

Newscasts

November 2009 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Introduction to Saltwater Fly Fishing – Meeting on November 10

This program is designed to take the mystery and intimidation out of taking your first saltwater fly fishing trip, and to help you be better prepared for your trip to make it more enjoyable and successful.

Our speaker will be **Craig Amaker**, who has fly fished saltwater for the past 15 years for everything from small snappers to yellowfin tuna and tarpon in a variety of destinations throughout the Caribbean and Christmas Island.

“I’ve gone from being the saltwater rookie facing an expensive trip and an exhausting tackle check list while trying to keep things on a bare bones budget to learning how to do my homework and refine things so the trip expense isn’t over the top,” says Craig. “Saltwater fly fishing is neat because it takes you to beautiful places of the tropical version – think ocean with sand and coral flats instead of spring creeks; palm trees instead of willows and cedars.”

Craig continues: “The rods are just a bit bigger than your standard trout rod, and the fishing is visual – seeing the fish and its strike. The fish are also bigger and fight much harder. A 12” mutton snapper fights hard enough to drown a 12” brown trout. There’s nothing like seeing a 24” bonefish rip 50 yards of backing off your reel in one run or a 60 lb. tarpon jump completely out of the water after it took your fly.”

Craig will also be providing information on a saltwater fly fishing trip he is hosting to San Pedro, Belize next February. Anyone interested in this trip should attend this meeting and talk to Craig directly.

As usual, the meeting is at 7 p.m. at the Coliseum Bar on Olin Avenue but we’d love to see you before for dinner and a few fish stories.

Icebreaker Update:

Our keynote speaker will be **Bob Linsenman** of Michigan, co-author of *Modern Streamers for Trophy Trout*.

See page 2 for more details on this fantastic event!!

Win a Fishing Trip for Two to Alaska Major Fundraising Opportunity

Through the generosity of the owners of Wilderness Place Lodge, the Chapter will raffle a fishing trip to Alaska. The raffle provides a marvelous opportunity for a trip of a lifetime while at the same time generating funds to support the Chapter’s stream improvement program.

The winning raffle ticket will provide a 4 night and 5 day stay FOR TWO PEOPLE at Wilderness Place Lodge (see www.wildernessplacelodge.com) located 80 air miles Northwest of Anchorage, Alaska on scenic Lake Creek. The winning ticket includes lodging, meals, and daily guided trips as well as transportation to and from Anchorage. **The value of the package is approximately \$6,200.**

Raffles tickets may be purchased for \$50 apiece, and the raffle will be limited to a total of 200 tickets. Thus, each ticket will have a 1/200 chance of being drawn. There is no limit on the number of tickets purchased by an individual.

All proceeds will be directed to support the Chapter’s trout stream improvement programs (e.g. easement procurement, stream work and stream maintenance). Tickets will go on sale in mid-December and may not be ordered before that time. Keep your eye on www.swtu.org for the announcement of when tickets will be for sale and ordering details.

The raffle will be held the first monthly chapter meeting after the 200th ticket is sold, but no later than the March chapter meeting – the Meicher Madness Auction.

Questions about this fantastic Alaska raffle should be directed to Jordan.Konisky@gmail.com.

Read on for:

- **Fly tying classes**
- **An update on some amazing restoration work on Vermont Creek**
- **A look at “The Good Old Days”**
- **The return of Rusty Dunn, who gets Shakespearean on a time-tested fly**
- **And much, much more!!**

Icebreaker Speaker: Bob Linsenman, *The Ausable Angler*

Our keynote speaker for the Icebreaker will be Bob Linsenman, author, angler, tyer, fly shop owner and guide.

Based out of Mio, Michigan, Bob is a noted name in the world of fly fishing. He has authored numerous books on fly fishing in Michigan and is perhaps best known as co-author of *Modern Streamers for Trophy Trout*.

Bob will be sharing his tactics and techniques for using big flies to catch big fish. He will also be demonstrating his streamer tying techniques.

It's very exciting to have such a noted practitioner and lover of our sport coming to share his knowledge at our Icebreaker.

We look forward to seeing EVERYBODY (along with a friend or two!) on Saturday, January 16 at the Promega Biotechnology Center in Fitchburg.

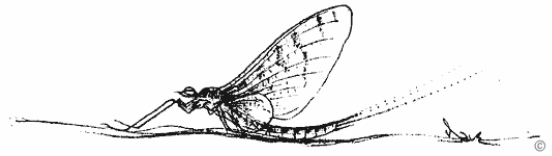
There are many ways, large and small, that you can lend a hand to help ensure a successful event. To get involved, sign up at an upcoming Chapter meeting or contact Dave Sanders at daveandcheri@charter.net to let him know how you can help or ask about the opportunities available.

Doorprizes and Bucket Raffles

This event is known for its outstanding doorprizes and bucket raffle items. Those don't come together magically – it is people like you taking a bit of time and effort to put together an item and donate it.

Whether its' tying flies, building rods or coming up with any sort of quality fly fishing or outdoorsy item, your donation will make a difference.

If you have an item to donate or have an idea of a business or individual in town we should be contacting, please get in touch with Jim Kanvik at jhkanvik@charter.net.



Fly Tying Classes 2010

SWTU invites you to learn fly tying or improve your fly tying skills. Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced courses provide instruction on techniques, including hands-on demonstrations and tutorials of fly patterns proven effective for local waters. All materials, including hooks, are provided, but you must supply your own fly tying tools and thread. Classes are free.

All classes meet on Thursday evenings from 7:00 - 9:00 PM for ten consecutive weeks, beginning January 14, 2010.

Fitchburg Classes

Beginning Fly Tying OR Intermediate Fly Tying
Fitchburg Community Center
5510 Lacy Rd, Fitchburg

Sun Prairie Classes

Beginning Fly Tying OR Advanced Fly Tying
Patrick Marsh Middle School
1351 Columbus St, Sun Prairie

Advanced registration is required! You may register online at www.swtu.org or by US Mail. To register by mail, send your name, address, phone number and desired class to:

Trout Unlimited Fly Tying Organizers
1522 Chandler St.
Madison, WI 53711

The registration deadline is January 10, 2010. Students will be accepted in the order registrations are received, and classes often fill to capacity. More information, including a list of needed tools and supplies, is available at www.swtu.org. E-mail questions to SWTU-FlyTying@sbcglobal.net.

You-Must-Be-Present-To-Win

Somebody is going to win \$100!!!

The *You-Must-Be-Present-To-Win* jackpot has reached its size limit. Contest rules stipulate that the jackpot never exceed \$100. So, someone will leave the November meeting with a \$100 gift certificate to *Fontana Sports Specialties*. All members in attendance will receive, free of charge, the entry-half of a single raffle ticket. If the other half of your ticket is drawn from the hat, then you will the \$100 gift certificate. All you have to do is show up.

Welcome New Members

Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited is pleased to announce the addition of the following new members to our ranks.

Mark Saunders Ryan Tomburrini
Michael Roy Chris Pappathopoulos

We are honored to have you among us. Please join us for a Chapter meeting, and we will give you **free** raffle tickets, flies and “an offer you can’t refuse” from some of our most experienced fisher-folk!

The Last Work Day of 2009

You can make a difference!

Saturday, November 14 is the last workday scheduled for this fall, and we’re hoping for dry weather. We’ll gear up at Salmo Pond and carpool to the work site at Schultz Road to install sweepers and limb cedars.

Please contact Mike Grimes, Project Chair, at mgrimes17@charter.net or (608) 655-1086 if you are coming so he can plan lunch and notify you if it’s canceled due to high or muddy water.

And remember; by helping out you earn the opportunity to **get your name in the drawing for the Streamkeeper II** – a magnificent fly rod expertly crafted by Jim Bartelt.

Vermont Creek Restoration Project Completed

By Dan Wisniewski

More than a mile of Vermont Creek, the major tributary to Black Earth Creek, has been restored, with the completion of a project by the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department. Two landowners, Sandra Johnson and Steven and Barbara Parrell, signed conservation easements with our Chapter to allow the work to be done on their farms. This stretch of Vermont Creek begins about 500 feet south of County Highway KP on the west edge of the Village of Black Earth, and

extends upstream about one and a quarter mile. There were serious problems caused by erosion, thick vegetation and channelization, and there was no public access.

County Conservationist **Pat Sutter** said the county utilized a \$150,000 DNR grant to pay for the project work, which included 10,410 feet of shaping and seeding, 2,800 feet of fencing, 62 lunkers and about 15 weirs. Two pairs of “perched” and damaged culverts which had seriously impeded fish passage were replaced by new six foot diameter culverts (**see before and after photos below**). Access to the stream will be along the northern edge of the Parrell property.

Staff from the county and the Natural Heritage Land Trust are working with the two landowners on a proposal to convert the SWTU easement into a permanent easement under Dane County’s Streambank Easement Program. Our Chapter has committed about \$17,000, raised from our members and other conservation groups, to help pay for these permanent easements.

Earlier stream restoration projects had been completed on about a mile of Vermont Creek between KP and Highway 14 on Sandra Johnson’s property and land owned by Leland and Shirley Danz at the confluence with Black Earth Creek. Other stream improvements have been made on DNR owned land farther upstream. Once the Johnson-Parrell easements are completed, SWTU, Dane County, DNR and the Natural Heritage Land Trust will be working together to secure other easements for additional restoration along Vermont Creek.



The good old days

By Bill Flader

The good old days are NOW. Have you heard that expression used to describe the excellent trout fishing we enjoy these days in Wisconsin and neighboring states?

Changing land-use patterns, stream improvement work, increased public access, catch-and-release ethic, and special regs all contribute.

So, after a productive early start to the 2009 season in NE Iowa and SW Wisconsin, this writer wondered what it would take, as a demonstration of the extensive resources available to trout fishers, to catch at least one trout in as many streams as possible. The nice round number of 100 seemed reasonable, and the quest began.

Realizing it would require fishing waters **new** to the writer, three essential map books were assembled: *Wisconsin Atlas and Gazetteer*, Wis. Trout regs pamphlet, and *Map Guide to Improved Trout Waters of Wisconsin* by Todd Hanson. In addition, an Iowa Trout Fishing Guide (folded map of NE Iowa with trout waters overprinted in color) and Jene Hughes' book *Iowa Trout Streams* were consulted. Hanson's book proved invaluable in showing public lands and location of access corridors, and secondarily where improvement had been done in past years.

Where no public access was shown, fishing was necessarily done near bridges, with some judicious and stealthy straying up or downstream at times. On a few occasions, upon discovery by the landowner, permission was granted after a brief explanation of what I was up to. One time, after being told "there are some big fish in that pool" the first fish hooked was a leaping 16" brown, so it was on to the next stream. Permission to fish several small creeks on large tracts of private land was readily granted after establishing a relationship and promising catch and release.

Before each foray out (47 days fished, between February 6 to July 27) a **plan** was hatched to fish a geographic grouping of waters to minimize driving time. (On one day trout were caught in 8 of 9 streams fished). Each day thus became an **adventure**, with a lot of exploring and opportunities to consider, meeting some interesting people in the process. For example, on leaving a Westby motel in the driftless area one morning, a Pennsylvania fly fisher who had fished widely proclaimed SW Wisconsin "the best trout fishing east of the Mississippi." I also found new

waters to return to some day... something to look forward to.

Now for some relevant data. In addition to the 100 productive streams, 37 **more** were fished unsuccessfully. 47 of the 100 were **new** to the angler. Fish were caught in 4 Iowa counties, 1 in the U.P., and 17 in Wisconsin. Surprisingly, in 25% of streams at least one fish caught was a brookie.

All fishing was with a 2 wt flyrod, and usually on scuds or nymphs (most often a fladermouse) below an indicator.

In this writer's 60-plus years of trout fishing a lot has changed, including his main haunt as a youth, the Onion River in Sheboygan County, once dependent on stocking, now producing wild browns after years of effort on the part of many. You may disagree, but its hard not to conclude that when it comes to trout fishing opportunities in our region, THE GOOD OLD DAYS ARE NOW.

And you are?

You can order a SWTU nametag

Any Chapter member interested in getting a nametag to wear to meetings and events can do so now. The cost will be \$10 per nametag. You can either sign up at the next Chapter meeting or e-mail daveandcheri@charter.net with a subject line of Name Tag and the body containing the exact name you would like on your tag.

Check the Chapter Calendar!

Stay in tune with all things trout with the SWTU Chapter Calendar, easily found in the left menu bar of www.swtu.org. If you have an item for the calendar, please contact Jordan at jordan.konisky@gmail.com.

Fountains of Youth

A look at classic flies that have withstood the test of time ... flies that remain "forever young"

by Rusty Dunn

Many fly tyers craft elaborate and beautiful flies. The Witch's Brew wet fly of William Shakespeare is a good example. It is frighteningly complex:

*Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and howlet's wing*

-- in *Fishing With Macbeth*, 1605

If you tie authentic Witch's Brews, don't brag to your friends about owning a howlet's wing, or it could land you in a federal assisted-living facility. If your preferences tend more toward simple but effective flies, the Gold-ribbed Hare's Ear nymph is hard to beat. Other than hook and thread, it contains only three ingredients, none of which involves poisonous snakes or hard time in the slammer. *Ear of hare and rib of gold* have been catching trout for centuries, and they will continue to do so as long as rabbits have ears and anglers have hooks.

The Gold-ribbed Hare's Ear (GRHE) is one of the all-time great flies. It is so ancient that its origins are uncertain. Angling books as early as Walton's *The Complete Angler* in 1676 describe flies made with hare's fur. The name "Hare's Ear" was first used for a fly (as opposed to the material) in 1800. The gold tinsel was added afterwards, first as a tag and later as a rib. A rib of tinsel adds sparkle and divides the abdomen into fuzzy segments that imitate gills of a mayfly nymph. Hare's Ear wet flies proliferated during the 1800s under many different names, including Hare's Ear, Hare's Lug, Hare's Fleck, and Hare's Pluck. Regardless of the name, Hare's Ear wet flies were favorites of accomplished anglers throughout the century.

The Hare's Ear even enjoyed a lengthy period of fame in the late-1800's as a celebrated dry fly. Dry fly fishing became widespread in England in the mid- to late-1800's, and a Hare's Ear dressed as a dry fly was very popular. F.M. Halford, the influential

author who popularized dry fly fishing and first used the term "gold-ribbed" Hares Ear in print, declared in 1886 that a dry GRHE was the single most productive fly on his home waters of the River Test. Remarkably, Halford later abandoned the GRHE because his fully developed theories of dry fly angling postulated that it should be practiced only by casting exact imitations of hatching insects to fish that are actively rising to those same insects. Halford eventually decided that a GRHE did not imitate a *specific* insect species and, therefore, did not conform to his angling philosophy.

Today's GRHE is usually fished as a generic searching pattern, but it was designed for use at the surface. Even Halford, a confirmed dry fly purist, admitted "*It has always been my theory that it is a fair representation of a dun in the act of disentangling itself from the nymphal shuck.*" Both Preston Jennings and Ray Bergman in the 1930s noted the effectiveness of cutting the wings off a GRHE wet fly. The resulting stubs suggested emerging wing buds, and the snipped GRHEs were excellent when fished in or just under the surface. A wing case later replaced the wing buds, and the modern GRHE nymph was born.

Fly tyers are an unsettled lot, what with all the tweaking and amending of perfectly good fly patterns. Evolution of the Hare's Ear is a perfect example. It prospered at times as a wingless wet, a winged wet, and both a winged and wingless dry fly. The wings and collars of hackle on these flies were evolutionary *cul de sacs* – dead-end features found today only in the fossil record. After all the tinkering, however, the modern GRHE looks remarkably like the original.

For proof of how effective an ancient fly can be, float an oiled size #16-18 Gold-ribbed Hare's Ear in or near the surface during a BWO hatch. The tug on your line will prove that this simple and effective fly has been fooling trout for over two centuries. Shakespeare was a genius with his *eye of newt and toe of frog*, but fly fishing need not be so complicated.

----- Gold-ribbed Hare's Ear Nymph -----

Match the hook size and fur color to natural mayflies.

Hook:	Dry fly, size to match natural
Thread:	Pearsall's Gossamer Silk, yellow; can be substituted with polyester
Tail:	Hare's fur guard hairs
Abdomen:	Hare's mask
Rib:	Flat gold tinsel
Wing case:	Barbs of a soft mottled feather (eg. turkey tail)
Thorax:	Hare's mask, slightly darker than the abdomen; pick out long fibers to imitate legs



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