

Newscasts

January 2024 serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Taste the Great Destinations

Serving up a mouthwatering presentation at our Tuesday, January 9 Meeting

Ben Lubchansky will be presenting tips and tricks (and trips!) to bring gourmet elements to your destination angling and adventure trips. From planning and packing to improvising in the field, Ben will give you the info you need to ensure your adventures are unique, memorable, and beyond the standard package. Ben will discuss his 'Casting and Cookery' series of angling trips as well as things you will want to know to make your own trips more exciting and enjoyable – whether stalking bonefish in the islands or overnighing with old friends in the Driftless. Ben will cover equipment, ingredients, meal planning, ingredient sourcing, foraging, dining out, and managing rental home assets and liabilities all in addition to presenting his own uniquely inspired trips featuring great destinations at the best time of year and the fish and food that makes them special.



Ben has been a cook and trip leader on group trips to the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos, Louisiana, and Cape Cod, as well as here in the Driftless and on the Wisconsin River. He has guided for trout and smallmouth bass in Wisconsin and is a commercial fly tyer. He has been a professional cook for over 30 years and is a staunch supporter of SWTU. Please learn more about Ben, his work, his upcoming and past trip offerings, and his fly tying business at www.608csk.com/general-1 and www.twowickflies.com.

Please join us at Schwoegler's on Grand Canyon Drive on Madison's West Side on Tuesday, January 9. Dinner and drinks available at 5:30 with Ben's presentation starting about 7 p.m.

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



3rd Annual Spring Fair Fundraiser – Save the Date!

SWTU has secured **Saturday, April 27, 2024**, for another fun-filled, social day of camaraderie. We'll be returning to the East Side Club on the shores of Lake Monona with hopefully stunning weather this year. Further details and tickets will be available in February.

SWTU Fly-tying Courses – 2024

Only a few spots left – Register now or miss out!

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 17, 2024. Classes consist of instructor-led demonstrations and hands-on tutorials. The courses are completely free of charge, and all materials needed during in-class instruction 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.

Both beginning and intermediate courses meet on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Fitchburg Community Center (5510 Lacy Rd., Fitchburg) beginning January 17, 2024. Courses run for eight consecutive Wednesdays (final class March 6, 2024).

Advanced registration is required! Register online at the Fitchburg Recreation Department (<https://anc.apm.activecommunities.com/fitchburg/activity/search>). 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 Phil Anderson at swtu-flytying@outlook.com.

Women's Fly Fishing Clinics: Registration now open

Please register now or share this with someone who may be interested. These fill up and we want our members to have an opportunity to take part in these groundbreaking clinics. ([Check out the great story and pictures from this year's successful clinic.](#))

There are two types of clinics detailed below with links and QR codes for more information. Both are set in Westby, WI (near Viroqua, in Wisconsin's Driftless Area) and the cost is \$355 until April 1 and \$375 after that.

Robbery of Women's Clinics gear

On December 7, we shared that the storage locker holding all gear used for the clinics was broken into and everything taken. Please keep a watch for the stolen items – details are in [this email](#) shared with everyone. Thank you.



Basics Clinic By Women For Women: June 14-18th, 2024

Learn how to choose proper equipment, tie knots, cast, read water, select the proper fly and time on the water. You will learn new tactics, regardless of your level of ability. Equipment available for use.

<https://web.cvent.com/event/cdce6e2c-68c0-418b-9df7-80ab071e7e2b/summary>



On the Water Skills Clinic – Intermediate: June 12-14, 2024

Personalized instruction streamside. Tune up workshops by women instructors to refresh skills in casting, matching the hatch & reading the water. Fish WI finest trout streams with experienced anglers.

<https://web.cvent.com/event/64a51c1b-ba47-48a7-a48a-f823041a9307/summary>

Also be sure to note this amazing learning opportunity!



Women's Intro to Fly Fishing Clinic

Taught by Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing
www.swtu.org/learn/womens-flyfishing-clinic/

Oshkosh, WI Feb 3, 2024
9:30-4:30 pm
1 N Main St, Oshkosh, WI 54901

Register : <https://bit.ly/47tUKLr>
\$21, includes lunch
Gear Provided

Sponsored by
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Workday Appreciation: A fun and productive fall 2024

I want to thank everyone that helped out with the fall workdays. There were 83 volunteers that showed up for the 5 workdays. We started on 9/13 at the Dane County Davidson Property ([Sugar River](#)) installing a brush bundle and finished on 12/02 at [Kittleson Creek](#) clearing two large stands of willows. The weather for our fall workdays is always interesting as we start in summer-like conditions and finish in winter. In between we worked on [Big Spring](#), [Hefty](#), and [Whitford](#) Creeks.

I am currently in the process of planning our 2024 Spring Workdays, If you have any suggestions, please pass them along to me. Pictured are Topf Wells and DNR staff Justin Haglund and Lloyd Meng (fur hat) inspecting a potential site.

Jim Hess, SWTU Conservation Chair

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.)



2024 Wisconsin TU State Council Banquet Tickets

We have available to us a few free tickets to the Wisconsin State Council Banquet to be held in Oshkosh on Feb 3, 2024. This event is a lot of fun with some great auction items and also some inspirational presentation and wonderful food. If you have an interest in attending or want more info, please contact [Tom Thrall](#).

More great reading from a great trout biologist

By Topf Wells

That would be Justin Haglund, the Maestro of Melancthon. He just released his [assessment of the Otter Creek watershed in Iowa County](#).

This is a set of trout streams that many of us overlook. It might be because Otter, the flagship, is a Class 2 stream for which stocking is essential. It has lots of public water and some of the tribs and nearby streams are Class 1 and a couple are superb.

Justin found more variety, it seemed to me, in some of the tribs and headwaters. Some are in great shape and a few will be declassified as trout water. One stream might be declassified because of persistent and major non-point issues, which seems unacceptable to me – not Justin's possible decision but the apparent refusal of regulators to address the problem.

Justin's thinks the greatest need the watershed has is for more easements for access and the possibility of restorations. Whenever the master plan for these streams and properties is up for revision, we TUsers should support Justin's recommendations strongly.

Finally, he notes the desire and preliminary plans to conduct a major restoration on a section of Pompey Pillar. I've fished that stretch a couple of times and believe TU should support that restoration.

Thanks to Justin and Happy New Year.

Welcome New Members

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

John Mayers
Michael Wartman
Jessica Applin
Sandra Meyers
Maxwell Mueller
Sacha Bendickson

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!)

Join our Fox Valley Friend for their Cabin Fever Day

It's always a great event and you can see the details in this image or visit

<https://foxvalleytu.org/>.



2024 CABIN FEVER DAY Proceeds will support our Fox Valley TU stream habitat work. **FOX VALLEY TROUT UNLIMITED** foxvalleytu.org

Saturday January 20, 2024 Noon - 4 pm

GREAT NEW LOCATION! Bubolz Nature Preserve
Noon Banquet Buffet
Catered by Van Abel's

food, friends & raffles!

GREAT Speakers
U.P. & MN Driftless Areas
High End Bucket Raffles
Scott Grady Bamboo Rod & Reel Pkg.
Sweepstakes Kick-off
Used Equipment Sale
Silent Auction

QR Code

\$45 for adults (15 and older); \$20 for children (4-14); under 4 free (includes entrance, banquet, speakers, etc.)
All tickets to this event must be purchased online through: foxvalleytu.org NO later than January 10, 2024
NO tickets will be sold at the door

Fountains of Youth

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

by Rusty Dunn

What is the measure of great achievement for a trout fly? Featured articles in glossy magazines? Making "Top Ten" lists of the fly-fishing paparazzi? A fly whose bin is always empty at the local fly shop? These are fine tributes to accomplished flies, but the most noble of honors – the *pièce de résistance* – is reserved for a chosen few: flies so good they have a beer named after them! Such is the case with the Haystack dry fly and its namesake beer "Haystack Blond Ale", brewed by the Great Adirondack Brewing Company of Lake Placid, NY. The Haystack is a pattern born of the creative mind and talented hands of Francis Betters. Fran Betters (1931-2009) owned and operated Adirondack Sport Shop, located on the West Branch of the AuSable River in upstate New York, for decades. Mr. Betters was known widely as a fly-fishing guide, teacher, storyteller, and creator of champion flies, including the Haystack, the Ausable Wulff, and the Usual.

Fran Betters grew up along the AuSable and spent a lifetime studying its habits. He began tying flies at an early age, selling the Haystack to local anglers from his home while still in high school. Inspiration for the Haystack came from a family friend, who tied a fly that, according to Fran, was "a big gob of deer hair tied to a #6 or #8 hook". Although crude, that ugly monster yielded many fine fish for Betters during the 1940s. Betters downsized the pattern and refined it to match mayfly hatches of the AuSable. He tied the first *bona fide* Haystack in June 1949, and it has been catching fish ever since.

The Haystack captures an elusive combination of simplicity and effectiveness. It is tied of hollow deer hair and is almost unsinkable, an important trait on the

pocket waters of the AuSable. The fanned wing is highly visible, even under low light conditions. The materials cost is minimal, and the fly is almost indestructible. Whereas more ordinary flies may succumb after a few fish, the Haystack performs like the Energizer Bunny ... it just keeps going and going.

The Haystack sits flush in the surface film, braced by its buoyant tail and "outriggers" of hollow hair. Flies that sit in the film "dimple" the water's surface, causing a light-reflecting and light-refracting imprint of their body when viewed from a trout's underwater perspective. The fish-catching magic of low-riding flies was detailed by Vince Marinaro in his 1950 landmark book *A Modern Dry Fly Code*, and such flies have become wildly popular today. "Emergers" as a group represent a continuum of developmental stages beginning below the surface film and continuing through intermediate stages until the winged adult dun pierces the surface film and crawls atop the water. The Haystack imitates a late stage of emergence, as a winged adult dun, having struggled to shed its nymphal skin, floats atop the surface waiting for its wings to dry. Emerging mayflies are especially vulnerable to trout predation, and emerger patterns are both effective and popular. Patterns like the Haystack or parachute duns are more popular today than their traditionally hackled cousins.

The Haystack is the direct ancestor of two very popular contemporary flies. Comparaduns, described by Al Caucci and Bob Nastasi in their 1975 book *Hatches*, and Sparkle Duns, developed in the 1980s by Craig Mathews and John Juracek, differ from the Haystack mostly by their tails. Haystacks have tails of bundled deer hair, Comparaduns have split hackle-fiber tails, and Sparkle Duns have tails of Antron fibers to imitate a trailing nymphal shuck. Other than that, Comparaduns and Sparkle Duns share the same basic design as a Haystack, a relationship the originators readily acknowledge and credit. © Rusty Dunn, 2024

Haystack

The Haystack imitates mayfly duns and emergers. Tie it in the sizes and colors of mayflies you'll likely encounter. Set the wings at 1/3 shank length, and spread the bundled butt ends of the deer hair around the top half of the hook shank to aid floatation. Splay the wings around a full half circle to imitate a dun, and a little less to imitate an emerger that floats lower in the surface film.

Hook: Dry fly #10-#18

Thread: Hot orange

Tail: Natural deer hair

Body: Tannish-brown Australian Possum

Wings: Natural deer hair, splayed around a 180° arc



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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