

Newscasts

July 2022 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

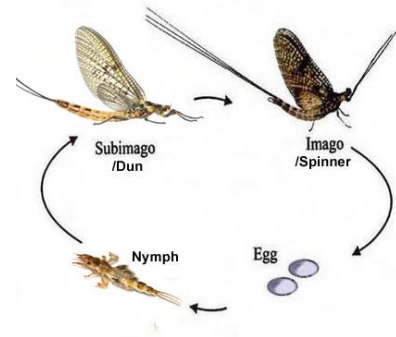


Bugs Got You Buggin? Scratch that Itch at our July 12 Meeting Skitter on over to Schwoegler's and join the fun

By Topf Wells

Please join us for our next meeting at Schwoegler's Lanes on Tuesday, July 12. We'll meet in their community room on the southern end of the building. The room is just off the southernmost entryway near the pro shop.

Mike Miller's presentation will start about 7. Dinner and drinks are available at 5:30. Dinner is a great time to catch up with old TU friends and make some new ones. We're lucky to have some great new members in SWTU. To our new members: please think of attending the meeting. You'll receive free flies and a warm welcome. If you're dining, try to arrive close to 5:30 so you'll have plenty of time to order and enjoy your food.

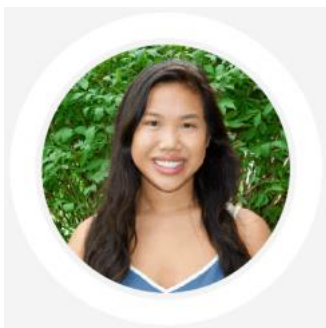


Trout anglers in this area and in much of the country have been worrying and wondering about mayflies, caddis and other aquatic insects for several years. ***The quantity and variety of trout's and our favorite insects seem to be declining.*** Is that the case? If so, how bad? Why? Can anything be done? 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.

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



Looking ahead to our Tuesday, August 9 meeting ...

August's meeting will provide **a tour of fish and trout management in our area through the eyes of Kailee Berge, SWTU's first fish intern.** Kailee has spent her summer in the field with John Lyons, Curator of Fish at the UW-Madison Zoological Museum, DNR Fish Biologists Dan Oele, Justin Haglund, Nate Nye, and Tim Parks, and DNR water quality biologists Kim Kuber and Camille Bruhn. In a few months, Kailee has helped survey every sort of stream and river, measured and test waterways, and census anglers (she was also a huge help on our workdays). She's seen more fish and been in more streams than most of us will in years.

Kailee will describe some of her experiences and what she's learned at our August meeting. This will be a fun and very informative presentation. Kailee is then off to her final semester of study and research in the Caribbean. Let's thank her for her great work and send her off in fine fashion!

Special Workday – Saturday, July 16 Removing Wild Parsnip at the Basco Wildlife Unit

By Jim Hess, SWTU Conservation Chair

On Saturday, July 16 we will be having a special workday to clear wild parsnip from the prairie we planted at the Basco Wildlife Area (formerly known as Neperud) along the Sugar River. We will be starting at 9am. It was the "perfect storm" for this pesky biennial invasive. Two growing seasons of not having workdays due to Covid-19 allowed it to spread its seed and a prescribed burn this last spring really invigorated it. Wild parsnip loves burns and disturbance.



The plan is to mow the heavily invested areas and the rest of the parsnip, which is scattered throughout the prairie, will be removed by hand, using brush cutters and shovels called a "parsnip predator." Cutting the parsnip by hand will allow us to remove the wild parsnip without disturbing the good native plants. There are herbicides that kill wild parsnip, but the plants are too big for that type of application, as there would be too much collateral damage. And this is where you come in. We need all the help we can get to make this a fast and easy project. If you are not comfortable with using a brush cutter, which is basically a weed wacker with a steel blade, we will have some parsnip predator shovels to use. Instructions will be given on how to do this.

As most of you know, wild parsnip is not a friendly plant (learn more about it [here](#)). You will need to wear a long sleeve shirt and use gloves. And of course long pants, sturdy shoes, and eye protection (ear protection if using a brush cutter).

When: July 16, 2022 from 9 a.m. to Noon.

Where: Sugar River Basco Unit Wildlife Area (Neperud Property). South of Paoli at 1065 Hwy 69. The fire number may or may not be up. Normally you would take Hwy 69 from Verona, but not sure what is happening with the highway construction. So best to take County Road PB south from Madison, when you get to Paoli you will connect to Hwy 69 south of Paoli. You will see Road Closed signs, but local traffic is allowed. When you come to the Hamlet of Basco at Henry Road, the Basco Wildlife Area is on the west side of Hwy 69. Here is a Google Map Link: <https://goo.gl/maps/ganNDvhmJ4yggJhN6>

Bring: Wear a long sleeve shirt, work gloves (Atlas rubber gloves work well), eye protection, sunscreen, and mosquito/tick repellent. Also, bring a reusable water bottle that can be re-filled from our 5-gal water jug. Also bring a sharp shooter shovel if you have one - in case we may run out of parsnip predators.

Parking: The gate will be open, drive on in and park by the barns.

RSVP: [Please RSVP to Jim Hess](#) if you are able to make the workday, to be sure we have enough equipment for everyone.

A Great End to the Spring Workdays

By Topf Wells

Jim Hess has more than earned his trip in search of smallmouth bass and pike eager to take a fly with his brilliant organization of the fifth and (almost) final SWTU workday of the spring season.

We returned to Smith Conley to continue our efforts to reduce the boxelders and increase the sunlight on a stretch of the creek that's open to public fishing. Lots of trees were marked with orange by Jim, Justin Haglund (the DNR fish biologist for Iowa County), Ted Swenson and the landowner. We darn near got them all, including those that fell in the stream. Our winch – *pictured here* – was pressed into action and it worked, mostly.



With so many box elders removed, we had a much better sense of the oaks the landowner has planted. They ranged from just hanging on to flourishing. With the box elders gone and more sunlight, all will do much better. The native Wisconsin oaks are an astounding resource. We know how important acorns are for many wildlife species and we have a better sense of how important their shade can be to trout streams. They also support over 900 species of caterpillars, a vital food source for birds (and I bet more than a few fall into the streams to the trout's delight).



Lloyd Meng is a DNR fisheries technician, who works for Justin and has been a mainstay of the Smith Conley workdays. He is prodigiously strong and a highly skilled sawyer. One scrawny oak tree was the beneficiary of Lloyd's skill. He had to fell three box elders, any one of which seemed destined to wipe out the humble tree. Lloyd dropped each one to save the tree. When it grows into the king of the forest, I hope it remembers Lloyd.

We had over a dozen folks out, a great turnout for a muggy day in early June. We had a couple of members from the Nohr Chapter join us (always fun to work with folks from that great chapter) and five of our Board Members. Way to go! The two days on Smith Conley have challenged our sawyers and all did a great and safe job. Bob Harrison continues to set the style standard for sawyers with an impressive and very safe helmet.

Joining us on her second workday was Kailee Bergee, our first SWTU/DNR/Zoology Museum intern. She is in the midst of an exciting (and sometimes exhausting) summer of fish activities. She worked really hard – *and is pictured here doing a modified caber toss into the burn pile.* We wish her the best for the rest of the summer. Be sure to attend our August meeting when Kailee will be our featured speaker. Thanks to John Lyons for his essential roles in creating the internship and supervising Kailee.



This is a stream with miles of easements for public fishing and lots of potential. We hope these workdays will increase folks' awareness of and interest in this stream.

And with stream potential in mind, Kailee and I walked the ongoing DNR restoration of Hefty Creek to which SWTU contributed. The crew is progressing well. We saw one completed segment that looks great. Even I could probably catch a trout there.

This day ended just as our previous one did for me, with a wood tick crawling out of my hair line. Despite that I and all the other folks on the workdays, thank Jim for his fabulous efforts.

After he catches loads of trout and smallmouth bass during the rest of the season – and he really deserves them – we look forward to he'll schedule in the winter.

Photos courtesy Jim Beecher – [see more in the article on swtu.org](http://www.swtu.org).

"New" Trout Streams in Iowa County

By Topf Wells

Justin Haglund, the DNR fish biologist for Iowa and Richland Counties, has just released a comprehensive assessment of trout streams in the Mineral Point Branch of the Pecatonica River Watershed or, more simply, trout streams near Mineral Point. I think these assessments contain a wealth of current and accurate information for anglers and conservationists. You can find this (and much more!) by Googling WI DNR trout stream assessments [or use this link](#).

Most of us probably don't think of this area as a hotspot for trout but the news of three streams caught my eye. The Rock Branch has a decent trout fishery with good public access. The two "new" trout streams are Pedlar Branch and Brewery Creek. New in the sense of who knew. Pedlar has an extremely strong population of wild brook trout in its headwaters. Brewery Creek is rising from the ashes of decades of environmental devastation

caused by mining wastes. For years the creek was devoid of just about any life, much less trout. Extensive remediation has the creek coming back. It now supports brown trout. Justin thinks it can become a worthwhile fishery and provide spawning habitat for Rock Branch. If we just give our creeks a chance ...

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.)

As seen in the Summer 2022 edition of *Wisconsin Trout*

Speaking of "what your Board's been up to" ... as you review your copy of *Wisconsin Trout*, note that SWTU contributed \$2,000 towards the removal of Powell Falls Dam on Kinnickinnic in River Falls (page 14); and SWTU provided \$3,000 for Costa 5 Rivers Program (page 14). Take a look in your print copy or watch for it to be posted online [here](#).

Make it a Prime Day – for SWTU

We take the occasion of July's "Amazon Prime Day" sales event to remind you about Amazon Smile and SWTU – **a partnership that has already generated \$630.12 for SWTU.**

Amazon Smile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices and shopping features as the regular Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. [Set "Trout Unlimited" with the Madison location as your charity](#) and you will be giving to the SWTU with every purchase.



If you're a Prime member ... it's easy, costs you nothing and every little bit adds up to make a difference over time.

Welcome New Members

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

Tom Cramer
Nicholas Linden
Shigeki Miyamoto
Celia Groff
Jack Drew
David Kruse
Lynn Parins
Riess Perry



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

Groundhog Day is an important landmark for most anglers, as February 2nd is midway between the winter solstice and the vernal equinox. Winter is fading fast, and spring is on the mind, if not yet in the air. Punxsutawney Phil emerges from his burrow, looks for his shadow, and thereby forecasts the severity of winter's retreat. Hope springs eternal on Groundhog Day.

Groundhog Day for angling author Eric Leiser was the fateful day when he dispatched a groundhog while speeding along New York Route 30 near Pepacton Reservoir in the Catskills. The good fortune of that encounter, followed by swift application of a skinning knife, produced the key ingredient of what later became Leiser's signature fly patterns. Groundhogs, known also as woodchucks and whistle-pigs, are ground-dwelling marmots whose fur is an excellent but underappreciated material for fly tying. Leiser admired his handsome roadkill and, in time, grew to appreciate woodchuck fur for its texture, floatation, strength, and versatility in fly tying.

Leiser aspired as a young man to be a musician and songwriter, but his first royalty check for a recorded composition amounted to \$13.41. A second royalty statement reported "No Sales". Leiser then realized that a career in music was unlikely. Instead, he pursued his lifelong interests in fishing, hunting, and the outdoors. Those pursuits eventually established Leiser as one of the most influential fly tying materials experts of the 20th century. He opened Fireside Angler in Melville, NY in the 1960s as a mail-order source of quality fly tying materials. Only a dozen or so such mail-order suppliers existed at the time, and Fireside Angler quickly became one of the most influential. Leiser supplied tying materials to most of the mid-century giants of American fly fishing.

Leiser was a self-taught angler who learned his skills

standing in a river and sitting at the tying bench. He published between 1973 and 1987 six fly tying books that are thoroughly excellent but, with one exception, not widely discussed today. They are rich in detailed, first-hand knowledge about the methods and materials of successful angling. If you need information on how to hunt, kill, skin, clean, tan, prepare, and store wild or domesticated animals for fly tying, Leiser's 1973 book *Fly Tying Materials* is all you need. His second book, *The Complete Book of Fly Tying* (1977) is his most influential. It instructed decades of beginning fly tyers on the craft and, remarkably, is still in print today. Leiser's third book, *The Caddis and the Angler* (1977, coauthored with Larry Soloman), was the very first to describe caddisfly life cycles and behaviors in detail and to provide fly patterns that imitate each stage. Fly anglers were slow to fully appreciate the importance of caddisflies to trout, but Leiser & Soloman remedied the oversight. For these and other accomplishments, Leiser was elected in 2002 to the Hall of Fame of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum.

The Woodchuck Caddis, known better as the Chuck Caddis, is one of Eric Leiser's favorite flies, in part because it features a wing of woodchuck guard hairs. Such hairs are stiff without being rigid, float well, and are beautifully barred (black-tan-black-white) along their length. The Chuck Caddis incorporates features of many successful caddis imitations: a short body, a down-wing silhouette of long fibers folded over the body, and fur dubbing fibers in constant motion atop the surface. It consistently brings up fish during the entire season and in all parts of the country.

Leiser refused to take credit for design of the Chuck Caddis, because he knew of an unpublished earlier imitation named Eddy's Fly. 'Eddy' has never been identified, but Leiser replaced Eddy's body of orange monocord with fur dubbing chosen to match the color of prevailing naturals. The resulting fly is simple, durable, and very effective. Stock your fly box with Chuck Caddis in various sizes and colors, and you can relive Groundhog Day over and over again, every single day of the trout season. © Rusty Dunn, 2022

----- Chuck Caddis -----

A dirty orange Chuck Caddis is Leiser's favorite. For a caddis skater imitation, use oversized hackle. The entire fly should ride above the water, supported only by the hackle and wing tips. Such skaters can draw explosive rises during periods of caddis egg-laying.

Hook: Dry fly, #12 - #18

Thread: Fine gray, or a color to match the body

Body: Gray, brown-olive, dirty orange, black, or tan/yellow fur dubbing; color chosen to match the naturals

Wing: Woodchuck guard hairs

Hackle: Rooster, brown and grizzly mixed



Stay Connected



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



[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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