smolka**

Our long time member, volunteer and former president, Larry Vawter was recognized for his service with an award during the Project Healing Waters celebration held Sept. 15th at Burba Lake on Fort Meade, MD.



PHW COO David Folkerts (right) and Regional Coordinator George Gaines (left) presented the award to Larry for starting and sustaining the Fort Meade program.

Congratulations to Larry for his 8 years of volunteer service with PHWFF and the numerous soldiers he has helped along the way. Kudos Larry! You're proudly representing our chapter.

For more information check out the article below from Fort Meade's online community paper – Soundoff.

<http://www.ftmeadesoundoff.com/news/13533/fishing-friendship/>

Pro Tips – How to Measure a Fish **- Phil Monahan**

During my time as a guide, I learned quickly that most anglers have no idea how to gauge the size of a fish by sight. Two-thirds of my clients would look at a 12-incher and say, “Man, that’s gotta be fifteen,

sixteen inches, right?” while the other third would land a 22-inch rainbow and ask, “Do you think it’s eighteen inches?” In these days of Internet trolly, accidentally overestimating a fish’s length can lead to an avalanche of abuse, which is no fun. So it’s worth learning how to measure a fish, but the key is to do it quickly.

This is important because the amount of time you keep a fish out of the water is extremely important. The “Keep ‘Em Wet” ethos is strong these days, and studies by the Colorado Division of Wildlife showed that leaving the fish in the water while you unhook it can double its chances of survival. So what you need is a way to get a nearly instantaneous measurement on the fish you catch.

When I was a guide, I futzed around with several methods, until I finally settled on what I thought was the quickest and easiest: I measured my own forearm, from the point of my elbow to the tip of my middle finger. The total distance is just under 19 inches. From the elbow to the bump in my wrist is 10 inches, to the base of my pinky is 15 inches, and to the end of my pinky 17 inches. I easily memorized these numbers and could make a very educated guess for an inch or two to either side of these points.



Whenever I landed a fish for a client, I could hold the fish just under the surface, lay my forearm alongside it, and get an immediate rough measurement. Sure, it wasn’t exact—and, as a guide, I may have rounded up on occasion—but this method lets you know immediately whether a fish is closer to 15 inches than it is to 18. I also know that the width

of my spread hand, from end of pinky to end of thumb, is 8.5 inches. Anything over 19 inches, of course, is a little more complicated.

In this case, I'd mark the 19-inch spot, slide my hand to the fish's nose, and then estimate in reverse. Simply add the two numbers and you're good to go. (Example: tail forward to mark = 19 inches, nose back to mark = tip of middle finger to base of pinky, or 4 inches. $19+4 = 23$ -inch fish.) Anything over, say 25-inches and, face it, you're breaking out the damned tape.



What I particularly like about this method is that you don't have to worry about holding anything but the fish. However, many anglers like to use their rod as a measuring stick. Jay "Fishy" Fullum, a well-known fly tier and angler, recommends using thread wraps on your rod blank. He makes narrow wraps at 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 inches. You can use easy-to-read hi vis colors, or, if you think that ruins the aesthetics of your rod, you can use colors to match the guide wraps. When you want to measure a fish, simply lay the rod alongside the fish in the water and estimate based on your wraps.

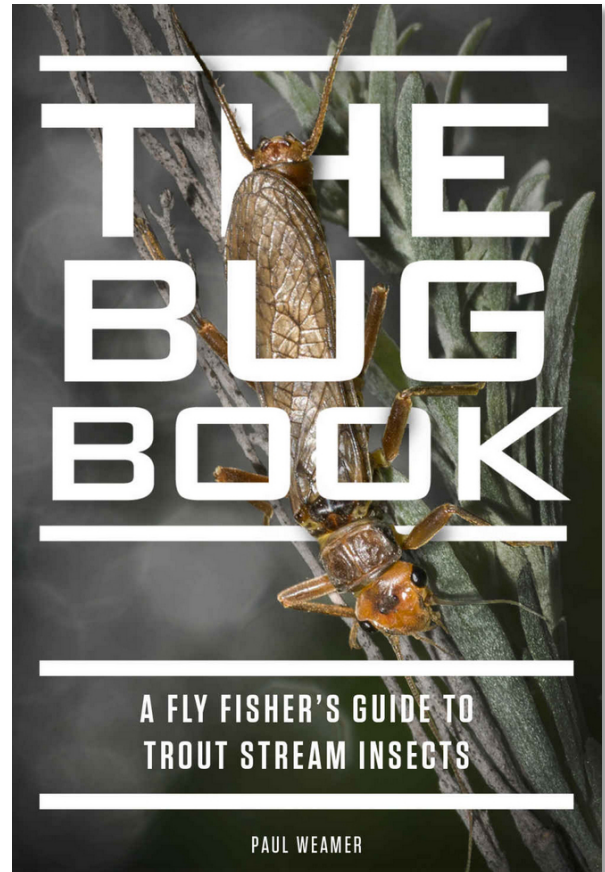


Both of these methods require a lot less fumbling through pockets or arranging stuff on your vest, saving valuable seconds separating the time you land

the fish and the time you let it swim away. And if your buddies can't live without an absolutely, scientifically verifiable measurement, just get new buddies. It's better for the fish that way.

Book Review - Trout Wrangler

The Bug Book: A Fly Fisher's Guide to Trout Stream Insects by Paul Weamer



This book is a complete guide to aquatic entomology for fly fishers, covering all the important insects and their imitations for the entire United States. Hatch charts, fly pattern recommendations, and important fishing strategies are included by Paul. This is the ideal reference for those just starting out or for those that want to have a more comprehensive view of the important insects.

Paul's book is written for new anglers who want a basic understanding of aquatic insects or more seasoned fly fishers who want to take their skills to the next level; those who want to know not only if their flies will work but why they'll work as well.

Members Catch - Bob O'Donnell

We had an explosion of member's photos this past month including both local and traveling anglers from our group. Can't even begin to fit them all in. And I would be remiss if I left out the photo of Marc Hutzell's son Grayson winning a fly rod at our BBQ picnic. You got to love that smile!



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.

Editor: Trout Wrangler
Phone: 410-733-0638
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October Caddis

Here in the East, the October caddis primarily hatches at night into very early morning.

Although it will take trout at any time of the day, fish this pattern early in the a.m. along the margins of fast water and bankside pockets. The insect prefers faster riffles and pocket water, making an imitation an important pattern on all of our boulder strewn, freestone rivers and streams.

<https://vimeo.com/50304327>



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