

Newscasts

June 2022 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



What Can The Future of Black Earth Creek Be?

Find out at our in-person June 14 meeting at Schwoegler's

By Topf Wells

We're settling in great at the new meeting site and invite you to join us for our next meeting at Schwoegler's Lanes on June 14th. Dinner and drinks will be available at 5:30 with our speaker at 7 p.m. We'll meet in Schwoegler's community room on the southern end of the building. The room is just off the southernmost entryway near the pro shop.

Dan Oele, "our" DNR fish biologist (he works in Dane, Green, and Rock Counties) will address a topic near and dear to many of our hearts: ***the Present and Possible Future of Black Earth Creek.***



Dan has spent hundreds of hours in the field and office, sampling and measuring Black Earth Creek and reviewing its history. He released his assessment of Black Earth Creek last year and is about to begin construction on a massive restoration of a key part of that creek. [Here's the link to the assessment.](#) SWTU believes the project will help revitalize the creek and contributed \$10,000 to enable the DNR to pursue a more complete restoration in a key segment. Be there on June 14 to find out more about this project and also hear Dan present a broader view of the current status of the creek. He'll have time to answer your questions about BEC and our valuable trout streams in your area.

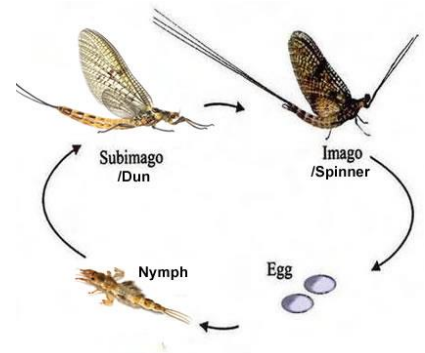
New members are most welcome to attend! We'd love to see you and offer a friendly greeting as well as a pack of **free** flies.

For the safety of all, if you or someone in your household is not feeling well, we urge you to stay home. Please also consider the CDC guidelines for gatherings, including staying up to date with your vaccinations. Thank you for your kind consideration. Like most venues, Schwoegler's does not require masks but we'll respect any member's decision to wear one.

Schwoegler's Lanes, 444 Grand Canyon Dr., Madison, WI 53719

Bugs Got You Buggin? Scratch that Itch at our July 12 Meeting

Trout anglers in this area and in much of the country have been asking this question for several years. The quantity and variety of trout's and our favorite insects seem to be declining. Is that the case? If so, how bad? Why? Can anything be done? Mike Miller, the Wisconsin DNR's stream ecologist, has been researching these and related questions. His work is advancing and he is approaching the stage at which we can help him. Mike will speak at our July 12 meeting, again at Schwoegler's. I think I've heard as much discussion on these topics as just about anything related to our streams and fly fishing. Mike will share some insights on this exciting work underway ... he will have some answers and will also generate plenty of questions.



Streams, Smiles and Wind Knots – A Great Riversmith Fly Casting Clinic

Many thanks to **Jim Beecher** for these photos that tell the tale of a wonderful, engaging and educational casting clinic in Cross Plains on May 7. Many thanks to all who showed up to teach and learn!



Turkey Nest Narrowly Avoided: May 14 Stream Workday

By Topf Wells

Thanks to Jim Hess and an even bigger, more varied cast of characters than usual, we had another successful work day, this time on Smith Conley.

The DNR folks, led by Justin Haglund, were a tremendous help. Lloyd and Mitch were great sawyers, great to work with, and kept an eye out for us as we worked in sometimes overgrown terrain.

We cleared and stacked lots of box elders and one spectacular honeysuckle. The property is lovely with a beautiful wetland, home to a pair of happy sandhills. The stream, well that needs lots of TLC; let's hope this workday is the start of that love and work. As is often the case, some of the box elders were gnarly. However, we did not wipe out the wooden bridge, a wild turkey nest full of eggs (pictured), or any volunteers. We had 6 or 7 sawyers working, all doing a great job under demanding circumstances. We had a fabulous turnout of another dozen members and we needed every one of them. We cleared lots of area and have left pyramids of piles. We should have an end of the year SWTU Olympics featuring brush piling and stump tossing.



Again, thanks to Jim and Justin for organizing the workday. Each has its challenges. In this case, the landowner wanted just the female box elders removed and had marked the females last fall when the seeds were still

attached. The landowners were just walking down to the site as I was leaving. I expect they were pleased and surprised by the amount of work we accomplished.

We're back at this site for the final spring workday in a few weeks. Pray for a spell of dry weather prior to that day. If the site is dry enough we'll have a skid steer helping. That will dramatically increase productivity and result in a whizbang finish to our spring. (Photos courtesy Jim Hess.)



← Ted Swenson, Conversation Chair of the Nohr Chapter, tries our new chainsaw (courtesy a Dane County grant).

The workday crew cutting, slashing, hacking and stacking.



Where There's a Willow There's a Workday: Fun Planting Trees

By Topf Wells

The Jim/Justin double team produced a good workday for us and Willow Creek.

With Jim and Justin having devoted hours to preparation, about a dozen SWTU members with some help from the Nohr and Coulee Chapters planted and fenced 60 swamp white and pin oak trees along Willow Creek at the site of Justin's COLOSSAL, SUPERB, OUT OF THIS WORLD restoration of over 1/2 mile of stream below the confluence of Willow and Smith Hollow.

I've never seen a restoration make a bigger difference in the stream. At one point Justin was standing on a bank and said that pre-project he would have been standing on a sheer, vertical, eroding stream bank 15 feet above water level. The site is an encyclopedia of current DNR practices and to this uneducated but appreciative eye, it looks as though everything is where it should be. SWTU and BFF can be happy and proud of our financial support of this project.

Justin had holes pre-drilled; the stock from the DNR nursery in Boscobel was in excellent shape with strong roots. We had the work completed by 12:30. The stream and trout will enjoy the shade and the trout the dozens of different caterpillar species which inhabit oaks.

Again, we had a diverse turnout of older and younger members. The two young fellows had not had a chance to fish much this year but were fishing in the afternoon. The fish gods should have sent them heaps o' trout. Carol Murphy, the new Nohr president, reported they had a great fundraiser last Friday. Congratulations! The Coulee member had some interesting advice on seeking permission to fish in the Driftless. One constant question is whether one should always ask a landowner for permission to fish if he or she has granted it once. (The answer is yes). The Coulee member's advice is when he asks the first time, he asks where he should park and points out his vehicle. He then promises if it's okay to fish in the future, he'll always drive that vehicle and always park in that spot. Pat has a friend who assumed he could always fish a stream for which he had permission once. He fished it

again and the landowner tracked him down and told him he could never fish the property again. The landowner had just put a new bull in the pasture and wanted to warn any angler about the new addition.

Speaking of landowners, the husband and wife on this property helped all morning with a tank and pump to soak the holes and water the trees. They'll keep an eye on the trees and water them as needed. They have a magnificent wetland restored on their property. It's spring fed and carefully supervised by nesting bald eagles. Both have been members of SWTU. They were so impressed and grateful for our turnout, I think they'll rejoin.

The trout signaled their approval of our work. Just above the Smith Hollow bridge, a bunch of us stared upstream hoping to spot trout. My goodness did we. A large (yes really) brown was idling just off the west bank. Maybe he was nymphing or maybe guarding his pool but he gave us a good luck. No, he was not broodstock.

This great day ended with more fabulous news. Justin gave credit to Vince Schmitz, DNR tech when the project was planned, for much of the design. Vince's name might ring a bell. He was a vital member of the DNR team that restored the Neperud stretch. The DNR just re-hired Vince to be the project coordinator/biologist for Dan Oele. HOORAY! With Scott Harpold and Vince as the project biologists, the Southern District has the all-star team. All the more reason for SWTU to support their restorations however we can.

A perfect day until a wood tick crawled out of my hairline 15 minutes ago. Huge thanks to Jim and Justin. The tree planting was so simple only because of all the work they did with the landowner, prepping the site, and insuring we had all the equipment.

Enjoy some photos courtesy Carol Murphy!



(My, isn't that just the bluest of blue skies?)

Learn what your Board's been up to

Minutes from SWTU Board of Director meetings can be viewed [in this Google Drive](#). If you have questions on what you read in them, reach out to one of the Board members listed on the last page of each newsletter. (Note that you may need to click the "Last Modified" header at the top to sort the list with the latest minutes at the top.)

Welcome New Members

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

Christopher Ankowicz	Nicholas Yerden
Paul Graham	John Ross
Tim Green	David Baltes
Michael McKernan	Fred Zamzow
Marshall Colburn	Russell Wellenstein
Ron Pelky	Jerry Packham
Carsten Thomas	Shannon Lipe
Herb Thompson	Todd Jaeger
Eric Buzza	Brett Charlesworth
Katherine Field	Mark Griesbach
Ryan Krause	Justin Martig
Leon Moore	Dale Peterson
Brady Walsh	Rob Wernberg
Tom Schuler	



We are honored to have you among us. Please join our next meeting – whether virtual or in person – as we'd love to get to know you better. **If you will be attending your first meeting**, please contact [Topf Wells](#) so we can expect you. (Note that some longer-term members may be captured in the list above. A glitch in the excel file made it harder to sort ... but it's better to be inclusive and we're happy to have your continued support!)

Fountains of Youth

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

by Rusty Dunn

British flies are often named with a sense of whimsy, such as the Welshman's Button, Wickham's Fancy, Houghton Ruby, and Dotterel Dun. The list is long. Such names conjure images of long-forgotten anglers, quaint old-world locations, or feathers plucked from an exotic bird. The Tup's Indispensable is one such flight of fancy. 'Tup' is a Scottish term for a male sheep. 'Indispensable' refers to the magic ingredient supposedly needed for the fly's effectiveness ... the secret sauce, the indispensable mojo, the fly-tying secret guarded from public disclosure for over 30 years.

The Tup's Indispensable was the brainchild of R.S. Austin, a merchant and fly tyer of Tiverton, England. Austin developed the Tup's around 1900 to imitate pale-colored mayflies. Author G.E.M. Skues corresponded extensively with Austin, experimented with both dry and wet versions of the pattern, and introduced Tup's Indispensables to the world through his highly visible writings. Skues even suggested to Austin the fly's snappy name. Skues' praise of the Tup's brought notoriety both to the fly and to Austin. Theodore Gordon, James Leisenring, Eugene Connett, and other influential American authors similarly praised the Tup's prowess. All credited its uncanny success to properties of Austin's dubbing mix. Skues described the magical dubbing best: *"When wet, the Tup's wool becomes somehow illuminated throughout by the colour of the red [seal fur], and the entire effect of the body is extraordinarily filmy and insect-like."*

Austin was a commercial fly tyer, and his dubbing blend was a closely guarded secret. He shared the recipe with only two confidants, one of whom was Skues. Such secrecy was part of the fly's allure. If you wanted genuine Tup's Indispensables – and Skues' writings insured that you would – buying them from Austin was

the only source. Secrecy did not deter others from attempting to guess the recipe, and many absurd creations were marketed as the real thing. They were all wrong, and Austin himself supplied the only authentic Tup's Indispensables. Tying the fly became somewhat of an Austin family industry, but success carried a price. Austin tired of tying immense numbers of one fly, and he confided to Skues that his home water, the River Frome, *"stank of Tup's Indispensables from Maiden Newton [its headwaters] to the sea"*.

After Austin died in 1911 and after his daughter retired from fly tying in 1934, the Austin family gave Skues permission to publish for posterity the dubbing recipe. Skues revealed the magic formula in a 1934 article in the *Fly Fisher's Club Journal*. So, what was the secret of Austin's dubbing? Skues describes it:

"The essential part of this dubbing is the highly translucent wool from the indispensable part of a Tup, thoroughly washed and cleansed of the natural oil of the animal."

There you go! All you need for genuine Tup's Indispensables is fine wool cut from the testicles of a white ram. Yeow! No wonder other writers failed to decipher the recipe. Remarkably, Austin was not the first to incorporate fur of a ram's testicle in fly tying. Alexander Mackintosh published a Green Drake pattern tied of such fur, which he described as *"a beautiful dusty yellow"* (*The Driffield Angler*, 1806). Beautiful? Indeed! Plentiful? Not! Fortunately, synthetic dyes and alternative furs make gathering Tup's materials far more pleasant today.

Try fishing a Tup's Indispensable to imitate light colored mayflies. In Wisconsin, sulphurs, pale BWOs, light Cahills, and light Hendricksons are very Tup's-friendly. Fish a Tup's wingless wet as an emerger awash in the surface film or drifted subsurface as a dropper trailing behind a dry fly. The list of authentic Tup's ingredients always provokes a chuckle, but it's no joke that you should tie one on and see for yourself what Austin's magic is all about.

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----- Tup's Indispensable (Skues) -----

The wingless wet pictured here is tied with authentic Tup's dubbing as specified by R.S. Austin.

Hook: Wet fly hook, size to match natural

Thread: Primrose silk (Pearsall's Gossamer No.3)

Tail: Yellow-spangled light blue dun hackle fibers

Abdomen: Primrose yellow silk

Thorax: Scrotum wool of a tup mixed with fur of a lemon-colored spaniel, fur of a hare's poll, cream-colored seal fur, and red seal fur or mohair to give a pinkish shade. (Substitute natural furs as needed.)

Hackle: Yellow-spangled light blue dun hen hackle



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[SWTU's Instagram account](#) is a great place for interesting news, facts and photos.



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.)

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

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