

# Newscasts



November 2019 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

## “Rusty Dunn” – columnist, fly tyer extraordinaire and historian A Nation of Immigrants: The English Origins of American Trout Flies Thursday, November 14 Chapter Meeting

Man. Myth. Legend. You’ve read the monthly columns, marveled at the beautiful flies and maybe even wanted to ask some questions of whoever is behind the steady stream of stellar fly tying history ... not to mention the amazing, effective fish-catching flies themselves.

Well, here’s your chance! And, really ... **does this meeting need any more promo than that Rusty Dunn, live and in the flesh, will be at the front of the room, talking flies?** One should hope not!

There will be a **50/50 raffle to help cover the room fee**. Tickets will be available from 6:30 - 7:45 pm for \$5 each. The drawing will take place at 8:00 pm, or as soon as possible after the featured speaker is completed. This is a must be present to win drawing. One winning ticket takes home half of the cash raised!

As usual, the meeting is upstairs at the [Coliseum Bar and Grill](#) on East Olin Avenue at 7 p.m. but please get there early this month if at all possible for auction items, drinks, food or sharing stories!

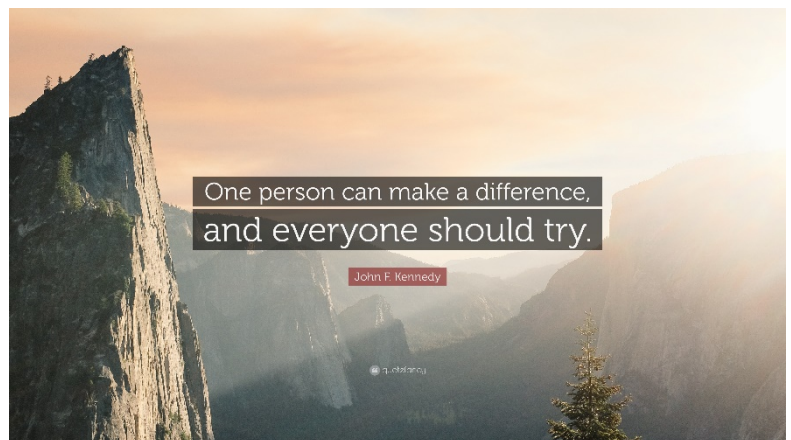
**Looking a month ahead ...** the December 12 meeting will feature Dr. John Lyons, “life-long fish nerd.” He has the amazingly cool title of **Curator of Fishes** at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Zoological Museum, a position he has held since 1985. Doctor Lyons will share insights from a lifetime of fishing and a professional career working on ichthyology (the study of fishes), fisheries management and aquatic conservation.

## Donation Campaign to Begin in December Your support can help us do so much more

In mid-December, you will receive a letter from SWTU asking you to donate so that we can continue and expand our work to protect and improve the trout streams we love to fish.

We will use the funds you and your fellow SWTU members donate to support more restorations of trout streams, more easements for public fishing and restoration, and better maintenance of streams which have been restored.

Our 50th Anniversary reminded us of how much we have done. With your help and generosity, we'll accomplish even more in our next 50 years. The Officers and Board members of SWTU unanimously support this request. Thank you for your continued support for the work we do at SWTU!



-- Your SWTU Officers and Board

PS If you donate \$50 or more, you'll receive one of our 50th Anniversary caps, debuted at the Banquet. Watch for the letter in mid-December.

## Make a difference – the Stream Team way!

November 16, 2019 – Syftestad Creek (May's Easement Dane County)

Find the planned details below but know that the location *may* change depending on weather and ground conditions. Just keep an eye on your email closer to the date.

When you join us, you'll get an entry for the Stream Keeper rod built by Jim Bartelt. To celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup>, we've upped the ante on the rod ... it's a sweet Sage 4 wt 8'6" model that's perfect for our spring creeks (and retailed for \$850). As in the past, we'll draw for it at the Icebreaker event in January.

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

**Where:** We will be working on Syftestad Creek where it joins up with Kittleson Creek, near the intersection of Hwy 78 and Dane County Rd H. Getting to this worksite will be a bit complicated, but well worth your effort to see this beautiful location. From the intersection of Hwy 78 & Hwy 39 (you will be on both highways for about 100 yards), take Hwy 39 for approx. 1.5 miles to Drammen Valley Rd, turn right (north) onto Drammen Valley Rd, and go 1 mile to Berg Road (a private road). Turn right on Berg Road and go about 1/3 mile, then turn left onto a gravel road and follow that road to a farm house. Everyone will park at farm house, near the out buildings, and will load into a 4-wheel truck to get to the worksite. SWTU event signs will be posted at Berg Rd and at the gravel road to the farm help direct you.

Here is a Google link for this location: <https://goo.gl/maps/GPhBfduke473Cbye7>

If you need directions, call Jim Hess at 608-288-8662.

**What:** Clearing invasive woody brush and box elders. When they did the restoration work on Syftestad Creek there was one area that the contractor couldn't get into. We have been trying for years to get into this area but it has been too wet. We have been given permission to gain access to the stream from the west, but we still need to cross the Kittleson Creek at an equipment crossing, so rain is still a concern. The long-term weather forecasts look fairly favorable for this workday, but long-term forecasts are not always correct, so we will have a backup location.

**Bring:** Bring working waders or rubber boots, if you have them. Also bring gloves, sturdy shoes, eye and ear protection. The chapter has loppers and hand saws that you can use. Also bring reusable water bottles that can be re-filled from our 5-gal water jug.

**Parking:** Park near the farm house, by the out buildings, as directed. People and equipment will be transported in 4-wheel pickups to the worksite. We will have truck stay behind for late comers, but try to arrive at 9 am, if possible

### Next Workday:

Dec 07 – site TBD

## Escape the cold with a Costa Rica fundraiser

### Amazing opportunity from (and for) Badger Fly Fishers

Do you want to get away from the cold weather in Wisconsin this winter? Here is a fantastic opportunity to do just that! Bill Weege, a longtime Badger Fly Fishers member, has very generously donated a weeklong February 2020 sport fishing and sightseeing trip to Costa Rica for a fundraising auction.

Please take a hard look at this! Badger Fly Fishers are a tremendous and extraordinarily generous partner of ours. Their support has been vital to a wide array of important initiatives. And thanks to Bill Weege's stunning generosity, money raised will go in total toward supporting work on local cold and warm water resources and the fish that live in them.



### Costa Rica trip and bid details!

The trip is scheduled for an arrival date of February 8, 2020 and a departure date of February 16, 2020 and is booked with [Central America Fishing \(CAF\)](#), the premier outfitter for fishing trips to Costa Rica, Panama, Belize, and Guatemala. The trip package is valued at \$5,613 USD and is for two people. The minimum bid for this fabulous trip is \$1,500. All the complete details can be found in the [Badger Fly Fishers website announcement](#). The last chance and deadline to bid on this trip is Sunday, November 24th at 7:00 p.m.



### A great lineup of meetings!!

- **November 14** Chapter meeting – "Rusty Dunn"
- **December 12** Chapter meeting – John Lyons
- **January 9** Chapter meeting – Steve Carpenter
- **January 25** daylong fundraiser – The Icebreaker
- **February 13** Chapter meeting – Dan Oele
- **March 12** Chapter meeting – Meicher Madness Auction

### Icebreaker: Save the date / Exciting presenters!

Our daylong annual Icebreaker event will be held **Saturday January 25**.

We're excited to announce that the **Icebreaker will feature Carl Haensel and Jade Tomanson of [Namebini Fly Fishing](#)**. The presentation topics will focus on "Exciting and Accessible: Trips and Tactics for the Adventurous and DIY Angler in the Upper Midwest."

Among their credits, aside for their guiding business, are numerous articles for *Eastern and Western Fly Fishing*, experience as a fisheries biologist and lead organizers of the Great Waters Show.

#### Your Raffle Prize Donations Make a Difference

This is our biggest annual fundraiser, and the amazing array of bucket raffle items is one thing that sets it apart. These items come from people just like you. Yes you!!

Donations range from rods, reels, art, optics, packs, quality outdoor gear and flies ... people love to win sets of flies! If you aren't sure what is needed or what to donate, you can make a cash donation that the Chapter will combine with others to buy high-end, drool-worthy prizes.

Have questions, ideas or items to donate? Just contact Ben Lubchansky at [608csk@gmail.com](mailto:608csk@gmail.com).



# A "Golden" Celebration – 50 years of SWTU

It was a great evening with fantastic food, lots of good conversation, and John Strauss provided a great snapshot of our chapter history. The following awards were presented.

**Award of Merit**  
Topf Wells

**Pass Lake Award**  
Jim Kanvik

**Conservation Partner, Professional**  
Bradd Sims

**Conservation Partner, Landowner**  
April Prusia & Steven Fabos

**Landowner Certificate of Appreciation**  
Stuart & Joan Jorenby  
Roger & Jean Kessenich  
Gary & Fern Langfoss  
Gertrude Presbroten  
Dan Reeson  
Herb Schraepfer  
Megan Yost



## Fly Tying Courses – 2020



Trout Unlimited invites you to learn fly tying or improve your fly tying skills this winter. Experienced SWTU instructors will teach both beginning level and intermediate level fly tying courses in Fitchburg beginning January 15, 2020. 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 the 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 are often more complex, and the hook sizes can be smaller than flies of the beginning course.

Both Beginning and Intermediate Fly tying will be taught on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 Lacy Rd., Fitchburg beginning January 15, 2020. Courses run for eight consecutive Wednesdays (final class March 4, 2020).

**Advanced registration is required!** Online registration for fly tying courses will be available via the Fitchburg Recreation Department website (<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/599/Recreation>) beginning the second week of November. If you've not previously created a password-protected customer account with Fitchburg Recreation, you must do so before registering.

The registration deadline for both courses is January 12, 2020. Courses sometimes fill to capacity, and early registration is encouraged. For more information, see <https://www.swtu.org/learn/flytying/flytying-classes/> or email questions to [swtu-flytying@outlook.com](mailto:swtu-flytying@outlook.com).

### “Holy smokes! I can’t believe what I’m seeing.”

By Topf Wells

That was pretty much the response of SWTU Board Members in October when we looked at the Dane County restoration of 2100 feet of the Sugar River on the Falk/Wells Wildlife Area below the Bruce Co. bridge. This stretch has been wide, shallow, featureless, with a sediment/sand bottom. Carp were the fish who enjoyed it the most and not many trout at all. SWTU contributed \$5,000 to this major restoration and supported the County's creation of its own stream restoration crew. This is the crew's first project.

Sara Rigelman of Dane County led the a multi-agency planning for a restoration that included a really big stream and dozens of nearby acres. The restoration aimed to narrow and deepen the water, scour the sediment, re-introduce some sinuosity, and create good trout and other wildlife habitat. Accomplishing all that meant using massive practices that none of us had ever seen on a Driftless Area stream. Most spectacular were log sills which measured hundreds of feet, contained hundreds of trees and narrowed the stream by 30%. These will trap silt and within a few years will be stable extensions of the stream banks. Massive weirs and rock hooks increased depth and will scour silt off gravel stream beds. Brush bundles and well-placed boulders will provide fish plenty of cover. The log sills made great use of the trees the County has to clear from the old nursery, which will be transformed into prairies and oak savannas. Wetlands created or restored by the US Fish and Wildlife Service will contribute to better water quality and provide excellent wildlife habitat.

Frankly we were stunned by the scope and excellent implementation of the project. The County crew executed a complex project superbly. Hard to believe they were rookies. The DNR will survey trout and other aquatic life for several years after the project. We're confident many trout will have a happy home in this new habitat. The best current access to see this work is to walk the hiking trail upstream from the Paoli Road parking lot, a distance of about a half mile.

On page one of this newsletter, you can learn about an upcoming appeal for you to donate to help us pursue more projects like this one. If you have any doubt if your donation will be well spent, treat yourself to a streamside stroll and check this project out.

## Workday report 1: "It's a jungle"

By Topf Wells

With help from Justin Haglund of the DNR and his crew of most excellent assistants and the Gray Langfoss family, SWTU opened the fall work day season with extraordinary productivity. We probably had 15-20 SWTU volunteers.

Jim has us tackling two areas on Kittleson Creek up and downstream of the bridge on River Forks Road. Downstream, Jim took our winch, Justin and Vince of the DNR, and a team of SWTU volunteers. Their daunting job was to take at least three large trees that had lodged in the stream. As our DNR biologists remind us often wood in a stream is fabulous trout habitat. Sometimes, though, the logs can direct the current so that too much stream bank erosion is occurring. Alas and alack, such was the case.

Jim and crew worked for three hours and cleared the stream to Justin's satisfaction. This was hard, slippery work but mission accomplished.

The other contingent of SWTU volunteers was sent upstream to the new Langfoss easement where their task was to begin dealing with the box elders. The simple name of that tree does not do justice to what we saw. Everyone, SWTU members, DNR crew, and Langfoss family had one simple, oft-repeated phrase: "It's a jungle." But we were ready for this jungle. Justin sent his ace crew, headed by Lloyd and including Cole, Mitch, and Paul, and, eager to see what conservation work was all about, Cole's sister's boyfriend. Gary Langfoss, the landowner who sold the new easement (one of three he sold to the DNR!) and his son-in-law joined us. AND THEY BROUGHT A TRACTOR, CHAINS, AND A SKID STEER.

They at least quintupled the work we did and maybe more. While we had to buck and haul some smaller trees the machinery could not reach, our DNR sawyers, Bob Harrison, and Mike Meier could cut tree after tree and the tractor or skid steer would simply haul to the very large brush pile. I for one never tired of the sight.

We cleared lots of the stream and it's a lovely sight. Heavily meandered with deep stretches, this is where the big trout live. Ask the muskrat who lost a leg to one in an attack that horrified us.

More good news: Justin has his crew working two days a week on trout easements in his area and they'll probably return to continue this work.

Gary Langfoss said he'd be interested in some oak trees in the area we cleared, a tree that is much better for the stream than the box elders.

(If you patiently read this, guess which sentence was inserted as a Halloween joke.)

## Workday report 2: Snow in the air, oaks in the ground

By Topf Wells

With Jim Hess providing leadership and logistics, SWTU had another successful work day on Saturday, 11/2. About 15-20 of us planted oaks and cut willows for different reasons but one purpose, to improve the health of two trout streams.

One task was to plant 40-45 swamp white oaks on three permanent Dane County easements on Kittleson Creek from a bit upstream of the CTH H bridge downstream to the STH 78 bridge. About 10 years ago this stream had been fully restored. The starting point of that project was to clear hundreds of box elders from the stream corridor. The oaks provide a more stable, long-lived source of shade for the stream and are a tremendous source of invertebrate life. These oaks will also allow for the growth of stream bank -stabilizing and wildlife supporting



native grasses and flowers. They will be gorgeous. The landowners of these properties were quite happy to have the oaks planted. I hope I love long enough to catch a few trout under their branches; I'd be willing to sacrifice a few flies to do so.

The second project was to cut and treat dense stands of young willow on Pleasant Valley Creek upstream of the second CTH H bridge. This is an extremely important headwater stream of Kittleson and supports an excellent population of trout. While cutting the willows improves the fishability of the stream the more important reason to control them is to remove a prime beaver attraction. As a great, now retired DNR fish biologist once told me, "Willows are beaver candy." While beavers are very cool and industrious, their dams can be major problems on SW Wisconsin trout streams, leading to warming water, sedimentation, and obstacles to fish movement. Our SWTU volunteers cleared and treated all the problematic willows on a couple of hundred feet of stream.

This was a tough work day. Winter has arrived when a howling south wind is bitterly cold. Fields were wet. We had to divide into small work groups in order to finish all the work properly. To plant and protect the oaks properly, we had to carry in fence posts, fencing, and additional top soil as well as planting the trees. Since the trees were scattered across three easements that meant covering lots of ground several times. The willows were extremely dense and made for tough work.

Jim placed the oaks superbly. You'll find them on bends and runs that could obviously use some more shade.

Lots of thanks for this project. Funds for the project came via a grant from the Friends of Dane County Parks (Jim wrote a great grant application). The trees are from the Dane County nursery-- huge thanks to Adam Alves, the Dane County Forester. As always, thanks to Sara Riggelman for help with planning the project and granting the County's permission. Curt Diehl of the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department was a stalwart worker all morning. We were joined by another great volunteer to whom the Chapter owes thanks on several counts: Mike Hasburgh, Pat's father. He brush cut the area for many of the trees and planted a bunch and helped raise a wonderful son!

Will someone please invite Autumn to return for a few weeks?



**Steps to planting**  
.....  
**Preparing**  
**Clearing**  
**Planting**  
**Protecting**

## Welcome New Members

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

Gus Powers	Jack McHenry
Austin Tacey	Ames Barker
Joseph Kieta	James Bakken
Tom Olson	Joshua Wescott
Jeff Williams	Timothy Fraley
Bill Keuler	Paul Reith
Bruce Rounds	Gunnar Malm
Adam Cohen	Jeremy Jones
Matthew Newman	



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.

## Register now ... 2020 Women's Clinics

These amazing events usually fill up fast, so check your calendar and register sooner rather than later. And if you know someone who might be interested, be sure to let them know.

Registration is open and you can find more details at the links below.

### On the Water Skills Clinic June 17-19th

<https://web.cvent.com/event/bdb48126-14a2-4999-b8ce-e467188ddb3/regProcessStep1>

### Basic's Clinic June 19-20th

<https://web.cvent.com/event/92d0e6cb-3b37-4724-b842-dd541471524a/regProcessStep1>

Remember that if you've done the Basics Clinic, you have the skills to do the On the Water Skills Clinic!!

## 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.



## Fountains of Youth

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

by Rusty Dunn

Fly tyers go to great lengths when crafting their imitations of natural insects. Replicating size, shape, and color are always a goal, but some tyers also imitate subtle features such as legs, gills, eyes, and the correct number of tail fibers or segments. Those materials are then wrapped around a bent nail (a.k.a. hook) that is so conspicuous, so horribly unnatural, so out of place, that it should scream "danger" to even the most casual of trout. If a mere shadow on the water spooks trout, why doesn't the hook make them dash for cover? Only trout know for sure, but understanding why hooks don't provoke fear requires thinking like a trout.

The great pioneer of trout perception vis-à-vis behavior was Englishman Col. E.W. Harding, who approached fly fishing from the perspective of trout (literally!). His 1931 book *The Fly Fisher and the Trout's Point of View* describes what trout see and how they respond to natural insects and artificial flies. The book is rich with insights that are not obvious to many fly anglers. It remains to this day one of the best descriptions of how trout perceive their watery world.

Harding thoroughly understood the physics of reflection and refraction of light at the water's surface. His description of "the window", the narrow, vertical, 97° cone of vision that is the only portal through which trout can see things above the surface, is outstanding. Trout view the surface everywhere else only as an undulating mirror that reflects underwater surroundings. Although Harding was not the first to describe the window, his account was (and still is) the very best.

Harding demonstrated that hooks do not alarm trout, because their bronzed surface acts as a mirror. Hooks reflect illuminating light, and trout see their curving surfaces as a distorted reflection of the underwater world. Thus, hooks are camouflaged! A thin thread-like core of wire remains visible, but its color tones with and blends into the subsurface background.

Harding's most significant contribution concerns the light pattern of insects floating at the surface. Cohesive forces between water molecules at an air/water interface are remarkably potent. They cause a thin surface layer to be rubbery, elastic, surprisingly sturdy, and relatively difficult to penetrate. This surface tension underlies the time-honored parlor trick of floating a needle on water, and it is crucial to a trout's perception of insects floating at the surface. Points of contact between the water and insects (body, legs, wings, etc.) create crescent-shaped surface deformations that admit light underwater and is visible to trout well outside of their overhead window. Each insect species yields a unique light pattern, and this allows trout to identify approaching insects long before they are seen directly in the window. Harding maintained that matching surface light patterns is as important *or possibly more important* than matching insect size, profile, and color. He described splitting of the nymphal skin, wiggling motions of emerging duns, and the resulting fireworks of pinpoint light visible to trout. Harding's concept of imitating light imprints of emergers was revolutionary. It is thinking outside the box at its very finest!

The concept of surface light patterns may explain why some very successful flies appear unlike any natural insects. Such flies possibly imitate the light pattern of emergers, rather than the insect itself. For example, North Country wingless wets are shockingly simple flies, but they are very effective when fished at the surface. Harding suggested that they imitate the disheveled light imprints of emerging nymphs and pupae. Harding also suggested that Derbyshire Bumbles imitate the light imprints of many floating insects. Bumbles are a group of patterns originating in Derbyshire in the mid-1800s, reportedly by Mr. G.J. Eaton. Bumbles can be fished either wet or dry and are similar to today's Elk Hair Caddis, Bivisible, Griffith's Gnat, or similar flies with bodies of palmered hackle. The great F.M. Halford described Orange Bumbles as being so effective on the River Test that many accomplished anglers termed it the "Priceless Bumble". Orange Bumbles don't imitate specific naturals, and Halford described them as 'fancy flies', which are attractor flies in today's jargon.

© Rusty Dunn, 2019

## ----- Orange Bumble -----

Bumbles can be fished either wet or dry. The Orange Bumble pictured here is a wet fly. Alternating ribbing of peacock herl and flat gold tinsel is intended to imitate the abdominal gills of nymphs.

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**Hook:** Wet or dry fly hook, #12 - #16

**Thread:** Orange silk

**Body:** Orange silk floss

**Ribs (2):** A strand of peacock herl alternating with flat gold tinsel

**Hackle:** Honey dun hen (wet fly) or rooster (dry fly)

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

### Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited Leadership:

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