

Newscasts

October 2016 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Patagonia Double-Play Our October 11 meeting!

A bucket list trip to two classic South American fly-fishing lodges? Now that's the definition of a PATAGONIA DOUBLE-PLAY!

Join us on October 11 to hear **Bill Engber** share stories and photos from an amazing adventure. Bill will talk about fishing the Rio Grande of Tierra del Fuego where massive Sea-Run Brown Trout average nine to ten pounds, and the famous Lago Strobel aka "Jurassic Lake" where Rainbow Trout averaging six to eight pounds cruise the shores. You won't want to miss this exciting presentation!

Did they catch any fish on this Bucket List Trip ??? Come to the Coliseum Bar & Grill on October 11th and see some pictures of Argentina, some flies and maybe some nice fish !

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

Bill Engber – he who is pictured here with Jurassic fish – leads a charmed life because he won the \$100 in September. Therefore the drawing rests to a \$20 gift certificate to *Fontana Sports Specialties*. We will see you at the October 11 meeting where you could win the drawing ... but you must be present to win!



Important Date Changes

Beers & Brookies Postponed

This event at Wisconsin Brewing Company will not take place in October as planned. Stay tuned for a new date!

November Meeting: One Week Later

Our November 2016 meeting is shifting a week and **we'll meet on Tuesday, November 15** ... as opposed to our usual second Tuesday.

Welcome New Members

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

Pat Gansemer
Jim Porter
Ben Stine

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.

Rod building class – 1 spot left! (again) Registration is first come, first served

One person had to drop out of the class, so one opening remains. Dave Fowler is offering a two-day rod building class this October 22-23, at Cabela's in Sun Prairie. Students will build their choice of a 3-, 4-, or 5-weight fiberglass rod (not bamboo!) with Dave's instruction. Class includes all materials and the cost is \$175 per student. Dave has generously offered to donate all profits back to SWTU!

For more information or to register, email Dave by October 15 at dfowler82@gmail.com.



Women & Fly Fishing
HAPPY HOUR!

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

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

Another nifty pic from Tristan. A beautiful late season brown.



Behold the power of fish karma By Tristan Kloss, SWTU President

I scoff at superstitions. I spent years adhering to the Scientific Method, carrying a healthy amount of skepticism, and—to channel a famous Vulcan—being logical. But I do believe that any old house must be haunted. During the Brewers' pennant run in 2011 I told my wife that I wasn't going to wash my baseball hat because it might interfere with their run at a World Series championship (that hat has, mysteriously, vanished... I wonder why?). And I believe in the power of fish karma.

Fish karma is something I may have made up after reading a couple of books about the Buddha and trying to rationalize the improbable scenarios that I routinely encounter on the water. But I think there is more to it than that. Fish karma is accumulated goodwill generated when one chooses to reinvest in the resource from which we derive our enjoyment. In other words: **When you do good things for coldwater, you have better days on the water.**

There is no other way I can explain it, except that the fishing gods must be keeping score at home (my money is on Oannes, although Miskatonic University alums might want to credit Dagon). All I can offer for proof are my own experiences. Why else would a slow day turn around after I finally remember to pinch down the barb, or after pocketing tangles of old line found discarded stream side? Some of my best experiences and most memorable Driftless fish have occurred while volunteering for Project Green Teen and the Women's Clinics. This last weekend, after spending the morning clearing brush with fellow TUErs at our first workday of the year, I hit the water and was pleasantly surprised at my luck: no hopper-dropper tangles, no flies lost to the brush, and a couple handfuls of fish by the time I hiked back to the car.

I know it wasn't luck, though. (And those handfuls of fish? One of brown trout, another chubs. Fish karma doesn't discriminate on species.)

Every investment you make in our coldwater resources pays off, usually in obvious ways: increased access to trout streams, habitat improvements, educational opportunities, and more. The next time you find yourself fishing well above your average, though, take stock of your fish karma: it likely runneth over. For that, I—and the fish—thank you.

October 22 Stream Workday

Join our Stream Team for fun,
friendship and making a difference!

Our second workday of the fall season will be Saturday, October 22 on the West Branch of the Sugar River at Cty. Rd. G.

When: October 22 from 9 a.m. to Noon (Chapter Approved Sawyers please arrive at 8:30).

What: Cutting and treating willows to benefit trout stream habitat and provide access to the stream. Also friendly camaraderie, refreshments, coffee, and a chance to give back to the resource!

Where: 8774 Cty Rd G. Driving west out of Mt. Vernon on Cty Rd G, the work site is 1.8 miles. We will be parking in a grassy area just off the road on the east side. Here is a [map](#) to this location.

Bring: Bring work gloves, sturdy shoes, and loppers and hand saws; otherwise the chapter has equipment you can use. Also bring reusable water bottles that can be re-filled from our 5-gal water jug. (As a conservation club we need to reduce our use of plastic bottles and throw away cups. Reusable coffee mugs will also be available.)

Parking: We will park in the grassy area just off the road on the east side.

If you have questions or think you can help, please contact Jim Hess at jim.hess@tds.net so we can get a volunteer count estimate. We look forward to seeing you there!

Future Workdays:

Nov 5 - Falk/Wells Wildlife Area – Sugar River
Dec 3 - Sugar River, Neperud Property - remove woody invasives from oak hill, plant native seeds along the river in the disturbed areas from the stream bank improvements, and inspect and clean up around planted trees and shrubs.

Remember, every workday you attend earns you an entry into the drawing for the Stream Keeper fly rod, custom-built by Jim Bartelt.

Jim Hess, Conservation Committee Chair

A rainy but productive workday

On October 1, we gathered to help the DNR clear buckthorn and honeysuckle along Black Earth Creek to provide access and creating a healthy stream. While we all got a little wet, we had a fine turnout and look forward to returning next spring to this site to continue our work.

Here are some pictures of our hearty crew!



Great News from Dane County

By Topf Wells

Trout streams, new and old, actual and potential, just received great news from Dane County.

1. On September 22, county officials introduced a resolution for the County to buy 10 acres on Token Creek from the DNR. This parcel used to contain the carp-holding pond, an impoundment of Token Creek, destructive of habitat and water quality in that trout stream. That pond was removed and several hundred feet of Token Creek and the Habrison Branch, a high quality tributary, restored this summer. As part of the Legislature and Governor's requirement that the DNR sell 10,000 acres of its public lands, the DNR had declared this property surplus and available for sale. Dane County and DNR staff negotiated a sales agreement so that the restored stream will stay in public ownership and be accessible by the public. We have several folks to thank for this doubly happy outcome (the restoration and the sale). John and Rosemary Harbison, the neighboring landowners and descendants of the family who owned the 10 acres condemned years ago by the DNR's predecessor for the carp pond, donated the funds for the restoration as a tribute to the conservation ethic of her family. Doug Haag of the DNR and Laura Hicklin of Dane County reached a fair agreement on the sale. Joe Parisi, the County Executive and his staff, strongly support this purchase. Jim Addis and Scott Stewart, retired DNR staff, have championed restoration of the stream for many years.

2. Dane County came through big time for our streams when the County Executive released his proposed 2017 budget on Thursday, September 29. In an extremely strong conservation and environmental protection budget, the following items were especially important for our trout streams and TU:

\$6.9 million for the Conservation Fund. This is bonding authority for the County's effort to buy land, including stream bank easements, for conservation and public access purposes. This amount will enable the County to vigorously and successfully pursue purchases that will conserve our county's trout stream and other natural resources, and enable the public to enjoy them.

\$2.3 million for the Lake Preservation and Renewal Fund. Bonding authority for purchases of lands and waters needed in the ongoing effort to clean up the Yahara Chain of Lakes, these funds could enable purchases along the trout streams in that area, such as Token Creek, which are important sources of water for the lakes and in need of restoration

\$60,000 for an additional Operation Fresh Start Crew. OFS is an educational and work experience program designed to assist young adults, whose lack of education or work experience is hobbling their efforts to support themselves. The OFS Conservation Crew has helped TU on several important projects in the last two years and we expect even greater assistance with the addition of the second crew.

The most ambitious innovation in the County's budget is a 5 year, \$12 million program to remove phosphorous-laden sediments from streams such as the upper Yahara River, Token Creek, Door Creek, Dorn Creek, 9 Springs Creek and 6 Mile Creek. Recent research shows that if this phosphorous is not stopped from entering the Yahara Lakes, water quality will not improve very much, regardless of other efforts. What makes this noteworthy from a cold water perspective is that the budget proposes this removal be conducted so that the gamefish spawning and holding capacity of streams be dramatically improved and that at least three of those streams are or should be trout streams. Miles of this stream are already in public ownership so their return to health would create significant public recreation opportunities. How that removal/restoration will occur and what steps will ensure that phosphorous from agricultural operations does not re-enter those streams are important questions that will have to be addressed.

County Executive Parisi and county staff worked hard and well to produce an excellent conservation budget. It now goes to the County Board for approximately 6 weeks of review, amendment, and approval. Dane County Board Chair Sharon Corrigan and almost all of her colleagues have strong environmental records so we can hope for and expect that they will take positive action on the conservation programs in this budget.

TU Officers and Board Members will monitor the budget's progress and notify you if we need to contact the County Executive and Board with any concerns or suggestions. Should you want to do so now, the County's website, <https://www.countyofdane.com/>, provides contact information for the County Executive, Chairperson of the Board, and each Supervisor.

Thank you.

Neperud Update: An important addition to our Sugar River watershed

By Topf Wells

For the past three weeks, with rain and mud sometimes delaying the work and mosquitoes making it a blood-donor experience, two DNR crews have made great progress on the restoration of the Sugar River on the Neperud parcel.

The major accomplishment has been the installation of several hundred feet of bank covers. The crew have also shaped banks, created one heck of a log sill, and improved an equipment crossing. The two crews are from Wild Rose, with lots of expertise in building the new generation of bank covers, and from Fitchburg. Shawn Sullivan, the Wild Rose fish manager has been on site; he's been joined by Bradd Simms, the fish manager out of Dodgeville, and Bob Fahey, the DNR Operations Supervisor for Southern Wisconsin. The Wild Rose crew has left to help the recovering sturgeon of the Peshtigo River, but the Fitchburg crew has another two weeks on site. More work will occur when weather permits in the spring of 2017. We are incredibly impressed by and grateful for their efforts.

On Tuesday, September 20, several dozen folks joined in being impressed by and grateful for the DNR crews and others' efforts at Neperud. TU, Dane County, and the DNR sponsored a Demo Day on the Neperud parcel to thank all our partners who have made the restoration possible and to enable nearby landowners and representatives of federal and conservation agencies to learn about the techniques being used in this area for the first time.

We were able to thank David Neperud for his family's conservation values in selling their beautiful land to Dane County and to TU's funding partners: Madison Fishing Expo, Dane County Conservation League, Badger Flyfishers, national and state TU, DNR, Orvis, and Sitka Salmon. All the attendees seem very interested in the DNR's step-by-step demonstration of how bank covers are installed. We think our members are going to have fun when we help the DNR install some additional bank covers at a workday next year.

Also attending were County Board Supervisors Dave Ripp and Pat Downing. Dave is a long time champion of the County's Conservation Fund and member of the Parks Commission; Pat is the Chair of the County's Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Both have offered vital support of the County's trout stream easement and restoration programs.

Dane County staff had good conversations with nearby landowners. We were also able to thank Dane County staff, in particular Sara Rigelman, for her indefatigable work in making this project possible. And on top of it all, Paoli's Bread and Brat provided a memorable lunch!

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!

Fountains of Youth

Classic trout 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.

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

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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FEATURED SPEAKER

LANDON MAYER

Landon's angling success is fueled by an addiction to pursuing large trout with small flies and lightweight fly-fishing equipment. A Colorado guide for over 19 years, Mayer has developed innovative strategies for sighting, hooking, and landing selective trout. He shares those secrets in his books *101 Trout Tips: A Guide's Secrets, Tactics and Techniques* (new for 2015), *Sight Fishing for Trout*, and *How to Catch the Biggest Trout of Your Life*, in addition to two DVDs. Mayer is also a contributing writer for *Fly Fisherman* and *High Country Angler* magazines.

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