

# Newscasts

December 2024 serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



## Good News About Black Earth Creek

Join us good food, good fun and good news at our chapter meeting on December 10

James Brodzeller, in charge of Dane County's trout program, will share some good news about Black Earth Creek (BEC) at our Tuesday, December 10th meeting.

He'll describe and illustrate the massive Dane County restoration of a large section of BEC in Mazomanie and the County's Walking Iron Park. You'll be pleasantly amazed at the scope and detail of this project, which the County completed this fall.

Then to perhaps even better news. Recently, the County purchased 14 acres of land and BEC downstream of S. Valley Rd., immediately south of the junction of Hwy 14 and Schultz Rd. This purchase means that BEC now has permanent, public access between S. Valley and the Village of Black Earth.



The stream isn't in the best of shape. James and Dane County are developing a comprehensive restoration and seeking funding (SWTU is helping). Hear about the property and plans. James will also report on other Dane County trout activities

James has been a great partner with SWTU on several projects and we're eager to continue working with him and Dane County.

Before joining the County, James worked for the DNR as a Water Management Specialist in the Dodgeville office.

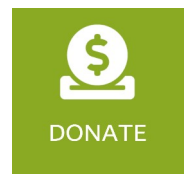
He enjoys fly fishing, biking, gardening and DIY homesteading projects (currently working on a sand battery greenhouse).

As usual, Schwoegler's on Grand Canyon Drive will host the meeting. Join us for dinner and drinks from 5:30 p.m. with a brief business meeting and James' presentation starting at 7.

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

## Help our Trout Waters / Help Your Taxes

'Tis the giving season and your local trout waters could use your tax-deductible gift. Your donation to the Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Endowment Fund is a great way to make a difference to the waters you fish. The SWTU Endowment Fund has made significant contributions to major projects, including Gordon Creek and the Sugar River. To make a tax-deductible gift, please visit <https://www.swtu.org/donate/> for details on how to give via check or online.



If you want to donate to SWTU's Endowment, please send the donation directly to SWTU with the notation that you want it directed to the Endowment Fund. Our Treasurer will then deposit those monies in the SWTU's endowment fund, managed by the Natural Resources Foundation (NRF), the custodian and manager of our endowment. NRF has been an excellent manager of our endowment. By directing donations to SWTU, and then SWTU conveying them to NRF, we ensure that principal and earnings are invested and reinvested within the guidelines established by the endowment fund.

Also, if you have an IRA and have to take a "required minimum distribution" (RMD) by year end, you may be eligible to make a "qualified charitable distribution" from your IRA directly to SWTU. Unlike most IRA RMDs, this type of distribution is not taxable to you provided you meet certain requirements. For example, your IRA custodian must transfer the money directly to SWTU. It cannot be paid first to you, then to SWTU. For 2024, the dollar limit on the charitable distribution is \$105,000, and it must be made by December 31. You should contact your tax professional or IRA custodian if you think you might be interested in this.

## Join the Last Workday of 2024

By Jim Hess, Conservation Chair

### SWTU Workday – Saturday, December 7, 2024

#### Conley Lewis Creek (Iowa County)

(Northwest of Hollandale near the intersection of Hwy 191 & Banner Road)

**Time:** 9am to 12 noon (Sawyers that have completed a chainsaw safety course, please arrive at 8:30. We can provide the equipment).

**What:** This will be another joint workday with the Nohr Chapter (Ted Swenson, Conservation Chair). Justin Haglund, DNR Fish Biologist, and his crew will be joining us. Topf Wells recently wrote this summary of the Conley Lewis Creek... “Conley-Lewis is one of the trout streams in an interesting complex of streams in eastern Iowa County, all part of the East Branch of the Pecatonica watershed. Near the easement we'll be working on Conley Lewis joins the Dodge Branch. Not far upstream, Whitford Creek, a Class 1 brook trout stream, also flows into the Dodge Branch.”

This will be a major clearing of box elders and other invasive woodies along the streambank to provide access and a healthier environment. Lots of chainsaw work, so we will need a good turnout from our sawyers. We will be returning next spring to continue this clearing project, and hoping to get as much done as possible at this workday.

We will be building burn piles to be burned later. To assist the DNR, we need to spend more time in building the burn piles. The trees need to be bucked up so that the larger logs and limbs can be laid down parallel to each other side-by-side in the same direction. Smaller limbs need to be placed between the layers of larger logs. This will make the pile denser and allow the wind to flow through, providing more oxygen.

**Where:** This site is located northwest of Hollandale, near the intersection of Hwy 191 & Banner Rd. We will be working upstream of the bridge on the north side of the stream.

Here is a Google Map Link: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/aNdKkj5871GrysSr9> (If not an active link, copy and paste into a search engine.)

Coming from Madison take US 151/18 west toward Barneveld, on the east side of Barneveld turn left on County Rd K; go south 11 miles toward Hollandale. Just on the north side of Hollandale, take State Hwy 191 west 2.5 miles to Banner Rd. Turn south on Banner Rd and go to the bridge.

Coming from the west, take Hwy 191 east out of Dodgeville 9 miles to Banner Rd and turn right and go to the bridge. Yes, fairly complicated. Here is my number if needed – 608-288-8662.

**Bring:** Bring work gloves, sturdy shoes, eye and ear protection. Also bring reusable water bottles that can be refilled from our 5-gal water jug.

**Parking:** Park on the east side of Banner Road, where there is more room to park. This is a fairly busy county road with heavy farm machinery, so it is important for everyone to park on the same of the road for traffic flow and safety.

## History and the Future, Looking Good (November 9 Workday)

By Topf Wells

The SWTU workday at Sawmill Creek on 11/9 was, per usual, successful and fun, with perhaps a bit more significance than usual.

The mission was to clear honeysuckle and box elder to improve access, streambanks, and the general health of the corridor. Steve Fabos of Indigenous Restorations led the honeysuckle and box elder removal. Much is cleared although we also girdled some of the bigger box elders. Not as much work, less debris on piles, and the dying box elders are good for a variety of wildlife. Woodpeckers should think kind thoughts of us.



As I traipsed over the little patch of land and looked at the soil and the field to the north, I thought of woodcock. With a better mix of native vegetation (and we left the wild plum, elderberry, dogwood, and one tiny, brave oak tree) this might be

a great spot for a pair of breeding woodcock next spring. Despite their fondness for dense undergrowth, I never, in all my years of hunting them, flushed one out of honeysuckle dominated understory. The low, intertwined branches would make it very difficult for a woodcock to flush and escape danger. My hope is the woodcock enjoy our work as much as the woodpeckers (we should probably install a wood duck house for the woodie trifecta).

The stream looked fabulous. The spring across the road was running strong and the drain tile from the northern field was supplying groundwater (I think the watercress was indicating that). Meg Pokorny, Steve Fabos, and Kyle Olivencia might decide what to do about that in the future.

Meg and Steve are familiar and welcome names, part of the history brought to mind by this workday. Meg and Bill are the kind landowners who sold the easement to the DNR, have generously donated to SWTU, and spend many hours and dollars restoring their lands and waters to health. Meg has been a kind and hospitable host after several of our workdays. Steve has planned and implemented those restorations. He and April, his wife, introduced the idea of the easement to Meg as part of the DNR/Pecatonica Pride/SWTU landowner outreach.

Kyle is part of our future. He is the new DNR fish biologist for Dane, Rock, and Green Counties.

Let's just stop right here and voice the corny observation that is nonetheless wholly accurate: HE'S A KEEPER.

Although this is Kyle's first week on the job, he and Jenna Jenna Errthum, his girlfriend, spent the entire workday with us. Both are smart – Jenna is a plant pathologist – friendly and incredibly hard working. They hauled brush and treated stumps and smiled all the time. Any time something needed to be hauled out of the drainage, Kyle was there.

He also demonstrated how observant field biologists are. One of our volunteers lost his key fob. All of us groaned; how were we ever going to find that in all the mess? Kyle walked about 30 feet, bent over, and picked it up. He remembered seeing our colleague slip and surmised that's where the fob escaped the pocket.

Kyle has superb academic, research, and field experience. Today he showed he's hard working, fun, and respects volunteers and conservation groups. We are so lucky to have him as the biologist in our area and the newest member of the team of biologists and technicians we work with and support. He may be glad to work here too. He and Jenna mentioned that one consideration in all his field work in Florida was to keep an eye out for alligators. Oh my goodness.

More history and the future: the old trailer was a great ad for SWTU with the brook trout wrap. Thanks to Pat Hasburgh for the design and Wow Gee Graphics out of Waunakee for donating the graphics, we have an even better wrap on the new trailer. Sweet!



Lots of thanks for one of our best workdays: We have to start with Jim Hess for his planning, leadership, and hard work. He managed to burn a big brush pile, girdle box elders, oversee the removal of an old barb wire fence (future anglers will thank us for that), and make sure we worked safely. Then he hauled the load of fencing and metal posts! Dyan and Wayne brought the trailer and Diane baked killer apple muffins. Safely returned from a summer of golden trout fishing in Wyoming, Dale Osthoff collected the rod he won for helping with work days last year. **As pictured at right**, Dave Fowler, the generous and expert rodmaker, helped present it. I'll try to persuade Dale and his sister to present on that wonderful summer of fishing. Meg and April had great snacks for us at the end of the day. We had a good mix of about a dozen members, who made a lot of work pretty darn easy.



*Trailer photo courtesy Jim Hess. Others courtesy Dyan Lesnik. See more and larger [in the story on swtu.org](http://www.swtu.org).*

## Registration Open for the 2025 Women's Fly Fishing Clinics

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 article just below and [this one from October](#) about this year's successful clinics.)

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, 2025, and \$375 after that.



### Basics Clinic By Women For Women: June 13-15, 2025

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. Register at: <https://bit.ly/WWFFCBasics>



### On the Water Skills Clinic – Intermediate: June 11-13, 2025

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. Register at: <https://bit.ly/WOWSCI>



[This flyer](#) has info on both events, and you can also learn more [here on swtu.org](https://www.swtu.org).

## I attended the Wisconsin Women's "On the Water" Fly Fishing Clinic's, ..... it was FANTASTIC !

By Mary N-P

My sister and I prefer to gift each other activities and adventures rather than stuff. In 2017, we hired a fly fishing guide for a half day river float, and I fell in love with a new sport.

I knew I wanted to continue fly fishing, but didn't know quite where to look for guidance. Mom dug out Grandpa's old Eagle Claw rod, and I went to a store to get a fresh line. I lost a bunch of flies, got tangled in many trees, and even caught a fish or two.

I met a woman at our local fly shop, and she told me about a group of women that taught other women to fly fish. This was an opportunity better than I had imagined. Basically, it is a three day fly fishing summer camp for adult women!

I showed up at WOWSCI last summer with a 7 weight rod to fish for trout in the Driftless area of Wisconsin. Oops! I had a lot to learn! Everyone was gracious and helped me to better use my own rod. Each guide allowed me to cast their personal fly rods to better understand rod weight and different kinds of fly lines.

At the three day clinic, I went out on the water 1:1 with a guide three times. I learned about native plants, birds, entomology, knot tying, how to read the water, and so much more. The guides shared their love of trout fishing and the Driftless, and I caught that bug. I decided after my first outing that I wanted to come back and keep learning. I signed up for the 2024 session as soon as it opened.

The guides welcomed questions about how to access DNR water in Wisconsin, how to hold onto a rod and be able to release the fish, and freeing lines stuck in trees, grass, and rocks. Meeting people with different fishing experience and with interest in different parts of the sport helped me to understand how it can take a lifetime to learn fly fishing.

The women at WOWSCI are excellent instructors, tell top notch fishing stories, and have graciously allowed me to trial and borrow equipment. The time on the water focuses on basic skills like casting, allowing the fly to drift, and setting the hook. For more experienced fisherwomen, it's a chance to match the hatch, explore new waters, and to spend one on one



time with an experienced guide and instructor. There are chances for women to talk with one another about safety and respect for private land while accessing the water.

WOWSCI has become one of my favorite weeks of the summer. The bunkhouse has real beds, hot showers, the best food, and hands-down some of the best women anglers in the country. Every person welcomed us to fly fishing and helped us to learn and grow as anglers. I am now fortunate to have a small, but growing group of “fly girls” to fish with in the Driftless and closer to home.

*(Photos are from of people at the clinics and not necessarily the author.)*



## Trout Unlimited Fly-Tying Courses – 2025

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 15, 2025. 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 improve 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 15, 2025. Courses run for eight consecutive Wednesdays (final class March 5, 2025).

**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](mailto:swtu-flytying@outlook.com).

## 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.)

**Please watch out for scam emails** – One thing your board continues to be up to is sorting through different types of scams directed at them and possibly other chapter members. Often these take the form of asking a person to purchase gift cards. Generally, you can ignore and delete these – if you want to make sure an ask is legitimate, do not (ever!) reply to an email you think may be a scam ... write a separate message using one of the legitimate emails at the end of each newsletter.

## Vets on the Fly Activities

By Dyan Lesnik

Vets on the Fly activities are free for all Vets and their family members. All equipment is provided so just show up for their events for socialization and fishing fun. [Learn more at their Facebook page](#).



Scan to register



Scan for more info

## Fox Valley TU Cabin Fever Days

Saturday, January 18, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

New location: Tanners Bar & Grill, Kimberly, Wisconsin

This is a tremendous TU chapter that has often supported our chapter and its events. This looks to be an amazing day of informational sessions, lunch, gear sales, auctions and a chance to go home with a stellar bamboo rod. Learn more and plan to attend: <https://foxvalleytu.org/cabin-fever-day-2025/>



### Quick links to cool content

- A terrific news release: [DNR Launches Brook Trout Reserves Program](#) to help protect Wisconsin's native brook trout populations from changing conditions. Be sure to read this release, which notes that, "There are many ways to get involved in this program, whether you're a landowner, angler or outdoor enthusiast."
- **See something, say something:** While on the stream, if you see runoff, erosion, something not quite right or have questions, thoughts, etc. you can report it simply at <https://apps.dnr.wi.gov/ccis/>. If one of us sees a fish kill, we should call or text to: 1-800-TIP-WDNR (1-800-847-9367). Thanks to Dan Oele for passing this along.



### Welcome New Members

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

Craig McMahon  
Michael Jacquart  
Matthew Mascal

We are honored to have you among us. Please join our next meeting 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.

## Fountains of Youth

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

by Rusty Dunn

The popularity of many fly-tying materials changes with time. New materials appear in the market, are popular for a few years or maybe even a few decades, but eventually fade from use, being replaced by newer (usually better) materials. The old materials disappear into obscurity, only to be encountered later as amusing oddities. Try to find flies today tied of hog's wool, sea swallow, stoat tail, kapok, hedgehog belly, wren tail, or monkey fur. It won't be easy. Each of these materials had its fifteen minutes of fame, but they are now oddball relics found mostly in antique fly boxes and long-forgotten angling books. On the other hand, some tying materials have graced our hooks for centuries. They are the furs, feathers, fibers, and flash whose ability to fool trout has never been surpassed. Such materials that have survived the most demanding test of all ... the test of time.

Peacock herl is one such exceptional material, and for good reason. It glitters, glistens, and sparkles in the sun. It is translucent and beautifully iridescent, shifting colors from emerald green to olive to bronze as lighting conditions change. The soft feather barbules quiver in the currents, imitating downy external gills of many juvenile aquatic insects. Peacock herl is quite magical when drifted before trout. They simply love it, and peacock herl has maintained a place of prominence in fly-tyers' bag of tricks for over 500 years.

Use of peacock herl in artificial flies dates to the very beginnings of recorded fly angling. Dame Juliana Berners, Prioress of Sopwell, authored the very first book of fishing with artificial flies. Her essay *A Treatise of Fishing with an Angle* (1496) described materials of twelve artificial flies, two of which, the Black Leaper and the Shell Fly, are believed to have been caddis imitations. Both have underbodies of wool that are "*lapped about with the herle of ye peacock taylor*".

Peacock herls are barbs of the beautiful and shockingly

long tail feathers of male peafowl. Peacock was firmly established as a favorite tying material by the era of Walton & Cotton (*The Complete Angler*, 1676) and has remained so ever since. The most famous of all peacock-bodied flies is probably Tom Bosworth's Coachman wet fly of the early 1800s. Descendants of the Coachman, such as the Pass Lake Special, Royal Wulff, and Royal Trude, remain popular today.

The Zug Bug is a peacock-bodied nymph designed by Cliff Zug of West Lawn, PA in the 1930s to imitate free-living and cased caddis larvae. It imitates many other juvenile insects also and is an excellent prospecting fly for darkly colored mayfly, stonefly, caddisfly, and damselfly nymphs. The Zug Bug originated in New York's Catskill Mountains and spread nationally due, in part, to author Arnold Gingrich (*The Well Tempered Angler* (1965); *The Joys of Trout* (1973)), who raved about its effectiveness. Even today, Orvis describes the Zug Bug as "*easily one of the top 10 nymph fly patterns of all time*". The Zug Bug is quite similar to a vintage pattern of the Pacific Northwest named the "Kemp Bug", and some anglers believe the Zug Bug descended from the Kemp Bug as a variant. History of the Kemp Bug and its origins, however, are poorly documented, and a direct relationship between the two is unconfirmed.

A Zug Bug marries peacock herl to soft brown hen hackle, yielding a combination of color and material that is perhaps the most effective in all of fly design. Brown is the most common color of juvenile aquatic insects, while peacock adds green-olive translucency, sparkle, and quivering movements. How many great flies have you known that incorporate peacock and brown? The list is long, including such notables as the many Coachman variations, Pheasant Tail Nymph, Prince Nymph, Renegade, Peacock Caddis, Brown Beetle, and others.

Fish a Zug Bug deeply with any wet-fly method that you like ... dead-drifted downstream, swung across stream, stripped as a streamer, twitched, lifted through the water column, in tandem with a second nymph, etc. The power of peacock is strong, and you can't go wrong showing peacock and brown to a trout. © Rusty Dunn, 2024

### ----- Zug Bug -----

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**Hook:** 1X-long nymph, #4 - #16

**Thread:** Black, 6/0 (#4-10) or 8/0 (#12-16)

**Tail:** Tips of peacock sword feather barbules

**Rib:** French oval tinsel, silver or gold

**Body:** Several strands of peacock herl, twisted together with a strand of olive tying thread to form a chenille

**Wing:** Wood duck flank feather, bound at the stem and trimmed between one-third and one-half of body length

**Hackle:** Soft furnace or brown hen tied as a collar

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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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