

# The Conservationist



PPTU.org

**Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited**

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

## “COVID-19 Issue Number 2” *May, 2020*

PPTU is sorry to say that our May chapter meeting is cancelled. Looks like we won't get to see each other again until September. May was our last meeting before our summer break and the states' meeting restrictions are still in place. So no social events for us until restrictions are lifted. Please try to stay connected with your fellow members on line.

There still is no fishing for fun in Maryland. But don't let that stop you from enjoying the outdoors. You can still hike, take walks, kayak and canoe around the state. I know I want to try and get out more often this month. Eating the same but doing less activities is not being kind to my waistline.

Remember to explore PPTUs forum and enjoy all the options to fill your day with entertainment and enlightenment being put forth by fellow members. From fly tying to opera, there are endless options to help fill the social void. Plus, you can always ask any questions you're hoping to get answers to.

Don't forget that your local fly shops could still use your help. They may be closed, but most are offering curbside pickup and of course shipping for your orders. Occasionally you'll see some deals during the week. Some of the manufacturers are offering incentives and the fly shops are passing them along.

I hope once again that this newsletter finds you all safe and healthy. We hope to meet again soon. Until then, feel free to jump in on our forum and post some notes. Chit chat with your fellow chapter members. No mask required!

Tight lines,

*– Bob O'Donnell*



### Monthly Chapter Meetings – Cancelled Until Further Notice

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

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### Contact Us:

[mail@pptu.org](mailto:mail@pptu.org)

## Presidents' Column - Randy Dwyer



Every column I write is focused on you, the Potomac Patuxent TU member. In past columns, it's been about what our chapter has recently accomplished, upcoming chapter meetings, or our monthly outings. As we all know, these activities are on hold – for now. It is my sincere hope that you and your family are healthy and not suffering any economic hardships at this time.

I have been working from home since mid-March and it appears this will last several more weeks at a minimum. I am the proud father of three adult children of which two, through no fault of their own, are currently unemployed and looking to get back into the workforce as soon as possible. We are all hoping for a quick economic turnaround and for our many PPTU small business owners to get back on their feet again very soon.

One great offshoot of all this has been the surge in activity on our [PPTU Listserv](#). It's good to see fellow members sharing a joke or fly-tying video, commenting on euro-nymphing techniques, or posting a link to the Phantom of the Opera! After a few YouTube views I found myself listening to [Beethoven's 9th Symphony](#) performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by Riccardo Muti. Who would have thought this would be a discussion on our PPTU Listserv! But it was excellent background music as I continue to work from home.

[Trout Unlimited is offering free TU membership](#) to any veteran, emergency worker or first responder. Please share this offer with family and friends and let them know it's good for any TU chapter across the country. I know we have many PPTU members who are front line workers fighting against COVID-19, and we appreciate your service!

I would like to personally thank every PPTU member who answered the call to support our local stocking efforts earlier this spring as well as those who financially supported the [Adams County TU Access Fund](#) for the Conewago Creek. Both efforts enrich our chapter and show the commitment of our membership.

Our chapter meetings will go dormant for the summer months of June, July and August, but your board continues to plan for chapter meetings starting in September, new outings, and activities in the community for the fall. It is my hope that you're soon able to get onto a local water and cast a fly to waiting trout. I know everyone will keep an eye out for this new "opening day" and while still practicing social distancing, go fishing with a buddy or two.

I wish you good health and a quick return to the tug of a beautiful trout at the end of the line!

Until September, Tight Lines!

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](mailto:kenbowyer@verizon.net) 🌸

## TU Membership for Essential Workers - Trout Unlimited

Chris Wood announced that TU would extend a "free" one year membership to all "essential workers" during the COVID-19 crisis. TU takes a pretty expansive view of what constitutes as "essential". Basically anyone that is still working — police, fire, delivery, grocery store, pharmacy, medical, delivery employees and so on.

All any of these folks need to do is email [Chris.Wood@TU.org](mailto:Chris.Wood@TU.org) and tell him they want to take advantage of this offer.

Pass the word along to folks you know and interact with to get the message out. Additionally when they sign up, tell them to mention that they want enrolled in the Potomac-Patuxent Chapter of Trout Unlimited – Chapter # 236.

## Fly Fishing 201 – Drag - Bob O'Donnell

Flies are now hatching and drifting silently and slowly downstream in the current. Once the trout key in on this food conveyor belt and start rising at will, the action for fly fishermen can be exhilarating. To fool these fish into taking your fly offering, there is one thing you need to avoid – drag!

Drag on a fly causes more rejections from trout than any other issue. You can pick the right fly, size, color, etc., but if your presentation is bad and the fly drags, the fish will most likely ignore it. Yes, there ARE times when you want to impart drag to a fly, but that's for another article. Here we'll focus on the basics of how you can achieve a drag free drift.



The elimination of drag, especially when dry-fly fishing, is an important skill to learn. The fly must come to the trout as naturally as possible. A drag free drift is when the fly floats gently downstream without giving the trout any clue that it is attached to



a leader and fly line. The best drifts come from putting slack in the line and leader before (and after) it hits the water. There are numerous ways to add some slack to your cast. We'll cover a few of the basics.

### Long Tippets

Make your tippet long, three feet, perhaps even four, and it'll want to drop on the water in curves; curves of slack. Slack is the primary cure for drag. A slightly high forward cast promotes slack in tippet. When the tippet starts to drop, it lags behind the leader, angles, and then makes its waves of slack when it lands. These waves of slack give your fly a chance to ride free in the current.

### Slack Line Casts

There are a few standard casts that force slack into your fly line, even into the leader and tippet. The most common slack-line casts are the Serpentine or Wiggle, the Reach, the Pile, and the Parachute cast which is primarily used to present a fly drag-free downstream. Downstream dry fly presentations are uncommon, but under the right conditions, deadly.



The Serpentine cast is made by wagging the rod tip back and forth as the line goes out. The Reach cast is made by an upright forward cast followed by lowering the rod to one side or the other, the Pile cast starts as a high forward cast and then the rod tip is hurried down to the water as the line follows. The Parachute cast starts with a high forward cast, the rod remains high, and the line and fly drop and drift off downstream as the caster lowers the rod-tip to feed line.

### Mending

Just before the currents take away the last of the slack and start dragging your fly, you can mend. A mend is a lift of the line and then a flip of it, so that whichever way it was curving, it's now curving in

the opposite direction. Some dry-fly aficionados may mend two or three times during a fly's drift.

Mending is a technique that the vast majority of anglers do incorrectly. They make a decent cast, get the fly lined up for an effective drift, and then they mend the entire fly line, and by doing so, they "pull" the fly out of the "lane" they were trying to cover. Mending without moving the fly is VERY important. You only need to mend the line that is 5-10' outside your rod tip. By only mending a short section of the line you'll keep the fly where you want it to go. Finally, when you mend and get some line set in an upstream belly, remember to move your rod downstream at the speed of the current. Do not hold the rod still. Holding the rod in a static position will shorten the drag free drift considerably. Remember, to "Mend and follow." This will dramatically extend a drag free drift.

Adding slack to your casts in one of these manners should do the trick for you and improve your game. Don't forget to play with your rod a little while on stream and get to fully understand how it works best for you. Try out different casts and techniques while fishing. You may surprise yourself and even hook up with a fish!

To learn more about slack casts and mends, check out these great videos from Carl McNeil:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6uHddBAH7g&t=17s>

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14njsZy47qg>



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

We are not allowed to fish catch-and-release waters. Only fishing for subsistence is allowed. However, this does not seem to have stopped a fair number of anglers. Hard to call them all sportsmen. Several PPTU members live close to our local no-kill streams. They ride their bikes, hike or simply drive past some of the access points to the upper Patuxent River, Middle Patuxent and other streams. They are consistently reporting fishermen using these streams. One fisherman was using bait and had a stringer! A similar report reached me as we are going to press about the Gunpowder: several fishers at Masemore. Thankfully, these streams are getting a lot of attention by the NRP officers.

Please call the Natural Resources Police at their 24/7 call center if you see any such activity taking place: 800-635-6124. Lock this number into your mobile phone! If you see any suspect vehicles, take a picture of their tags. If we do not squelch this onslaught on our resources, then we will have these same people and their friends returning to poach our trout waters in future years.



*" The definition of a fly rod - an antenna which transmits peace, tranquility, excitement, fellowship, and most of all, an awareness and appreciation for the outdoors."*

~ Author Unkown

## Time on Your Hands? - Jay Sheppard

OK. We are stuck in our homes. What to do to pass the time? Many are tying flies. Great idea, great use of time. How to choose what patterns to tie (or order online)? I offer that maybe now is a great time to organize and inventory our flies. There are many benefits to such an undertaking. When I am standing in the middle of a stream I hate searching through several fly boxes to find a particular fly I want to use. Time on the water is precious. The sun always sets and days always end. I hate wasting even a minute when I could be casting a fly instead of changing flies or tippets.



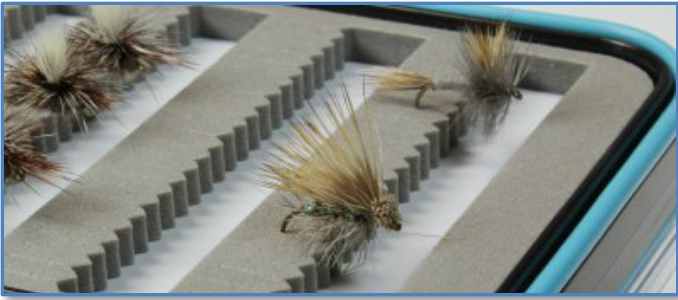
It may sound like I am well organized. Sorry to burst anyone's bubble, but I try to organize things so I can find them later. Repeat: TRY! But being even slightly organized still helps when I get to the stream and have no intention of leaving until it is too dark to fish. I have my fly boxes semi-organized. Each resides in the same pocket of the vest all the time. I will describe my system, but I do not suggest anyone else follow suit. I only offer it as model how anyone can chose to organize their box. The main point is that I know if I want an Adam #16 or a hare's ear# 14, I know which box for either I need.

I have watched newbies to this sport fumble through several boxes looking for a fly. Each box had a jumble of dries, nymphs and streamers. Adams #14 were in a different box than the #16 or the #12s. Granted, none of us knew the names of most of our flies when we got started. But we knew some were bigger or smaller than others, some were gray, others black, some brown or cream, etc., etc. My own system is arranged by general types and then by sizes. Now I have about a dozen boxes of various sizes in my vest when trout fishing. Dries, wets, nymphs and streamers are the major categories. Each has their own box. Each of those groups has been subdivided by fly size, so midges and other really small flies have their own and larger flies theirs. Within boxes, like flies are kept close together. Sulphur duns are not far from their corresponding cripples, emergers and rusty spinners of the same size. This system may not work for others, but it works for me. So come up with some 'file' system to have your flies organized. This will save a lot of time when the trout are rising all around you and the sun is setting. The other reason for a system is knowing your inventory.





Have you lost all your #16 Adams, #14 gold-ribbed Hare's ear nymphs, or #20 zebra midges? Down to only one or two?



So break out your fly boxes, a pair of tweezers (for smaller ones) and check all the flies. Any broken hook points? Are they in your boxes where you want to later find them? What more patterns and sizes do you need to round out your selection? Now is the time to either tie more or order online. Be a good scout and be prepared for when we can all go fishing on our favorite trout waters.

### **Dr. Glenn Flittner Passing - Chuck Woods & Jay Sheppard**

**Dr.** Glenn Flittner died last Tuesday, April 14. He was 94. People who knew Glenn were sad. Trout were relieved!



Glenn was president of our Potomac Patuxent Chapter in the chapter's early years. The preservation measures for the Paint Branch and the special regulations for the upper Patuxent were established during his tenure.

Glenn was a scientist. His doctorate was in Oceanography and his civilian career was with the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration. He served in and retired from the Naval Reserve with the rank of Captain. He was not religious, but he was totally ethical. According to Glenn, his duties

included evaluation of the junior reserve officers under his command. One these officers had political connections and did not report for duty on required days. On an evaluation, Glenn wrote that he could not evaluate this subordinate because the junior officer was never there. Glenn's superior told Glenn to change the evaluation. Glenn refused to do so. Two years later, Glenn was mustered out of the Navy when he qualified for retirement. The junior officer later became Secretary of Defense.

Glenn was born in Southern California. He learned to fish for wild trout in streams near Los Angeles that are now concrete drainage culverts. Glenn and friends would explore, backpack, camp, and fish in the remote high mountain streams and valleys north and west of Los Angeles. This ended when he joined the Navy. While stationed in San Francisco, Glenn met and married a beautiful nurse. Glenn and Evelyn had 2 boys, John and Kurt. Family vacations were usually camping/fishing trips. The boys became excellent fishermen and fly tiers. Several PPTU members went on many of these later trips. Trips to Penns Creek for several years were followed by trips to western Maryland and, in 1982, a nearly month-long trip to Alaska. There he and others from PPTU floated and camped on the remote Karluk River on Kodiak Island. They later took an RV north from Anchorage for a long week exploring the waters of central Alaska.

In later years, Glenn and Chuck Woods went out West and fished rivers in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. The picture at the beginning of this article shows Glenn with a Green River brown trout.

Glenn lived a long, productive and active life. In accordance with his instructions, Glenn's ashes will be interred in Arlington National Cemetery at a future date.

### **Idaho – Paying Anglers to Fish! - PPTU**

Sounds like a dream come true. We are stuck in our homes and this guy is out fishing every day and making money to boot! Spending a couple of months in Idaho doesn't really sound too bad. Check it out: <https://www.kivity.com/news/outdoors/fish-and-game-pays-anglers-to-remove-rainbow-trout>



## 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.



## Please Support Your Local Fly Shops

### - PPTU

Don't forget to support your local fly shops during this time. Just like the other small shops surrounding us, they could use your help. Even if it's a small purchase, it will help get them through this period of uncertainty. I for one would like to know that they'll be there once restrictions are lifted.

The following is a list of shops in our area that are open and waiting for your business. Go on line or pick up the phone and help them out.

#### Backwater Angler

<https://backwaterangler.com/>

<https://www.backwaterangler.com/shop/>

#### Beaver Creek Fly Shop

<https://beavercreekyflyshop.com/>

[BeaverCreekFlyShop@gmail.com](mailto:BeaverCreekFlyShop@gmail.com).

#### District Angling

<https://districtangling.com/>

<https://shop.districtangling.com/>

#### Great Feathers

<https://www.greatfeathers.com/>

<https://www.greatfeathers.com/shop.html>

#### TCO Fly Shop

<https://www.tcoflyfishing.com/>

#### Savage River Outfitters

<http://www.savageriveroutfitters.com/>

Order from any of these shops and you can make arrangements to do curbside pickup or have your order shipped right to your home address.

## Fly Fishing Hatches | Introducing Backyard Hatches Video Series - Backyard Angling

There is so much more to fly fishing than just catching trout. The environment where trout live is a fascinating place, and many anglers miss so much of the natural world's wonder when they only focus on just the trout. One important player in this natural environment is the aquatic insect – and that is what this video series will be all about! In each video, we'll explore the science behind the hatches that we know and love as fly anglers and how that can help translate into us bringing more trout to the net. And who knows, maybe after this video series you may have a new appreciation for the aquatic insects of the natural world or maybe just reinforce those feelings of wonder!

This looks to be an interesting series once they get it going. There's also some additional eye catching videos on the main site that a few of you may be interested in viewing. I plan on coming back and checking it out now and then, keeping an eye out for a new release in the series. I hope they keep it up, the footage looks great.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJqjB91u674>

And here is the link to the Backyard Angling site itself where you can find the other cool videos from this PA Fishing Channel.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChD\\_bdcIY8SAlmNGZhSB5HA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChD_bdcIY8SAlmNGZhSB5HA)

Enjoy! – Bob O'Donnell

## Slate of Elections Coming Soon

### - PPTU Board

It's that time of year again when we search for new blood to keep the chapter moving along. Our current by-laws state that we must notify the chapter members of the upcoming slate of officers being put forward for a vote.

This year, being the special year that is so far, we will be holding our annual vote online. A notice regarding this along with the proposed new board members will be emailed out to the membership very soon. If anyone wishes to volunteer to join the board as a director please contact us. We're always looking for people to replace those that are finishing up their term of service. Volunteering as a Director takes little more than attending the board meetings once a month throughout the year and contributing to the topic discussions and issues as much as you like. There are also other key positions that need replenished every 2 years; Treasurer, VP, and the President positions all need to be kept filled. If you are ever interested in volunteering for the chapter's board please contact us for more information.

## Getting Back to Normal

### - Randy Dwyer

Below is a link to Governor Hogan's proposal for easing back into 'normal' activities. It's segmented into three phases: Low Medium & High Risk. Each has criteria the must be met in order to proceed on to the next level of engagement/activity. The outline of stages is found starting on page 25. Getting outside for recreational fishing is in the Low Risk section.

Please note: The Governor has not yet announced Low Risk activities as permissible.

[https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/MD\\_Strong.pdf](https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/MD_Strong.pdf)

## Killing Time at Home

### - Bob O'Donnell

There is plenty to do to kill some of the time we have on our hands while NOT being able to fish but folks are always looking for more. Sometime this month I plan on trying out a zoom meeting open to the chapter. We'll see how it goes. As a somewhat recent gift I have been receiving a monthly surprise

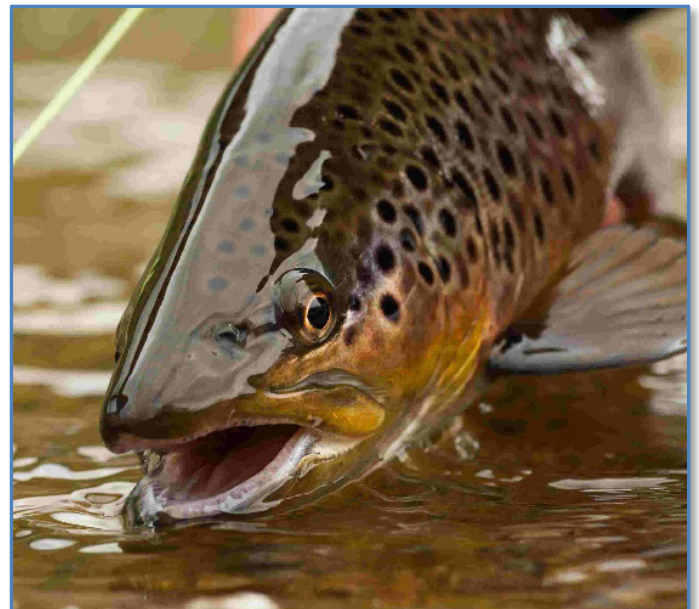
box from Postfly. Originally for a Christmas present one year, my kids signed me up for a couple months of the regular Postfly box for trout. When my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday rolled around they decided to do another gift but upgraded me to the "Guide Series" box. To say the least, its been fun! The boxes are loaded with different gear giving you a chance to sample some things you may not have ordinarily tried. On several occasions, I pulled out items that I may have already had or didn't see myself using and donated them to the chapter for our monthly barrel raffle.



Since we haven't been able to fish, having one of these boxes show up in the mail has been a pleasant surprise these past 2 months. I have a fresh box waiting to be opened and thought I might share it with the chapter – hence the Zoom meeting. We can both get to explore it together giving chapter members the chance to see for themselves before buying or giving a hint to someone as a gift option for a special occasion.

<https://subscribe.postflybox.com/>

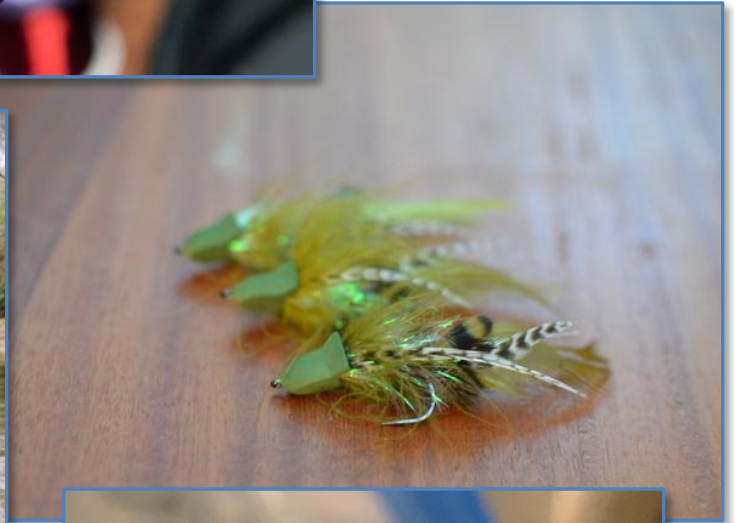
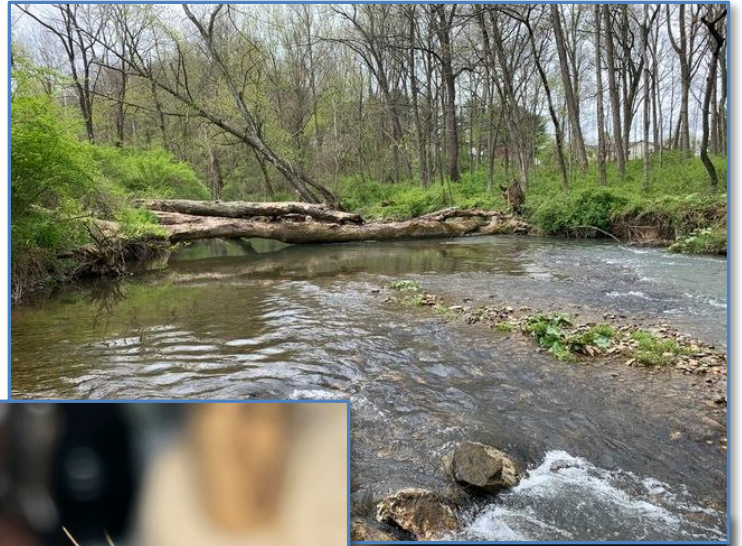
So, keep an eye out in your chapter email for this special event. If it goes well, we'll consider doing a few more on line meetings. Stay safe!





## Members Catch - PPTU

Seems like a lot of you are busy tying flies. A few managed to sneak out before stuff went south. Several others outside our area can still fish. We appreciate the photos of streams and nature – a good reminder of what we have to look forward to once restrictions get lifted. Post more to the PPTU forum!



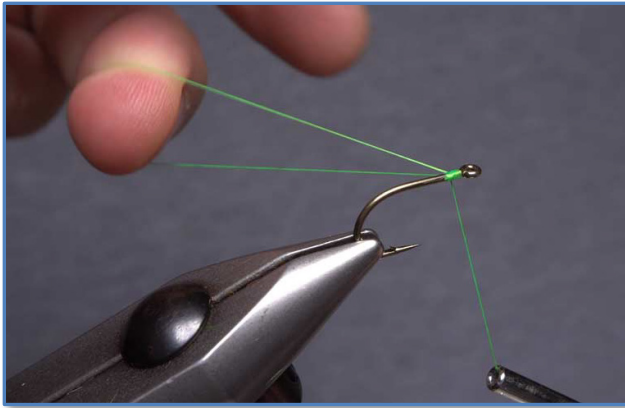


Contributions should be sent to the Editor as plain text in an email or as an MS Word.doc attachment. The deadline for submissions is the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication.

**Editor: Bob O'Donnell**

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## How to Save Your Work with a Borger Double Hitch

Instead of fly pattern I thought I would toss out this instructional tip for all the new fly tiers in our group.

This is part of a series of videos called "One-Minute Fly-Tying Tips and Techniques" from Tim Flagler of Tightline Productions. I highly recommend that you check the series out. Watching all of Tim's tips will definitely enhance your fly tying skills.

<https://news.orvis.com/fly-fishing/video-how-to->



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