

Newscasts

June 2019 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Next Chapter meeting will be Thursday, September 12

Whew! We need a break!! A summer break, to be exact.

Summer is filled for most with travel, family activities and plenty of fishing ... and so we do not have our usual monthly meetings in June, July or August.

There are still some things going on, of course, and we'll let you know about it in the July Newscasts, on www.swtu.org or by checking out [our Facebook page](#).



Help Celebrate SWTU's Golden Anniversary

We're celebrating SWTU's 50th year with a special Golden Anniversary Banquet and Celebration on **Thursday, October 24**. It will be at the Lussier Family Heritage Center and feature a tasty meal from 608 Community Kitchen.

Please block your calendar now and keep watching Newscasts and www.swtu.org for details on tickets and more. (Note that because of the banquet, we won't have our usual chapter meeting on October 10.)

Learn what your Board's been up to

Minutes from SWTU Board of Director meetings are now available for viewing [in this Google Drive](#). They'll keep being added after they're approved. 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.

Help keep the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund going

Please take a bit of time and contact your state senator and state assembly person to ask that he or she support a proposed 10 year extension of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund. This fund supports almost all the DNR's purchase of land for protection and outdoor recreation, including trout stream easements, assists local conservation organizations and governments to buy land for those purposes, and contributes to the development of some of those state properties. Locally, the Stewardship Fund has been a big help to Dane County in its purchases (the Neperud parcel for example) and Groundswell Conservancy.

Just about every conservation organization in the state, including TU State Council, supports re-authorization. They argue that if the state does not have a long and reliable period of funding for such acquisitions, some of which are complex and expensive, we will not be able to protect the lands and waters necessary for future conservation.

Probably, almost every SWTU member has fished, hunted, hiked, biked, foraged, or otherwise enjoyed natural resources that are preserved and available because of the Stewardship Program. If you are willing to contact your legislator an easy way to do so is to leave a message for him or her via the Legislative Hotline: in Madison (608) 266-9960 or toll-free 1-800-362-9472. Better yet, use the Hotline to find your legislators' mailing address and send a brief letter or postcard.

Don't miss our last Stream Team Workday 'til Fall June 15 2019 – Sugar River (Davidson Wildlife Unit)

No grill and a possible light rain mean no cookout or picnic, but we still have to celebrate a spring of great Stream Team achievements!

So after the workday ... it's off to Paoli for lunch and a beer or two. We'll meet at either the Paoli Pub and Grill or the Hop Garden, depending on the number of folks who want to go, the weather, and whether there's a wedding next to the Hop Garden. We'll decide at the end of the brush-bundling. Dutch treat; thankfully, Paoli prices are quite reasonable.

Time: 9am to 12 noon (Chapter Approved Sawyers please arrive at 8:30).

Where: We will be working at the new Dane County wildlife area, the Sugar River Wildlife Area, Davidson Unit, previously referred to as the Zeigler Property. The Davidson Unit is located just south of Verona on Oak Grove Rd, which is 1.3 miles south of Highway 151 on Highway 69. Turn right on Oak Grove Rd and go about 600 feet to the end of the road. The fire number address is 1855 Hwy 69. Here is a map link: <https://binged.it/2Mn84bL>

What: We will be installing brush bundles, using the limbs and brush cut at our last workday, which were piled up along the streambank. Some of us will be in the water and others will be on dry land hauling the limbs and brush, and perhaps using our new loppers to trim some of them up. This will be our second brush bundle installation. Our last installation was at the Sarbacker Easement on the Sugar River, and it was a great success. After this workday, SWTU will be known as experts.

The purpose of brush bundles is to redirect the flow of water back to the channel, exposing the gravel bottom for spawning, and protecting the streambank from erosion. It also provides habitat for young trout. Over the course of a year or so, the brush bundles collect sediment and builds out the streambank.

Important: Be sure to take breaks during the workday, to drink some water, catch your breath, and exchange fish tales.

Bring: Bring waders to work in the water. But there will be plenty of work on dry land. Also bring work gloves, sturdy shoes, and eye and ear protection. Also bring reusable water bottles that can be filled from our 5-gal water jug. Stay hydrated.

Parking: There should be plenty of parking on Oak Grove Rd.

Future Workdays:

This will be the last workday of the season. Thank you everyone for you help!

Check our website (www.swtu.org) or email Jim Hess (jimhess5599@gmail.com) to make sure there are no cancelations or changes to this schedule.

Welcome New Members

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

William Schilling	Chelsey Wolfstor
Adrian Karinopoulos	Davey Wilson
Daniel Nodolf	Kim Licitar
Ken Frank	Michael Hasburgh
Sue Meffert	Richard Pantalone

We are honored to have you among us. Please join us for a Chapter meeting, and we will give you a **FREE** raffle ticket, flies and "an offer you can't refuse" from some of our most experienced fisher-folk! Try to get there at 6 p.m. for dinner and to sit with one of our board members to learn more about us. **If you will be attending your first meeting**, please contact [Mary Ann Doll](#) so we can expect you.

Another tremendous year for “PGT”

Project Green Teen (PGT) is SWTU's youth education program. Partnered with Shabazz these spend a semester learning about ecology and the environment. This year Students spent the week learning about conservation issues working with the WI DNR and TU Driftless. They completed service projects to local farmers and to the Westfork Sports Club who hosted their stay. Students spent the week pulling buried barbed wire from broken fence lines, removing debris, working to divert channelized streams back into the main stream corridors, demolished the little blue cabin and rebuilt the garbage area at the Westfork.

Five evenings were dedicated to fly fishing with the support of members from our chapter and others around the state. Students had already had 2 fly tying sessions, casting lessons and went fishing for blue gills at Tenny Park. Students caught 92 fish over the week and students and mentors shared five dinners together.

Next years PGT Dates are May 8th - 15th with fishing on the 10th - 14th. Mark your calendars. We try to get a 1:1 learning lesson for the students AND for the Shabazz staff who want to learn. We need 15 people for next year Sunday - Thursday. Those interested please contact Dave Fowler at (608) 513-0681 dkfowler82@gmail.com Please let him know as soon as possible. The average age of this year's group of volunteers was 70 years old. It would be wonderful if we could tap into those folks newly retired to help.



Women's Clinics for 2019 are underway!

Here are some happy faces from 2018. We have 3 clinics: A Beginners, Women's on the Water - Intermediate and an evolving Riverbuddy Training program with exciting new developments this year. These are the women training to take other women out on water and teach them the sport. This year they have 3 sessions. One on Landowner rights and Access point with Geri Meyer of the Driftless Angler/ Athena & Artemis Women's Fly Shop, another on entomology with Mike Miller, WI DNR and a final guided lesson with the fishing instructors for the Women's Clinics.



Look for pictures of this year's clinics in the fall.



Vets on the River – Free Women Veteran's Fishing Trip

There are a few openings for a FREE trip for female veterans Sept 17-20 up by Hayward, Wis. Meals, lodging, fishing gear and even guide tips are included. Learn more at these links: <https://www.nps.gov/sacn/planyourvisit/vets-on-the-river-programs.htm>
<https://www.nps.gov/articles/vets-on-the-river.htm>

Workday report #1 from Topf Wells:

Sweetening up the Sugar River

With reference to the basketball and hockey playoffs, **HESS SHOOTS AND SCORES**. Jim organized another most successful work day. Almost 20 volunteers cut, limbed, hauled and stacked truckloads of invasive honeysuckle and box elder on the County's new Davidson Property on the Sugar River (between Verona and Paoli). That material now waits in carefully arranged piles to be transformed into two very large brush bundles at our mid-June work day at this site.

"Brush bundles" doesn't come close to conveying the size of these installations. Extending for hundreds of feet, these devices will increase the width, depth and stability of stream banks, and create great refuges and feeding lanes for trout. Removal of the honeysuckle will also enable several generations of native oaks to thrive. Over time we should also welcome the return of a greater variety of native vegetation where the dense honeysuckle canopy stifles everything.

Birders among our workers really enjoyed the site because several migrating species of warblers were visiting. Lots of us were impressed by the quality and sizes of the runs on this part of the Sugar. The quality of doughnuts, cookies, apples, coffee, pork sticks and Jim's well water continues to run high.

Knowing that everyone contributed to the work day, we always try to acknowledge some extraordinary efforts. Today, a hats off to our sawyers. Bob Harrison, Mark Horn, Jim Hess, and Mike Meier again had to battle aged and well-entrenched honeysuckle. While the individual stems of an old and ornery honeysuckle might be 10 times smaller than the trunk of a medium sized box elder, the wood is twisted, fibrous, and tough. It devours the chains of a chainsaw. Those seemingly simple clumps of brush also require a lot more twisting, turning, and bending than many other forms of cutting. Tough, tough work; thanks for our sawyers of taking it on.



Photos courtesy Jim Beecher. [View the full album.](#)

Workday report 2 from Topf Wells:

Cold Front Stalls – Crew Revives for Great Ham Sandwiches and Very Cold Beer

A cold front hit Madison in the morning at about 7:45, dropping the temperature and providing a cool breeze. Forty miles can make a big difference in weather. The cold front did **not** reach Steiner Branch until after 1 p.m. ... 50 minutes **after** the work day ended. Sigh. After the work day, and 100 gallons of sweat produced by about 10 volunteers, several of us asked, "Where the heck is that cold front?"

A great day nevertheless! First, the work. Our crew, including Bradd Sims, the hardest-working DNR Fish Biologist in the state, cleared and stacked about 3/4 of the willows choking the stream. The area was probably no bigger than a large residential lot but willows can achieve an amazing density. Jim and Steve Fabos wrestled brush saws all morning and Mike Meier entered the fray with his chainsaw. The rest of us hauled and stacked. I think for the first time an SWTU workday achieved two-story tall brush piles. DNR Wildlife Management is going to burn them. The Winter Solstice would be an appropriate occasion.

Hot, muggy, and buggy were the conditions. Jim's 5 or 10 gallons of well water were necessary and welcome. The stream itself continues to be beautiful. For anyone who wants to fish it, now is the time. It's a hike from the parking lot but the stream banks are clear enough to allow for easier movement and getting in and out of the creek. Look for the brush piles, you can't miss 'em. Gnats were a drag but the site also had a great assortment of butterflies. Between Jim and Marci's prairies and this site, we had the opportunity to see a dozen different species.

As always, thanks to Jim for his great organizational work, with those thanks to also be shared with Bradd.

The day got better with the lunch Jim and Marci provided for all of us at their home. A sumptuous feast. Among the headlining features were April Prussia's ham and Marci's pasta salad, the best I've ever had in my life. Heavenly!

As heavenly are the remnant prairies and oak savannas Jim and Marci have saved, and the prairies they have planted. They are beautiful and healthy, a balm to the soul (and to the body too with a cool north breeze).

These workdays are always worth attending, and Jim and Marci's extraordinary hospitality made for an extra-great day.

Photos courtesy Jim Beecher. [View the full album.](#)



Applauding the DNR Trout Stream Easement Improvement Team

The DNR Trout Stream Easement Improvement Team recently took to the field. Two UW Platteville natural resource students will spend the summer on a variety of trout stream easements in our general area performing a variety of maintenance. Their aim is to help the streams and make access safer and more convenient for anglers. This will be hot, sweaty, buggy but most welcome and needed work.

SWTU contributed \$2,500 to this effort and were joined by the DNR and several southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois/Chicago Chapters. Jerry Saap of TU and TU DARE worked very hard to put this team to work. Besides being a great and much needed idea in and of itself, it is a very substantial and innovative example of cooperation among all these chapters. So if you see a young man and a young woman toiling away to clear brush or wild parsnip along a stream you're fishing, please introduce yourself and thank them.



June update on the Westfork Sports Club – Restoring flood damage

By Tina Murray

The club continues to rebuild after the flood of 2018. From the Portage Shelter north is open and functional. Please don't drive in low lying areas or in sandy areas. You will get stuck. There is a grounds repair plan and a new stream plan is being developed. The WFSC is still raising funds for both the stream restoration and the grounds restoration. Donations can be mailed to West Fork Sportsmens Club Inc., P.O. Box 52, Viroqua, WI 54665

The Westfork is seeking skilled labor in that some help with electrical, plumbing and construction would be greatly appreciated. They are also looking for people to help with permits and grantwriting. Please email westforksportsclub@gmail.com if you can help or have leads.

There will be a BIG workday the weekend of Sept 15th. Please mark your calendars and come out to help. Even if it is simply flipping burgers or directing traffic, we would love to see a rally for the club and this is the one weekend we will do it for sure.

Camping is first come first serve and cabin, clubhouse and day shelter reservations are now all done online. And.... shhhh.... the fishing is still great on the club grounds!

(Many thanks to Tina for these regular updates on a special place.)

Fountains of Youth

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

by Rusty Dunn

Spring creeks offer some of the world's most challenging trout fishing. They are often slowly moving, glassy smooth, crystal clear, and thick with weeds by mid-summer. Spring creek trout can be surprisingly large, because the slightly alkaline waters support immense populations of insects, crustaceans, and other trout fare. Famous spring creeks of the world include the chalk streams of southern England, Montana's DePuy, Armstrong, and Nelson's Spring Creeks, Idaho's Silver Creek and Henry's Fork, and Pennsylvania's Letort Spring Run. Such rivers can reward experienced fly fishers, but they often humble novices. They identify great anglers, and it's no accident that spring creeks were home waters of such angling giants as G.S. Marrayat, F.M. Halford, G.E.M. Skues, Jim Leisenring, Vince Marinaro, and Charlie Fox.

Pennsylvania's Letort Spring Run was six miles of spring creek paradise in the 1950s and 1960s. Its crystalline waters, abundant insects, and large selective trout attracted some of America's finest anglers. Vince Marinaro, Ernie Schwiebert, Charlie Fox, and Ed Shenk considered it home. Marinaro and Fox were contemporaries and best friends who established on the Letort what has been called "the limestone school" of American fly fishing. They jointly discovered the Letort's food base of minute insects and designed tiny flies to match. Fox and Marinaro epitomized "*fine and far off*" for American waters. Marinaro's book *A Modern Dry Fly Code* (1950) and Fox's *This Wonderful World of Trout* (1963) are the Old Testament of spring creek angling in America.

Charlie Fox was "Dean of the Letort" and served as its protector for over 50 years. Fox's home was a double haul away from the water's edge, and he owned a half mile of stream frontage. Fox welcomed both expert and novice, friend and stranger, to his property with modesty, grace, and unending generosity.

Conservation of the Letort was Fox's highest priority. He hauled gravel by hand and successfully rebuilt spawning habitat that was in decline. He strategically placed flagstones in the stream for anglers to stand on. He advocated managing the Letort as a wild trout fishery to a state bureaucracy that was deeply rooted in hatchery-fueled put-and-take angling. Fox was so attached to the Letort and to trout he nurtured that he couldn't bring himself to fish it late in life. He simply sat aside its mesmerizing waters, coached others on its intricacies, and immersed himself in the theater of nature. Fox was not as famous nationally as the loquacious and opinionated Marinaro, but cognoscenti respect the two as equals. Both are angling greats whose individual accomplishments cannot be disentangled, much like those of Walton & Cotton, Marrayat & Halford, or Hewitt & LaBranche.

Charlie Fox's favorite hatch on the Letort was the annual emergence of *Ephemerella dorothea* and *Epeorus vitrea*, yellow-orange mayflies known commonly as Sulphurs, Pale Evening Duns, Little Yellow Drakes, Little Light Cahills, and Pale Watery Duns. Fox coined the term "sulphur" (also spelled "sulfur") in the 1930s to describe the insect. The name stuck and is now the most common name throughout the East and upper Midwest for wonderful hatches on those long lingering evenings of June.

Sulphur hatches on the Letort were monumental in the 1950s and 60s. Indeed, Fox called them "the hatch of hatches". Sadly however, the great clouds of Sulphurs have all but disappeared. Sediment from poor agricultural practices, runoff from urban development, and pollution from a commercial watercress farm at the spring's source now foul the Letort's formerly pristine waters. The creek is a shadow of its former self, but at least the few remaining trout are wild thanks to Charlie Fox. If you visit the Letort, find Marinaro's Meadow, wherein you'll see side-by-side brass plaques of Vince Marinaro and Charlie Fox overlooking one of fly fishing's most hallowed temples. It is sacred ground with a magnificent past and an uncertain future.

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----- Sulphur Dun -----

Charlie Fox experimented with many different body colors and concluded that bright orange Sulphur Duns are superior, despite appearing to human eyes quite unlike the color of naturals.

Hook: Dry fly, #18 - #20

Thread: Pale yellow or cream, 8/0

Wings: Light dun hen hackle feather tips, upright and divided

Tail: Light blue dun rooster hackle fibers

Body: Bright orange dry fly dubbing

Hackle: Light blue dun rooster



Stay Connected



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



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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