

Newscasts



March 2025 serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Understanding Hatches

Ann Miller shares some “buggy insights” at our March 11 chapter gathering

Aquatic biologist Ann Miller will present "Understanding Hatches" at our March 11th Gathering, which she bills as, "Driftless area in Wisconsin gets buggy and insight into writing a hatch guide." Ann has a lifelong passion for insects, fly fishing and figuring out what trout eat. Her presentation will dive into the importance of understanding insect life cycle stages with applications to fly fishing.

Ann authored her popular book "Hatch Guide for Upper Midwest Streams" after becoming frustrated while teaching entomology in fly fishing schools with the lack of comprehensive information on Midwest insect hatches, taxonomy, behavior, and flies to match them.

Ann's new "Pocketguide to Upper Midwest Hatches" was published in March 2023 with Stackpole Books and includes a new section on terrestrial insects. Her book will be available for purchase at the gathering for \$30, cash or Venmo.



Ann is also a co-founder and current president of Flygirls of Michigan, an organization whose purpose is to help women become involved in fly fishing. She has served on the board and as an officer of the St. Joseph River Valley Fly Fishers and is on the board of Tie-a-thon, an organization that distributes donated flies to non-profit groups involved with teaching youth, cancer survivors, veterans, and more.

We gather, as always, at Schwoeglers on Grand Canyon Drive on Madison's West Side. Dinner and drinks will be available starting at 5:30 p.m. with Ann's presentation following some brief updates at 7.

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

Will You Step up for SWTU?

Please consider running for the SWTU Board. It's fun (most of the time), all the Board Members and Officers are kind and dedicated to SWTU, and we discuss and decide on the full range of chapter activities. They include projects, classes, meetings, special events, finances, outreach, education and advocacy.

Okay, that sounds a bit dry and maybe not fun-filled. Perhaps these details will help. The Board recently reviewed DeForest's comprehensive plan to improve the Upper Yahara River (Dane County's new trout stream) with village staff and a stream ecologist. We're contributing funds, work days and fishing clinics for kids. Board members met with all the DNR biologists and staff in this area and officers from our neighboring TU chapters. Now the DNR will prioritize brushing on Mt. Vernon Creek. We'll support an intern on the DNR's summer stream survey crew – the crew that discovered the trout of the Upper Yahara 2-3 years ago. We're strengthening our ties with the UW Hoofers Fly Fishing Club, connecting with the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association to increase collaboration and coordination, and enabling two youngsters from Dane County to attend the TU Summer Fishing Camp.

These are just a few recent examples of what the Board helps SWTU accomplish. We'd really appreciate your help.

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.)

SWTU Receives STIHL Grant

Watch for word of a workday this fall (most likely) featuring work by 8-10 professional sawyers using STIHL chainsaws to quickly cut down and buck up invasive trees for our crews to haul and stack. We'll need plenty of helpers that day! Some of us saw a similar effort on Dell Creek coordinated by the Aldo Leopold Chapter and an impressive amount of work was done with remarkable efficiency.

Pictured receiving the award are Jim Hess (SWTU Conservation Chair), Paul Krahn (TUDARE), and James Brodzeller (Dane County Watership Coordinator).



2025 Tentative Spring Workday Sites – Updated

By Jim Hess, Conservation Chair

Still working on locking in all dates and sites, but here is an update as of 2.23.25

- **April 5 – Duerst Property on the Sugar River** (7309 Riverside Rd). The county recently purchased this 625-acre property. We will be clearing honeysuckles and small box elders to help the STIHL sawyers with felling the large box elders..(see separate story above on the STIHL grant)
- **April 19 and or 22 – this will be an Earth Day Event.** Planting 26 swamp white oak trees. This is being funded with a \$1,500 grant from the Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin for trees, t-posts, and fencing. We will plant 16 trees on Gordon Creek at the easement upstream of the bridge on County Rd A. This is a DNR easement and Justin Haglund has contacted the landowner, who is very excited and will water the trees. The trees will be about 6 feet tall. The DNR will pre-drill the holes. We are hoping that students from Hollandale Elementary School will join us on Earth Day. If not, we may make it a Saturday, April 19 workday.

Will also plant 10 trees on Kittleson Creek easements along Cty Rd H. Replacing dead trees that we previously planted. We will need to dig these holes.

- **April 26, Conley Lewis** – this will be a joint workday with the Nohr Chapter, removing large box elders. Same location as last fall. Working with Justin Haglund and his crew.
- **May 10 – Kittleson Creek** along Cty Rd H, just south of the intersection of Cty Rd A and H. Removing willows at the first site and clearing a large stand of honeysuckles downstream. We are coordinating with Dane County.
- **May ? – Big Spring** DNR tree planting. Not sure of the date as it needs to follow a DNR burn, which is weather dependent. This will be a joint workday with the Nohr Chapter, led by Justin and his crew. The DNR will predrill the holes and provide fencing and t-posts.
- **May 24 – Duerst Property**, same as April 5.
- **June 7 – Kittleson Creek** or continue working on the Durest Property.

Watch Newscasts for more details and locked-in event logistics as we get closer to spring.

Attend the Nohr TU Chapter Banquet: May 2, 2025 in Muscoda

SWTU frequently partners with the Nohr Chapter on Workdays and most all of us enjoy the streams they've improved over the years. Visit <https://nohrtu.com/events/> for info on the banquet and how to get your tickets.

DNR Stream Surveys Filled with Fish Facts

Want to fish some different streams or learn more about your favorites? Go to my favorite reading: [WI DNR trout stream surveys](#). Some recent additions: reports on many and all of the best trout streams of the northern Driftless Area, including Vernon and Crawford Counties, watershed assessments in Dunn and Pierce Counties (lots of public fishing and wild trout in that part of the Driftless) and, in Grant County, a creel survey of the Big Green, and miles (yep, miles) of new trout water in the Platte and Little Platte watersheds. – Topf Wells



Registration Full for the 2025 Women's Fly Fishing Clinics / Volunteers Needed

The clinics have filled but there is a waitlist in case of cancellations. [This flyer](#) has info on both sold-out events, and you can also learn more [here on swtu.org](http://www.swtu.org).

You Can Volunteer for the Intermediate Clinic!

This outstanding clinic is in need of our help! They are looking for volunteer guides for their intermediate class! As a guide, you'll go out with members of the clinic and give 1:1 instruction on casting and fishing, reading the stream, and more. Guides are an integral part of the Intermediate Program, and a very important part of the Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinic on the whole.

Take this quote from Dave Fowler, a guide who was a part of the 2024 Intermediate Women's Clinic: "The success of the Intermediate Clinic is very dependent on folks volunteering to be guides. It's a really fun time for both the guides and the women, and I know that they really appreciate the knowledge they gain during the Clinic."

If you are interested in guiding, or know someone who might be, contact Lisa Wilson at lawfinnee@gmail.com.

2025 Wild & Scenic Film Festival

Presented by The River Alliance of Wisconsin and Barrymore Theater

March 20, 2025

We suspect that many of our members will have an interest in this slate of films ... [learn more and get tickets here](#).



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](#).

Welcome New Members

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

Tim Yoshino	Charles Durkee	Rebecca Ricketts	Colin Malin	
Cody Bunch	Kirsten Norslien	Steve Ippen	Rob Myers	Curt Bronkhorst

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.



Throwback article is a fun fishing fox fly find

This is a fun article on a favorite fly of many in our chapter, using only material from a single hide: [Dave Whitlock's Red Fox Squirrel-Hair Nymph](#).

This fly has been a featured pattern in our free fly tying courses, and you can [view the pattern sheet for it here](#).

Fountains of Youth

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

by Rusty Dunn

It's mid-Spring on a bluebird April day. The water has warmed following winter's chill, and trout are looking up. Fish are slashing in the riffles and porpoising in the pools. You reach confidently for a size #18 dark bodied caddis dry fly. Good choice. Fish are on it in a flash. Over the next few hours, you bring dozens to hand. What a glorious day. *The thrill of victory.*

Just one month earlier on the same stream in March, you found blue-winged olives hatching in abundance and again fish rising everywhere. You reached confidently for a size #18 BWO dun. No takers. You tried a smaller size but only got cautious looks from wary trout. You switched to a parachute BWO. No interest. You tried a BWO emerger. Rejection. You emptied the fly box trying to find a pattern that fish would take but never found one. Standing among rising trout, you were fish-less. As daylight faded to evening, your confidence faded to zero. *The agony of defeat.*

When food is scarce, trout often feed recklessly, but when it's plentiful, they can be oh-so-picky. What to do? Well, you could fish only in April and May, the months when fishing is easy. Or you could locate a copy of Doug Swisher and Carl Richards' 1971 book *Selective Trout* and tie some No-Hackle Duns. They might be just the ticket for those fussy trout.

No-hackle dry flies originated in England over 200 years ago with the Hare's Ear dry fly of Samuel Taylor, which was described in *Angling in All Its Branches* (1800) as a variation of the even-more-ancient Hare's Ear wet fly. Taylor's fly is often credited as being the very first to be tied without hackle yet intended to be fished as a dry fly. F.M. Halford, the most influential advocate of dry-fly fishing in history, added a gold rib to Taylor's pattern in 1886 and proclaimed that, if he had

to choose but one dry fly, it would be the Gold-Ribbed Hare's Ear dry fly. Despite Halford's endorsement, no-hackle dry flies are scarce in the angling literature until publication of *Selective Trout*.

Swisher and Richards focused modern angling attention on the importance of imitating insects during those few seconds or minutes when winged adults crawl from their nymphal skins, pierce the surface film, expand their wings, and fly away. *Selective Trout* was very influential. It revived interest in emergers, championed low-floating fly patterns, contained the most detailed discussion of mayfly spinners to date, and provided hatch charts with identification keys for mayflies all over North America. It was the first non-scientific book with large clear color photos of trout-stream insects.

By careful observation and clever underwater photography, Swisher and Richards documented a trout's-eye view of mayflies during emergence. As newly hatched duns float downstream and approach a trout's window of vision, the first features clearly visible from below are a slim body sitting flush in the surface film and a prominent upright wing. Viewed underwater, high floating, traditionally hackled flies, which Swisher and Richards derided as looking like "*shaving brushes*", are unlike the real McCoy. Hackle hides the body and wing, but no-hackle designs emphasize them and capture the essence of an emerger's underwater profile. Widely split tail fibers provide the necessary stability and, together with upright wings, cause no-hackles to land straight, true, and low in the surface film. Swisher and Richards described the Sidewinder No-hackle Dun as their best pattern to imitate emerged duns at the surface. Other patterns in *Selective Trout* imitate emergers at earlier stages of a hatch.

The next time some overly opinionated trout threaten you with the agony of defeat, cast off your (s)hackles and reach for a No-hackle Dun. It's hard to find a dry fly more elegant, more beautiful, or more effective.

© Rusty Dunn, 2025

----- Sidewinder No-Hackle Dun -----

This Sidewinder Nohackle Dun is tied in the colors of a blue-winged olive. Vary the size and color to match other mayfly species.

Hook: Light wire dry fly, #16-20

Thread: Olive-dun or olive-brown, 8/0

Tail: Medium dun hackle fibers or microfibets, widely split

Abdomen: Tying thread

Thorax: Brown-olive beaver, muskrat, silk, or other dry fly dubbin

Wing: Matched slips of duck quill, upright and divided, mounted low aside the thorax and slanting rearward slightly



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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