

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

January 2022 • Published monthly except June, July, August and December

“Fly Fishing Safety” with PPTU’s Mike Abramowitz

Feb 16th, 2022 at 7:00PM

For our February meeting, we'll have a talk with PPTU's Dr. Mike Abramowitz on fly fishing safety, both on and off the water. Mike will tell us about how we can be safe before leaving home, during travel to and from the fishing spot, while out and about on the stream, and even when traveling to far away fisheries. Mike will cover topics like: the weather, communication with fishing buddies or folks back home, removing the hooks that get more than the fish, stream-specific germs & diseases to watch out for, hypothermia, altitude sickness, long-distance travel, how to help you get home safely to fish another day, and much more.

A retired anesthesiologist, Mike finds fly fishing to be a challenging and exciting sport. When not fishing, he spends time volunteering with Project Healing Waters at the DC Veterans Hospital, and with Casting for Recovery. Mike has written a number of articles that were published in the “Mid Atlantic Fly Fishing Guide”. He is an active fly tier, fly designer, and rod builder, and loves spending time outdoors (even when not fishing).



– *Karan Singh*

Monthly Chapter Meetings – Virtual Until Further Notice

Time and Day: 7:00 PM unless a new time is stated, Third Wednesday except June, July, August and December

Virtual Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87000587056?pwd=TEtWSm9JVGC2VEJEdFJRXPQGUh0dz09>

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

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Patuxent: Jay Sheppard

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Contact Us:

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Presidents' Column - Joe Taylor



As I get up to speed in my new role, it never seems to amaze me the great work many dedicated chapter members do to help us be successful. I wanted to highlight a few members this month. As you might already know, we have a team who is hard at work trying to help restore the Brighton Dam watershed with oxygen rich water. We still have a lot of work ahead, but I wanted to thank Jay Sheppard, Alan Burrows and the rest of the committee who have been working tirelessly on this project. As a result of their hard work, hopefully we will have another great stretch of water to chase trout throughout the year.

I also wanted to take a moment to recognize Bob O'Donnell for his relentless "behind the scene" work on so many items including the "Conservationist. Bob has been the editor, designer, task master and more to keep our flagship publication looking professional, interesting and delivered to the chapter in a timely manner. This is just one of many of the ways Bob helps the chapter month in and month out. Bob, we couldn't do it without you, thank you!

Even though some may think we are in the doldrums of winter, the excitement surrounding winter fishing is alive as well at PPTU. Whether it's trying your luck at the Gunpowder, taking advantage of the consistent water temps of spring creeks or taking a road trip to try your luck at Steelhead fishing, many members are braving the conditions to enjoy the opportunity to get out on the water. I would encourage you to participate on the PPTU Listserv, Facebook page or refer to our PPTU Website to keep updated on what's happening with the chapter. Don't forget to dress warm, keep an extra change of clothes in the car and to be extra safe.

As I mentioned last month, I am still working with the board and other members of the chapter to pave a clear path forward with PPTU. As we move forward, one thing has become crystal clear to me. We have chapter members who have worked relentlessly for many years on behalf of PPTU. They have the insight and knowledge that we, as a collect group, benefit from without probably realizing how impactful they have on our success over the years. To that point, I would like to ask every member to determine how you might help keep our chapter

strong in the years to come. We need your help! One of my goals is to have co-chairs for just about everything we need to do as a chapter. If you have an interest in helping with our membership, learning more about trout stocking, how to strengthen our social media presence and/or just about anything else that comes to mind, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. All help is welcomed! I'm looking forward to working with everyone, learning each of you and doing my best to help keep our chapter one of the strongest in the country. Until next month, try your luck at some wintertime fishing. Best of luck!

Joe Taylor
President, PPTU



PPTU Mentor Program Beginners & Beyond

PPTU 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. all on 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 us by e-mail: mentor@pptu.org

Live(stream) Fly Tying At The AMFF - American Museum of Fly Fishing

The American Museum of Fly Fishing will host a day of fly tying on Saturday, February 12th. Beginners and seasoned anglers alike will enjoy watching experts Kelly Bedford, Paul Sinicki, Mike

Rice, and Rich Strolis demonstrating their skills and sharing their knowledge from the Selch-Bakwin Fly Room at the Museum.



Best of all, this event can be enjoyed in one of two ways. AMFF will be livestreaming the fly tying on their Facebook page, or if you're in the area stop by and watch in person.

Kelly and Paul will get things started at 10:30 a.m., while Mike and Rich will kick off their segment at 1 p.m. (both times are Eastern). Whether it's in Manchester or virtually, feel free to join in!



THE
AMERICAN MUSEUM
OF FLY FISHING

https://www.facebook.com/americanmuseumofflyfishing?mc_cid=c1afecfa35&mc_eid=b688bef123

If you spot poaching please call or text:

Maryland Wildlife Crime Stoppers
At
443-433-4112



Add this number to your cell phone contact list!



Of Wood, Bamboo, Brass and Silk - Kevin Haney

Physical objects have the power to connect us with the past. Something of the history of an object and those who used it can, with repeated and long-term use, become infused into the object itself. If you are sensitive to such things, that history can be felt. One does not have to be a mystic or a metaphysician to appreciate this fact, you only have to be open to it. I'm among the small contingent of anglers that prefer to fish with antique fly fishing tackle. While admittedly not always the most efficient tool for the job, if someone were to ask me why I prefer to fish this way, the best answer I could give was that it puts me in touch, on both a conscious and subconscious level, with the fishermen, fish, and experiences that are infused into the history and lifetime of the tackle. Modern tackle, lacking this rich history and connection to other people and other places, are to me just cold and impersonal products of the industrial laboratory.



The rod is the central component of any fly fishing outfit, whether antique or modern. If it does not function well, it doesn't matter what reel, line, or fly you use. For the purposes of this discussion, I'll talk about "antique rods", which will include both bamboo rods and the solid wood rods that predate bamboo, usually made from greenheart or lancewood. Bamboo rods really started to come into their own at the beginning of the 20th century and with that, wood rods became less and less common, although they were still made up until the 1930s. And please keep in mind that what I say is just my

own personal opinion, not meant to offend. Many, many more people use graphite rods than use antique ones, so I realize that my views represent a distinct minority.

Modern graphite and fiberglass rods are born of the chemical laboratory, with any one being pretty much identical to the next one. Bamboo and wood are natural materials. And because they are natural, each rod is unique and has something of a "personality." To put it in more ineffable terms, a properly made bamboo rod has a soul. Every one of them carries life with it. That bamboo plant grew on a hill in China and waved this way and that in the wind, no two stems exactly the same. It was cut and carried to a warehouse and dried, again no two the same. Then it was handed to a builder and he or she split and milled or planed it to shape, with every one being unique. That gives each rod an individual character. Antique rods are original art, like an oil painting. Modern rods are more akin to mass produced posters or prints.

On a more practical level, antique rods are much more pleasant to cast at short to medium distances, and they are more sensitive in transmitting the feel of the strike and the fish than is graphite. I like the extra weight of bamboo and wood (and we're talking mere ounces here) verses graphite. It feels more substantial in hand while casting and fighting fish and provides better tactile feedback on what the rod and line are doing, especially if it has a solid wood handle instead of cork. Antique rods feel like an extension of my arm, a reflexive, extra muscle. Graphite (and fiberglass to a somewhat lesser extent) feels like a piece of equipment or a tool.

Antique rods look like the shiny mahogany boats from yesterday, while graphite looks like the new fiberglass speedboat. Antique rods are like a fine handmade wood bow, ready to take the buck as it approaches the stand, while graphite is like a 30.06 from 200 yards, dropping the buck with cold efficiency. Antique rods are the seasoned old fisherman, comfortable with his capabilities and satisfied with the simple things, while graphite is the youngster, eager to catch the most fish, as fast as possible. Antique rods are at home on the cabin wall, holding memories of past days on the water, while graphite sits uncomfortably in the closet, waiting only to be fished. Like food, for some, it's a rich experience of many senses to be slowly savored--for others, it's about getting full fast.



The brass and steel period-correct reels that you would use on an antique rod, while heavier, balance out the heavier rod and just feel and look right. Modern aluminum reels do not do that. And balance is the key to a good casting and fishing outfit. If the balance is there, any extra weight from antique gear will hardly be noticed. And, to me, there's just something aesthetically wrong and cognitively dissonant about putting a modern reel on an antique rod, or vice versa.



All antique rods were designed and made to be used with silk lines—plastic lines didn't come into widespread use until the 1950s. The silk line is an extension of the antique rod, much more pliable than plastic and smaller in diameter for the same line weight. And while they do require some extra care, drying them out and cleaning them off after each use and dressing them with line dressing before the next use, that extra effort pays off with a smaller line that cuts the wind better, is more accurate and stealthier than plastic, and is just more of a joy to cast. On the practical side, a good silk line, properly cared for, should last at least 20 years while you might be lucky to get 5 years regular use from a plastic line.

In the end, it all comes down to personal choice and the enjoyment you get from using the tackle you prefer. For me, when I catch a fish on an antique rod, I'm connected to a wild, living creature by a rod and a line made from something that was wild and living too. I'm participating in the continuation of a long tradition, by holding and fishing a thing of beauty and grace that people have been using for perhaps the past hundred years. And, though it might sound a little "out there", I feel that the rod, reel and line I'm using are infused with the memories of all of the fish they caught in the past, and all of the many fishermen that used the tackle. It connects me to the greater whole of a long and storied angling history, making me feel part of something that started long before I was born and that will continue long after I'm gone. And that, I think, is quite a lot to get from the simple act of standing in a stream and trying to hook a fish on a fly.



I would like to start a special interest group of folks in the Central Maryland who are interested in collecting and fishing antique fly fishing tackle. Some of the things we could do are learning to better cast antique rods, refinish silk lines, basic rod and reel repair, making furred leaders, and outings using antique tackle. If you are interested, contact me at kevinhaney1@outlook.com.

Moved?

Changed Email?

If you have retired, moved, or changed your email address, please let us know. Send an email to membership.pptu@gmail.com or go "old school" and drop a postcard in the mail (see address on last page).

Heidlersburg Fishing Show - Jerry Gladfelter, Adams County TU

The 6th Annual Heidlersburg Fishing Show will take place on Saturday & Sunday, February 26-27, 2022 at the Fire Company. ACTU will be having a table at the show. If you're in the area, stop by and visit our TU friends from PA. They'll have a booth.

New and used fishing merchandise, fresh and salt water tackle, charter captains, raffles, kids casting competitions, seminars, food, and good company!

The show is at the Heidlersburg Fire Company, 2720 Heidlersburg Road, Gettysburg (1 mile west of the Rt 15/Rt 234 intersection).

Maryland Fly Fishing Trail - Rich Batiuk

What is the Maryland Fly Fishing Trail?

A virtual trail which will lead fly fishers of all ages and levels of experience on a journey across all of Maryland's counties, (re) discovering "America in Miniature" for themselves.

The first in the nation state-wide fly fishing trail crossing all 23 Maryland counties and Baltimore City.

Leading existing and new fly fishers to a diversity of fishing opportunities for catching many different species of fish year round.

Introduce participants to nearby public access points, support numerous local, small businesses including hotel and lodging, restaurants, and fishing tackle shops, and increase visitation to nearby state parks and historic sites of interest.

Why a Maryland Fly Fishing Trail?

Putting Maryland on the map as an amazing fly fishing destination where within a few hours you can catch billfish or brook trout—and so many other species—on a fishing fly for the more than 7 million fly fishers across the country.

Introducing more women, younger anglers, and anglers of color and varied economic status to what makes fly fishing so special.

Helping recruit and retain Maryland anglers and ensure they renew their fishing license so they can explore even more waters across Maryland.



Expose anglers to new places to fish and find new public access points from which to cast from shore, wade, kayak, canoe, boat or charter and the opportunity to catch an incredible array of different fish species.

How Can I Help Build the Maryland Fly Fishing Trail?

1) You can contribute ideas on proposed Trail sites via shared access to the Google Form accessible at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdLBTkT6iioR2bF5h_f2KsKecLNaJiDMNBo-n0D4-VqOc3eCg/viewform. We are not asking for your secret fishing hole; but we are asking you to share good places to fly fish all across Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City. Fill out the Google Form for each idea for a Trail site and submit it and then share another proposed Trail site. Remember, we are going to place multiple Trail sites across ALL 23 Maryland counties and Baltimore City so please propose as many sites as possible.

2) Share names of fly fishing related vendors (e.g., fly shops, fishing tackle stores, guides, charter boat captains) to be recognized on the Trail web site with Shawn Kimbro at shawn.kimbrow@outlook.com. We want to help bring business to those who provide us with gear and expert advice on where and how to fly fish.

3) Share names of supporting and engaged fly fishing/fishing related organizations with Randy Dwyer at wrandydwyer@gmail.com. We are asking for information on other organizations with some type of fishing/fly fishing connection which may be interested in helping Trail participants have a better fly fishing experience.

4) Share recommended web content writers, photographers, and videographers with Joe Evans at jhevans45@gmail.com. We will need a continuous source of new content for the Maryland Fly Fishing Trail website as the seasons change as well as provide new insights on the multitude of aspects of the entire fly fishing experience.

5) Share recommended web content writers, photographers, and videographers with Joe Evans at jhevans45@gmail.com. We will need a continuous source of new content for the Maryland Fly Fishing Trail website as the seasons change as well as provide new insights on the multitude of aspects of the entire fly fishing experience.

If you have any additional ideas and recommendations or questions regarding this first in the nation statewide fly fishing trail, please reach out to me through a separate email message at richbatiuk@gmail.com or 410-268-5226 (home) or 410-507-0785 (mobile).

Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

Stocking will start sometime around the last week of February for our special regulation streams. If you are interested and have not been on my email list in the past, please send me an email: jaymsheppard95@gmail.com.

The only requirements for helping us float stock are having chest waders and ability to wade down or up a stream for a mile or more. All stockings take place Tuesdays through Fridays, usually between 10 AM and 3 PM. We float stock the upper Patuxent above Triadelphia, the Brighton Dam tailwater, and the Middle Patuxent delayed harvest section in south Columbia. Once you are on my list, I send out info on the stocking dates DNR has told us. If you can help that day, then you reply, and we will get back to you as to where and when to meet the DNR truck with the trout.

"To go fishing is the chance to wash one's soul with pure air, with the rush of the brook, or with the shimmer of sun on blue water. It brings meekness and inspiration from the decency of nature, charity toward tackle-makers, patience toward fish, a mockery of profits and egos, a quieting of hate, a rejoicing that you do not have to decide a darned thing until next week. And it is discipline in the equality of men - for all men are equal before fish."

~ Herbert Hoover



Valentine's Day Gift? - Bob O'Donnell

Another fun offering popped up in my mail box this week and provided some mild laughter between my wife and myself. I tried to convince her this is

much more rewarding than a box of chocolate, but she wasn't buying it. Jokingly based off the old Whitman's Chocolate Sampler box, the Fly Sampler comes packed with 24 premium go-to trout flies and a detailed fly guide to assist with selection.

<https://postflybox.com/products/postfly-fly-sampler>

And in case anyone is wondering, Whitman's operated as an independent chocolate company until 1993 when it was acquired by Russell Stover Candies, a company founded in 1923 and now based in Kansas City, Missouri. In 2014 both Russell Stover and Whitman's were acquired by Switzerland-based Lindt & Sprungli.

I'm pretty sure a few new flies won't add to my waist line.

Fishing for Great Lakes Steelhead Video - Brian Hepler

Tom Rosenbauer always does nice work - I am a fan of his fly fishing podcast as well.

Anyway- I came across this YouTube video late one night - thought I would pass it along.

Enjoy!

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

Tentative Outings Schedule - Lou Reichel

We're working on finalizing this list of outings for the year to include dates. If you have any suggestions for an outing in 2022 please email me:

Outings@pptu.org

All outings will be posted on the web site:

- Beaver Creek
- Casselman River
- Spring Creek
- 1 Fly Contest on the Gunpowder
- Yellow Breeches
- Western Maryland Campout
- Erie Steelhead

To join an Outing, remember to fill out the Outing Registration found in the PPTU web site. You may need to log in or set up an account first.

Contributions Welcome!

Send your contributions or article suggestions to the Editor 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



Lifecycle Stonefly

So, this video was interesting. It steps you through several patterns representing the different stages of a stonefly. English is not the tyer's native language but you can follow along fairly well. I'm sure if I tied a fly trying to do the monologue in Swedish I would butcher a few words myself.

Nice set of flies, not too difficult to tie. Looks like he also did two other series on Caddis and Mayflies as well.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itFAWJ-A4Ns>



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