

# Newscasts

February 2024 serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



## Updated Date – 3rd Annual Spring Fair Fundraiser

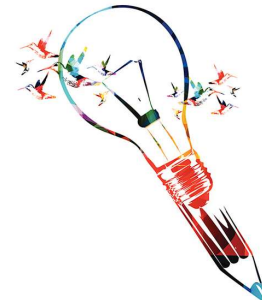
Join us **Saturday, April 20, 2024**, for another fun-filled, social day of camaraderie. This is a one-week shift from what we previously shared. We'll be returning to the East Side Club on the shores of Lake Monona with hopefully stunning weather this year. Further details and tickets will be available later this month. **(Please note the updated date!)**

## Spring Fair Marketing Help

Do you have graphic design experience (or know someone that does)? The SWTU Spring Fair committee urgently needs a marketing manager. You'll help make the 3rd annual fund raising event a success and further our strong cold water conservation efforts – all while having some fun.

This role creates:

- the event poster
- a welcome handout for event
- a safe ride poster
- various other small signage for event day



Design files from previous years are available. Additionally, the role takes the lead in drafting promotional messaging for social media channels. Assistance in posting to each channel is available. Please get in touch with John Freeborg [john-swtu@freeborg.com](mailto:john-swtu@freeborg.com) or 608-695-8544.

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## The Wyoming Cutthroat Slam – You Can Do It!

John Lyons shares photos, stories and tips at our Tuesday, February 13, Chapter Meeting

John Lyons will talk about his July 2023 fly fishing trip to Wyoming where he and a fishing buddy pursued the “Wyoming Cutthroat Slam” and attempted to catch all four subspecies of Cutthroat Trout remaining in the state. He'll briefly review some of the new ichthyological conclusions concerning Cutthroat Trout subspecies and discuss logistics for anyone contemplating attempting the slam ... but most of John's presentation will focus on pursuing beautiful fish in a beautiful landscape.

John is a professional fisheries biologist and ichthyologist with a strong interest in trout (and frankly all fishes) and the places they inhabit. He worked for nearly 33 years as a fisheries research biologist and eventually supervisor for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources before retiring in 2017. Since then, John has continued his longstanding affiliation with the UW Zoological Museum where he currently serves part-time as the Curator of Fishes. John grew up in New York State fly fishing many of the famed Catskill Mountain rivers and graduated with a BS in Biology from Union College, Schenectady, NY. He came to Madison in 1979 for his MS and Ph.D. in Zoology, fell in love with Wisconsin, and has never left. These days, he fishes as much as he can, from trout in the Driftless to catfish in the Mississippi, and his favorite pastime is exploring new fishing spots.



Please join us at Schwoegler's on Grand Canyon Drive on Madison's West Side on Tuesday, February 13. Dinner and drinks available at 5:30 with John's presentation starting about 7 p.m.

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

## Looking ahead to March — Taste the Great Destinations

Serving up a mouthwatering presentation at our Tuesday, March 12 Meeting  
*(this is rescheduled from the January meeting canceled due to snow)*

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](http://www.608csk.com/general-1) and [www.twowickflies.com](http://www.twowickflies.com).

## SWTU Tentative 2024 Workdays

By Jim Hess, Conservation Chair

### Planned Regular Workdays

- April 6, 13, or 20 – Kittleson – planting trees on Hefty Farms Easement, located at the bridge on Kittleson Road and replacing some dead trees downstream. At this time not sure when the trees will be delivered, so holding multiple dates. May need to plant trees on the same day as the Spring Fair, as we did last year.
- April 6 or 13 – Kittleson – removing willows on Hefty Farms Easement
- April 20 – SWTU Spring Fair Fundraiser (may be planting trees in the morning like last year, if necessary)
- April 27 – Conley Lewis Creek in Iowa County. A joint workday with the Nohr Chapter. Justin Haglund, DNR Fish Biologist, and his crew will be joining us. Conley Lewis feeds into the Dodge Branch Creek upstream from Banner Road. This is located near our previous workdays on Whitford Creek.
- May 18 – Big Spring – joint workday with Nohr Chapter, assisting the DNR in removing willows. Justine Haglund, DNR Fish Biologist, and his crew will be joining us again. This is a continuation from last year.
- June 1 – Sawmill Creek (Pokorny Easement) – removing invasive woodies and installing a brush bundle. This will be the 3rd workday at this site.

## 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.)

## Terrific Tying Teaching Time

A few photos from our free fly tying classes, courtesy Henry Nehls-Lowe.



## Looking For New Place to Fish This Season?

By Topf Wells

The DNR lends a helping hand.

The DNR has recently published regional Wadable Trout Stream Reports for wide swaths of SW and NC WI – including counties such as Crawford and Vernon in the SW and Waupaca and Marquette in the NC.

These are quantitative summaries of DNR surveys of dozens and dozens of trout streams in these areas over the last 1-2 years. While the reports don't offer narratives, analysis, or management recommendations, they include the streams surveyed, the locations of the surveys, and the species, numbers and size of trout the DNR teams found. The report also lists the percentiles of each stream for the different classifications of trout species, numbers and size. In other words, you have the basis for judging the relative quality of the fishery for each stream, at least near the location of the survey.

The reports do not indicate which locations offer public fishing. The reports are easy to find by googling WI DNR trout stream surveys or going to <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/trout/TroutSurveys>.

Some healthy populations of trout out there. Our chapter members seem not to fish the Waushara, Waupaca, Marquette County streams as much as many used to. Might be time to pay a visit to some of those.

## Veterans Fly Tying – All Vets and Their Families Welcome

Our veterans fly tying program is starting back up Wednesday, February, 7, at 5:30 p.m. at VFW Post 1318 (2740 Ski Lane, Madison). Brood X is the first fly of 2024!

There is never any cost, and we'll plan to meet every Wednesday in February and March to tie new patterns. April will switch to fishing at various locations (dependent on the weather). [Learn more at their Facebook page.](#)

## Wisc. Smallmouth Alliance – Guided Trip Fundraiser

Our friends at the Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance are holding a fundraising auction of guided fishing trips. It's a great way to support important conservation efforts ... and hook into a whole lot of fun. (Seriously, if you've never fought a smallmouth on a flyrod, you owe it to yourself to experience it!). Jerry Pasdo is the contact person for the auction and he can be reached by email at [japasdo@gmail.com](mailto:japasdo@gmail.com) and by phone at (608) 345-2198. All bids must be submitted to Jerry's email address and must be received by 7pm, February 15, 2024 to be valid. [Find a list of trips and more at their website.](#)



## Welcome New Members

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

Pam Delfosse  
Thomas Henter  
Kenneth Nelson  
Mark Henrickson  
David Gill  
Benjamin Lofgren  
Hunter Amundson  
James Richards

Rebecca Ricketts  
Kenneth Marschke  
Carol Schlatter  
Paul Nesson  
Ben Delzer  
John Parrish  
Eli Selinger

Chris Cook  
Rick Nauman  
Eric Schneider  
Marjorie Reed  
William Clark  
Stephen Schasker  
Garrett Knowlton

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 has 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

"Match the hatch" is a cornerstone of fly fishing. Successful flies are those that imitate food of a feeding trout, but how exact must that imitation be? A crude approximation? A detailed facsimile? Opinions vary widely and are often strongly held. "Presentationists" maintain that the fly itself is of lesser importance, because success lies in how an angler presents the fly. They emphasize imitation of insect *behavior* over insect *form* (profile, color, size, anatomy, materials, etc.). "Imitacionists", on the other hand, maintain that flies should mirror the natural in detail. They assume that presentations are excellent but believe that trout are more often deceived when a fly closely mimics the natural. Imitacionists emphasize insect *form* over insect *behavior*. Which group is correct? That's for you to decide. Better start deliberations soon, however, because you may be puzzled and uncertain even after decades of thoughtful experimentation.

Consider two examples of the presentation vs. imitation debate. Ernie Schwiebert (1931-2005) was one of America's most knowledgeable and accomplished fly anglers. His 1955 book *Matching the Hatch* includes 101 flies needed onstream to imitate common mayflies. His 1978 article in *Fly Fisherman* magazine includes 40 flies to imitate common ants alone! Even committed imitacionists might question Schwiebert's need for such abundance. At the other end of the spectrum, George La Branche (1875-1961) is widely acknowledged as a founder of American presentationists. His influential 1914 book *The Dry Fly and Fast Water* argues that action and movement of a fly is paramount, and the specific fly itself is much less important:

*"A great part of the imitation must be produced by the angler himself while actually fishing the stream."*

La Branche's book contains only eight fly patterns, about which he comments:

### ----- Whirling Dun -----

La Branche concluded that a forward tilt of the wings improves effectiveness of the Whirling Dun

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**Hook:** Dry fly, #10 - #12

**Thread:** Yellow

**Wings:** Starling or duck quill slips, upright, divided, and tilted forward ~30° toward the eye

**Tail:** Ginger or light brown hackle fibers

**Tag:** Two turns of flat gold tinsel

**Body:** Muskrat underfur or mole fur

**Hackle:** Ginger or light brown rooster, hackled heavily for turbulent waters

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*"I rarely use over six. If I were compelled to do so, I could get along very well with one – the Whirling Dun."*

One fly for all situations? Even committed presentationists might question the sparseness of La Branche's fly box. Fortunately, most anglers are somewhere in the middle of the imitation vs. presentation spectrum, and you must find your own place of comfort.

La Branche's favorite fly, the Whirling Dun, dates to the very beginnings of angling. Charles Cotton described the first Whirling Dun in *The Complete Angler* (1676), but historians are undecided on the insect that it imitates. A great variety of Whirling Duns have been published since Cotton, and the diversity of insects they imitate make "Whirling Dun" almost a general style rather than a specific pattern. Common features of Whirling Duns include a relatively large body size, an upright profile of divided wings suggesting mayflies, a brownish yellow, yellowish gray, or gray body color, and ginger or dun hackle. Theodore Gordon noted so many Whirling Dun designs – including four when visiting a single fly shop – that he collected them as examples of variation in fly tying. Imitacionists argue that the diversity of flies imitates the diversity of natural mayflies. Presentationists argue that the flies are interchangeable and that each is successful in skilled hands.

George La Branche's favorite Whirling Dun is similar to Hendrickson and Quill Gordon mayflies. Patrick McCafferty, whose book *Aquatic Entomology* (1981) is the definitive work on North American mayflies, identified Whirling Duns as two species of the genus *Leptophlebia* (common names Whirling Dun, Whirling Blue Dun, Blue Quill, Borchers's Drake, Black Quill, Brown Quill, and Palefoot). If you see mayflies on the wing and view yourself as an imitacionist, select a matching fly from one of the many fly boxes in your vest. If, on the other hand, you view yourself as a presentationist, grab a Whirling Dun from the lone box in your shirt pocket and take pleasure in George La Branche's back-to-basics simplicity.

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## 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](mailto:madkasel@gmail.com)

### Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited Leadership:

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