

Newscasts

October 2009 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Get Bugged – Meeting on October 13 An interactive look at Wisconsin Trout Stream Invertebrates

Get up close and personal with trout food! A brief slide presentation will be followed by the chance to see, touch, identify – and even collect – bug specimens collected from local waters.

Presenting will be Dr. Bobby Peckarsky, Emeritus Professor (entomology/ecology) Cornell University, Kris Stepenuck UW–Extension / WI DNR statewide volunteer stream monitoring program coordinator, and Mike Miller WI DNR stream ecologist.

These are three EXPERTS and they will be on hand to talk to answer your questions. They will even have collection vials available for those wanting to keep specimens for future reference.

Let there be light! (a request)

The lighting in the meeting room is not the best and these are small, crawly critters. So **if you have a nice portable tying light, please bring it in along with an extension cord** so we can light the specimens properly. We'll have some lights on hand, but more will be better.



Also, if your eyes aren't what they used to be, bring along your reading glasses or a magnifying lens so you can really focus in on the live specimens.

This will be a fantastically fun and educational evening – you don't have to be an etymologist to catch trout, but some pointed advice from one (or three) of them sure couldn't hurt!



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.

Welcome New Members

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

Daniel Abel, Jr.
Tim Steines

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!

Planning Ahead

Chapter Budget for the next fiscal year
(Sept. 30, 2009 — Oct. 1, 2010)

If you are a project chair or otherwise help out by running events or activities, we need to get your budget so we can plan accordingly. Give us your best estimate as to what your financial needs are for your project or event. This will not be cast in stone and can be adjusted as needed by the Board. These budgets will be used to help the Chapter can plan accordingly.

Please contact Tom Thrall at 273-4248 or tthrall2@yahoo.com to discuss your financial needs or to see what has been spent in past years to help give you some guidance.

You-Must-Be-Present-To-Win

Nobody won at the September Chapter meeting, so the *You Must Be Present to Win Drawing* has increased to \$80. Please join us at our October meeting for a chance to win an \$80 gift certificate to *Fontana Sports Specialties*. You need only be present (and able to discern the calling of your name) to win.

Read on for:

- **Workday schedule!**
- **Three things everyone can do to make the Icebreaker great!**
- **Rusty Dunn's good friend, the esteemed Major Oliver Leech, unearths a fly with a name that fits in perfectly with this month of Halloween!**

Icebreaker: Three things you can do now!

First: Save the date

The 2010 SWTU Icebreaker will be held on **Saturday, January 16** at the Promega Biotechnology Center in Fitchburg. This is our Chapter's largest fundraiser and a successful event translates into a lot of important restoration and education work.

And more than just saving the date... tell a friend to save the date, too!

Second: Find a way to help out

There are a hundred ways, large and small, that you can help make a great event. Setting up, taking down, greeting people at the door, hanging up posters in town, assisting with the lunch, tying flies and much, much more.

If everybody finds some small way to lend a hand, the event will be that much better. Sign up at an upcoming Chapter meeting or contact Dave Sanders at pheasanttails@gmail.com to either let him know how you can help or ask about the opportunities available.

Third: Donate a doorprize or auction item

Fantastic doorprizes and auction items are key to making a great Icebreaker and your help is needed!!

So, as you're tying flies to fill your flyboxes, set aside a couple each night to donate. In no time, you'll have a great set of flies that anybody would be ecstatic to win!

Quality flyfishing and outdoorsy items are all great. Reels, rods, fly boxes, binoculars, vests, nets, etc. Or maybe you're a woodworker. Or rodbuilder. Or offer a service. If it's something you think a fellow lover of fishing and the outdoors would like, we'll take it!

Please include a note describing your item so we can make cards for the event.

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

Thanks!

Help Out at Our Fall Work Days Many hands make for light work

We have three workdays scheduled for this fall. Please mark these dates off on your calendar, because we – and our streams – could use your help!

The remaining dates (all Saturdays) are:

- October 24
- November 14

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.

More details will follow and be included in our Chapter Calendar. If you'd like to help or have questions, contact Mike Grimes, Project Chair, at mgrimes17@charter.net or (608) 655-1086.

It's Your Newsletter, Too!

Know something?

Think the SWTU members should hear about it?

Just drop your loyal Editor a line at mackasel@gmail.com or catch me at a Chapter Meeting.

Many stories in have started with a Chapter member having an idea of something that should be here in the *Newscasts*. Your thoughts, ideas and considerations are always welcome.

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 Major Oliver Leach

Editor's note - Rusty Dunn is away on an extended fishing excursion to Burkina Faso and his dear fishing companion is honored to prepare this month's column.

While the origins are debated by historians, humans have cast flies over fish for thousands of years. The first written description was from the 2nd century, when Macedonians employed red wool and feathers to capture "fish with speckled skins." The angling literature suggests that this fly imitated an unusual Roman insect, but was it a dry fly, wet fly, or streamer? Historians haven't yet answered this question, but various evidence, including archeological, suggests the first fly was likely a streamer.

The recent history of streamers is better documented and their popularity among trout anglers in North America was established in Maine during the early 1900's. In the 1860s, Maine's remote Rangeley Lakes region became renowned for producing unusually large brook trout, some exceeding 10 pounds. Gentleman anglers from east coast cities flocked to newly developed resorts in the area, with fly rods in hand and in search of "square tails" of great size. They soon found that their odds of landing outsized brook trout on the Rangeley Lakes improved by tightly securing a streamer to the end of their tippet. Joseph Bates, regarded by many as the ultimate authority on streamers, stated in *Streamer Fly Tying and Fishing (1950)*,

"The dry fly, the wet fly, and the nymph all enjoy cherished places in an angler's bag of tricks but...streamers and bucktails, when properly

selected and employed, hook more and bigger fish more often and in more places than any other type of fly rod lure."

Even Theodore Gordon, the father of American dry fly fishing, designed and fished streamers, such as the *Bumblepuppy*, which are well know to bring many fish species, including trout, to hand.

The debate will continue on the origins of fly fishing, but there is little doubt that the *Gray Ghost* is the most popular streamer pattern in American history. The *Gray Ghost* was designed on July 1, 1924, by Mrs. Carrie Stevens, wife of a successful fishing guide and a self-taught, innovative tier who originated many popular, beautiful, and effective streamers. She never tied with a vise and "specialized" in streamers that were trolled with fly rods behind boats rowed across the Rangeley Lakes. Mrs. Stevens first dressed the *Gray Ghost* with white-barred cheeks and long olive-gray hackle wings to imitate smelt. Immediately after tying the first *Gray Ghost*, she was so compelled by the new fly that she left her housework unfinished and cast the streamer into a pool of fast water running next to her cabin. Within an hour Mrs. Stevens caught a six-pound, thirteen ounce brook trout, which placed 2nd in the 1924 *Field and Stream* Fishing Contest. Her fly and fish gathered much attention and she soon received many orders for the *Gray Ghost*. Anglers quickly professed that the streamer was not only a beautiful fly, but it produced both notable trout and landlocked salmon. Demand increased for the *Gray Ghost* and Mrs. Stevens continued creating and dressing many other streamers that were heralded by fly anglers. She's regarded as one of America's great fly tiers and her legacy resonates with the *Gray Ghost*, still well known and received by today's fly anglers, tiers, and historians.

----- Gray Ghost -----

Hook:	6xl Streamer
Thread:	Black
Tag:	Narrow flat silver tinsel
Body	Dressed with very thin orange silk
Ribbing:	Narrow flat silver tinsel
Throat:	Small bunch of white bucktail, and tied beneath is a golden pheasant crest feather, curving upwards
Underwing	4 to 5 strands peacock herl, and tied on top is a golden pheasant crest feather, curving downwards
Wing:	4 olive/gray saddle hackles
Shoulders:	Silver pheasant body feathers, one-third as long as the wing.
Cheek:	Jungle cock



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