



January 2004

The Conservationist

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter

www.pptu.org

Wednesday, January 21

Let's Tie One On!

Our Annual Fly Tying Demonstration Meeting

The January 21 meeting is one of our most popular and widely attended of the year. A number of our members will be demonstrating how to tie some of their favorite fly patterns.

Whether you are an expert or novice, or just curious about how it's done, you'll learn some new patterns as well as pick up a few new pointers from our tyers. They'll be tying the tiniest of dries to big saltwater patterns and lots in between. If you're nice to them, you might even walk away with a few free demo flies!

There will even be a table for young hackle wrappers, so bring the children! There will also be a demonstration of practical fishing knots and line connections.

Those manning the vises will be.

Theaux LeGardeur	Redfish patterns
Paul Prevost	Blue wing olives
Sebastian O'Kelly	Shad flies
Jim Greco	Hairwing caddises
John Colburn	Soft hackle flies
Andy Shaffer	Deer hair bass bugs
Dave Pratt	Miscellaneous flies
Paul Vicenzi	Kids' table
Robert Simpson	Fishing knots

So come on down and see us tie one on!



January 10-11

The Fly Fishing Show Hits Town

The waiting is over. The excitement of the holidays is behind us, and now it's time to head out to the Reckord Armory on the University of Maryland campus in College Park, MD, for the 12th annual Fly Fishing Show. (See map and directions on the back page.)

Our chapter will again have a booth at the show, and we expect to see all our members stop by, say hello, and if you haven't done so already, renew your chapter and national TU memberships. Again, the dates of the show are: Saturday, January 10 and Sunday, January 11, 2004. The daily admission to the show is \$12. It's hard to see and hear everything at the show in one day, so save money and get a two day ticket for \$20. Children under 12 are admitted for just \$2 each day.

To learn more about the show and to check on the stars and featured fly tyers please visit the show web site at <http://www.flyfishingshow.com>



Meetings

Time and Day: 7:00 PM, Third Wednesday except December, June, July, and August

Place: Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland

Directions: From Capitol Beltway: North on Georgia Avenue (Rte. 97). First right onto Forest Glen Road. Pass Holy Cross Hospital and go across Sligo Creek Parkway. The Center is on the right.

The Conservationist

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Contributions in the form of articles, letters, fishing news, tying tips, book reviews, and even poetry about trout fishing should be sent to the Editor as plain MS-DOS (ASCII) text or Microsoft Word attachments to e-mail messages containing brief descriptions of the attachments. Attachments received without a description will be deleted without opening.

The deadline for submissions is the twelfth (12th) day of the month prior to the month of publication

EDITOR: John Colburn
(Phone: 202-545-8776)
(johnwcolburn@juno.com)

President's Column

It snowed again last night, an observation I made at 4:00 this morning—the usual time I get up and take Missy for her romp. Missy, a young German shorthaired pointer, did her thing and then proceeded to catch a Frisbee for a period of time before coming in to dry off.

I have been planning to write this column earlier (John Colburn, our editor, has been warning of this impending deadline for some time now), but didn't seem to get to it for some reason or other. I have not done an article on fishing since I took office; truth is I have not done much fishing either. Numerous attempts were aborted to deal with other matters of some urgency and an occasional round of golf. This time of the year Missy and I are usually still trying to find a few pheasants for her to chase and for me to get some photographs. There hasn't been much hunting either this year.

As a youngster in northeastern Pennsylvania, hunting would be over except for two weeks of snowshoe season in early January, and Dad and I would start to pass the harsh winter months working over our fishing equipment (we were still using bamboo and those fly rods required yearly maintenance), tying flies, and making spinners and plugs for trout and bass fishing. There was also an occasional wooden boat to build and subsequently store at one of the many lakes in the Poconos Mountains. Then, there were the endless hours in "the shop" with friends, reminiscing our outdoor experiences of seasons past. Come March, we would find our way to the feeder rivers of the larger lakes looking for sucker migrations and some ice fishing (any excuse would suffice!) and the inevitable bonfires with sausages and chickens cooking on spits. If the lakes were cleared of snow, we would ice skate for hours on end. That's how we dealt with "the cabin fever".

How times have changed.

The first snow of the season brought back these memories as Jim Greco and I were planning this year's fly tying classes that begin in February. Jim is a master tyer and will be ably assisted by Bob Serrano and Paul Provost. Since attendance is limited, sign up early. Our chapter has a variety of programs, a number of which can be experienced during the winter months. We're fortunate to be only 1.5 hours from the spring creeks in southern Pa. There, the water temperature year

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President's Column

(Continued from page 2)

round is about 55°F, often warmer than the air temperature. Joshua Forster has a seasonal outing schedule of fishing activities planned for our members' enjoyment—weather permitting!

We've also been working on next year's April fund raiser, designing the program, getting tickets ready for sale in January, etc. This event is our principal activity to raise funds to support Chapter conservation and education activities. Bob Serrano is again leading this effort and has been planning and acquiring the prizes and items that will be available for the evenings' festivities. Last years' silent auction was a lot of fun and a good reason to bring to the affair our spouses and significant others who otherwise might not attend. I'm sure Bob can use some help in his preparations.

The Chapter's participation in the January Fly Fishing Show at the University of Maryland is one thing Jack Dawson has been working on. This is a major opportunity to sign up new members to TU and our chapter and to renew memberships as well. Jack is planning to provide the show sponsors with door prizes to help increase attendance. Concurrently we are working with the Mid-Atlantic Council on new membership recruiting and the corresponding assignment of chapter affiliations—a thorny issue that has plagued us for some time.

This month we begin planning, and coordination with DNR for our Kids Fishing Day in early May. It's a great opportunity for members to introduce youngsters to fishing and the subject of conservation. Marci LeFevre is working on this program. Our kids hold the promise and future of our sport, and we feel obligated to invest time with them as they prepare to contend with the myriad of issues ahead. I'm sure many will be the same issues we face such as land usage, clean water and habitat preservation.

Sebastian O'Kelly has begun thinking about next year's speakers program. While we have a few months left in this years' program, the end of the chapter's fiscal year is coming, and we would like to have next year's program lined up by then.

The "Trout in the Classroom" program is on its way for the year, the eggs that were delivered to the schools by Jim Greene and Dave Whitman in December have hatched, and the wondrous life cycle of trout, once again, is under the inquisitive eyes of kids.

Dad and I, after dinner and school work, would retire to "the shop" and dream the dreams and excitedly await the spring thaw. Missy awaits the next Frisbee session and her servant (me) wonders what things I've forgotten to tend to.

Oh yes, times have changed!!!

Lou Boezi



The Patuxent Report

We have found a good number of small wild browns this fall. There was excellent holdover from last spring's and fall's stockings. If we get some warm spell in the middle of January into early February, you may find a few trout sipping midges and little winter stone flies. The fall rainbows will likely be cooperative, too. They were stocked near the Rt. 94 and the Hipsley Mill bridges.

Hunting season will continue through most of February in some sections of the Park, so be careful. In February, we intend to replace some of the signs, particularly around all the major access points. If you want to help, contact me at the January meeting. Hip waders will do fine, and we may cover a couple of large sections of the stream. If it is a pleasant day, we might see a few holdover or wild trout!

If you want to help float stock the brown trout this year and do not plan to be at the January or February meetings, email (jmsheppar@aol.com) or call me (301-725-5559) **before** the February meeting (this will be announced again in the February issue).

If you have not helped on this activity, you must have **chest** waders and be able to spend a week-day helping out. Although this is strenuous work, it is very rewarding, as you typically get to see 1.5–2.5 miles of stream: every deep hole, submerged log, and slippery rock can become permanently imbedded in your memory (or other part of your anatomy when you trip up)! This activity is not suggested for those just learning to wade.

A sign-up list will be at the January and February meetings. If you are already on my Email list of volunteers, please do not contact me—I will be contacting you again with details on dates for stocking in February. We hope to start stockings some time after the February meeting and be mostly completed by the first week of March.

Jay Sheppard

Outings

Chapter Outings Schedule

The new outings' schedule for the year is posted below. The next outing will be to Big Gunpowder Falls River, Maryland, and is scheduled for later in January. If you are interested in this outing, please e-mail me at jforster@smart.net

Joshua Forster
Outings Chair

Proposed 2004 Outings

Big Gunpowder Falls River, MD	Jan. 2004
Morgan Run, MD	Feb. 2004
South Central Pennsylvania	Mar. 2004
Rapidan River, VA	Apr. 2004
Western MD Memorial Day Weekend,	May 2004

For details about these outings, visit the PPTU web site www.pptu.org or see Joshua Forster at the Chapter meetings.

Lies, Damn Lies and Releases

Eleven members from the Chapter traveled to Central Pennsylvania over the October 24-26 weekend. We fished Spring Creek, Spruce Creek, Fishing Creek and the Little Juniata River. Jim Keil graciously provided the accommodations at his father's hunting club in the hamlet of Neffs Mills. Thanks also go to Jim Greco who picked up the groceries and made breakfast for the group each morning, and Dave Wittman for picking up and transporting the bottled water.

Flows on all of the streams were well within fishable limits and the rain held off until late Sunday when Mike Goeser and myself were caught in a brief deluge on Spring Creek at dusk. Tan elk hair caddis in size 16 took several brown trout on Fishing Creek on Friday afternoon. Overcast skies and small blue winged olives were the ticket for Spring Creek on Saturday and Sunday.

Although most members caught several brown trout, some of a more respectable size than others, as well as one or two rainbows at Spruce Creek, the author would be disingenuous not to admit that he was skunked on Spruce Creek and the Little J on Saturday.

Thanks to Triton, however, the malokee had worn off by early Sunday morning when one of the less intelligent of the species *salmo trutta* at Fisherman's Paradise, attempted to commit internal seppuku by engulfing a #20 BWO parachute adeptly tied by Jim Greco. Said brown was released from



the bank in a somewhat more gently manner than Jim Greco had been on the previous day. (More than one of us took a midday bath on this trip.)

Additional photos from this trip will soon be posted to the Chapter's website.

Weather permitting, the next outing will be to the Big Gunpowder Falls River and is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, January 24. If you are interested in this outing, please see me at the January 21 Chapter meeting.

Joshua Forster
Outings Leader

More Lies, Damn Lies and Releases

Tim Wagennar, Cathy Nutter, Bob Serano, Rich Mance and Barton Jennings joined me on Big Hunting Creek on Sunday, November 23rd. The water looked great and the weather was ideal for late November. Cathy, Tim and I each caught one brookie apiece, which were in full spawning colors but quite emaciated. Two of the brookies were caught at the Camp Peniel Bridge pool. Cathy caught hers on a Copper John and I caught mine on a tan beadhead San Juan Worm. Many of us had several fish follow egg patterns but couldn't get any takers. Little surface activity was observed.

Earlier in the day, I lost an 11-13 inch brown further upstream when he swam over a small falls and the hook pulled out. (Note to self: set the hook upstream when trout are hell bent for the Chesapeake.)

As for hatch activity, there's some debate in our group as to whether they were little winter black stoneflies or black midges. In any case, they were few and far between and only active from about one until three in the afternoon.

Later in the day, Tim Wagennar and I fished the area between the reservoir and where the stream crosses MD SR 77. Few fish were observed, due no doubt, to the vociferous lowlanders who were out for their weekend "communing with nature" fix.

Joshua Forster
Outings Leader

PPTU Education Programs

2004 PPTU Fly Tying Class

If you have decided this is the year you will finally take the plunge and learn how to tie flies, this is the perfect opportunity. Our chapter is once again sponsoring a 6 week tying class for its members. This year, Jim Greco and his able colleagues, Bob Serrano and Paul Prevost, have volunteered to teach the class. These three tyers bring a wealth of experience to the classroom.

Primarily aimed at novice tyers, this class will also benefit intermediate tyers who would like to refresh some of their basic skills. The emphasis will be on teaching a solid foundation in the basics of tying nymphs, dries, emergers, streamers and terrestrials. The class will be held at the Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, located at 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, MD, on Tuesday nights from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM on February 3, 10, 17, 24 and March 9 and 16.

Students should have their own basic tools (contact Jim for a list) and vise with them on the first night of class. The \$90.00 tuition fee covers the room rental, class handouts, and tying materials for flies to be tied in the class with the balance of revenue going to the PPTU Chapter for use in its education and conservation efforts.

Anyone interested may contact Jim Greco by phone at 410-997-2787 or email at Jimg6128@aol.com. Registration will be on a first paid first served basis with a limit of 20 students. As long as there are openings available, students can also sign up at our PPTU booth at the College Park Fly Show or at our January chapter meeting.

PPTU Mentor Program

The Mentor Program got off to a slow start in 2003 as bad weather and delayed stockings put a hold on our clubs one-on-one tutoring activities.

However, once the activities started in late March, 17 members (Neal Murray, Patrick Kendall, Philippe Marin, Matt and Holly Baun, Sam Bell Jr., Uli and Kevin Levi-Goerlich, Marci LeFevre, Brad Bickford, Jon Halpern, Lee and Matt Merrill, Rich Mance, Elliott and Carol Dworin, and Barton Jennings) were tutored at Morgan Run, Big Hunting Creek, or the Gunpowder.

First timers received a current issue of the Mid-Atlantic Fly Fishing Guide (or a copy of the Mary-

land section) and a 4 page summary of entomology. This introductory material provided the newcomer with an idea of what flies to use at any given time and general information on identifying insect types. A brief time was spent on the stream turning over rocks to show some insect life in its early stages.

Knot tying was discussed showing two basic knots; the surgeons knot (and surgeons loop) for tying or connecting tippet to leader and leader to line and the improved clinch knot for tying flies to tippet.

Different types of leader (the standard 7.5' 3x nylon tapered leader, the Orvis braided leader, and the Airflo PolyLeader) were discussed to show them alternative setups. For those with their leader connected to the fly line with a nail knot or to a nylon butt section with a loop, the Cortland braided loop was shown as an alternative for line to leader loop to loop connections.

For those with no casting experience, basic casting techniques were shown. On the stream, casting variations including the sidearm cast and the roll cast were demonstrated to avoid overhanging trees and brush behind you.

Basic short line nymphing with a strike indicator and dry fly fishing techniques were demonstrated. Line mending was demonstrated to insure drag free fly presentation. A combination rig was also demonstrated using a dry fly such as an elk hair caddis or royal coachman along with a bead head nymph attached as a dropper fly to an 18" piece of tippet tied to the bend of the dry fly hook using the improved clinch knot. With this setup, the dry fly acts as a strike indicator to detect when a fish takes the bead head nymph.

About half of the participants caught fish their first time out. Neal Murray caught the largest fish, an 18" rainbow at Morgan Run. Ten year old Kevin Levi-Goerlich was our youngest student and probably the best at casting and handling the fly line. He also caught a nice 11-12" brook trout on a dry fly at Big Hunting Creek. Holly Baun caught the most fish—four—in a day while her tutor was skunked. The heaviest hatch was observed by Lee and Matt Merrill when a trico hatch along with a few caddis and blue wing olives swarmed the area while we were eating lunch on the Gunpowder. Some photos from these outings have been posted on our PPTU website.

The PPTU Mentor Program is available to members of PPTU current with their dues. Ken Bowyer

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PPTU Mentor Program

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or Paul Prevost will conduct one-on-one stream side fly fishing instruction. Interested members must show commitment by having waders or hip-pers, 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.

Contact Ken at 301-627-7154 or e-mail kenbowyer@comcast.net or Paul at 202-244-0168 or e-mail pprevost@hotmail.com.

Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp

A Student's Report

[Owen Dietz received a PPTU scholarship grant which enabled him to attend the Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp during the summer of 2003. This is his report.]

This summer I attended the Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp. It was hosted by the Cumberland Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited, at the historic Allenberry Resort on the Yellow Breeches, Boiling Springs, PA. It lasted from Sunday, June 15, through Friday, June 20. A typical day would consist of:

05:00 AM	Wake Up
05:15 AM	Fishing
07:00 AM	Breakfast
08:00 AM	Classes
12:00 PM	Lunch
01:00 PM	More Classes
05:00 PM	Dinner
06:00 PM	Fishing
09:00 PM	Yet another class
11:00 PM	Lights Out

Classes and instructors included:

Fly Casting—Ed Shenk, Emily Zeiders, Catharine Tucker.
Knot Tying—Emily Zeiders, Art Rorex.
Ethics and Streamside Etiquette—Catharine Tucker.
Equipment Repair—George Walthour and Fred Bohls.
Principles of Ecology—Mike Klimkos
Hydrology and Geology—Dr. James Richenderfer
Entomology of a Trout Stream—Dr. James Gilford
Collecting Aquatic Invertebrates—Staff Biologists

Watersheds—Glenn Rider, Kevin Kelly, Jenifer Bandura
Ecological Effects of Water Pollution—Robert Schott
Wader Survival—Dan Martin
Ye Olde Colonial—Ken Reinard
Fly Tying—Kieran Frye, Tim Trexler, Frank Angelo
Reading the Water—Catherine Tucker
Advanced Fly Tying—Kieran Frye, Tim Trexler, Frank Angelo
Angling Literature—Karl Lutz
Trout Behavior—Dr. Robert Behnke
Acid Deposition—John Arway
Fishing Around the world—Leon Chandler
Electrofishing Demonstration—Larry Jackson
Stream Corridor Protection—Mark Gutshall
Environmental Law and Politics—Maxine Woelfling
The Bugs and Acceptable Imitations—Dave Rothrock
What's That Bush in my Back Cast?—Catherine Tucker
Watershed Management—Mark Dubin
Casting with Leon Chandler
Evolution of an Angler
Reptiles and Amphibians
Wetlands

I participated in the streamside restoration of the feeder to the Yellow Breeches. The kids got three tons of stone moved into the bank to make a buffer zone. We split up into two groups of sixteen kids and put down two V's on the side of the bank near the bridge of Children's Lake. This way the fish would have sufficient cover from predators. Also it helps keep the bank from caving in more. In many of the classes there were conservation concepts taught. This way everyone was able to learn how they could as individuals help the environment.

The camp itself was very enjoyable. There were many other kids my age who also shared a liking for fly fishing. The hospitality was superb. Many of the speakers would come down to the stream to show ways of fishing and patterns of flies with the kids. All the classes were enjoyable. I learned a lot from them. Some of the classes were hands on, some were slide shows, and some were both. The food and lodging was great. At the camp there was never a lack of something to do.

Everyone there was able to hook up with at least a couple of fish. Some came out with some good ones. I got a nineteen inch brook trout. The camp gave me a real opportunity to explore the stream with some experienced fishermen.

Owen Dietz



Tackle & Tactic Tips

Ok, so it's now mid-winter. So what, we can all dream of warmer times, can't we?

Let me suggest a few future plans for those warmer times. I encounter a steady stream of fishers who want to get into fly fishing for trout. I also meet many who have been trying for the past year or so to really improve their skills.

There are dozens of skills that we must master to become reasonably good in this sport. It is a lot easier to focus on a few of these skills and largely ignore some of the others for the moment. But we all want to be rewarded for our day on the water with at least a few fish brought to hand.

Trout are masters of their environment. They have to learn what they can ingest and what to avoid. On heavily fished catch-and-release streams, trout become experts at fly identification. I am convinced that many trout at the more popular fishing spots can actually identify the manufacturer of the hooks our flies are tied on! For the average fisher, this means a lot of refusals and missed trout resulting in frustration. Presentation and fly selection for these wary trout is the only game they will play.

So ignore presentation and fly selection issues for a change next spring! Go forth and chase some fish that give good accounts of themselves when hooked on a fly rod. In particular, spend the next summer going for smallmouth bass and similar quarry. Smallies are ounce for ounce about as great a sport fish as anyone could catch. But their biggest asset, besides their sporting qualities, is that these bass will chase almost anything presented to them and no matter how sloppy the cast. Bass hear something hitting the water and react instantly: "Can I eat it?" Trout hear something hit the surface of the water nearby and think: "Should I flee?"

Take some small poppers, streamers, woolly buggers, and even a few sturdy nymphs and dry flies and head for a smallmouth stream as soon as the water is well into the 50s next spring.

We have some of the finest in the nation within an hour or two drive: Potomac, Shenandoah, Susquehanna, and even many local small streams. When you chase smallies with a fly rod, you can focus on the fundamentals of line control, fighting fish, and just casting. So many starting fly rodders are overwhelmed by having to focus on so many

things at the same instant when they chase trout. Consequently, if they ever do hook a trout, they lose it quickly as the line wraps around their legs or rod, or they give too hard a pull on the rod or give too much slack.

Smallies will attack almost anything that looks edible that comes within range of their eyesight. They are far more easily caught compared to most wild trout—no special techniques of presentation and fly selection are not needed. Just get the offering into the water on a reasonably stout leader is almost all that is required.

This allows the fly rodder to focus on handling the rod and line, sharpening his casting skills, and still catching lots of fish. Smallmouths and trout seek the same basic feeding spots in the rivers and streams; so learning where bass are waiting is excellent training for where the trout will be found.

After the fisher learns how to strip and retrieve line, mend casts, alter drifts and retrieve speeds, and fight a fish with all the line hanging off the reel, then he can return to the trout streams. On the trout stream the focus of the game returns to presentation, presentation, presentation, and fly selection.

So plan to hit some of those smallmouth waters this coming spring. They are the best educators with which a fly rodder can start, and they charge nothing for the lessons.

Jay Sheppard

Membership

THE POTOMAC-PATUXENT CHAPTER of Trout Unlimited has two membership categories: **Regular or Family** (\$15/year assessment) or **Student** (free). The Chapter operates on a September-to-September basis. The assessment is totally separate from Trout Unlimited dues. Send correspondence, change of address, or assessment payable to POTOMAC-PATUXENT TROUT UNLIMITED, PO Box 2865, Wheaton, MD 20915.

Chapter and national TU expiration dates are indicated in the mailing label as PP-0903 or NTU-0903.

First time visitors receive two free issues of this publication.

Address Changed? Missing an Issue?

If you have moved or see any error in your label on this newsletter, please advise both the TU national office and this chapter with separate notices. We maintain our mailing list apart from the national list; we do eventually get the notice of address change from national TU, but it is often a few months before it affects your newsletter and other mailings. Please help us help you. Thank you.

This past year we had several reports of members not receiving their newsletters. Make sure we have your correct address, including 9-digit ZIP, and that you have paid your dues. If you are missing a back issue, please contact us for a copy.



The Fly Fishing Show - Twelfth Year!

Reckord Armory, University of Maryland January 10 and 11, 2004

Hours: Saturday: 9 - 6 Sunday: 9 - 5

Admission: Adults, \$12 per day, two-day pass, \$20
Children under 12. \$2

[www.flyfishingshow.com/
collegepark.html](http://www.flyfishingshow.com/collegepark.html)

The Show at College Park

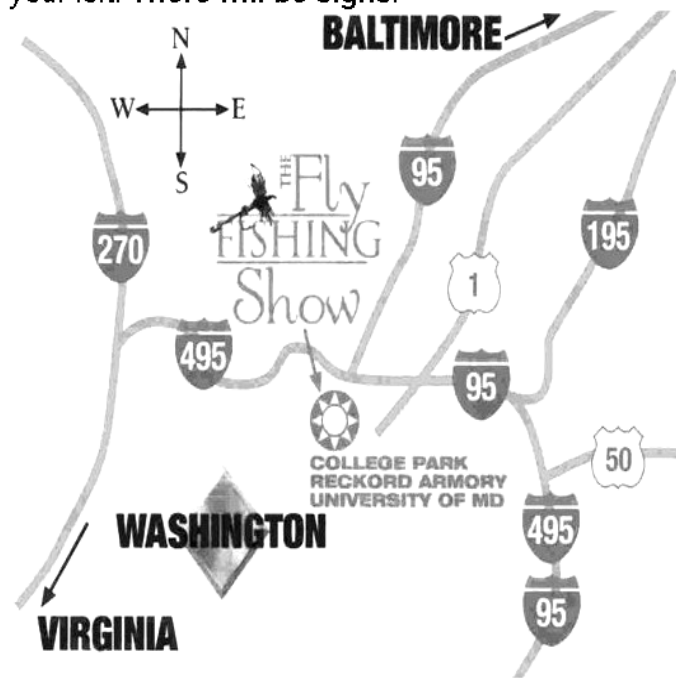
This is the largest fly fishing only show to come to the Washington area.

Seminars, fly casting and fly tying demonstrations, exhibitors, door prizes, authors signing books—all this and more. A special Grand Door Prize will be awarded after all the sponsors' shows are completed. The drawing for a fishing trip for two at the Yan Kee Way Lodge in Chile will be held on March 15, 2004. Be sure to stop by the *Fly Rod & Reel* magazine booth to register for a drawing for a customized Ford Expedition SUV and a fishing trip.

There will be fly tying and fly tying classes, including a casting class for women only, that require a fee and advanced registration. For details see the show web site: www.flyfishingshow.com/collegepark.html

PPTU will have a table there, so please stop by to say "Hello" and maybe sign up a friend with Trout Unlimited.

Directions: Off I-95/495 (Capital Beltway), take Exit 25 (Rt 1 Baltimore Ave, College Park). Follow Rt 1 south 2.5 miles to the University of Maryland campus. The Reckord Armory where the show is held is on the right of US 1. If you are coming from Washington on US 1, Reckord Armory will be on your left. There will be signs.



Return Address:
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Wheaton, MD 20915

FIRST CLASS MAIL