

Newscasts

December 2016 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Relax, Talk Trout Unwind and meet new people at our December 13 meeting

The Holidays can be a stressful and busy time, so relax and join us at the December meeting.

We'll be holding a group discussion about all things "Trout Unlimited". It will be a casual night for telling fish tales, exploring our local water, and spending time in great company. We look forward to seeing you there!

As usual, the meeting is upstairs at the [Coliseum Bar and Grill](#) on East Olin Avenue at 7 p.m. but please join us earlier for dinner and a few stories.

You Must Be Present To Win

Nobody won last month, so the drawing for a gift certificate to *Fontana Sports Specialties* goes to \$60. We will see you at the December 13 meeting where you could win the drawing ... but you must be present to win!

Welcome New Members

We're pleased to announce the addition of the following new members to our ranks.

Abigail Beneke
David York
Evelyn Trujillo
John Freeborg

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! Try to get there at 6 p.m. for dinner and to sit with one of our board members to learn more about us. **If you will be attending your first meeting**, please contact [Matt Sment](#) so we can expect you.

The Icebreaker

An exceptionally engaging and interesting day awaits you. Learn more on page 2 and flip to the back page for the full flyer.

THE 34TH ANNUAL SWTU
ICEBREAKER
JANUARY 14TH 2017
AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE
6000 American Parkway, Madison, WI 53783

JOIN US FOR:

- TWO FABULOUS KEYNOTE SPEECHES
- PRESENTATIONS BY LOCAL EXPERTS
- MASTER FLY TYING DEMONSTRATIONS
- EXCITING BUCKET RAFFLES
- SILENT AUCTION
- CONSERVATION PARTNER DISPLAYS
- DELICIOUS LUNCH
- WDNR'S INTRODUCTION TO MACROINVERTEBRATES
- MUCH, MUCH MORE!

FEATURED SPEAKER
LANDON MAYER

Landon's angling success is fueled by an addiction to personal large trout with small flies and lightweight fly-fishing equipment. A Colorado guide for over 19 years, Mayer has developed numerous strategies for rigging, hooking, and landing selective trout. He shares these secrets in his book: *181 Trout Tying A Guide's Secrets, Tactics and Techniques* (now for 2015). *Sight Fishing for Trout and How to Catch the Biggest Trout of Your Life*. In addition to two DVD's, Mayer is also a contributing writer for *Fly Fisherman* and *High Country Angler* magazines.

JUST \$10
FREE for Vets
and Kids 12
& under

FOR MORE INFORMATION: SWTU.ORG

Free Fly Tying Classes: Watch for details

SWTU will once again be offering classes for all skill levels at various locations. Space will be limited. Watch your email and the next Newscasts for dates, details and how to register.

Women & Fly Fishing
HAPPY HOUR!

A women's social event to connect with other women with interests in fly fishing.

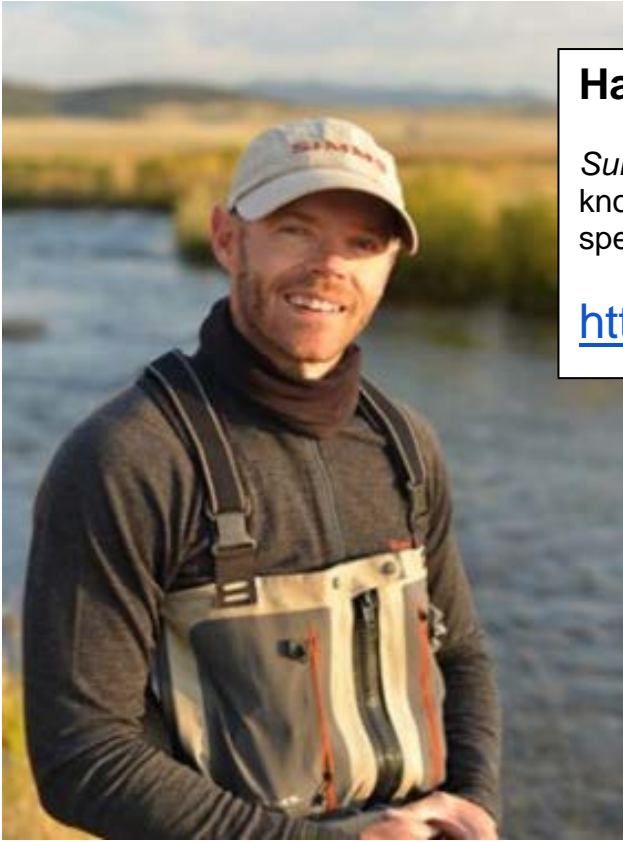
JANUARY 13th
6:00 to ...

Ale Asylum
2002 Pankratz Street,
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 663-3926

A local brew pub near the airport with good food and spirits. Cash bar and food available for purchase.

Hosted by SWTU Women for other women interested in or connected to Fly Fishing: **beginners, novices, experts ... we welcome all levels of skill.**

The Icebreaker!



Have 2 and a half minutes?

Sure ya do! Watch this brief video and get to know a bit more about Landon Mayer, our special guest speaker.

<https://vimeo.com/56980157>

A few key raffle items!

The Icebreaker is known for its stellar array of items you can win, including:

- 7' 3 wt fiberglass rod built by Dave Fowler
- Bamboo Rod built by Paul Douglass
- Complete 5 wt. Orvis Clearwater rod outfit
- Dozens of hand-tied flies donated by chapter members

Many hands make light work!

This incredible event is powered by you, our members! We need a variety of volunteers the day of the event Contact [Amy Klusmeier](#) with questions or to volunteer.

Donate to the Bucket Raffle

We would be pleased to accept anything from a handcrafted birdhouse to a guided fishing trip. Or consider donating new rods, reels, accessories, camping equipment, overnight lodging and especially sets of flies. Our vast array of raffle items adds excitement (and revenue!) to the event. Please deliver the items or make a commitment to a member of our Raffle Team: [Craig Amacker](#) and [Amy Klusmeier](#).

Location. Location. Location.

The Icebreaker will once again be at **American Family Insurance on the east side of Madison!** Join us for great speakers, master fly tying demonstrations, Stream Explorers program for kids 12 and under, and of course, a bucket raffle and silent auction featuring fabulous prizes!

[Google Map Link](#)

Our Schedule for the Day

9:00 AM

Keynote: **"Sight Fishing for Trout"** – Landon Mayer

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

- Master Fly Tying Demos
- Conservation Partner & SWTU Activity Booths

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Local Angling in Main Auditorium featuring Mike Miller, WDNR, Kyle Zemple, Black Earth Angling, and more!

12:00 - 1 PM Lunch

1:00 - 3:00 PM

- Keynote: **"Colorado: Four Seasons of Trout Fishing"** – Landon Mayer
- Kids Activities including casting, fly tying and exploring macroinvertebrates

3:30 PM

Bucket Raffle Drawings and Silent Auction Winners

Bad News! New Zealand Mudsnails Spreading

Anglers should be aware that invasive New Zealand mudsnails have recently been discovered on Badger Mill Creek, a tributary to the Sugar River, at and upstream of the Hwy 69 bridge. Other than a population on Black Earth Creek, the Badger Mill infestation is the only other inland instance of NZMS in Wisconsin. While it's not conclusively known how the snails moved from Black Earth to Badger Mill, anglers inadvertently moving them on their wading boots or gear is a strong possibility.

The DNR has organized a rapid response team made up of agency and organizational partners, such as the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association. SWTU is part of this response team. A high priority in the coming weeks will be assessing the extent of the NZMS in the entire Upper Sugar River Watershed (not just Badger Mill), and getting signage and wader wash stations out on streams to inform anglers. It's important to note that while NZMS have only been confirmed on Badger Mill thus far, *anglers should assume that any streams in the Upper Sugar River watershed could be infected with NZMS, and should take appropriate steps to decontaminate their gear.*

NZMS have the potential to outcompete native macroinvertebrates (and essential "trout food") like caddisflies, mayflies, and stoneflies, having a negative effect on trout health. They have decimated trout streams in western U.S., in the worst cases, forming over 90% of the biomass of some streambeds. As such, anglers should proceed with absolute caution, and always practice clean angling. At minimum, anglers should carry clean water and a boot brush in their vehicle, and always scrub and clean their boots before leaving a stream. (Though this will not kill NZMS, only minimize its spread. Freezing gear for 6-8 hours is the best way to kill NZMS.)

For more information on NZMS and clean angling, visit <https://www.wisconsinrivers.org/our-work/aquatic-invasive-species/new-zealand-mudsnails> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPIRYsqNxJo>

New Zealand Mud Snails: Totally tiny, utterly destructive



Stay Connected



Know what's happening by connecting to our [Chapter Calendar!](#)



Check out [Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited on Facebook](#) to connect to activities, discussions and friends. (You should be able to view the page without a Facebook account.)

And if you know of a member not receiving emails from SWTU, please have them email madkasel@gmail.com!

President's Column

Tristan Kloss, SWTU President

'Tis the season to think of what we are thankful for, compile our wish lists for the holiday, and look forward to our hopes and expectations for the New Year. I wanted to share with you my thoughts during this holiday season as we move toward 2017...

I'm thankful for the massive amount of time and effort that our volunteers put into the organization. We've done the math and in this past year volunteers have contributed 6,690 hours to workdays, projects, meetings, and other events related to our mission. Using the DNR's current volunteer rate of \$12/hour (and, personally, I think that number vastly undervalues SWTU's members!) your time equals \$80,280 in in-kind donations. That's kinda incredible, so thank you, thank you, thank you for everyone who volunteered in 2016.

While I wish I had the space to call out each and every volunteer individually, I believe a few folks deserve special recognition for their efforts this year. Topf Wells need to be commended for the amount of time he spent to make the Neperud Project happen. Jim and Nancy Hess also deserve a kudos for hand-sorting the native grass and forb seeds that were used for planting on our last workday, an unenviable but incredibly important task.

Help our trout waters / Help your taxes

'Tis the giving season and your local trout waters could use your tax-deductible gift. Your donation to the Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Endowment Fund is a great way to make a difference to the waters you fish. The SWTU Endowment Fund has made significant contributions to major projects, including Gordon Creek and work in Mazomanie.



Give a lasting tribute to the waters you love. Send a check in any amount to **SWTU Endowment** and mail to SWTU, PO Box 45555, Madison, WI 53744

My holiday list this year looks something like this...

- ... a safe and productive start to the early trout season for everyone
- ... a full fly box (that I don't have to fill!)
- ... a successful Icebreaker
- ... continued growth in our relationships with Southeastern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Badger Fly Fishers, Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance, the DNR, and many other local organizations that help us complete our mission
- ... a limited edition *Star Wars: Rogue One* Men's Rebel Parka, size XL, from Columbia (ya know, just in case anyone needs any ideas...)

Finally, I'm looking forward to building on what we've accomplished in 2016 and keep moving forward our goals of conserving, protecting, and restoring coldwater resources in Wisconsin. No doubt we'll face challenges along the way. We already know that our work on the Sugar River will take on greater importance now that New Zealand Mud Snails have been found in the watershed. We'll continue to monitor conditions on Black Earth Creek with the help of BECWA, BECCO, and the River Alliance. We'll conduct workdays where it is needed and where we can get access. We'll put on a good show at the Icebreaker and hope you'll find time to join us for our biggest fundraiser of the year. I know that, whatever 2017 will bring, we're prepared to face it head on and do our best for the resources that we care about.

Until next year, have a safe and happy holiday season! I'll see you on the water.

Tristan

I Seed What You Did There ...

Our last workday for the year was at the Neperud property on the Sugar River, where 23 volunteers helped to hand sow native grasses and forbs (wildflowers) into areas where the DNR made streambank improvements this last summer. We also cleared out invasive woodies, took an inventory and cleared out around the oak trees and native shrubs we planted in April.

We had a total of 186 volunteers at our workdays this year, representing 814 hours of volunteer work (including planning and prep) with a value of \$11,160! Photos courtesy Jim Beecher. [View the full album.](#)



Fountains of Youth

Classic trout flies that have withstood the test of time ... flies that remain "forever young"

by Rusty Dunn

The behaviors of trout can be infuriating at times. They might refuse your best imitations during a hatch but at the same time inhale some ugly concoction of fur and feather that looks more like a hair ball than an insect. You might catch dozens of trout on a bright, sunny, lifeless afternoon, but next day – same time, same place – you get skunked when it is wonderfully overcast and mayflies emerge endlessly. Those objects of our attention – the ones with the pea-sized brains – are hard to understand. But, who are we to second guess the mind of a trout? The best we can do is experiment with fly patterns and allow trout to tell us what they like. Such is the case with three of the unlikeliest of classic flies ... the variants, spiders, and skaters. These flies may not look like any insects you've seen, but the angling literature is full of testimonials to their uncanny ability to enrage a trout.

Variants, spiders, and skaters are three increasingly extreme fly designs. All are lightly dressed, high floating, wingless, dry flies tied with unusually long hackle. Skaters are the most extreme, consisting of nothing but a hook, thread, and 2+ inch hackle. Spiders have somewhat shorter hackle, and variants have hackle that is a more modest 2 or 3 hook sizes large. Variants have the profile of traditional dries, but their hackle and tail are sufficiently long that the entire hook rides above the surface, with the fly supported only on the tips of its hackle. Variants are sprightly flies that land softly, dance lightly, and respond to every little swirl of current or puff of wind.

Englishman William Baigent (1864-1935) originated the variant style of flies in the late 19th century. He was a dedicated dry fly angler living in the English north at a time when the "dry fly revolution" was underway on chalk streams of the south. Baigent's approach to dry fly design, however, was very different from the highly imitative methods that took root

among southern revolutionaries. Baigent was an amateur entomologist who knew the insects of his home waters very well. But rather than tie excruciatingly exact replicas of captured naturals, Baigent designed his patterns by trial and error; he didn't care what the final fly looked like. Baigent began with simple generic imitations, varied their size, profile, components, and color, and then took them fishing. Experiments continued only on those flies that caught the most fish. Baigent's "survival of the fittest" evolutionary approach yielded remarkably effective flies. The trout he caught – not some angling author or self-anointed authority – told Baigent what a fly should look like. Baigent was one of the earliest fly angling impressionists, for whom exact imitation is unnecessary. His long hackled flies seemed monstrous to human sensibilities, but trout are much more tolerant. Baigent was once asked what his most famous fly imitates, to which he responded, *"It is not tied to represent any fly, it is tied to catch a trout"*.

Americans Preston Jennings and Edward Hewitt knew of and admired Baigent's designs. Both were keenly interested in underwater optics and the light patterns of flies riding atop the surface. Baigent corresponded with Hewitt, whose Bivisible (*F.O.Y.*, Sept. 2007) and Neversink Skater (*F.O.Y.*, July/Aug. 2008) were likely influenced by Baigent's ideas. Art Flick, an influential author of the mid-19th century, thought highly of the variant style, which he popularized in his 1947 book *A Streamside Guide To Naturals and Their Imitations*. As described by Flick, *"There is something about flies tied this way that seems to excite the trout, and often they will come up and smash them when they do no want them."* Flick opined that an angler could do very well through an entire trout season using only three flies tied in varying sizes: a Dun Variant, Cream Variant, and Grey Fox Variant.

Why do such ill-proportioned flies work so well? Only one expert knows for sure, and that's the trout. Ask a trout about this when you next meet, but be sure to phrase the question with oversized hackle.

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----- Art Flick's Grey Fox Variant -----

A size #10 - #12 Grey Fox Variant is a very popular imitation of eastern Green Drakes.

Hook: Dry fly, #10 - #16

Thread: Pearsall's Gossamer silk, primrose yellow

Tail: Ginger hackle barbs

Body: Light ginger or cream hackle quill, stripped

Hackle: One each of light ginger, dark ginger, and grizzly, oversized by 2-3 hook sizes and wrapped together





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FOR MORE INFORMATION: SWTU.ORG

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