

# The Conservationist



PPTU.org

## Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

November 2013 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

## Its that time again!!! PPTU's Annual Fundraiser – November 20<sup>th</sup>

This is a great event that not only allows for some great socializing; it also gives our fellow members a chance to win some great prizes! This year we are offering our members a choice of prizes. We have 5 great gifts for 4 grand prize winners. The prize not selected will be raffled off at a later date. Each winner will select a prize in the order they were selected. So the first person selected gets a choice of 5 prizes. The second person selected will get a choice of 4 prizes etc. Winners for these prizes will be announced during our February 2014 meeting and folks do not need to be present to win.

### The prizes for this year's raffle are:

1. **West Branch Angler & Sportsmen's Resort Stay & Float Package For Two.** Three nights, 2 days float fishing on the West Branch of the Delaware River in Deposit NY (most meals included plus guide tips)
2. **Beaver Creek Guided Trip with James Harris** and one night in the cottage for two
3. **Rapidan River Trip and stay at Graves Mountain Lodge** for 2 for two nights
4. **Mike Heck Guided Day Trip** to a South Central Pennsylvania spring creek
5. **Waterproof Camera**

The November fund raiser will have some great bucket raffle and silent auction prizes. These prizes include fishing gear, books and artwork. As in years past, 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)

Our annual fall fundraiser also offers a great opportunity to interact with some of our very experienced and talented members in the form of a panel. PPTU has no shortage of expert experience when it comes to spending time on the water. These folks represent just a small section of the wealth of knowledge that PPTU has to offer. Members will have the chance to ask questions to a panel whose experience on the water and advice is always appreciated. This year we are fortunate to have a panel that includes Pati Nicholson, Jay Sheppard, Nick Weber and Bob Dietz. A wide array of subjects can be discussed. From the conservation efforts taken on by the chapter to the work we do as a philanthropic organization to swinging wet flies. All subjects are welcome and open for discussion.

PPTU's fall fundraiser plays a big part in raising the needed funds that directly affect some very important causes. PPTU supports conservation efforts through a variety of efforts from stream restoration to making sure our elected officials 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 entering a raffle to win some great prizes you can make a real difference in 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

Visit our website: [www.pptu.org](http://www.pptu.org)

## **OFFICERS and DIRECTORS 2013 – 2014**

President: Jim Robinson 301-490-5358  
Past-President: Dennis Covert 410-740-8337  
Vice-President: Bob O'Donnell 410-733-0638  
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Alan Burrows 443-610-7850  
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Northwest Branch: Jim Keil 301-588-8375  
Middle Patuxent: Jim Robinson 301-490-5358  
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### **Mid Atlantic Council Delegates:**

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Jim Greene 301-652-3848  
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## **Presidents' Column - James Robinson**

It's November already. DNR has been doing their fall stocking of rivers & runs across the state. I hope that you've had the opportunity to get out and wet a line.

If you missed the Chapter meeting on the 16th, you really missed an interesting presentation by Seth Coffman who oversees trout waters restoration in the Shenandoah Valley from Winchester south to Waynesboro. He explained how their working with government agencies & land owners to improve and restore the habitat for the native Brook Trout throughout the valley. Although these beautiful fish will never return to some of their former range, steps are being taken to return some of their spawning areas to them. The Potomac-Patuxent Chapter has a small committee that is beginning to develop ideas for similar projects on the Patuxent River. This may take years but if we do nothing, we'd not be doing our job.

October 20th was the Breaking Clays to Save the Bay skeet & trap shoot sponsored by the Izaak Walton League in Damascus. For several years, they have donated part of the proceeds from this friendly competition to PPTU for conservation projects. I thank you if you attended and hope you'll make plans to attend next year if you missed it. We appreciate this support from the League.

October 26<sup>th</sup> was the 4th Great Bratwurst Sale at Bass Pro. This one day fund raising activity has been very profitable for the Chapter and a great way to showcase our Chapter to the public. Two other activities that we support, Project Healing Waters and Casting for Recovery, also benefit.

And finally, on Oct 27<sup>th</sup> we sent a two person team – Jim Greco & Carl Smolka – to represent the chapter at the Casting for Recover Two-fly Competition on the Rose River in Syria, Virginia. CFR uses, among other things, fly fishing to assist breast cancer survivors during their recovery.

Coming up in November is the Chapter's annual fund raising meeting on the 20th. Join us at the 'flea market' if you have gear you'd like to sell or participate in the silent auction of great things from restaurant coupons to books to fishing gear to who knows what else. This will be followed by our "Panel of Experts", Chapter members with years of experience fishing both local & far flung waters. If you have a question (about fishing), come to the Schweinhaut Senior Center and get an answer.

November 23rd is the training for Trout in the Classroom teachers at the Robinson Nature Center in Columbia. If you're interested in learning more about this rapidly expanding program, you should try to attend. This is also a good time to sign up to help with distribution of the Trout eggs in January.

Finally, I need to advise you that we're starting to look into the monitoring of the Paint Branch along the ICC in Montgomery County. We've gotten word that the State Highway Administration may soon cease their monitoring of this Trout water. This is a preliminary query now but may pick up speed in 2014. This will be a good opportunity if you're interest in learning about macro-invertabrate, pebble counts & electro-shocking surveys.

Remember, no meeting in December.  
Until January... Tight Lines, Jim R 🐟

Jim Robinson  
President, PPTU



*The Paint Branch* by Jeff Myers

## 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](mailto:kenbowyer@verizon.net) 🐟

## Tackle and Tactics - Jay Sheppard

Our quarry inhabit a habitat that few of us have had more than summer or vacation exposures to: water. This universal solvent is a most interesting fluid when it is running down a stream. Casting your offering to a moving surface of water is part of the calculation, excitement and anticipation—are we going to get any response to what may or may not be lurking under that surface? I am no expert on fluid dynamics—not even sure I know what that even means! I do have more than 60 years of experience of watching fish and my offerings moving around a stream. I simply enjoy the challenges of casting a fly and trying to get it to drift over a trout.

In ponds or larger bodies of water, fish must move to find their food. In streams, the fish can remain in one spot and the water will sometimes bring food to them. Pretty simple concept that we all accept. The problem is trying to predict where and when the food will be delivered so we can match that expectation of our quarry with our own offering. There is not enough space to convey a minute fraction of the information one can glean from watching a stream to predict where will be the place to drop his fly or lure. Many books have been written on this topic alone that would fill a large library.

Bubbles and debris are the biggest indicators of where the food may be traveling down a stream. In turn, those markers can often point to places where trout may be waiting for their cafeteria line to produce the next meal. Also very important are structures within the stream and along the shore, as well as the actual course of the stream—is it straight or curving, deep or shallow, rocky or sandy, for example? A long straight stretch of water will have the food usually more uniformly distributed across the width of the stream. In a curve, both the water and the food try to move to the outside of the bend. This usually creates a deeper run along the outside that also favors trout with the security of depth. Both straight sections and bends in streams will usually have some telltale lines of bubbles as the myriad currents interact. Even when fishing nymphs or streamers, getting your fly to pass through those holding zones are going to produce more takes, while ignoring the bubbles, structures and other features of the stream can make for a long day with little action.

One can walk up the middle of a long straight stretch of a large river and may not flush any more trout than if he waded up one side or the other. However, on bends, it is usually very prudent to stay on the inside of the bend and fish across to the deeper, outer part of the bend. Flushing waiting trout is a major concern. Brown trout, especially, are territorial and flushing one can move it near another, just like moving a dog out of 'his' yard and into another dog's yard: there will be a lot of resentment and neither will be interested in feeding while interacting with the other. On some waters, the trout are very used to fishers and may simply move up against a rock as the fisher wades past less than 10 feet away. Big Hunting Creek has many

trout that just move a few inches to hide as one passes and will resume feeding when the fisher is often less than 20 feet away. This may happen on the Gunpowder or the lower Savage River, but other trout on the same rivers may move 20–60 feet away and become ensnared in territorial disputes with their neighbors. Moving very slowly helps keep these disturbances to a minimum. Leaving a large wake as one sashes across a stream usually are very counterproductive to finding a willing trout.

Just like us, trout want to expend the least amount of effort (i.e., swimming) for the most reward (calories). Laying in wait where the current is diminished is to be expected, unless there is a very large amount of food coming down the stream. I have seen a dozen or more 13–15" trout working side by side suspended only a foot or two below the surface intercepting the many dozens, if not hundreds, of drowned mayflies that are being swept into the head of the pool. Come back a few hours later, and one may be lucky to see even one trout, as the hatch is over. When the food supply diminishes, the trout wait in more secure and slower spots. As winter approaches, even less food is present in the stream, so the trout leave the productive runs and pocket water of the warmer months and move to deep pools. On those nice winter days when blue-winged olives and little stoneflies are very active, the trout may move back into some runs and faster water for a few hours in the middle of the day. 🌸

## Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

In case you are not on the PPCTU list serve where such reports are usually posted, here is a copy of my report regarding the electro shocking survey in late September on the Patuxent tailwater.

DNR-fisheries, PPTU, and others from WSSC and Council of Governments met at 9 AM on Sept. 27 below Brighton Dam. We started just below the pipeline crossing below the dam and made two passes with the shocking equipment. We then moved down to Haviland Mill bridge and did two passes starting right below the bridge and working upstream with the same crew. We finished about 1:15 PM. All trout captured were measured for length and weight.

WSSC had turned off the turbines in the dam, and the flow was down to ~20–21 cfs (had been ~80 cfs for past month or so). This reduction in flow also resulted in a lower temperature of the water, from 68–70° down to 66–68°. Water clarity was off a bit: maybe 12–15" of good visibility. Both sections sampled were the same ones that have been sampled for the past decade or so. Each is about 200 yards long.

Here are the gross results:

	Browns		Rainbows		Total
	AD	YOY	AD	YOY	
Dam	4	4	0	25	33
Bridge	9	0	1	1	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>44</b>
Species Total	17		27		

The largest trout was a brown at the dam section: 13", 12 oz. The origin of the Young of Year (YOY) was either the May TIC releases or the DNR release of fingerlings in mid-June. TIC released only a few hundred rainbows. DNR released 5000 rainbow fingerlings and 1500 browns with about equal split between the dam and bridge. These YOY were very impressive in their sizes, with some approaching 9+ inches already. Body condition was excellent for the trout below the dam, and the trout at the bridge were in good condition. The adult and YOY trout were all in good color.

To refresh folks minds, PPTU stocked DNR-provided adult trout in Feb & March this year; mostly rainbows. As can be seen from the above numbers, adult rainbows did not show up very much in our sampling.

Also found in the survey were 2 YOY walleye, the largest was about 12–13". There were hundreds of white suckers, fallfish, yellow perch, with smaller numbers of such species as white perch, red horse suckers, carp, largemouth bass, sunfish, and a wide variety of small 'bait fish'. Some of the white suckers were likely in the 2-lb size range! When they splashed in front of you or bumped your leg, you knew they were nice sized fish!

Last year, if I remember rightly, we had ONE trout captured in these surveyed sections. So this is the very best showing we have ever had.

Controlling the water temps has worked well this summer. Not perfect, but fairly well! As some may remember, we had some work on the dam in July that resulted in water of 82° being released for about ~8 hours. Some of us figured that the trout largely succumbed to those high temps, as the temp shot from ~68° to 82° in less than 45 minutes and then plummeted back to about 65° when it was finished! Clearly many trout made it through that brief hot spell!

I am at a real loss as to why the numbers below the dam were so much higher than the numbers at the bridge. There were only two riffles in the upper section but many riffles and large woody debris in the section at the bridge. In the past, there did seem to be more macro invertebrates in the large riffles over the pipeline and less in the riffles at the bridge, but I am not sure if those are the main reasons for the differences in numbers and condition in the YOY we captured. More adult browns were found at the bridge vs. below the dam.



In sum, we found enough trout in the Patuxent below Brighton Dam to make fishing there the rest of the fall and into the winter reasonably rewarding; at least for anyone working a stream this close to the cities! DNR does not have any more trout for stocking in this reach this fall. Some short video clips are posted on the PPTU web site.

On October 9, 200 adult rainbows were float stocked in the Delayed Harvest section of the Middle Patuxent 🌸

### Congratulations in Order!!!

Congratulations to Larry Vawter and crew on their *"4th year of service"* to the Project Healing Waters program at Fort Meade, MD. Congrates to Larry Vawter, Pati Nicholson, Carl Smolka, Harry Steiner, Dillon White, Dave Buck, Mike Shylindski, and Walt Moorse. Way to go guys! 🌸

## Raffle Information - Bruce Eberle

The annual PPTU Conservation and Education Fundraiser is fast approaching! At the November meeting there will be a silent auction and bucket raffles for fly-tying materials, flies, Orvis reel spools, gift certificates to your favorite places, etc.

In addition, PPTU will hold another flea market. So go thru your fishing closet and pull out those outgrown items, or the rods/reels you have upgraded and bring them to the flea market. You price them and 15% of the sale price goes to the PPTU Chapter to assist our conservation and educational outreach activities!

The Grand Raffle tickets will be on sale. This year there will be five [5] prizes: four destination trips for two persons and a water proof digital camera to capture the memories of a lifetime. Only four [4] winners will be drawn at PPTU February meeting. That means that each winner will have a choice of at least two remaining prizes. Winners need not be present to win!

Please let me know if you have any suggestions or donations for silent auction prizes or for items for the bucket raffles. If we know about items you are planning to bring to the flea market, we can share that information prior to the meeting! 🍁

## Go Box - Carl Smolka

Lake Frank is only a few miles from my home, is normally unoccupied and offers a good grass background area near the dam to practice fly casting and perhaps catch a few bass or bluegills. As practice before the 2fly Casting for Recovery challenge, I took advantage of a great weather day and headed out to work on my casting. I'm also now tending toward minimalist fishing where I leave my vest in the Jeep, grab a lanyard with a couple of tools and a small fly box and that is the essence of this question. What would be in your "get up and go" box of flies? Keep in mind, I am a student of the Greco school of anything less than 3000 flies is inadequate, so coming up with only a

dozen for the Go-box is a challenge and lots of parameters to consider, so I will suggest these and only these constraints: a dozen flies for fresh water fishing in Maryland any time of the year.



Here are my initial thoughts.

- #12 Green Weenie*
- #10 Pink San Juan Worm*
- #18 Copper Wire Brassie*
- #16 Flash Back Pheasant Tail*
- #10 Black Woolly Bugger*
- #10 Pax Special*
- #16 Tan Hair Wing Caddis*
- #12 Renegade*
- #20 Griffith's Gnat*
- #14 Black Gorilla Glue Ant*
- #10 Partridge and Orange*

Yep, I only have 11 on my list and almost added Erin Block's #14 High Lake Larry (Fly Tyer – Autumn 2013) as it did catch fish today, but I only have one day's data.

What would be the dozen in your Go-box? 🍁

**Note: Be the first PPTU member to comment and send their "Go Box" list of 12 flies to the editor and receive a free prize!**

*What! No Parachute Adams??? Somewhere in time and space you're ruffling Leonard Halladay's feathers Carl. - TroutWrangler*

*Leonard Halladay – accomplished fly fisherman and inventor of the "Adams" dry fly. 🍁*

## Techniques – “Sweep Set” - Phil Monahan, MidCurrent

This is a useful technique when you’re either fishing downstream or have a lot of slack on the water—for instance when you’re making slack-line casts, such as a pile cast or a curve cast. Because there’s a lot of slack on the water, if you simply raise your rod tip, all you’re doing is picking up the slack. Depending on how much slack you have between you and your fly, you might never even put any tension on the fly itself this way. No tension on the fly often means no hookup.

The sweep set uses the water tension on the line to apply pressure. You’re not trying to pick up the slack; instead you’re counting on the tension along the line to transfer energy down to the fly. Think about how the current pushing on your line makes your fly swing at the end of a drift. It’s the same principle at work in the sweep set. By pulling on the line, you’re kind of creating an artificial current.

To make a sweep set, you sweep your rod horizontally toward the bank behind you, keeping the rod parallel to the water’s surface. At the same time, haul the line with your non-rod-hand. Always sweep to your downstream side. Otherwise, you’ll drag the line across your body, where it can get snagged by your vest/jacket or any tools you have hanging from it. Once the fish is hooked, you can raise your rod and start stripping like a madman to pick up the slack and establish a connection to the fish.

Because most of us have been taught to raise our rod tip to set the hook, employing the sweep set requires concentration and discipline. I usually make a mental note at the end of every cast to remind myself what I should do if I get a strike.



Give it a try and improve your hookups! 🐟

## November Outing – Steelhead! - Ken Bower

The November Steelhead Outing to Erie, PA is set from Sunday, November 10 thru Wednesday November 13. The plan is to drive up early Sunday, stopping for breakfast on the way, fish Sunday afternoon, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday morning before heading home Wednesday afternoon. To sign up for this outing, please complete the [liability release form](#) found on PPTU’s web site ASAP so that I can try to assist in pairing up people if that's needed. 🐟

## Good Laughs! Hank Patterson – Your Fly Fishing Guide - TroutWrangler

I shared this with the members before but thought it would be fun to toss it back out there again, especially since Hank just released a box set of his guiding adventures. Not sure what to get your fishing buddy for the holidays? Pick this up.

For those of you unfamiliar with Hank Patterson, I’ll fill you in. Hank Patterson is a self proclaimed Fly Fishing genius. His 2.5 years of experience and twenty seven viewings of A River Runs Through It on BluRay have given him little knowledge and great confidence. If you’re looking for a fly fishing guide who will occupy your personal space and fill your head with misinformation, Hank Patterson is your man!

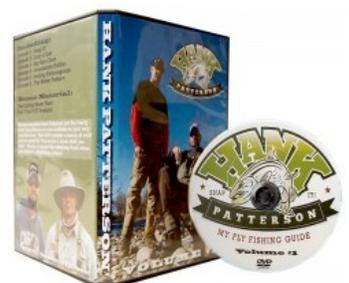
The first video of Hank’s that I ever watched left me on the floor laughing. If you fly fish, have used a guide, or just like off beat humor, take a look at the The Reel Adventures of Hank Patterson:

<http://www.troutjousters.com/hank-patterson/>

or Hank’s new web site:

<http://hankpatterson.com/>

- Tight Lines!



**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](http://www.pptu.org)

**Reminder**

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!*



*Josh Collette of Rockville, MD and friend Kyle Kelly with a nice pair of NY Chromers pulled from the Oswego River.*

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**

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