

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

February 2020 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

“Maryland Trout Stocking”

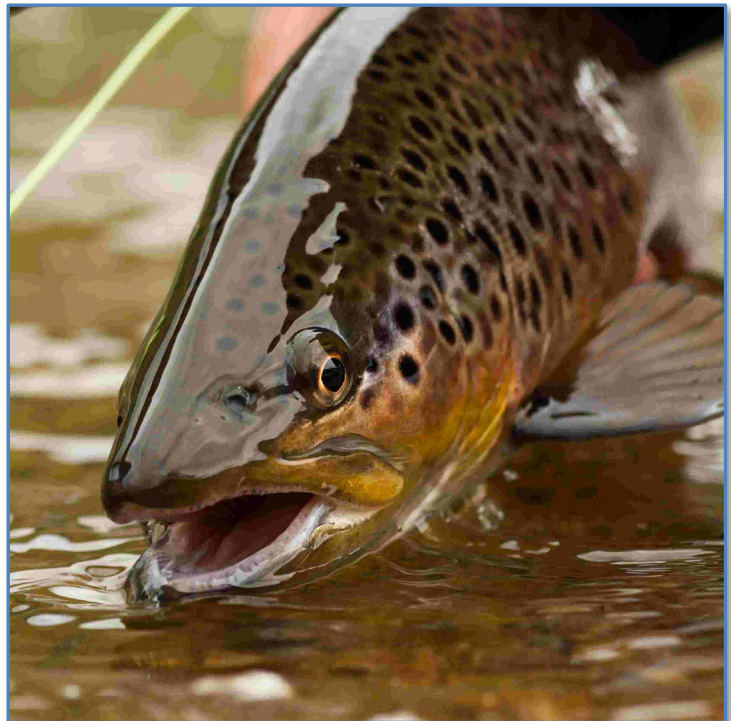
Maryland DNR

February 19th, 2020

Our guest speaker at February's meeting will be a representative from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' trout stocking program. (Information at <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/trout/stocking.aspx>) Come out to hear more about how the program works, why certain streams get stocked before others, and how to help out with the local stocking efforts. Have you ever wondered why some streams get more trout than others? Or why some areas are catch-and-release, while others allow you to keep two or even five trout a day? Come to the meeting and get some answers to these and other questions about the stocking program.

Hope to see you there!

– *Karan Singh*



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

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

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Presidents' Column - Randy Dwyer



I am writing this column on the heels of our January 2020 Kickoff chapter meeting and want to say thank you to everyone who made it a great success. First and foremost a thank you to our tiers who came from near and far to share their expertise with us. We had Richard Farino, Ellis Ward and Morgan Eddy from District Angling, James Harris of Beaver Creek Fly Shop, Raymond Collette tying on behalf of Project Healing Waters at Ft. Meade and David Selmer and Dave Manco of L.L. Bean. Each of these outdoors companies are dedicated to our needs and deserve our support. Please visit them and tell them you are a PPTU member and appreciate their ongoing support of our chapter.

We also had our very own PPTU tiers: Peter Yarrington, Sean Beck and Carson Wargo. Their tying tables were surrounded by visitors throughout the evening and they help make the kickoff so special. A special note of thanks goes to Karan Singh, our PPTU Speaker Coordinator, who organizes our monthly to bring you the very best speakers on topics of interest to all. Please reach out to Karan if you have an idea or suggestion for a future meeting: singhkaranr@yahoo.com.

Maryland DNR's Trout Stocking Program

Our February meeting will be of interest to all chapter members as we will have a member of Maryland's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to tell us about their trout stocking program. As you know, later this month spring stocking will be underway across the state. Where they stock, how many, stocking within the PPTU chapter's region and streams and creeks they avoid stocking are all topics to be addressed. This meeting will go into the reasoning behind the decision on this massive undertaking across our state.

"Last Call"

February is also the beginning of our Fly Tying and Rod Building Classes. Both classes will begin soon and let this announcement be the "Last Call" for anyone wanting to learn fly tying from our resident expert, Bob Dietz and/or rod building from Larry Vawter and Michael Abramowitz. Heck, you can even sign up for both classes if you want and be

ready for spring fishing! Visit www.pptu.org for more info (ASAP!)

Speaking of supporting the outdoor businesses in our region, it was an honor for PPTU to be invited to Bass Pro's Guide and Outfitters Event Day this past January. Our members tied flies, answered questions about fly fishing and promoted our chapter. If you know of a chance to do the same at a local fair or community event, please let me know and we'll do our best to be there.

PPTU Member & Community Outreach


Your chapter is planning many activities of interest for you to take advantage of this spring and into the fall. Please be on the lookout for social gatherings, Fly Fishing 101 classes, Outings, support for local charities, Trout in the Classroom and opportunities to help preserve our local cold-water fisheries. These cold waters need our attention and support. Only by being good environmental stewards will we help retain our area's cold-water fisheries. Please lend a hand whenever possible and let's make a positive impact for future generations to enjoy.

Randy Dwyer
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.



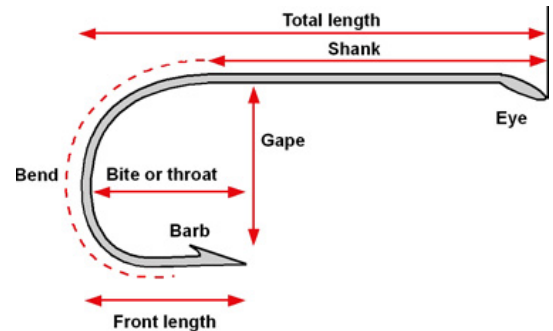
Contact Ken at 301-627-7154 or by E-mail:
kenbowyer@verizon.net 

All About Hooks - Michael Abramowitz

With the upcoming PPTU fly tying class and the recent FLY TYING EXTRAVAGANZA, this article is devoted to briefly discussing fish hooks. (Excluding commercial treble hooks and salt water hooks.)

In Forbes magazine (August 5, 2005), a panel of editors, readers and, experts ranked "the fish hook as the 19th most important tool in time into the impact on human civilization".

Archeologists have found fish hooks made from shells dating back many thousands of years. Early fish hooks have been made from bone, horns, stone, and early metals such as bronzed brass. Other metal hooks appeared for the first time around the 17th century. In the 1950's people started using high carbon steel to make fish hooks. Attempts were made to cover the metals with materials to be resistant to corrosion.



Readers are well aware of the different names given to parts of hook, The point is the sharp part of the hook that penetrates the flesh of a fish, the barb is the part that points to the opposite direction of the point to prevent the fish falling off the hook, and the eye which has a loop too which a fine line (tippet) is attached. The gape is the distance between the points in the shank. Fly tyers are fully aware of the different sizes, shapes and names given to hooks. Hooks for dry flies, nymphs, streamers and many other different patterns of flies. When targeting certain species of fish, one must remember to the appropriate size hook. Shad for example may be a larger fish, but the mouth is relatively smaller and you may choose a smaller hook.

Modern hooks may be sharpened chemically, and cost more.

Sizes of hooks are not standardized by manufacturers. The smallest hooks are designated by

higher numbers. The smallest size is #32. A size #20, approximately 3 to 5 mm. Larger hooks have low numbers to designate size but are not all equal. An Orvis # 8 is a different size compared to an Eagle Claw size #8.

If you examine the sales section of the Fly Shop's website on hooks you'll be amazed at the variability of hooks available.

Datus Prosper in his book, "What the TROUT said, about the Design of trout flies and other mysteries" includes a chapter devoted to hooks. In Chapter 5 of his book, "The hook problem", he discusses the Redditch scale of hook sizes. There is a section on hook strength, and he discusses the concept of "hooking leverage". Prosper includes a table from manufactures including Mustad, Partridge, Wright & McGill, Viellard-Migron & Cie, Orvisand, & Tiemco where he discusses strengths and weights. The chapter also has diagrams on the mechanics of hook leverage and hook failure which can be a guide for choosing the correct hook for your flies.

"How I would have cherished a book like this in my formative years." Vincent C. Marinaro writes in the book introduction.

I highly recommend that Prosper's book finds a place on your book shelf.

Shad Night 2020! **- NCCTU**

Shad Night 2020 is moving a stone's throw away from where the shad swim. Join us at DC's Aquatic Resources Education Center (AREC) along the banks of the Anacostia for a special evening. This is home turf for our featured speaker, Danny Ryan, the head of fisheries research for the Department of Energy and Environment, Fisheries and Wildlife Division. The facility includes an impressive aquarium array with most of DC's resident species represented.

Please take a minute to circle Wed., February 19 on the calendar. That's when the local angling community will meet again for NCC-TU's annual preseason focus on all things shad.

Aquatic Resources Education Center
1500 Anacostia Dr, Washington, DC 20020.

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**

If you are not on my list of volunteers to help float stock, plant trees, or other stream project, please send me an email (jaymsheppard95@gmail.com). Float stocking requires chest waders and experience in wading streams—over slippery rocks and logs, for example. We pull boxes for up to a couple miles down or up a stream, so this work requires a bit of stamina. When we get dates for stocking or plan other projects, we alert those on this list. If you can help, great, but if not, maybe next time!

We have heard from WSSC that all the repairs to Brighton Dam have been completed. We have not determined what sort of stocking we may do this spring. The dissolved oxygen levels in the summer releases will be next to zero. So we will not expect any trout to survive the summer months until we get this problem fixed. We are working on a solution, but time and money are not on our side at this point.

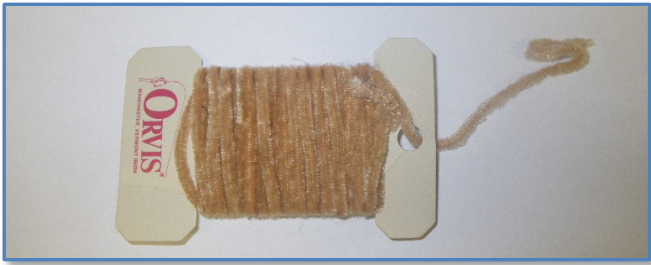
Preseason stocking of local special regulation waters can be expected before the end of this month. Get ready, spring trout fishing is almost upon us!

"Here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling."

~ William Shakespeare
Twelfth Night
Act II, Scene 1, Line 2

Fly Tying Tip - Jay Sheppard

I am stingy with my materials. I do not like having small, unusable lengths of chenille, yarn and similar materials cluttering up my tying work bench and eventually having to toss them. The solution is simple. Do not cut off any lengths from the cards on which they are wrapped. I feed about 4-5" of the chenille through the hole in the card before I tie each fly. It is then very easy to wind around the hook. Once in a while, I fail to extend enough material through the hole. In such situations, I can usually back the material around the rear of the card and then continue wrapping. If there is no hole in the card, I just punch one through using my scissors. Try the hole in the card. No fuss, no muss!



Upcoming Water Quality Monitoring Classes - Cathy Wiss

For more than 25 years, the Audubon Naturalist Society has been teaching the natural history of aquatic ecology and training volunteer stream monitors to track the health of our region's streams. Learn from the experts: study stream science in our introductory classes, and you just might be inspired to become a stream monitor yourself! Our advanced classes are perfect for those interested in deepening their knowledge about biological stream monitoring and are taught by our Maryland Biological Stream Survey-certified instructor Cathy Wiss.



ENJOY
LEARN
PROTECT

Registration & Fee Information

Registration is required: register online at www.anshome.org/adults. The classes are open to anyone 10 years and older. Except for Macro ID Review & Quiz, prices for all classes are \$15 ANS Members/\$25 Nonmembers. Waivers are available

for those currently in the ANS monitoring program and for middle school and high school students earning SSL credit through their school systems. Email cathy.wiss@anshome.org for details.

Shop Amazon Smile! - PPTU

Don't forget to shop Amazon Smile! Add the *Potomac-Patuxent Chapter* as your charity of choice to your Amazon account. If your company purchases through Amazon, ask them to help support us as well. Its free money in support of the chapter.



Other Fishing Tactics - Jay Sheppard

I have done very little spin fishing for trout and bass in the past decade or three. Many years ago, that was about the only way I fished. As I got more and more interested in fly fishing, that became my dominant manner of fishing. I still retain my ultralight spinning rod and reel. I have a few 'old timer' suggestions for those who like this form of fishing that should still work today.

Ultralight spinning allows me to toss a very light lure with good accuracy into tight pockets or close to cover where the trout or bass might be lying in wait for a 'protein packet' to pass. Line of about 4-lb test is ideal, as it is usually strong enough to hold a good sized fish and still allow casting of lures in the ¼ ounce or smaller range with some distance and accuracy. One very quickly learns with this light line that the fisher cannot rear back to set the hook, as with much heavier test lines without losing the lure on the fish or snag.

Although I would use them, my tackle boxes held fewer and fewer of the spinners and other sinking lures readily available. Such lures required constant cranking on the reel to keep them from catching the

bottom. My preferences in later years went to those lures that could float or suspend themselves when they were not being retrieved and then dive when retrieved. The various minnows, crayfish, frog and similar lure imitations could be cast up stream of some obstruction such as an overhanging branch and then allowed to float under it before starting the retrieve. If one has ever seen an injured or sick fish, they do not have the energy to move continually. They move a few inches and drift, move a few inches and drift...etc.

About 25–30 years ago a state record brown trout (not in Maryland) was caught on a dead drifted, floating minnow lure. The fish was downstream of a power plant that in the summer sucked thousands of thread-fin shad into the turbines where they would then float along the surface for a mile or so downstream—like mayfly spinners. The trout were simply sucking in the floating and stunned shad as they drifted across its feeding station. The fisher simply had to cast his floating minnow out in front of the trout and hope that it would float to the trout at the proper moment. In actual fact, it took several mornings to get the fish and the lure timed correctly before it was hooked. I have seen floating/twitching lures work in the Savage, North Branch and Gunpowder Rivers with good effect, especially when the flows are relatively high. (None of these rivers have the floating shad, but they do have some big browns looking for an easy meal.)



Another lure that I see rarely used in recent years but yields good results is the old Lazy Ike or flatfish. These will dive and vibrate when under a tight line, which can be varied depending upon the current and other factors. 'Hanging' one of these funny lures just upstream of a large log jam or other deep cover can often entice a big brown to come out and give chase. This is especially useful in really cold water where the lure is essentially held in the same spot for many minutes, only being vibrated or twitched every few seconds. This lure comes in very small sizes for fly rods, too. As with any fishing, cold water means SLOW retrieves to allow the fish the time to recognize the lure and then to give chase.

Ultralight spin fishing is a lot of fun. One does not need a zillion choices of patterns like fly fishers carry, especially for bass. Always have Polaroid glasses to see the fish chasing the lure. Keep varying the speed and other action to find the combination that yields solid strikes. Go ultralight! It is also a great step towards learning how to fly fish, if one is not already a fly fisher.

Favorite Fly Tying Channels - Sean Beck

I had a couple people ask about my favorite tying channels on YouTube, so I'll share them here.

Gunnar Brammer -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheTardyDuck1>

Fly Fish Food -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/frycdf>

Kelly Galloup -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheSlideinn>

Tightline Productions -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/tightlinevideo>

Brian Wise -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/flyfishingtheozarks>

And, our own Bob Dietz chimed in with a few others that are quite good as well. Davie McPhail is a master and one of my favorites – Bob O.

Davie McPhail -

<https://www.youtube.com/user/DavieMcPhail>

In the Riffle –

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0gE6I-ipn32oawn5lMrIsg>

Holsinger's Fly Shop -

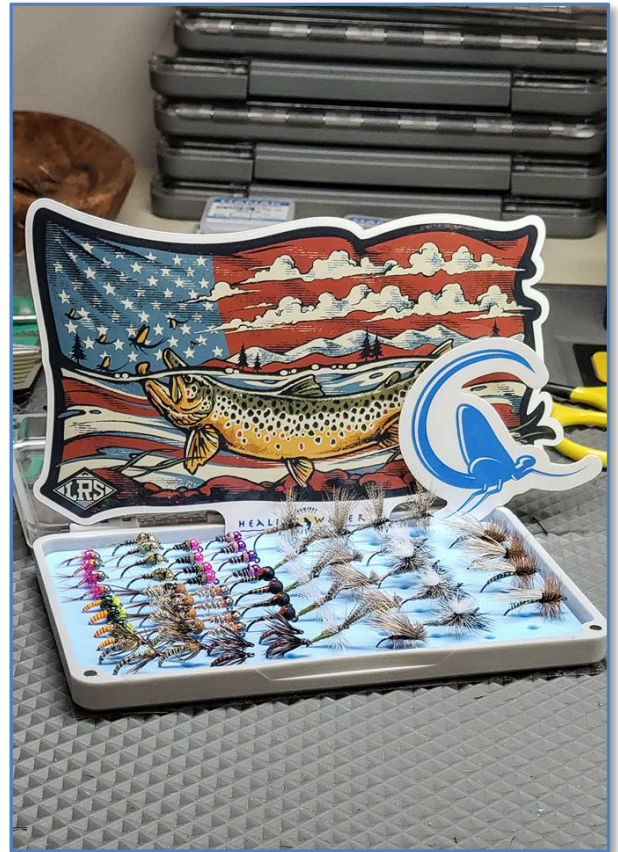
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdGM_wL5jLWsm8ho5f0nD4A

Request for Fly Donations for Scouts - Bob O'Donnell

We are requesting PPTU members that attend our February meeting to bring a fly or two to donate to our upcoming Scout merit badge effort. We're looking for a variety of flies for the scouts. Here's a shirt list: Griffiths Gnat; Beetle or Ant, San Juan Worm, Woolly Bugger, Bully Bluegill Spider, Mop Fly with Legs, Mickey Finn. Tie one or buy one and bring them to the next meeting!

Members Catch - PPTU

Nice to see so many people attend our fly tying meeting in January. Below is one happy person – the winner of the beautiful Project Healing Waters box of custom tied flies by Ray Collette. Congratulations goes out to Ron Briggs!



PPTU members are tying more flies than fishing this month.

Get out there and start fishing folks!

I'm going this weekend!!!



PPTU Volunteer - Bob Kaiser tying flies at a recent Bass Pro Shop event.

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: Bob O'Donnell

Phone: 410-733-0638

Email: TroutWrangler@Yahoo.com



Hackled Frenchie

The Frenchie is a great fly and a favorite amongst several of our members. If you don't have any in your fly box, tie a few up, buy a few, or persuade your friends to give you a couple. The audio on this video is a little low, but the instructions aren't too bad. It is your basic Frenchie with a hot spot and hackle collar added to the pattern.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeZfdh1uoh4>



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