

Newscasts

April 2025 serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Streamer Fishing in the Driftless – Tips From Our Friends at the Musky Fool You won't want to miss our April 8 Chapter Gathering

Learn tactics for targeting the biggest trout in the creek at SWTU's April 8, 2025, Chapter Gathering. Presenting will be Tim O'Connor of The Musky Fool fly shop in Waunakee (muskyfool.com).

Why learn to fish streamers? Because lots of time they're a great choice. At different times of the year and in different conditions, streamers might be the type of fly that gives you the best chance at a fish. If this is the season you're absolutely, definitely going all out to catch the 20+ inch brown trout, you absolutely, definitely should know how to fish a streamer. SWTU is here to help.

The driftless is home to a myriad of spring creeks loaded with trout, most of which are on the smaller size. Yet, the big ones do exist and are quite prevalent if you know where to find them and how to approach them. It takes a totally different set of tactics, gear and mindset. The techniques covered in this seminar are scalable to rods ranging from 4 to 8 weights, and will help in building the fundamental skills of streamer fishing for all species.

Tim O'Connor of Musky Fool is an accomplished streamer angler who has some excellent approaches and tips for streamer fishing. He'll share those at our April 8 meeting.



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

Chapter Gatherings: A Look Back & Ahead

Back in March – Aquatic biologist and author Ann Miller had a big turnout for her "Understanding Hatches" presentation at SWTU's Gathering on March 11th. We all were impressed by her stunning photography and in-depth knowledge of stream invertebrates. She was delighted with the great questions and engaged discussions that she had with the audience, plus sold every copy of her book, "Pocketguide to Upper Midwest Hatches" (Stackpole Books).

Ahead in May – We will gather on **WEDNESDAY, May 14** We will gather on **WEDNESDAY, May 14** (as opposed to our usual Tuesday due to some scheduling with Schwoegler's).

We'll elect officers at this meeting and it's our last until September. We also have an extremely special and welcome guest: **Kyle Oliverncia – the new DNR fish biologist for Dane, Green, and Rock Counties**. He is our point person for all of SWTU's stream conservation work in our area. Kyle will introduce himself and discuss stream sampling plans for the year and provide an overview of the Garfoot Creek project planned for 2026/27.



Some of us have worked with Kyle on our Sawmill Creek workday and met with him and the other fish biologists in this part of the Driftless Area. He's a great guy – knowledgeable, communicative and approachable. We and the trout are lucky to have him caring for our streams.

Board Elections at May 15 Meeting: You Can Make a Difference!

Please consider running for the SWTU Board.

Elections will be in May (instead of April), and we don't yet have a full slate with a couple of Board openings. We know people are busy, but the commitment isn't too large and much can be handled virtually. In short, candidates are hard to come by this year and we need people to step up. We have some openings created by some having served multi-year terms and one tremendous member who moved to Green Bay.

Our biggest need is Treasurer. Marty Chiaro leaves having improved all the functions of that office and leaving it in the best shape ever. The Board has also learned from Marty's labors and expert advice and has taken a big step in making the Treasurer's duties simpler and more manageable. We are in the process of hiring a CPA/devoted SWTU member to file tax documents and handle some key bookkeeping functions. We intend this improvement to be permanent.

If anyone has any interest in serving as Treasurer, please contact any of our current officers using the info at the end of the Newscasts : Steve Musser (Pres), Marty Chiaro (Tres), Topf Wells (VP), or Henry Nehls-Lowe (Sec).

Reviewing the minutes in the "Learn What Your Board's Been Up To" article that's in every Newscasts gives a nice picture of all the good you can do by stepping up. Thank you for your consideration.

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.)

Join our First Stream Workday of 2025 – Saturday, April 5

By Jim Hess, Conservation Chair

Below is information for our first workday of our spring season. It will be at the Duerst property on the Sugar River located at 7309 Riverside Rd. We are hoping for a big turn out as there are a lot of invasive honeysuckles to be removed and burn piles to be built. The workday will be lead by Dane County staff.

Saturday, April 5, 2025 – Sugar River, Duerst Property

Time: 9 am to 12 noon (sawyers that have completed a chainsaw safety course please arrive at 8:30, if needed we can provide a chainsaw and safety equipment).

Where: Sugar River, Duerst property, 7309 Riverside Road. Take US 151 (Verona Rd) to Hwy 69, go south about 1 mile to Riverside Rd, turn right (west) and go about ½ mile. Here is a Google Map Link to this location:
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/9o9sJJ19ZzTJvo8G7>

What: Dane County purchased this 625-acre property in 2023. It is just upstream from the Davidson Wildlife Unit, where we have had several workdays. The county is the process of restoring this property for public use. We will be clearing honeysuckles and other invasive woodies and creating burn piles. James Brodzeller, Watershed Coordinator, will be leading the workday.

A little more background on this workday...SWTU and the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department worked together to secure a grant through TUDARE for a STIHL workday at this property. STIHL will provide 10 professional sawyers next fall for a full workday of clearing large box elders that are encroaching the river. So, this workday will start the process of clearing out the invasive understory so the STIHL crew can focus on the large box elders. After the large box elders are cleared, the plan is to remove the berm which was installed years ago to keep the flood waters off of this property, which will reconnect the river with the floodplain.

Bring: Work gloves, sturdy shoes, eye and ear protection, and reusable water bottles that can be filled from our 5-gal water jug. Stay hydrated. Also, there may be some wet spots, so bring your rubber boots or waders if you have them.

Parking: Plan to park on the gravel road that leads to the river.

Future Workdays:

- **Tuesday, April 22** (1:00pm – 2:30pm) - Gordon Creek, Cty Rd A. This will be an Earth Day Event. Students from Hollandale Elementary will be helping to plant swamp white oak trees. The DNR will pre-drill the holes and demonstrate a stream shocking for the students.
- **April 26** (9am – 12 noon) - Conley Lewis. This will be a joint workday with the Nohr Chapter, removing box elders. Working with Justin Haglund and his crew.
- **May 10** (9am – 12 noon) - Kittleson Creek. Removing willows and clearing a large stand of honeysuckles. We are coordinating with James Brodzeller, Dane County.
- **May 17** (9am – 12 noon) - Big Spring DNR tree planting. Justin Haglund and his crew will be leading this workday. The DNR will predrill the holes and provide fencing and t-posts.
- **May 24** (9am – 12 noon) – Duerst Property, same as April 5
- **June 7** (9am – 12 noon) - Kittleson Creek or continue working on the Duerst Property if needed.

Riversmith Casting Clinics: 2025

Each spring, we hold our Riversmith Fly Casting Clinic (named after Jeff Smith, who was the driving force behind this event for many years). The clinic is free and available to anyone interested in learning how to cast a fly. Beginners are especially encouraged to attend. This year, we will be holding two clinics.

- The first clinic will be held in conjunction with Trout Days in Cross Plains on **Saturday May 3rd from 9 to Noon** at H.M. Zander Community Nature Park in Cross Plains. All comers are welcome to this clinic.
- The second clinic will be held as a standalone event for Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited members and friends on **Saturday June 14th from 9 to Noon** at Salmo Pond County Park west of Cross Plains.

Anyone who is interested in learning about fly fishing is welcome at either clinic. The clinics are free and are open to anyone ages 6 and up! Beginners are especially encouraged to attend. Equipment will be provided for those who don't have a fly rod. Learn about equipment, how to cast a fly rod, how to read the water, what trout eat (aquatic etymology) and any other questions you might have!



Please join us and also pass the word along to anyone you know who is interested in learning about our sport. You can show up to learn or help teach or provide encouragement.

Attend and invite others wanting to learn

You can learn about fly-fishing equipment and casting, aquatic entomology and reading the water to find trout. These 2-3 hours would cost a bundle from a private guide! Let any friend, relative or neighbor know about this exciting and valuable event.

You can help! The more experienced casters and fishers we have on-hand, the more we can provide individual assistance to attendees. Bring a friend who could use a lesson and stick around to help.



2025 Health of the Watershed Report

Forum on the Health of the Black Earth Creek Watershed

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Wisconsin Heights High School

5pm: Open house | 6pm: Presentations start

Learn more at <https://www.becwa.org/events>. Note they ask you to please RSVP by emailing info@becwa.org by April 19 so they make sure to get enough food and beverages!



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](#).

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."

We could use a couple more guides! If you are interested, or know someone who might be, contact Lisa Wilson at lawfinnee@gmail.com.

Help fund a scholarship for a woman at the Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics!

SWTU'S Women's Clinics (Beginner and Intermediate) are entering our 15th year and serve over 75 Women every year, while we also have up to 25 chapter members assisting in the Women's on the Water Skills Clinic – intermediate is in **need of gently used to new donation items for raffles**. The raffles raise scholarship money for up to 6 women to attend on a discounted rate. These scholarships help level the playing field and are a key component instilled into the WWFFC. Typically, three scholarships are reserved for each of the Basic and the Women's on the Water Skills Clinic. If you have items, please contact Tina Murray at 920.602six556. She is happy to gather items and will coordinate pick up and drop offs. You can also email our SWTU Women & Diversity Coordinator at swtu.wmen.diversity@gmail.com Remember, these are women either just starting out and in need of gear or on the path to finding their perfect pack, dry bag, tippet spool, etc. Thank you!

Hoofers Fly Tying Workshop

On March 18th SWTU held a fly tying workshop at UW-Madison for the Hoofers and over 20 tried their hand at it for the first time, with several making fly earrings! From those with limited experience to others curious about the craft, everyone was eager to learn and clearly expressed interest for more. At the end of the evening both students and instructors came away jazzed. A massive thank you to the seven incredible instructors for sharing their passion. Many thanks to Henry Nehls-Lowe for the organization, these words and photos ... which you can [view more of in the story on swtu.org](#).



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.

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.](#)

Wild River Chapter Video Library

The [Wild Rivers TU Chapter](#) covers a seven-county area in northwestern Wisconsin: Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Iron, Burnett, Washburn and Sawyer Counties. Their website has great information and [links to their YouTube channel](#), which has videos featuring a DNR fish biologist discussing one of the most important and popular trout watersheds of the Northwest, including the Namekagon, White, Brule and other South Shore streams.

Yahoo for the Yahara River

Yahara River-Bottom Scrub-a-Dub

First annual trash pick-up on the rocks and the ON THE BOTTOM of the Yahara River. We are looking for volunteers, pickers, swimmers, wetsuits, trash bins and monetary support. [View poster for details and a signup link.](#)

Yahara Fishing Club Newsletter

The Yahara Fishing Club is one of Madison's oldest outdoor organizations and devotes itself to all sorts of fishing. It's also been an important voice for fish conservation for years. It offers many programs and fishing opportunities. Currently, it's one of the leaders in the restoration of the Warner Park Lagoon and Marsh. [Check out their latest newsletter](#) and consider joining.

Welcome New Members

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

Joe Aldstadt	Luke Melotik
Ashley Vanderbosch	Linda Dorazio
Stanley Nichols	Bonnie McMullin-Lawton

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

Tie an Iron Blue Nymph on a #16 hook, and you've recreated the most famous fly of perhaps the most famous angler to ever cast a wet fly before trout. Walk into a fly shop and ask for an Iron Blue Nymph, and the clerk will probably look at you funny. "A what?" he might ask, to which you should reply, "Young fellow, perhaps you know it instead as a Dark Watchet, Dark Whirling Dun, Little Blue Dun, Iron Blue Drake, Little Purple, Little Dark Blue, or Iron Blue Quill. Got any?" You won't get the flies you're looking for, but at least you will have made the point that nymph fishing was refined long before the Pink Squirrel reigned supreme.

An Iron Blue Nymph and its dry fly counterpart, the Iron Blue Dun, are fly patterns nearly lost in antiquity. "Muddled **by** antiquity" might be a better description, because almost every author who wrote a fly-fishing book prior to about 1900 included a favorite recipe, often several recipes. The names varied widely, as did the materials. You'll find Iron Blue recipes with condor quill, Tomtit tail, horsehair, mouse fur, swift feathers, cormorant, and rat whiskers. Not exactly everyday fly-tying supplies. The first unambiguous pattern for an Iron Blue appeared in 1681 in James Chetham's book *The Angler's Vade Mecum*, but the most famous pattern of all is undoubtedly the 1921 fly of G.E.M. Skues published in *The Way of a Trout With a Fly*.

Skues (1858-1949) is rightfully credited as being the father of modern nymph fishing. Generic subsurface wet flies had been around for centuries, but Skues pioneered hatch-matching patterns and methods of presentation that mimic natural behaviors of nymphs during progression of a hatch. Skues was keenly

observant of both mayfly and trout behavior, and his writings educated turn-of-the-century anglers on things we take for granted today. For example, trout feed on nymphs underwater long before they look to the surface. Bulging rises identify fish taking nymphs just under the surface. Fish take duns on top of the surface only late in a hatch. And wet flies are deadly when fished upstream and manipulated to mimic a nymph's natural behavior. Skues drew great satisfaction from the challenges of subsurface fishing:

"In the effort to divine the indications which call for striking with the wet fly, I confess I find a subtle fascination and charm and, when success attends me, a satisfaction beside which the successful hooking of a fish which rises to my floating fly seems second-rate in its sameness and comparative obviousness and monotony of achievement."

Skues' writings were very popular, and he introduced soft-hackled flies, which developed in the English North Country and Scotland a century or more earlier, to a much wider audience. His Iron Blue Nymph is an excellent pattern for dark blue-winged olives. BWOs are mayflies of leaden skies, blustery winds, drizzling rain, and cold fingers. Fish an Iron Blue as a swimming nymph early in a hatch, allowing it to swing deeply and then rise to the surface as would a hatching nymph. Fish it in or just under the surface when trout are bulging. Skues called the Iron Blue Nymph "good medicine for bulgers", and indeed it is. When casting to sighted fish in clear water, watch closely for a sideways glance, a flick of the tail, and a quick little nip -- Skues' "cunning brown wink": Then, lift your rod tip, draw in the steel, and quietly say thanks for Skues and his insights. Historic flies yield memorable fish, and Skues' Iron Blue Nymph one of history's finest.

© Rusty Dunn, 2025

----- Iron Blue Nymph -----

Hackle collars of many North Country flies are quite long and intended to imitate both legs and wings. The hackle of Skues' Iron Blue, however, is tied intentionally short, imitating only the legs.

Hook: Wet fly / nymph hook, #16-22

Thread: Pearsall's Gossamer silk, crimson (No.13)

Tail: Three fibers of soft white hen hackle, tied short.

Body: Dark mole fur spun thinly on tying silk, with 2-3 turns of silk exposed at the tail without dubbing.

Hackle: Nearly black hackle from the throat of a jackdaw or starling, tied short and not exceeding 2 turns.



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

Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited Leadership:

President	Steve Musser
Vice President	Topf Wells
Secretary	Henry Nehls-Lowe
Treasurer	Marty Chiaro
State Council Rep.	Michael Williamson
Board Member	Dyan Lesnik
Board Member	Jim Beecher
Board Member	Riley Bellin
Board Member	John Freeborg
Board Member	Don Golembiewski
Board Member	Joshua Reilly
Past President	Mark Maffit
Newscasts Editor	Drew Kasel
Conservation Committee Chair	Jim Hess
Women's/ Diversity Initiative Chair	Tina Murray
Youth Education Chair for SWTU	Tina Murray

stevemusser@msn.com
topfwells@gmail.com
henry.nehlslowe@gmail.com
chiaromt@gmail.com
mlwilliamson.53@gmail.com
dmlgriffin@gmail.com
jamesfbeecher@gmail.com
rileybellin2814@gmail.com
john-tu@freeborg.com
don.golembiewski@gmail.com
reillyo76@gmail.com
mark.maffitt@gmail.com
madkasel@gmail.com
jimhess5599@gmail.com
swtu.women.diversity@gmail.com
swtu.women.diversity@gmail.com

Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 45555
Madison, WI 53744-5555

