

Newscasts

November 2022 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



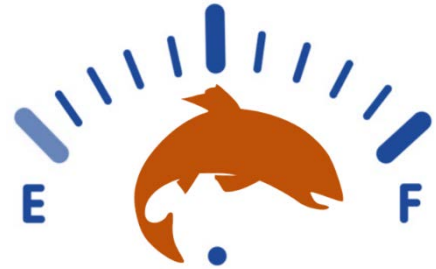
Trout on (much less than) a tankful – Let's talk nearby creeks

Join us at Schwoegler's on Tuesday, November 8

By Topf Wells

Justin Haglund, the DNR fish biologist for Iowa and Richland Counties, will be our speaker at the November 8th meeting at Schwoegler's Bowling on Grand Canyon Drive. Dinner and drinks starting at 5:30 with Justin's presentation about 7.

Justin has some real news on a nearby creek that you'll find interesting and maybe even exciting. He has surveyed and assessed Smith Conley Creek and has requested and helped on several SWTU/Nohr workdays on the creek with another scheduled in November.



Smith Conley has miles of easements and is an easy 3/4-1 hour trip from Madison. Nevertheless, many of our members don't know about it and fewer fish it. With good reason. Many of the easements don't offer great habitat and are tough to fish.

Justin has documented healthy trout numbers in parts of that stream (comparable to some sections of Gordon!). The workdays are part of his larger plan to significantly improve habitat, access, and fishing opportunities on Smith Conley. SWTU can be a big help to Justin (editorial comment: just as we were on Gordon and Kittleson and look how those turned out).

That's not all. Justin has discovered some amazingly healthy brook trout streams in eastern Iowa County, including Whitford Creek. Whitford joins the Dodge Branch on a lovely property owned by The Prairie Enthusiasts, where SWTU might schedule a work day in the spring.

Justin has been the biologist for Iowa and Richland Counties for five years. He has obtained large easements on Kittleson and Gordon Creeks and has been extraordinarily helpful in assisting SWTU in holding work days on those and other streams. He completed a superb and major restoration on Willow Creek two years ago that is playing to rave reviews from Willow Creek anglers. Justin also served as a key biologist on the development of the DNR's first Inland Trout Plan.

Justin's talk will focus on the most recent studies and workdays on Smith Conley (both the DNR's and SWTU's) and his plans for its much better future. He'll have time to answer questions about other streams and plans in his area.

A REMINDER: We meet Tuesday, November 8, at Schwoegler's Bowling on Grand Canyon Drive on Madison's West Side. Dinner and drinks are available starting at 5:30, with presentations at 7.

If you or someone in your household is not feeling well, we urge you to stay home. Please also consider CDC guidelines for gatherings, including staying up to date with 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

Register for SWTU Fly Tying Courses – 2023

Trout Unlimited invites you to learn fly tying or improve your tying skills this winter. Experienced SWTU instructors will teach both beginning and intermediate level fly-tying courses in Fitchburg starting Wednesday January 18, 2023. Classes consist of instructor-led demonstrations and hands-on tutorials. The courses are completely free of charge, and all materials needed in class are provided. You need only supply fly-tying tools and thread, a list of which is available at <https://www.swtu.org/learn/flytying/flytying-classes/>.



Beginning Fly Tying is intended for those with limited previous fly-tying experience, including complete beginners. General techniques needed as a foundation for fly tying are established, and basic but effective trout fly patterns are demonstrated and practiced. An instructional booklet with pattern sheets is provided free of charge.

Intermediate Fly Tying is intended for those who have a solid foundation of fly-tying experience and want to increase their proficiency. The course builds on the foundations of Beginning Fly Tying and progresses to more advanced methods. Techniques and materials are more varied, the patterns can be more complex, and the hook sizes are generally smaller than flies of the beginning course.

SWTU currently plans to offer both Beginning and Intermediate Fly Tying courses in person on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Fitchburg Community Center (5510 Lacy Rd., Fitchburg) beginning January 18, 2023. Courses run for eight consecutive Wednesdays (final class March 8, 2023). **Please note that if the Covid-19 infection rate in Dane County worsens and approaches that of the 2021-22 winter surge, in-person instruction will either be cancelled or replaced by virtual instruction via Zoom.** A decision of whether to teach the courses in person will be made by instructors approximately late-December. All registered students would then be notified by email. Instructors are fully vaccinated and boosted for Covid-19; and they request that students be fully vaccinated and boosted also.

Advanced registration is required! Sign up at the Fitchburg Recreation Department site (<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/599/Recreation>). If you've not previously created a customer account with Fitchburg Recreation, you must do so before registering.

Questions? See <https://www.swtu.org/learn/flytying/flytying-classes/> for additional information. Or, email questions to swtu-flytying@outlook.com.

No Icebreaker / Yes Spring Fair Fundraiser

At a recent meeting, the Board voted to once again not have our traditional Icebreaker fundraiser in January. Factoring into this is that venues have not yet recovered or reopened to events like ours. Instead, your Board did vote to hold another Spring Fair in 2023 and is in the process of assembling a committee to organize it. Please watch for more information on this in the coming months.

Workday + Picnic = Happy Trout + Happy Volunteers

By Topf Wells

Jim Hess had lots of help with one of the best SWTU workdays ever from Scout Troop 104, the DNR, and some great SWTU volunteers. And then, the Rudds, our kind and generous hosts put the icing on the cake (actually some scrumptious Halloween cookies).

Whoever is in charge of the weather took great care of us. A chilly start rising to perfect fall temps, bright sun, and mild breezes resulted in comfortable conditions.

We had lots of brush to be cut and stacked and Scout Troop 104 showed up in full force to help out.



We had some big box elders to be cut and hauled out of the stream. Scott and Vince, the two DNR restoration biologists, showed up with their favorite skidsteer to handle those.

Our standard vexatious mix of invasive honeysuckle, buckthorn, and box elders besided a stream bank – about a dozen SWTU members led the charge there.

The site was the Rudd easement (and thanks to the Rudds for selling the easement to the DNR and being great partners in the restoration) which the DNR, with help from SWTU, restored last fall and early this summer. The top of the easement had some old but still intact LUNKERs and some new work that the big box elders were going to fall at some point. We also had a long stream bank where willows, box elder, honeysuckle and buckthorn were probably going to attract beavers (willow = beaver candy, trick or treat indeed), were choking out native vegetation, and would be the ingredients for brush bundles for more trout habitat (to be installed in a spring workday).



Three hours of work produced fabulous results. The big box elders sleep with the fishes – well actually where they won't ruin fish habitat. The stream bank has been cleared and we'll be able to install brush bundles just where little brown trout want them.

We used a combination of chainsaws and loppers on the stream bank. With lots of brush haulers and stump sprayers we were extremely productive. As is always the case, a skidsteer or a tractor makes a huge and good difference when we have to take big box elders down.

Mike Meier, Curt Riedl and Bob Rudd were great sawyers. Gail and Jim led the Scout Troop and set a wonderful example for the Scouts, who responded with consistent effort. Zach Oluf gets a special shout out for great work and the happy birth of Isabella, their second child and first daughter. Warmest congratulations to Zach, Rachael, and Gus (proud big brother).

The Rudds and Marcie Hess then provided a spectacular lunch: pulled pork, macaroni and cheese (Good Lord, MACARONI AND CHEESE), baked beans, tossed salad, lemonade, and cookies. With the hard work and filling, delicious lunch, naps became the goals of many attendees.

Thanks to Jim for another great day and all the folks who made it a success.

We'll see you at the Falk Wells Wildlife Area on the Sugar River on Saturday, November 12!

Photos courtesy Jim Beecher. [See the full article for many more photos.](#)





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.)



What your board has NOT been up to.

We've had increased incidents of official SWTU emails and those of our leaders being spoofed to send requests for help. Usually these ask the recipient to buy gift cards and deliver them somewhere. This is **not** how we operate ... if you're ever suspicious of an email related to SWTU, please use the contact information at the end of the newsletter to reach out to someone directly to confirm the request before taking any action.

Welcome New Members

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

Sandra Eisele
Rick Heinritz

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

Deceit is the key to success in fly fishing. If your fly imitates the appearance and behavior of trout food, you will have memorable days. In Isaak Walton's 1653 classic *The Compleat Angler*, Piscator asks Viator, "*Is it not an art to deceive a trout with an artificial fly?*" Indeed, it is. Deceit is good. Deceit is effective. Deceit brings trout to hand. Open your fly box, and you'll see all manner of deceit. Wet flies, dry flies, nymphs, emergers, streamers. All deceitful. All designed for the grand masquerade ... the old switcheroo ... the tools of smoke and mirrors. "Fool a trout, catch a trout" are words to live by.

Most fly boxes contain both wet and dry flies, and we take for granted the ability to switch between wets and dries as needed. For much of fly angling history, however, only wet flies were available. Dry-fly methods developed in the mid to late 1800s, yet wet-fly fishing prospered for many centuries beforehand. Most wet flies of that period had conspicuous wings of feathers or feather quill slips. The flies imitated *adult* insects even though the flies were fished underwater. Such flies are known today as *winged* wet flies to distinguish them from other subsurface patterns such as nymphs and *wingless* (aka. soft-hackled) wet flies.

Angling authors struggled for centuries to understand why winged wet flies were effective. The term "winged wet" appears to be a contradiction. Airborne adults have wings, but underwater juveniles were supposed to be wingless. Yet winged wets were very effective fished subsurface, often on a down-and-across wet-fly swing. As Andrew Herd noted in his excellent 2003 historical treatise *The Fly*,

"Fly design later in the nineteenth century studiously avoided the inescapable fact that winged duns are not to be found several inches under the surface, breasting the current."

Period anglers, though, didn't care too much about *why* winged wets were effective. Trout were eager, creels were filled, and they were satisfied.

Decades elapsed before entomologists caught up with anglers and established that some insect species have winged underwater phases. For example, certain mayflies and caddisflies hatch from their juvenile skin underwater and ascend to the surface as winged adults. Adult females of other species dive or crawl underwater to lay eggs. Thus, winged insect adults are indeed subsurface trout fare.

Early American settlers fished winged wet flies with great success on Eastern brook trout streams. Highly visible flies were especially effective, and American winged wets grew increasingly bright and garish through the 1800s. Nothing dressed up a fly box or a mountain stream quite like a Parmachene Belle, Scarlet Ibis, Grizzly King, Silver Doctor, or any of hundreds of other wet-fly patterns. All were brightly colored flies fished to brightly colored brook trout.

Rivers of the East were in serious decline by the late 1800s, and brook trout numbers declined in parallel. Brown trout imported from Europe largely replaced brook trout in these degraded waters, but anglers discovered that their favorite winged wets no longer worked as well. Brown trout are more opinionated than brook trout about acceptable flies, and anglers adapted to the changing conditions by embracing imitative dry flies, nymphs, and wingless wets. Traditional winged wets faded from use, and such flies are rather uncommon onstream today.

Do winged wets have a place in your fly box? Nymphs and wingless wets are probably superior in most subsurface situations, but winged wets can still provide memorable days of effortless pleasure. Fish winged wets with short quick movements or swung through riffles. The cross-current movement and prominent wings will provoke eager strikes, and trout will hook themselves. The results might also hook you on the subtle charms of vintage flies and old-fashioned methods.

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----- Gold-Ribbed Hare's Ear Winged Wet Fly -----

Silk thread is traditional, but any orange thread will work fine. The body should be rough and scraggly with fur fibers poking out between the tinsel wraps.

Hook: Wet fly / nymph, #12 - #16

Thread: Orange, 6/0 or 8/0

Hackle: Furnace hen, length to hook point

Tail: Furnace hen feather barbs

Rib: Flat gold tinsel, narrow

Body: Hare's mask fur

Wings: Quill slips of hen pheasant or partridge, length to midpoint of tail



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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