

# RipRap

A Publication of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5

FEBRUARY, 2008

## **FEBRUARY MEETING INFORMATION**

**“Helicopter Fishing Headwater Streams in Alaska”**; that should get your attention. Scott Thorpe will give a presentation at the February meeting on fishing headwater streams for trout, char, grayling and salmon in Alaska using helicopters to reach very remote water. Last summer Scott guided for Talaheim Lodge on the Talachulitna River.

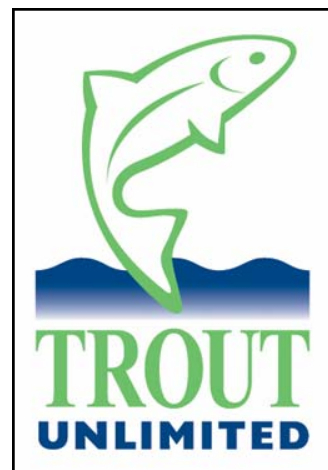
Scott is a former architect who has fly fished extensively in the US, Canada and the UK. He is a licensed guide in Wisconsin, Montana and Alaska. He focuses primarily on Lake Superior steelhead and trout in the driftless area of Wisconsin. He is on the Board of the Lake Superior Steelhead Assn and a member of TCTU and the Brule River Sportsman’s Club.

This should be an outstanding opportunity to go where most of us will never get to; I can’t imagine missing this presentation.

February 6, Bob Smith’s Sports Club, Hudson, 6 PM dinner, 7 PM meeting/presentation.

*-Greg Dietl*

*President of Kiap-TU-Wish*



Come to the February meeting to see Scott Thorpe’s presentation on fishing in Alaska.

February 6th at  
Bob Smith’s Sports  
Bar in Hudson.  
6PM Dinner  
7PM Meeting/  
Presentation

Photo Courtesy of Scott Thorpe

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## PRESIDENT'S LINES

BY GREG DIETL

The annual Rush River Cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 19th. This will be the fourth year of this event. Each year it has drawn larger groups and requires increasing work and coordination. To date, the majority of this work has fallen on the shoulders of chapter member Sarah Sanford. Sarah could use some help. I know she coordinates the meeting site, food, cooks, trash pickup, designated cleanup sites, volunteer coordination, & prize donations. We have chapter members who can pitch in and help her out with some of the work involved and I know she would welcome the assistance. This event has been very successful. It cleans up the river, is a social event, and brings awareness to the resource. We need to keep this an annual event. Please contact Sarah Sanford and offer your help.



### March, 2008 Business Meeting Announcement

The chapter's annual business meeting will be held Wednesday, March 5, 2008, 7 PM, at Bob Smith's Sports Club, downtown Hudson. There will be presentation of the Treasurer's report, discussion of the year's expenditures, plans for 2008, and elections to the board. Come early for dinner, 6 PM.

### Welcome new chapter member Andrew Klanderman.

### Members in Lisbon and Naples

I want to acknowledge two chapter members from distant states: former board member Corey Mairs now lives in Lisbon, ND and Jim Schoenwetter lives in Naples, FL. Maybe we could get Corey back for a Wyoming presentation again sometime. If you guys are ever around the area and can make a meeting, we would love to see you. Hmm, Lisbon? Naples? Thanks for your continued support of the chapter.

### Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo

The Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo is March, 13, 14 and 15 and we need volunteers. We've got some but can use more. If you want to volunteer send me an email and I'll put you on the list. If you have a preference for days or hours, let me know. When we get closer to the dates, we'll work on a schedule.

### Chapter Activities

There are many other areas available for chapter volunteer activities. We can always use help finding speakers for chapter meetings, or be a speaker at a chapter meeting; join a chapter committee including the banquet committee; help with the Spring Appeal; assist with chapter communication activities; work on stream projects. There are many activities available. See any board member or officer.

Scott could use more submissions to RipRap: stories, photographs, favorite fly recipes, or for that matter, favorite recipes. I know we have some cooks out there.

A reminder that the DNR has requested chapter members' assistance in spotting and reporting potential problems on the streams and rivers that can affect fisheries and stream water quality such as beaver dams, erosion, pollution, fish kills, etc. The DNR cannot be aware of all these problems without assistance. Please be on the look out for these issues or any observations you think could be a water quality issue and report it to the DNR.

### Pine Creek Brushing

Keep your eye on the website for brushing dates on Pine Creek in February. Work needs to be done on both sides of the stream just upstream from where work stopped last year to the bridge. Part of this property is the Bjurquist tract. We will send email notification also.



## SCOTT'S SCOOP

BY SCOTT HANSON, EDITOR

I do love to tie flies. Ever since I took the Beginner Fly Tying class at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop when I was 11 or 12, I have loved the art of fly tying. Over the years I have evolved in to a fairly respectable tyer, if I do say so myself. Along the way I have gone through phases in which I have enjoyed mastering difficult techniques and complicated flies. I even went through a phase in which I enjoyed tying complex deer hair bass bugs, with doll eyes and rubber legs. Or, at least I enjoyed the final product once I was done tying it. I did come to my senses, however, and haven't tied a deer hair bug in 10 years or more.

Nowadays, I find myself tying only simple and fast flies; flies that I don't feel bad about if I lose them in the tree branches, which happens way more than I like to admit. The only time in recent years that I have felt bad about losing flies while fishing was when I broke off 4 of the same dry fly on the same half-sunken tree on East Beaver Creek in southern Minnesota. I'm sure if I had waded over to inspect the tree, I would have found all four of them within inches of each other on the same branch. I lost all four of those flies within a 10 minute span while a nice mayfly emergence was occurring, and trout were rising all over the place. At least those flies had been quick and easy to tie. If I had spent 20 minutes tying each fly, making sure they were accurate down to the last detail, the aggravation of losing them might have been too much to handle. But since those flies had been quick to tie, I was able to shrug off my bad luck, and keep on fishing. (Notice how I called it bad luck, and not bad casting.)

I've gotten to the point where if a fly takes much more than five minutes to tie, I won't tie it. I don't think fancy, intricate patterns catch as many fish as the simple ones, anyhow. I almost never use deer hair bugs when I go bass fishing anymore, either. A few Clousers and wooly buggers in various colors are usually all I need. If I ever need a bass bug, I'll go buy it at the fly shop.



On a somewhat related note, I would love to get a monthly fly tying article started here in Rip-Rap. I know that there are dozens of wonderful tyers within our chapter, and it would be great to get some of their favorite flies highlighted for others to enjoy. I don't expect anyone to give up their prized secret flies, but if you have a favorite fly or a tying technique that you would feel comfortable sharing with others, let me know. I'll get it started this month with one of my favorite flies, and then we'll see where it leads us. If you have an idea about a fly or a technique, drop me a note at [scott@yes-tech.com](mailto:scott@yes-tech.com). See you next month!



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## ANGLER EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

COURTESY OF WISCONSIN DNR

**MADISON** – Fly fishers and other anglers can help get kids off the couch and out fishing Wisconsin's lakes and streams by attending workshops Jan. 30 and Feb. 2 on starting youth fishing programs.

Department of Natural Resources angler education workshops set for Jan. 30 in Oshkosh and Feb. 2 in Stevens Point are aimed at training volunteer instructors who can then offer programs in their own communities. Participants will hear how to introduce children to basic fishing skills and provide information on Wisconsin lakes and streams, says Theresa Stabo, DNR aquatic resources educator. Participants also receive instructional materials to help them start their own program, and access to DNR loaner equipment.

"We need to coax kids outside and away from their electronic gadgets. We want to help them make that important connection to the natural world," Stabo says. "Through the DNR's angler education fishing program, we want kids to think of wetting a line as a viable choice for spending their free time and to cultivate a passion for protecting fisheries and other aquatic resources."

Fishing programs provide a recreational link to learning about local waters. Ideally, adults who attend this workshop will form partnerships to help provide kids with repeatable fishing opportunities through school studies and clubs, Stabo says.

The Feb. 2 workshop is a fly fishing instructor certification session and represents a partnership with Trout Unlimited. Stabo will be joined as an instructor by Dennis Vanden Bloomen, UW-Stout fly fishing instructor and president of the Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Details on the two workshops are provided below. The workshops are free of charge and include lunch or dinner, however, there is a \$15 workshop commitment fee to ensure good attendance by registrants. [Registration forms and more information](#) are available on the DNR Web site.

- **Jan. 30, Oshkosh**, Angler Education Workshop runs from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the DNR Service Center, 625 E. County Highway Y, Suite 700.
- **Feb. 2, Stevens Point**, Fly Fishing Instructor Certification Workshop runs from noon to 5 p.m. at the Holiday Inn, 1001 Amber Ave. Banquet dinner to follow, compliments of Trout Unlimited.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Theresa Stabo (608) 266-2272 or Rachel Piacenza (608) 261-6431



# Spring 2008

## 20th Anniversary

# FLY FISHING OPENER

Special Thanks: Dave Whitlock, Illustration

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2008**



SPONSORED BY THE BADGER FLY FISHERS, ORVIS & TARGUS, MADISON, WI • [www.badgerflyfishers.org](http://www.badgerflyfishers.org)

9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. plus evening banquet

**FREE ADMISSION** – Help us celebrate our 20th Anniversary

### ATTRactions

- Special feature - Indoor casting of numerous new fly rods furnished by company representatives.
- Commercial exhibits of the latest and finest in fly fishing equipment
- Raffles, and lively auction
- Fly tying demonstrations



**ORVIS**  
OFFICIAL FLY FISHING EQUIPMENT

**Madison Turners**  
3001 S. Stoughton Rd. (Hwy 51)  
Madison, WI  
Come join us for a day of fly fishing, fly tying demonstrations, education and conservation.

### FEATURED SPEAKERS

**GARY BORGER** – Internationally known author, teacher and fly fisherman

- *Really Matching the Hatch*
- *Equipment Isn't the Only Thing, It's Everything*

**PAT EHLERS** – Premier guide and owner of "The Fly Fishers" fly shop

- *Wisconsin Fly Fishing Opportunities*

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Madison Turners  
3001 S. Stoughton Rd. (Hwy 51)  
Madison, WI

SATURDAY, February 16

- 9:00 Registration opens (Main Lobby)
- FLY TYING BEGINS AND COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS OPEN**  
Fly tying demonstrations will run continuously until 4:00 p.m. These master fly tiers will be demonstrating traditional and innovative patterns including bass bugs, dry flies, nymphs, and steelhead flies.
- 9:30 - 10:30 **PAT EHLERS: Wisconsin Fly Fishing Opportunities**
- 11:00 - 12:00 **GARY BORGER: Really Matching the Hatch**
- 12:30 - 1:30 **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**
- 2:00 - 3:00 **GARY BORGER: Equipment Isn't the Only Thing, It's Everything**
- 4:15 **LIVELY AUCTION AND RAFFLE DRAWINGS**
- 6:00 **COCKTAILS**
- 6:30 **BANQUET**, plus **GARY BORGER: A Pilgrim in England**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT **RICH LUDT** (608) 833-7918

E-MAIL [fishhook1949@yahoo.com](mailto:fishhook1949@yahoo.com)  
or log on to [www.badgerflyfishers.org](http://www.badgerflyfishers.org)

### REGISTRATION FORM: BADGER FLY FISHERS' SPRING OPENER, FEBRUARY 16, 2008

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

#### ADMISSION FEES:

Advance Registration \_\_\_\_\_ Free Admission \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Evening Banquet \_\_\_\_\_ \$16.00 \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### SEND THIS FORM AND CHECK TO:

Badger Fly Fishers' Spring Opener

Attn: Rich Ludt

7162 Bracco Lane

Verona, WI 53593

Make check payable to:

Badger Fly Fishers' Spring Opener

(Pick up tickets at registration)

Please return registration by Monday, February 11, if you wish to attend the banquet.

## FLY TYING CORNER: THE SPEARFISH SPECIAL

BY SCOTT HANSON

**Several** years ago I devised a fly that I thought looked great. It seemed that it had all of the attributes that would make it a fly that I would use and cherish for years to come: It looked nice and buggy; it was fast and easy to tie; it was different than all other flies that I had ever seen; and I was sure that it would catch dozens of fish the next time I went fishing. All of these things proved to be accurate, except for the fact that I couldn't catch any fish on it. I tried it in trout streams all over the area, and had no luck at all. I put my new fly away for a while, and didn't take it out again until I was out in the Black Hills fishing on Spearfish Creek. It was a hot afternoon in early September, and I was catching fish regularly all afternoon on various nymphs. Finally I hit a dead spell, which is something that instantly turns me in to a lunatic searching frantically through my fly boxes for a pattern that might work. Finally I tied on the fly that I had designed several months earlier, even though I had absolutely no faith in it working. I had spotted a nice brown holding about 30 feet upstream, so I cast up in front of it and let my fly drift down to it. I noticed that the trout moved very slightly as my fly got to it, and sure enough, my dry fly indicator shot up stream. I had finally hooked a trout on my new fly, and it turned out to be a very nice 15" brown. With my faith restored, I kept fishing with the fly all afternoon, and caught fish all day.

Since I had had so much luck using this fly on Spearfish Creek, I decided to name it the Spearfish Special. Since then I have used this fly to catch trout in numerous other streams, as well. It has turned in to one of my most productive nymphs, and I wouldn't be caught out on the stream without some. After I had been fishing it for a few months, I came across a photo in a fly pattern book of a similar fly that had been devised by Theo Bakelaar, a well-known Dutch fly tyer and fisherman. It's not one of his most popular flies, however, so I guess I'll let him continue to think that he invented it. Here's the recipe:

**Hook:** Daiichi 1560 size 12-18

**Bead:** Brass bead to fit the hook

**Tail:** Pheasant tail fibers

**Abdomen:** Pheasant tail fibers

**Rib:** Copper wire

**Hackle:** CDC feather wrapped in as collar hackle

**Thorax:** Peacock herl



Photo by Scott Hanson

I had never had any luck using a conventional Pheasant Tail nymph, and still have never caught a fish on one to this day. But I always liked the color scheme, so I used the main ingredients of that fly on the Spearfish Special. I was a big fan of CDC back then, and figured that using one of these feathers as hackle would look good under water, and trap air bubbles making the fly look more alive. I haven't done any underwater studies to verify that, but it's still my theory. I like the look of the brass bead instead of a bright gold or copper bead; I just don't like a bead that's too flashy. Brass beads are hard to find nowadays, though, so you might have to do some searching. If you can't find any, gold would probably work just fine. If you have any questions about this fly, let me know.



## TROUT FISHING IN OKLAHOMA?!?!

BY PAUL WRIGHT

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Paul Wright has been a member of Trout Unlimited for more than 30 years. He is a retired chemist living in North Hudson with his wife, Becky. This is his third article for RipRap.

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**During** our numerous trips to Oklahoma these past few years to visit our daughter and son-in-law I never gave much thought to trout fishing. I have enjoyed some pretty good crappie fishing and duck hunting down there but didn't think the Sooner state had much in the way of trout fishing. I was wrong.

Oklahoma does have a number of trout fishing waters, all put and take with stocking done mostly in the winter months. Two places, however, do offer year round trout fishing opportunities, and on a frosty morning late last December, my son-in-law Kraig and I headed for one of them. Our destination was the Lower Mountain Fork River in the southeastern corner of the state near the town of Broken Bow.

This river is a tailrace fishery coming out of the 14,200 acre Broken Bow Reservoir and has 12 miles of designated trout water. The area is in the Ouachita National Forest and has some rugged scenic beauty. Huge hills and steep banks in places with conifers and hardwoods made it seem like I was on a Wisconsin trout stream. The river has rapids, flat stretches, deep pools, and one tributary stretch that resembles a Rocky Mountain stream as it tumbles and churns its way over huge boulders for a mile and a half.

As we were rigging up at 8:30 a.m. it was 28 above and reminded me of my April steelheading days on the Bois Brule. In the first riffle I fished I caught a chunky foot long rainbow and as I released it, I thought to myself that this was going to be a great day. Two hours later I was still looking for my second strike. The temperature warmed to the upper 40s by mid day without a cloud in the sky. A beautiful day for December trout fishing. We managed to find some active fish as the day warmed up and by the time we called it quits around 3:00 p.m., we had each caught four or five rainbows with several in the 14" to 15" range. Streamers and Wooley Buggers worked for me. I tried nymphs but no dice. Mayfly, Caddis, and Midge hatches occur during warm winter days and there is a spring Hex hatch. Crayfish, Damselflies, leeches and shad are also available to trout on a year round basis. Grasshoppers and beetles add to their diet in the summer.

This river is regularly stocked, and there are holdovers as evidenced by trout over 9 lbs. being taken. It is primarily a rainbow fishery but browns are also present. Only one brown per day may be kept, with a minimum 20" size limit. Although regulations vary on different sections of the river, they are well marked, and on most of the river fishermen may keep 6 rainbows with no size limit. One section allows the keeping of just one brown or rainbow with a minimum size of 20", and one section allows only the use of barbless artificials. There are also camping and canoeing opportunities at Beaver Bend State Park through which the first five miles of the river flows.

The Mountain Fork River was impounded in 1969 and trout stocking began in 1989. The Water Resources Development Act of 1996 ensures that water from Broken Bow Lake is used to maintain the trout friendly temperatures throughout the year. The 89'er Chapter of Trout Unlimited has also had a hand in the development of this fishery. If you're ever in the neighborhood, give this river a try.



## THE MILWAUKEE RIVER

BY JAMES R. HUMPHREY

**Public** parks line the Milwaukee River like jade jewels in summer; as pearls in winter. Gordon, Kern, Hubbard, Estabrook, Lincoln and Blatz parks are strung north from Locust Street. The German Socialists who were always a presence in Milwaukee politics made sure there were numerous parks, excellent schools, playgrounds within walking distance for every child, and incorruptible administrations. Frank Ziedler was an honored mayor for 12 years, and an inspiration for me. Upstream from Gordon Park, which in the 1920s and '30s had been a bathing beach and picnic ground, the river was a succession of long, greasy pools. In 1898 a dam had been thrown across the river at North Avenue to create smooth water for the Milwaukee Rowing Club, and perhaps to create electrical power. As far as I knew no one fished the river between North avenue and Capitol Drive. We certainly did not.

People may have fished upstream of Capitol Drive in Estabrook and Lincoln Parks, but in my family only my brother Don fished and trapped. He made pin-money from pelts of fur-bearers, including once a red fox, and brought home smallmouth bass, miscellaneous panfish, buckets of crayfish which turned bright pink in boiling water; and snapping turtles for Mother to prepare. Turtle was supposed to taste like chicken, beef, or pork, depending on the cut. It was more like boot leather to me, but who was I to complain: I was the youngest of four siblings.

The river upstream of Lincoln Park was a respectable smallmouth fishery in the early days of the Twentieth Century, and probably there were northerns and largemouth bass. I remember often having to eat Don's catch because that was The Depression, Dad was dead in 1930, the banks went bust, and we'd eat anything before it ate us.

In the 1990s the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources removed the North Avenue dam in stages, the ponds disappeared, the riverbank was cleared of trash, and a smallmouth river magically appeared. Lake Michigan fish species then had access to spawning grounds.

My nephews, Joe Balestrieri and Terry Lanke, both of whom live close to the river and are accomplished fly-fishers, said I couldn't catch a smallmouth on my first return to the reborn river. I said I would, and I did within three, five?, minutes.

On another occasion when the Chinook were coming up from Lake Michigan to spawn, the nephews released salmon to 30 inches. They said that if I hooked one I couldn't handle it on the old #8 Battenkill bamboo rod. I accidentally foul-hooked a fish. Although it wasn't an heroic struggle, nor a pretty one, I landed it, to prove them wrong again. Such satisfaction comes rarely. The reel was that old and cheap favorite of skilled fly-fishers everywhere, the Pflueger #1495.

The river also contains runs of coho, brown trout, steelhead, walleyes and probably other species of game fish. Because it runs hot in summer and cold in winter the salmon and trout do not reproduce. There may be other water quality problems that militate against reproduction of specific species. You should not eat any of them unless you are elderly, because pollutants accumulate in the fat of animals. Just enjoy the resurrection of a classic stream. The steelhead will provide all the excitement you might wish for. A grandnephew caught and kept a 15 lb. steelhead: on a fly. I saw it.

A fly-fisher's store with a deck overlooks the river downtown, and the story goes that gentlemen in waders may be seen crossing the lobby of an elegant hotel near the river at the end of a day.

Historians and poets will remember Carl Sandburg, poet, historian, one-time secretary to Milwaukee's Socialist mayor, and author of that little poem, "Fog", when the fog comes "on little cat feet" to the harbor. His former residence is marked with a plaque two or three blocks north of Locust Street on Cambridge. Walk north on Cambridge past the house that is built like a boat.

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Jim Humphrey  
lives in Oak  
Park Heights,  
MN. He is the  
co-author of  
*Trout Streams  
of Wisconsin &  
Minnesota*  
He is a regular  
contributor to  
RipRap

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KIAP-TU-WISH

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Hudson, WI 54268

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WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.LAMBCOM.NET/  
KIAPTUWISH/

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***Don't miss the February meeting!!***

Scott Thorpe will be discussing the time he spent guiding and exploring via helicopter in Alaska last summer. You don't want to miss this presentation!

The meeting starts at 7 PM, but you can join us for dinner at 6 PM. See you there!  
Wednesday, February 6th at Bob Smith's Sports Bar in Hudson.



**WE'RE LOOKING FOR ARTICLES CENTERED  
ON FLY TYING AND TECHNIQUES**

Let the Editor know if you have an article you'd like to submit.  
Deadline to make submissions for the March RipRap is February 20th, 2008