

The Conservationist



PPTU.org

Potomac-Patuxent Chapter Trout Unlimited

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From there to here, a brief history on the sport we love with Bob Dietz May 21st

Sometimes, looking back helps us to look forward. Having an understanding of techniques and materials used in the past can sometimes shed a little light on how and why we do what we do today in order to catch a fish. Looking back should also give us some comfort in knowing that people have been addicted to fly fishing for centuries. This month we welcome fellow PPTU member, Bob Dietz who will give us a brief history of the sport that is for most, a true passion.

As many know, Bob is an excellent tier and instructor, but he is also a history buff. Bob will discuss with us the development of the sport since the early 1800's. He'll discuss the development of rods and leaders over the years. He'll cover how the dry fly and the nymph were developed and how the changing technology in fly rods helped to spur their growth. Bob will also not leave out of his talk the colorful cast of characters that helped to shape and grow the sport of fly fishing.

Please join us on May 21st at 7PM at the Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland to welcome Bob Dietz and a very informative evening on fly fishing.

– *Marc Hutzel*

On the Bench – Bob Dietz will additionally start the evening off with a teaser to his presentation. It's a one-man show!



Monthly Chapter Meetings

Time and Day: 7:00 PM, Third Wednesday except June, July, August and December
Place: Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland
DIRECTIONS TO THE SENIOR CENTER

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

Visit our website: www.pptu.org

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS 2013 – 2014

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Vice-President: Bob O'Donnell 410-733-0638
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Presidents' Column - James Robinson

Has the snow ended yet? I certainly hope so!

Last month, I reported about the MAC (Mid-Atlantic Council) banquet that had occurred in late March. When I wrote the article for the April issue, the numbers weren't in. I still don't have the final numbers but initial reports are that it was a great success.

Several members of our Chapter and associated organizations were nominated by PPTU and recognized by the Mid-Atlantic Council for their work on various projects. Nick Weber (Past President of PPTU, Past Chair of MAC, current member of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling) received the Elliot Donnelley Award for his work on the Commission & for his efforts to establish the Patuxent tail waters as a fly fishing only, catch & release only fishing area; Carl Smolka (currently our Membership Chair) received a Citizen Recognition Award for his continuing support & work with Project Healing Waters; Billie Dove (WSSC employee) also received a Citizen Recognition Award for his support to PPTU at the Brighton Dam to improve the availability of cold water into the tail water; Chuck Dinkel received the David Wittman Award for Youth Education for his work with Trout in the Classroom; and finally, the Savage River Watershed Association received an Organization Recognition Award for supporting efforts to monitor & restore the Savage River Watershed in western Maryland. Congratulations to all of these deserving people.

Elections – At our Chapter meeting on the 21st, we'll be holding an election for two Director positions. The slate of candidates hasn't been announced as of the time that I'm writing this. I hope you'll come & vote.

Speaking of elections, I'd be remiss if I didn't recognize the Directors who will end their term in office ...

Pati Nicholson has been a Director since the fall of 2011. She brought a unique perspective to the Board as TU, as an organization, began efforts to expand membership by recruiting women (an under represented group in our ranks). She was instrumental in linking our Chapter with Casting for Recovery, an organization that assists the recovery of breast cancer survivors through fly fishing activities. She has also been a mentor & supporter of Project Healing Waters at Ft. Meade. Pati, thank you for all that you have done. I hope we'll see you at future Chapter activities.

Alan Burrows joined the Board in September of 2013 to fill the position vacated when Bob O'Donnell became Vice-President. In less than a year, he has stepped up to fill a critical need in the Trout in the Classroom program. Currently, he's working with the schools in Howard County but I'm sure that his 'kingdom' of tanks & legion of fish fry will grow as time goes on. He has that special demeanor necessary to work with the inquisitive minds of our youth. Alan, thank you for coming on board so quickly and I'm sure we'll have more for you to do in the future.

So now, we take a break for a couple of months. Keep your lines wet & we'll see you again in September (sounds like a good title for a song but you don't want to hear me sing).

Until next month, tight lines ... 🍷



PPTU Mentor Program Beginners & Beyond

Ken Bowyer provides one-on-one streamside fly fishing instruction to PPTU members. Participants must show commitment by having waders or hip boots, a rod and reel outfit, and leader. Discussions will include equipment, knots, casting, flies, dry fly and nymphing techniques, entomology, reading water, conservation, etc. at nearby streams. Instruction will be tailored to individual needs. Members who have not made an **Annual Supporting Contribution** will be asked to contribute \$20.



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

Tackle and Tactics - Jay Sheppard

Reel drag: Fighting a large fish on a light tippet is one of the fun challenges of fly fishing. A 2-3 lb trout on 6X or 7X tippet would be a real challenge for any fisher. I generally like to fight directly off the reel any fish that may weigh about half or more of the tippet strength. Any lighter fish and I will usually just strip the line in by hand as I fight it. The big problem with fighting any fish by direct handling of the line is that one cannot truly and wisely estimate the amount of tension being delivered to the tippet and the fish at any given moment. Make an error in holding the line too tight and the fish and you will part ways.

Properly setting the drag on the reel is necessary before going fishing. I much prefer a smooth drag system on a reel if I expect to catch any large fish on light tippets. The click-click type drag systems

on the less expensive reels deliver a very uneven series of tensions to the tippet as the spring clip jumps up and down with the passing of each sprocket inside the reel.



The drag must be set quite low relative to the actual tippet strength. Point a rod directly at the fish, and the pull of the fish is direct to the reel. With just a slight raising of the rod the force needed to overcome the drag is perhaps doubled. Point the rod directly overhead, and you had better have very strong tippet for the size of the fish or you will surely break it off. A force of about 4 ounces at the reel is about all I need to hold most trout. For steelhead I might prefer about 6 ounces and for medium salmon only about 8 ounces.

The drag setting has to be determined before you go fishing. A reel that has almost all the line on the spool will take much less force to overcome the drag than a reel with just 40 feet of fly line removed. One needs only one item to set the reel's drag. Ideally a spring scale that is carefully calibrated to ounces (or grams) would be most useful. A plastic drink container that holds up to about 8 or 10 ounces can work as the weight. Measure about 3.5 ounces of water and seal into the plastic bottle. Mount the reel on a rod. Strip off about 30–40 feet of line so that it will hang directly off the spool and not touch any part of the reel or rod. Attach the bottle to the fly line only a foot or so from the reel itself. Adjust the drag setting until the weight overcomes the drag and starts slowly pulling line directly off the spool. Mark this point (4-oz. setting) on the reel in some manner, such as a

fine scratch mark. Add 4 ounces of water to the container, then set and mark the drag for the 8-ounce setting. That should be the range for 90% of your freshwater fishing. Be sure to recheck every few years as the drag wears with usage. With the drag set, one can fight a fish directly off the reel with greater confidence.

One must tire a fish before it is landed. This does not mean it is belly up and gasping for more oxygen, only that its strength and stamina are greatly reduced. Making the fish swim against both the current of the stream and the drag will tire it out the fastest. If the fish is downstream of you in heavy current, then make the trout swim from one side to the other by first pointing the rod directly across the current until the fish is downstream of the rod tip and then switch the rod to the other side to make the trout swim over to that point. With a 9' rod the fish is having to swim laterally back and forth over some 20' feet of water. If one can wade downstream safely to where the trout is, than wade slowly downstream and retrieve the same amount of line as one is covering by wading. When downstream of the trout, one usually can net it.

Another trick is to actually give the downstream trout a large loop of line that extends downstream of it. This can be risky, but if your luck holds and it is done properly, the large belly of the fly line is tugging at the trout from downstream. Letting the fish simply hang on the end of the line downstream of you is letting it rest! No expenditure of any energy on its part is needed. That trout will take more than a bit of time to ever come to the net. Check your drag and go fish!! Tight lines.....but not parting tippets! 🍷

Patuxent Report - Jay Sheppard

Streams are stocked! Trout are rising! Go chase some of these trout now!! Do not forget your cell phone, if you have one! This is prime poaching season on our special regulations streams. Slip it into a Ziplock and have the Natural Resources Police (NRP) number already in its memory: 1-800-635-6124. This dispatcher desk is a 24/7/365 operation by the DNR police.

At the Mid-Atlantic Council's banquet on March 29, the following was one of the awards that was given.

Citizen Recognition Awards – The Citizen Recognition Award recognizes the conservation accomplishments and contributions of closely allied individuals that facilitated and contributed to improving a Maryland trout fishery and/or the quality of the trout fishing experience.

The award read as follows:

Billy Dove, Operator of the Brighton Dam and other facilities for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). Mr. Dove has been a major player in developing the Patuxent River tailwater fishery below Brighton Dam. He has done everything possible that was within his purview to give us the flows we needed for stocking, shocking, or other stream work. He has tried to give us the coldest possible water. Mr. Dove has gone above-and-beyond to reset the releases to benefit the trout fishery. He has been a true asset to the establishment of this fly fishing only trout fishery below Brighton Dam. For the past several years, dozens if not many hundreds, of trout fishers have descended on the Patuxent River below Brighton Dam to enjoy their sport. None of this would have been possible without Mr. Dove's personal assistance. 🌸



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!



In the Media **- Trout Wrangler**

Recently several of us got into a discussion on building your own tapered leaders. I remembered the first leader I made many years ago from a formula out of an article in an issue of Fly Fisherman magazine. It was fun and relaxing to measure out the sections and neatly tie it all together. Proud of my creation, I rushed out to a local stream to try it out. The leader performed as advertised. A proper cast allowed the sections to unroll in a strong but graceful manner, turning over my dry fly to a gentle soft landing. It was almost trance like to just false cast and watch it in action. Now years later after our discussion and watching this video I'm ready to give it a go again.

Tightline Productions recently released a video on building your own tapered leader. Have a look! **Be a leader!** Email the editor with the type of leader material featured in the video and win a prize. 🌸

<http://vimeo.com/91408485>

Final Issue until Fall!!!

The next Conservationist is the September issue, which should be out shortly after Labor Day.

Have a great summer!



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.

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Hardy Nottingham
Hardy Nottingham mahogany/brass star back reel.



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