



RipRap

Newsletter of the
Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter
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CHAPTER MEETING

RIPRAP

Restoration, Improvement &
Preservation through Research
& Projects.

Next deadline for article submission
is April 12th. Send information to
econ4664@gmail.com.

Photo by:
Mark Ritzinger

Conserve

Protect

Restore

The Drift: Herding Cats

WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Almost every volunteer leadership post I've held in the past has been made up mostly of herding cats. The posts usually start with what I refer to as the "honeymoon period." This is the period starting months before a leadership position begins, usually during recruitment. It's a time filled with enthusiasm and energy as other members of the organization build you up and tell you how ideal you are for the position. The honeymoon period includes many heartfelt promises of help and assurances like "the organization almost runs itself" and "everyone really pitches in so there isn't much work for the leader to do anyways." In any event, the leader's duties are presented as being few and far between, and are usually joined by another round of assurances of help. The "honeymoon period" usually lasts about three weeks after a new leader assumes his or her new post. It is then followed by a second period which lasts for a determined term or until the new leader has a nervous breakdown. This second period occurs after all of the recruiters disperse (or vaporize?), and is a time commonly referred to as the "herding cats period."

This period requires very little explanation except that it is a time during which the leader tries to keep the organization going while facing diminished outside help. Previous heartfelt promises of help have seemingly been amended due to changes in work duties and family schedules. Complacency sets in with the belief that there is now a reasonably competent leader in place and tasks will somehow get done.

I am happy to report that serving as your president for the past three years has been quite different — different in a good way. This is the first time that I have served as leader of a volunteer organization which hasn't included a significant "herding cats period." Kiap-TU-Wish is an extremely active chapter, with volunteer workdays every weekend during the winter months, habitat improvement and maintenance projects going on every summer, consistent temperature monitoring of at least five area streams, and monthly chapter meetings throughout the year. Youth outreach efforts include nine Trout-in-the-Classroom projects each year, Bugs-in-the-Classroom, Pheasants Forever youth days, and the River Falls fly-fishing clinic. Additional outreach includes open houses, advocacy efforts targeted at the removal of the River Falls hydroelectric dams and other area conservation issues, publishing an extremely high-quality newsletter, sending kids to Trout Camp, DNR planning meetings, County planning meetings, City Council meetings, fundraising and grant writing, and time spent helping landowners along trout streams with land use issues. The list goes on and on.

Being president was a lot more work than I thought it would be, because Kiap-TU-Wish and all of you do a lot more than I ever imagined a sleepy little coldwater conservation organization

could ever do. My one impression left after serving as your president is that Kiap-TU-Wish is anything but “sleepy” and that our volunteers and partners such as Clearwater TU and Twin Cities TU will help our chapter continue to successfully achieve its current and future goals.

I have never been a part of any volunteer organization that has such enthusiastic, energetic, committed volunteers. We have a core group of volunteers who are involved in many facets of Kiap-TU-Wish, and there are an incredible number of additional committed volunteers who help when they can, or when certain special skill sets are needed for an activity. It's been a lot of work just keeping track of all the chapter activities we are currently doing.

It's impossible to thank everyone who has helped me and volunteered during the past three years. I do need to, however, give a shout out to Tom Schnadt, for his wisdom and for checking the chapter email daily for more than two years because I couldn't open it on my work computer. Thanks to Suzanne Constantini

for serving as Treasurer for the past three years (which is a lot of work), to Randy Arnold and Loren Haas for their tireless work organizing habitat and maintenance projects, to Kent Johnson, Gary Horvath, Scott Stewart, and Dan Wilcox for the 100s of hours they have put in on River Falls dam removal advocacy, to folks like Perry Palin, Scott Thorpe, Brian Smolinski, Dave “Swede” Johnson, and many others who taught me to how to fish for the wily trout, to Greg Olson for running all of the Trout-in-the-Classroom programs and for agreeing to serve as chapter president next year. Thank you to Mike Alwin for running the River Falls Clinic each year, to Maria Manion and Ed Constantini for their outstanding job publishing the RipRap, to Kasey Yallaly, Nate Anderson and Heath Benike from the WDNR for partnering with Kiap-TU-Wish, and last but not least, to all of you. Your enthusiasm and energy and willingness to pitch in and help made the past three years such a positive experience that this month's Drift should have been titled “NOT Herding Cats!”

Thank you very much, and... Happy Fishing! Scott

From the Editor



In my previous note, I suggested that you start looking toward the coming of spring and the arrival of longer days, warmer water, and mid-day hatches. Well, as they say in horse racing, we are rounding the clubhouse turn. When you read this, spring will be only a few weeks away — starting at 4:37 a.m.CDT on Saturday, March 20th, to be exact.

It has been a long winter on this end. Tying season is pretty much over, and I didn't enjoy it as much as in years past. The reason? I did all my tying alone. Poor me, huh? Over many years, most of my tying was done solo. Fortunately, that has now changed, and my past few tying seasons have been complemented by monthly, sometimes semi-weekly get-togethers with a group of new-found tying buddies who have generously welcomed me into their flock.

On my initial visit, as we started to tie, it immediately became obvious who the alphas were (can there be more than one alpha in a group?). Not alphas by personality, mind you, but rather by tying expertise. For some, being the new guy might elicit a few pangs of anxiety, but that was not the case here. It soon became clear that this was just a great group of guys, willing to share their ideas, tying hacks, and measured criticism when asked for. Do you sense I miss them?

So now, as we round that turn, let's look ahead. Forget all the nasty portents associated with March. You've heard them: “Beware the Ides of March,” or “March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.” As fly-fishers, the spring season has so much to offer us. Some of the year's best fishing will soon be upon us. I imagine that many of you have already felt that first tug on your tippet and have likely landed a few trout besides. If not, you can now try out that new rod or reel or test the comfort and dryness of your new waders, or even try out some of the new patterns you tied during those cold winter days.

The melting snows along the streams will reveal emerging white trout lilies, bellflowers, iris, phlox, and a proliferation of other

native wildflowers. If you're lucky, you may come upon one of the many furry inhabitants that grace our streambanks looking for a tasty morsel to fill their empty bellies. Does the sky seem more blue and the air more temperate? Don't you long for the smells that warn of a pending spring shower? And there is also the joy of more daylight. I've packed my solar light away for the season. Daylight savings time kicks in on March 14th, and perhaps that extra hour of daylight on the stream might just prevent your first skunking of the year. As for me, I can honestly say that I've never been skunked, I've just run out of time.

We begin this issue with the “Drift” and a note of thanks from our outgoing president Scott Wagner. From his side of the vice, Paul Johnson tells how a simple fly-tying kit from Cabela's and its instructional video by Jack Dennis set the stage for his foray into the world of fly-tying. Kasey Yallaly, graces us with yet another fact-filled article comparing brook and brown trout and looking at how their survival needs vary, even when they occupy the same stream. Scott Hanson describes his love of fiberglass rods and how their allure will always outshine the qualities of their graphite cousins. In part four of his Beginning Trout Fishing series, our favorite “coulee trout chaser” Bob Trevis discusses tactics for fishing downstream and once again offers some little nuggets that will surely increase your success should you choose to try his proven methods. Greg Olsen confesses that while “up north” he overcame the temptation to stay in-doors and remain a couch potato and instead ventured out into the cold to fish a special spot; his reward was (you're gonna have to read the article to find out). Kent Klewein was kind enough to share an article from his Gink and Gasoline blog that emphasizes the merits of fishing bends in a river or stream. Mike Alwin (AKA Mikey) promotes the sometime over-looked scud and provides us with a capsulated view of where in their watery environment you might come across a few. And lastly Ken Hanson shares one of his favorite sub-surface patterns, the Heron Hornberg. Ken claims it's a great brook trout fly and one of his go-to patterns when swinging for fall-run trout on the Madison River. FINI!

Meet new board member, Matt Janquart

Matt grew up learning to fish on Green Bay and the rivers and flowages of northeast Wisconsin with his dad. After obtaining a Natural Resources Degree from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point he followed his wife out west, eventually returning to make the Twin Cities their home.

A random visit to the Kinni Canyon along Hwy F inspired Matt to pick up fly fishing and explore the beautiful landscapes of western Wisconsin. Hooked on fly fishing he soon began venturing through the upper Great Lakes pursuing trout. Exploring the many driftless streams and north country rivers he found himself dragging his family along with him to explore these unique places.

Matt truly appreciates the Midwest rivers in our backyard and wants to do what he can to protect these fragile cold water resources as we move into trying future climatic times. Matt currently teaches science to at-risk kids in the Twin Cities and it is this passion for education that drives his desire for Trout Unlimited to seek ways to incorporate and educate more youth on the importance of the protection of these resources and leading them into both an interest in angling but also in conversation. Matt now resides in River Falls with his wife and three children.



Winter on the Upper Kinni
Mark Ritzinger

Views from this Side of My Vise

PAUL JOHNSON

A number of years ago, I wanted to learn how to tie flies that I could use to catch fish. I had never really been trout fishing and didn't know anything about it, so my intended quarry was panfish. I got started with a tying kit from Cabela's that came with a video tape by Jack Dennis that gave me a good start. After that, I started to take some classes at Bentley's Fly Shop. Andy Roth and John Mowery were a big help to me back in those days.

In 2008 the shop hosted a class that had a different instructor for each of the four sessions of the course. One of those instructors was Jim Thomson. I am sure many of you knew Jim. Two wonderful things happened to me that night. The first was that Jim introduced me to the Laughing Trout Fly Tying Club. The other was that he tried to teach me how to tie his Cripple Dun fly pattern.

Jim was a great teacher and became a good friend over the next several years. Me? I was not a real good student. I thought I remembered how he taught me to tie the Cripple Dun. As it turned out, I did not. I ended up tying a few poor imitations of Jim's baetis imitation and stuffing them into my fly box (I only had one (!) fly box).

Back then, my trout fishing skill was even less refined than my fly-tying technique. I had some success catching a few fish on nymphs but never on dry flies. The following spring, I remember coming to a spot on a small stream where there were rising fish. Still not really knowing what I was doing, I tied on one of my versions of Jim's Cripple Dun fly. I think the fish felt sorry for me or maybe they just could not believe someone with such poor fishing skills would dare to show his face on the stream. For whatever reason, they ignored my flawed presentation and eagerly took the fly. That was a big breakthrough for me in my trout fishing journey and a day I hope I never forget.

Since those early feeble attempts, I have made several changes to the original Cripple Dun and I am very happy with my interpretation that I call the BWO Special. Along with the evolution of the fly pattern, my insight into how to put it to use has advanced. I always make sure to have plenty of BWO Specials with me from early spring until late in the fall. We will start to see these little mayflies hatching in March, and see them again in the fall. Typically, the worse the weather is the better the hatch. Cold and rainy conditions often make for good days on the stream.

If you are interested, check out my [YouTube video](#) for tying the BWO Special.

Scott Wagner: Thoughts On Stepping Down As President

JUDY MAHLE LUTTER

After serving as president of Kiap-Tu-Wish for the past three years, Scott Wagner will be stepping down this April. Scott joined Kiap-Tu-Wish in 2011 and since then his involvement has grown, culminating with his election as chapter president in 2018. In 2015 he was recruited to the board as treasurer, a logical position since his career as a banker has spanned nearly 35 years. As a member and then treasurer, he saw the chapter grow, first under the leadership of Tom Henderson, whose main focus was the cataloging of area streams. A major goal of Tom's was building a strategic approach to the preservation of cold-water habitats.



Under the leadership of Tom Schnadt, stream habitat improvement efforts continued to grow. A major program initiative, Trout in the Classroom, has greatly increased youth outreach and volunteer opportunities. Important relationships with Pierce County and the Wisconsin DNR in the area of habitat improvement continue to reach new levels. This important partnership has vastly improved the streams in our local watersheds, resulting in a significant increase in miles of habitat restoration and maintenance—much more than each organization could have accomplished alone.

Prior to joining the board, Scott volunteered at numerous tree-cutting workdays and noticed many stumps left over from habitat improvement projects that had occurred 15–20 years earlier. “I decided one of the things I wanted to focus on during my presidency was creating a strategic plan for habitat maintenance, so that someone like me wouldn’t have to clear all of these same trees again in 20 years. Of course I didn’t do this on my own.” Scott speaks passionately of others in the chapter who give so

much of their time and energy to chapter projects. One of his goals has been to make chapter meetings more lively and include topics of varied interest with the hope of attracting more women and youth. “Because many of us do not see each other with any regularity, the tendency is to chat with old friends at chapter meetings. Many of us are trying to be sure that we welcome and talk to new people.”

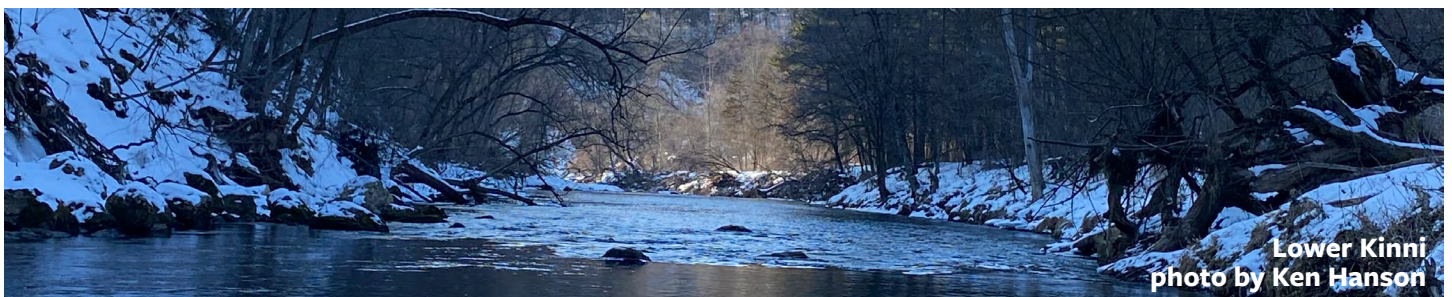
Prior to Covid, the chapter had seen steady growth and meetings were more frequently attended by 50 people rather than the usual 25–30 of previous years. Meeting participation has been up during Covid as well. In February, for example, a new record was set when 64 people tuned into the zoom meeting.

One of the things that has long impressed me about Kiap-Tu-Wish is the number of volunteer opportunities that always draw enthusiastic workers. The heart of the Volunteer Workday effort is Randy Arnold who, as Scott says, “is really at the heart of the chapter’s reputation for volunteerism. Randy sets the standard and leads by example.” Under his guidance and with the help of many who frequently volunteer, the chapter has been able to complete numerous projects while maintaining other important projects done in the past. The volunteer sessions of course involve hard work, but are also a wonderful way for people to get to know each other. “Many of the leaders of Kiap-TU-Wish come from people who have become a part of the chapter through their volunteer work. It helps us as a chapter build an important sense of community.”

The chapter is beginning to see the results of its outreach efforts. Scott has noted that as women become more involved they are also choosing to run for the Board of Directors. “Suzanne Constantini and Linda Radimecky are both wonderful additions and we foresee the number of women on the board growing in the near future.”

One of the challenges moving forward is encouraging individuals in their twenties and thirties to become members and volunteers. Those with young families frequently have so much going on that they have trouble finding time to be actively involved. The pandemic did encourage more people to try fly fishing so Scott foresees increased interest in Kiap-TU Wish.

Scott is excited to see what lies ahead for Kiap-TU-Wish. He is convinced it will stay true to its cold water conservation mission and through continued efforts will hopefully introduce many more people to the beauty and delight of being out on a stream. Thanks to Scott and his presidency, the chapter has made great strides during his tenure, and will continue building on a strong legacy.



Board Candidates



Greg Olson

Greg grew up in Hudson, fishing the St. Croix and Willow Rivers. He graduated from UW-River Falls and Northwestern University, majoring in organic chemistry, and has worked at DiaSorin, an immunodiagnostic company in Stillwater, for 20 years.

Greg will pursue any species of fish, anywhere, with a fly rod, but still prefers to solve the complex riddle of matching hatches and conflicting currents. During his current board term, Greg has spearheaded and started nine Trout-in-the-Classroom programs, raising live trout in area schools. He also serves as the Wisconsin Trout Unlimited State Council Chair for Trout-in-the-Classroom, helping other chapters get Trout-in-the-Classroom programs started across the state. Greg has volunteered to serve as our 2021–2022 chapter President, pending his re-election to the board.



Suzanne Constantini

Suzanne graduated with a BSN degree from Alverno College in Milwaukee and holds an MBA from the University of St. Thomas in St Paul, Minnesota. Suzanne has a long fishing resume. She was introduced to fishing early by her Dad, who was an avid fly angler. Starting in 1973, she and her husband Ed made frequent trips to the Boundary Waters, where they mainly fished for walleye and bass.

In 1987, after moving to Stillwater, they discovered Bob Mitchell's fly shop and participated in many of the shop's fly-tying courses. Suzanne took a fly-casting lesson at Bob Mitchell's after she decided it was not a good idea to try and learn from Ed. Ever since, she has been a constant fishing companion to Ed and enjoys seeking out the many small brook trout streams that are scattered throughout our local watersheds. For the past three years, Suzanne has served as the chapter's treasurer.



Linda Radimecky

Linda graduated from St Mary's University in Winona, where practically every science class was related to water—limnology, macro invertebrates, ornithology, electro shocking, and fish population studies. Unfortunately, she didn't know about fly fishing and tying flies to imitate the insects she was studying. Linda has now seen the light.

She has served Fly Fishing Women of Minnesota, teaching women to fly fish, and looks forward to continuing her contribution to Kiap-TU-Wish. Linda has worked for the MNDNR since 1991 as a state park naturalist, where she introduces people to fly fishing and other outdoor experiences. She has served as the chapter's Diversity Director for the past two years, and is interested in starting a Stream Girls program during her next three-year board term.



Missie Hanson

Missie and her husband Ken are long time Kiap-TU-Wish volunteers and chapter members. After graduating with an environmental BS and a Master's degree from the University of Minnesota, Missie's conservation career has included serving as Director of Conservation Programs for Friends of the Minnesota Valley; serving as a Community Assistance Coordinator, a Park Planner, the Wild and Scenic River Planner, and a Regional Planner for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources; and spending the past four summers with her husband Ken in Yellowstone National Park, serving in various capacities as a Campground Host and Park Volunteer.

Missie will be bringing a wealth of experience and skills in conservation planning, GIS data management and mapping, community relations, and grant writing and river management (not to mention her enthusiasm) to the board. She is seeking her first three-year term on the Kiap-TU-Wish board.

From the field

Habitat Improvement

Since the last edition of RipRap, we have continued with our effort to clear box elder, buckthorn, honeysuckle, and dead/downed trees from the Lueck 'Fee Title' property located on Trout Brook Drive on the upper Kinni, immediately downstream of the Interstate 94 bridge. This entire area was under eight feet or more of flood water during last summer's major rain event. Given the propensity for these hundred-year floods to now occur every couple of years, along with the fact that bank restoration work by the WDNR was not in the plans for this property, every effort was made to cut the trees and brush close to the ground and burn every bit of the cut timber in order to prevent it from washing downstream during our next hundred-year flood. With adequate snow cover on the ground, we left piles of cut wood burning at the end of each workday. Remaining timber not consumed by the fire was transported to each new cutting area where it was added to the new day's bonfires.

A very dedicated crew of volunteers has been turning out each week to help out. Among those showing up religiously every week are Dave Gregg, Jim Tatzel, John



Some of the Lueck crew
Photo by Randy Arnold

Skelton, Pete Kilibarda, Loren Haas, Scott Wagner, Dave Kozlovsky, and Trish Hannah. Matt Wysocki, volunteer coordinator for the Clear Waters Chapter, has been helping out whenever his chapter's workday doesn't interfere with ours. Thank you to all of the other volunteers who have come out to help with this project as well.

With the bitter cold temperatures in mid-February workdays were put on hold. Milder temperatures that followed allowed us to continue workdays and work on the Lueck site was completed on February 27th. Ten workdays were needed to clear the site.

Dan Pherson is the regional sales manager for Stihl Corporation in Madison. Dan is an avid fly fisherman who frequents the Driftless Area. He has been taking note of all of the habitat restoration work happening through the work of TU chapters within the region. Wanting to support our efforts, he contacted Jeff Hastings of TUDARE looking for recommendations on where his company could make a donation of their power equipment. Under Dan's initiative, Stihl will be donating a \$1500 gift certificate to a driftless area chapter in each of the next 4 years. In discussions with Jeff, it was decided that our chapter's volunteer effort in habitat restoration was at the top and that we would be the first to receive a gift certificate from Stihl to be used at one of their dealerships within our chapter area. A big thank you and shout goes out to Dan, Jeff, and the Stihl Corporation for their support of these projects.

Trout in the Classroom

All four of our TIC classrooms had eggs delivered right after the first of the year, and the kids were delighted to see the eggs hatch.



Photo by Ben Toppel
Rocky Branch Elementary

The fry are still living off their egg sac while spending their days in the egg basket. Soon they will be released to the big, wide, world of the 55 gallon tank and feeding with tiny pellets will commence. The kids

are doing a great job monitoring water chemistry and temperature. The photo comes from Rocky Branch Elementary in River Falls. The kids were delighted to watch the heart beating in the sac fry as it swam about the petri dish. As first year TIC teacher Ben Toppel stated, "It doesn't get much more exciting than that!" Wait until feeding time, Ben!

Something of Interest

While doing a bit of surfing one early morning I came across an article on TU's website that referenced habitat improvement efforts in Northern Wisconsin. One of the stories describes efforts aimed at reconnecting our cold-water habitat. TU Communications has allowed me to reprint an edited version of the story. You can find all of the 2020 highlights from TU's Great Lakes Team [Here](#).

TU had another productive year protecting Northern Wisconsin's coldwater resources, despite delays to our field season caused by the pandemic. In 2020, we reconnected more than 30 miles of coldwater habitat, bringing us to more than 115 miles reconnected since 2016.

Highlighting this reconnected habitat is the first completed project under our community flood resiliency program. This project is located on the North Branch of Beaver Creek, in the middle of a state fishery area, and was completed in partnership with the Wisconsin DNR and Town of Beaver. Most of our road-stream crossing replacement projects involve TU bringing significant financial resources to the table to facilitate implementation, but our partners already had funding lined up, and help was needed with survey, design, and monitoring. TU staff were able to jump in and complete that work, helping our partners improve fish passage and stream health.

Looking ahead to 2021, we have several road-stream crossing projects planned in partnership with the US Forest Service, towns, and counties. We also have an in-stream restoration project planned for the Marengo River, in partnership with the US Forest Service, repairing damage caused by historic floods in 2016 and 2018.

Brook Trout & Brown Trout: How They Differ

KASEY YALLALY

Brook trout and brown trout are our two main inland trout species in the upper Midwest. One is a native species and one is not, but both provide tremendous value to our trout streams.

Rainbow trout also make their appearance in some streams but this is generally due to stocking, since this species does not naturally reproduce in our streams — they feature a put-and-take fishery when present.

The Willow River is one of our local rivers where you have the opportunity to catch all three species! For the purpose of this article, however, I'll be discussing brook and brown trout, their main differences as a species, and how some of our management actions are focusing on promoting our only native inland trout species, the brook trout.

Brook trout and brown trout have similar thermal tolerance limits, despite what many people may think. Temperatures around 76°F can be sustained for short periods of time and for longer periods as the maximum temperature decreases to sustainable levels. Acclimation temperature — the temperature at which a given fish or population of fish is acclimated — can vary from stream to stream. This may be why a particular high water temperature can be lethal to trout in one stream and not in another. If, for example, a fish is living in a stream that usually

sustains water temperatures of 55°F for most of the summer, and suddenly a drastic event occurs that increases the water temperature to 70°F in a short period of time, the likelihood of that fish experiencing mortality is high.

Preferred water temperatures for feeding and growth are similar for both species, generally ranging between 55–66°F. When comparing physical habitat differences, the species are also very similar. Both species require adequate overwintering habitat that consists of deep slow pools with plenty of overhead cover. Brook trout generally prefer some groundwater or spring input during the winter as well.

Spawning habitat varies slightly between the species, with brown trout preferring larger gravel/cobble substrates and slightly higher water velocities, while brook trout prefer smaller gravel substrates with slightly lower water velocities. Brook trout have also been found to successfully spawn in sand or fine grain substrates. Both species are highly associated with in-stream habitat forms including large woody debris, boulders, overhead bank



Bethany Olson holding a beautiful Brown Trout
Photo by Kasey Yallaly

cover, and vegetation. Many studies have noted the importance of woody habitat for brook trout.

Brown trout also respond differently and perhaps more positively to environmental disturbances when compared to brook trout, including flood events, runoff impacts, and temperature changes. Brown trout likely have a competitive edge when these events occur and are probably better able to bounce back from these events when the species occur in sympatry. While there are many other details of the species' differences and similarities, these are just a few that can be used to help promote one or both species when taking management actions.

While the species are very similar, there are plenty of differences. Therefore, when we are attempting to manage or promote one species versus the other, we can key into these differences. Currently, I am attempting to promote the brook trout populations in streams that will have the potential to hold brook trout into the mid-century despite warming temperatures and more frequent and drastic weather events. These streams have been designated as Brook Trout Reserve candidate streams by the WDNR. Both Cady and Plum creeks, among others, have been identified as this type of stream.

We have been experimenting with different habitat practices within our trout habitat improvement projects in an attempt to benefit brook trout over brown trout. The installation of overhead bank covers like LUNKER structures have ceased and more complex woody habitat features are now being used based on observations of a few large brown trout dominating LUNKERS

in many of the previous trout habitat projects. More rootwads are being installed and we are using less stream narrowing. The reason for this is because typical habitat projects have resulted in great adult brown trout habitat with the narrow, deep habitats and fast water velocities. This type of environment concentrates the fish population and brook trout have been shown to be easily outcompeted by brown trout for important resting and foraging habitats.

We have also found that young-of-year or juvenile trout numbers actually decline within trout habitat project areas. This is likely because we create excellent adult habitat and potential spawning habitat. When the juvenile fish or fry emerge, however, very little nursery habitat or escape habitat exists in these deep and fast environments and predation or exclusion is likely high. This is why, in part, we have opted to change some of our habitat practices by incorporating more island features and more complex channel habitats along with deep pools and complex woody habitats.

While our focus is primarily on brook trout in streams that are likely to be thermally resilient and with wild genetic strains, I want to emphasize that brown trout management is still just as important. Most of the streams in Pierce and St. Croix counties are brown trout dominated and that isn't going to change. Management of these streams will continue to focus on promoting brown trout through habitat management or stocking. When we have an opportunity, however, to promote native brook trout populations in a stream where it is possible and brook trout are likely to survive, this species should be given that chance.





Fiberglass: Love Me Some Fiberglass Rods

SCOTT HANSON

When I first started fly fishing, back in the mid-1980s, I never heard anyone talking about fiberglass fly rods. Everyone talked about graphite rods only. Graphite was the best thing ever. Why would you want anything but graphite? Graphite, graphite, graphite. I was still a young lad at this time, but the way everyone was talking, it seemed as though fly rods had always been made out of graphite. And who was I to question these authority figures?

At some point I heard about bamboo fly rods. It seems that what I first heard about bamboo was that it was heavy and far inferior to graphite. As a kid I just accepted all this hearsay as fact, and went on with trying to teach myself how to cast with the cheap rods that I had at my disposal.

Fast forward to the early 2000s: By this time, I was working at a fly shop, so I had a chance to try out all the latest rods. Graphite rods were getting faster and faster, but I realized that I still preferred the slower rods that I had grown up with. At some point I learned that there had been fly rods made out of another material, in between bamboo's heyday and the birth of graphite. That material was fiberglass, and it had the reputation of being slower in action, like bamboo, but lighter in weight, more like graphite. I was intrigued, so I started to look for fiberglass rods.

At that time none of the big rod companies were making fiberglass rods, or if they were, I was unaware of them. So I learned as much as I could about vintage glass rods. Turns out, a lot of people were happy to get rid of their old fiberglass rods that had been collecting dust in their closets. The website eBay was full of old glass rods, so I started to buy a few here and there. If memory serves, I believe my first was an old yellow Wright & McGill Eagle Claw 5'6" 5wt with their patented metal "Mini Ferrule." It was too short to be a viable fishing tool, but the action was perfect for me; similar to the older graphite rods that I had learned on, perfect for my casting stroke.

From that first old Eagle Claw, my infatuation with fiberglass rods has exploded. I have been fortunate to cast pretty much every

brand of glass rod out there, and there are a ton of sweet ones. And now vintage rods are not your only option; almost all major rod companies now offer at least a few fiberglass rods, and there are a dozen or more small rod companies that specialize in high-end fiberglass fly rods.

If you are intrigued by fiberglass fly rods but don't know where to start, here are a few ideas. It seems as though Fenwick made more fiberglass fly rods than anyone, as there are always a good number of them for sale on eBay. Every Fenwick rod that I have ever tried has been sweet, so you should be able to find one you like. I would suggest you try to find an FF75 or an FF805 to try. They are great all-around rods that you can do anything with.

Another vintage option would be a Shakespeare Wonderod. There are, literally, hundreds of different models of Wonderod from throughout the years. Seems as though everyone owned one at one time or another. Of all the Wonderods that I have cast, and there have been a lot, I have enjoyed the shorter models more than the longer ones, but you can try them for yourself and see what you like.

Cortland and Berkley made some great rods, and so did Heddon, Browning, Garcia Conolon, Orvis and Phillipson. All of these can be found rather inexpensively. As far as modern fiberglass goes, Scott, Thomas & Thomas, and Winston offer 'glass models. And if you want to explore some of the fiberglass-specialty builders, check out Chris Barclay's or Shane Gray's rods, or get on the waiting list for a Steffen Brothers rod. I have had the pleasure of trying out rods by most of these builders, and they are all silky smooth.

Look me up any time you want to talk fiberglass rods, and especially if you have an old one sitting around in your rod closet you'd like to find a new home for. I haven't completely given up on graphite, which I can admit has a place in this world, but fiberglass is my go-to casting tool nowadays.



Wet Flies & streamers: Fishing Downstream Can Pay Off

BOB TREVIS

In part three of my Beginner Fly Fishing series, I shared tactics and techniques for fishing upstream with dry flies and nymphs. After covering upstream water, if time allows, try fishing back downstream to your starting point. Effective downstream tactics include fishing traditional wet flies or soft hackles, and fishing a streamer pattern.

WET FLIES

Wet fly fishing is fairly easy to learn. In contrast to fishing with dry flies, you don't have to make pinpoint presentations, and you can generally use the leader and tippet from your dry fly set-up. To start, tie on a single or a tandem set of wet flies and simply make a cast slightly up and across stream. Try to maintain a "tight line" (with the line captured against the rod handle with your forefinger), and let the fly swing across the current — it will usually not be more than a foot under the surface.

When the fly finishes its swing, let it dangle in the current for a few seconds before retrieving it for your next cast. A general rule of thumb for swinging wet flies is based on current speed: the faster the current, the smaller the angle of your across-stream cast. Take a step downstream and repeat the process. Try to cover the best holding water, be it along the far bank or in more mid-stream areas. If a trout takes your fly, it will usually hook itself — no need for an indicator!

I know of one spot on the lower Kinni where the opposite shore is naturally rocky and about 2 to 2 ½ feet deep. If I swing a soft-hackle along that 30-foot stretch when it is shaded, I have always been rewarded with a strike or two — sometimes more.

My preferred wet flies include any tied with a partridge soft-hackle, such as the Partridge and Orange, the Purple Prince Charming, or a basic wet fly with a black body. Use a size 14 or 16 for your best shot at imitating a struggling or emerging trout snack.

STREAMERS

Streamers can be fished in much the same way as a wet fly, though you will likely need a shorter and heavier leader (like a 7 ½-foot 3X). To start, cast slightly upstream and across, letting the

streamer act like an injured minnow as it is moved by the current. You will need to retrieve line or let line out as the current dictates, and you can use your rod tip to "steer" the streamer towards rocks and other trout-holding structures. Retrieve the streamer with short strips, stripping and pausing, or a combination of strips and pulsing the rod tip. Let the trout tell you which retrieve is best.

Work your way downstream and you may awaken the largest trout in that section of water. A black or variegated Woolly Bugger in size 12, 10, or 8 is probably your best searching pattern. Other options include the Hornberg, the Pass Lake, and the Muddler Minnow. Effective larger streamers include the Tequeely, Clouser Minnow, or Frick's Fix. Leeches and crayfish are other "Happy Meals" when seeking larger trout. When possible, ask your fly shop for pattern suggestions.

TERRESTRIALS AND THE HOPPER-DROPPER

Mid- to late summer means tough fishing for many anglers, but it's when trout start turning their attention to food from above. Hoppers in pasture areas often launch themselves in the wrong direction and end up being blown into the water by the wind. Fishing hoppers is surprisingly easy. Try to get your imitation to "splat" down as close as possible to the stream bank, then let the current take it on its way. If there are no takes after your fly drifts a couple of feet, move yourself upstream (or down) a step or two and recast, probing undercuts and grassy overhangs. Even when your fly drowns, it can still catch fish — hoppers are very poor swimmers.

If your creek or stream runs through wooded areas, try a black cricket in size 12 or 14. Nothing happening? Try a size 14 beetle pattern or an ant pattern in sizes 16 or 18. Again, fish the stream

edges and undercuts where these insects are most likely to have landed or been taken by the current.

Some anglers prefer to fish a Hopper-Dropper rig, which consists of a size 10 or 12 floating hopper pattern combined with a section of tippet (16" to 20" long) tied to the hook-bend of the hopper using an Improved Clinch Knot. The other end of the tippet links to a size 16 or 14 nymph. In theory, along with acting as your indicator, the hopper gets the attention of the trout, which sees the helpless nymph going by and can't resist a snack. Casting a hopper-dropper rig can at first be troublesome, and requires that you cast with more of an open loop. But once mastered, this method can be deadly.

An alternative technique is fishing with two nymphs, both near the bottom, and with the upper one usually weighted heavier than the trailing one. On some days this technique produces numerous trout; other times, you'll just get tangled leaders and lost nymphs. Methods such as Czech, Spanish, Polish, or French nymphing (all fall under the umbrella of Euro Nymphing) are variations of the multi-fly rig, and require a somewhat different approach to rigging and methods.

On a general note, and assuming there is no hatch occurring, you'll be best served fishing current transition zones, riffles 6" to 18" deep, eddies (with their wrong-way currents), and the sides of pools formed below mini "falls." Always fish the foam line and

either side of it. Stream edges with undercuts are hiding places for trout, as are in-stream rocks that form classic pocket water. In-stream rocks have a "soft spot" both behind and in front of them where trout can lie without fighting the current. Try fishing these "pockets" on a short line; you'll often be pleasantly surprised when that resting trout suddenly appears to take your fly.

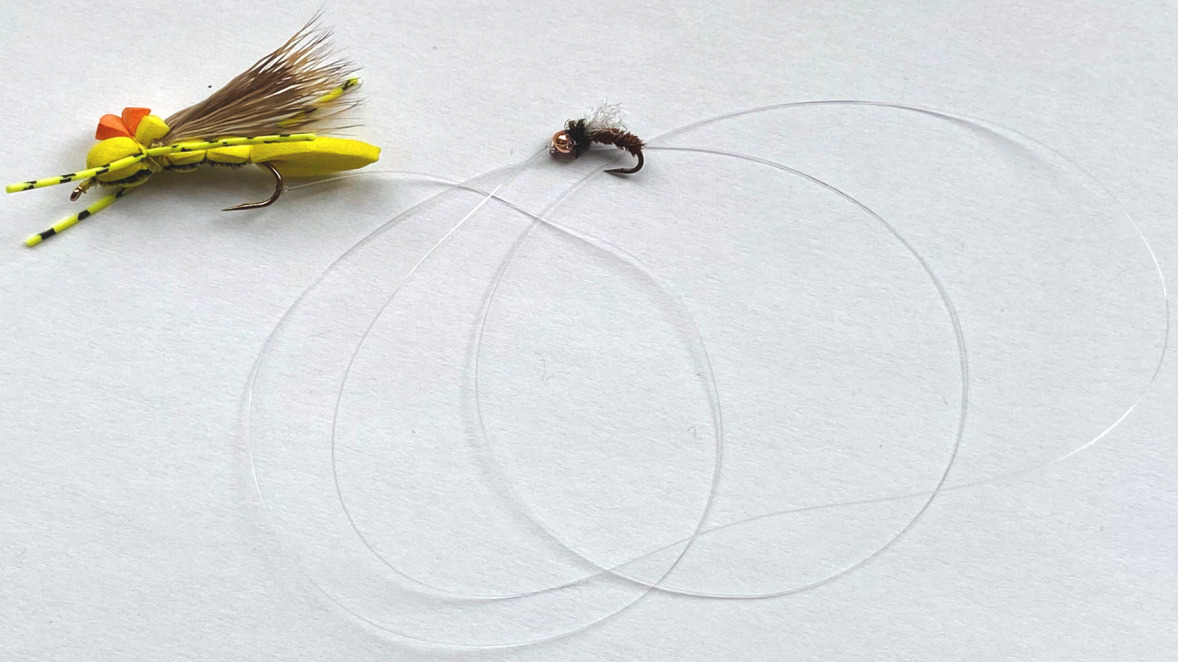
FINAL THOUGHTS

In-stream vegetation presents its own challenges, as do the remains of fallen trees. Plus, remember that trout do not have eyelids, so they prefer to be in shadow rather than bright sunlight. Fish accordingly.

Also remember that trout are always aware of predators above them. Stalking a stream (preferably staying on and a bit away from the bank) and using vegetation to hide yourself will increase your chances for a hook-up. And walking a bit from the road or parking area will increase your chance of finding solitude and the pleasure of encountering fish that haven't been fished over that day. Should you land a trout that you don't plan to keep for supper, be sure to release it carefully downstream, not upstream where its fear pheromones will warn other trout of "stranger-danger." And a final tip: wearing polarized glasses will give you a huge edge in your efforts to spot trout. Good luck out there in 2021!

Hopper/Dropper

General Foam Attractor (GFA) Hopper
Shopvac emerger



Ken Hanson

AUTHOR'S NOTE: In spring and early summer before hoppers are out, you can make your top fly a size 12 Parachute Adams, Royal Wulff, or Elk Hair Caddis.

A Ray of Light On a Dark Day

GREG OLSON

It seems like we hadn't seen the sun around here for a couple of weeks. I was "Up North" in mid-January of this year and it was more of the same there: leaden skies and 26 degrees. Not a banner day for fly fishing. I was coming up with lots of good reasons not to go out and stay on the couch with a good book. Fly fishing is my mistress, but iced guides, fingers, and toes while dredging the bottom with nymphs...maybe I wasn't jonesing that bad. Yet, the book I was re-reading, for perhaps the tenth time, was Nick Lyons' *Spring Creek*, and each paragraph describing those strong hatches and challenging trout started the wheels in my head to turn.

I remembered a spot from late last summer that I stumbled across. Headwaters, strong springs, brook trout, and good midge hatches (when I visited again in October, the BWOs were out in force and resulted in my biggest brook trout of the year). The water was so cold in late August that my waded feet got numb. That water should be ice-free! The prospect of dry fly fishing got me out the door. There was the matter of an unplowed forest service road to get there, but then the 4Runner and I had a good streak going of getting out of places we shouldn't have gone — we were feeling cocky!

This spot is a very wide, very slow section of stream that formed behind a beaver dam, now blown out, but still a pinch point. Not a sliver of ice was on the water and the watercress was bright green! I stood on the bank and watched for a few minutes. Despite the lack of sun, there were midges and the fish were looking up, enough to warm any angler's heart...and toes and hands. It was tough, tough fishing though. If I moved one inch, it seemed like I sent foot-high waves in all directions.

These fish were not pushovers. After repeated failures, I found that a downstream puddle cast, with just a tiny, tiny twitch of a smokejumper midge in the vicinity of a rise, would seal the deal. Those spots on the brookies looked so bright amongst their surroundings that I had to wear shades!



Somewhere up North
Photo by Greg Olsen

Bends in rivers and streams are like my best friends, by Kent Klewein

They possess all the qualities that I value and they always provide me consistent support in my endeavors. I don't know about you, but when I find myself staring at a section of river or stream and I see a nice bend, I quite often head straight for it. I do this because I know it will usually produce a quality fish or two on the end of my line, and it's generally very obvious to me where I should present my flies. Just about every bend you encounter on the water will hold these three qualities.

ONE WELL-DEFINED CURRENT

There usually will be one well-defined current, collecting and moving food through the bend. This clearly indicates to anglers where the most food is drifting and where the fish should be positioned to intercept it.

CLEAR CHANNEL OR TROUGH

That well-defined current usually has cut out a deep channel or trough in the bend. This reinforces further why fish will be located here. The deeper that fish can get below the surface and current, the less energy they'll have to exert to maintain position and feed.

The deeper water also provides fish with added safety and camouflage from predators.

UNDERCUT BANKS

Often a significant section of a bend will have an undercut bank from the current digging into the bank over long periods of time. Undercut banks provide the same function to fish as roofs on our houses do for us, protecting us from the elements and allowing us to live comfortably. Furthermore, the current funnels food directly into the undercut bank. That's like us calling in a large pizza for delivery and having it come right to our front door. Big educated fish understand this value and that's why they're so often found here.

Next time you find yourself on the water with the choice to fish a straight section of water close to you or a nice bend farther away, opt for fishing the bend and I bet you'll find yourself rewarded for your efforts.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was reprinted with permission from Kent Klewein, Gink & Gasoline. [Link](#)

Scuds: The Ubiquitous Crustacean

MIKE ALWIN

Perhaps fifteen or twenty years ago, “Czech nymphing” became prominent in the arena of trout fishing. The hallmarks of this style of fishing featured slender, heavily weighted nymphs tied on curved hooks, and exceedingly long leaders. While the techniques for fishing this style were intriguing, the most interesting observation was that most of the imitations were of one basic design and represented two of the most important trout foods, caddis and scuds.

As we know from our reading, caddis are highly speciated and therefore fill many more watery niches than stoneflies or mayflies. They seem to always be either emerging, skittering across the water surface, or ovipositing on or in the water. Scuds, on the other hand, have no terrestrial manifestation and therein lies the beauty of this little morsel; it’s always available as trout food.

The scud (order Amphipoda) lists approximately 90 species in three families, most of which inhabit shallow water venues, trout streams being only one of them. They can also be found in ponds, springs, and lakes. They require relatively high dissolved oxygen levels, common in spring creeks, but one species has been found as deep as 1000’ in Lake Superior.

Any description of a scud will mention its many pairs of legs (seven to ten pairs, depending on who’s doing the counting), its size (5–20mm), the range of colors of the live specimen (tan, gray, olive, pink, purple, and orange, to name a few), and its tendency to swim on its side. It swims quickly in short bursts and is sometimes called the “side swimmer.” Its most active at night but can almost always be found hiding in vegetation or under rocks. Scuds are omnivores, consuming detritus, diatoms, and algae. They are rarely predaceous.

Breeding seems to be based on water temperatures and generally begins in late May in this latitude. The pre-mating ritual involves male scuds carrying females around on their backs for a time. Females carry fertilized eggs and newly hatched young around in a pouch called the marsupium. The young are released when the female molts. Unique to scuds and unlike a mayfly, as just one example, instead of trying to escape the scud just curls up like a circle.

This observation leads fly tiers into the mistake of trying to imitate the scud playing possum. Remember that scuds are swimmers and that when swimming they are stretched out. Therefore you’d be well-advised to tie your imitations on a straight hook — heavily weighted, of course.



HERON HORNBERG

Hook: #8-10 Streamer Hook

Thread: Black 6/0 Danville

Body: Silver Mylar Tinsel

Underwing: Yellow Marabou

Overwing: Dyed Mallard Flank

Hackle: Brown & Grizzly Hen Hackle



I'm a fan of brook trout fishing and over the years have had great luck with subsurface patterns such as soft hackles, small muddlers, and various wet flies. One of the best flies I've used for brookies is the Hornberg, aka Hornberg Special. It can be fished both dry and subsurface and is lots of fun to fish. It's especially fun to twitch through a pool and watch a brook trout chase it. The Hornberg is like a mini version of some of those huge musky flies that are designed to wag back and forth in the water, and it drives the trout nuts.

The Hornberg has some history in Wisconsin and at one time was popular all over the country (do some Google searching). I feel that when fishing brookies, I get more out of it when using classic patterns. My great uncle Carl "Mike" Hanson introduced me to this pattern by giving me the tying recipe on a tattered note he had kept in his billfold for years. Uncle Mike, a bait fisherman, had met a flyfisherman one day on the stream and noticed the guy was having great success. Mike asked what he was using, and the guy wrote down the Hornberg pattern for him.

One small problem I've had with the Hornberg is sometimes the opposing mallard flank feathers can get knocked out of place, causing a helicopter effect that can twist the leader. Not a big deal, but it's something that's been tucked away in my brain.

One day I was watching Tim Flagler on YouTube tie a Wood Duck Herron www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yo89nMifX10 and thought that this technique could solve my problem with twisting as the over wing is tied in the round. I combined the Hornberg Special with this Herron technique, added some marabou, and this is the result. I've fished it in various situations and it's becoming a go-to fly for me, especially when swinging for the fall run trout on the Madison river in Yellowstone.

- Dress the hook with black thread and bring thread back to the front to the 1/3 position.
- Tie in mylar tinsel, wrap it back to the beginning of the bend, and then forward over itself.
- Tie in yellow marabou on top of the hook shank just forward of the tinsel.
- Tie in a mallard flank feather by the tip just forward of the marabou and stroke the fibers rearward. Wrap the feather forward with three or four wraps, continue to stroke the fibers.
- Tie in brown and grizzly hackle Adams style.
- Build a small head and whip finish.

KIAP-TU-WISH

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APRIL CHAPTER MEETING

7:00 pm on Wednesday, April 7, 2021

In addition to the chapter's annual business meeting and board elections, Cole Webster, Water Resources and Outreach Specialist for St. Croix County will be presenting on the regional groundwater system and groundwater quality concerns.

MAY CHAPTER MEETING

7:00 pm on Wednesday, May 5, 2021

Kasey Yallaly, DNR Fisheries Specialist, and Nate Anderson, DNR Habitat Specialist, will be presenting the results of the 2020 stream surveys, as well as the current state of trout populations and population trends in western Wisconsin.

Kiap-TU-Wish's Virtual Banquet and Virtual Auction

Two major fund-raising efforts took place on February 25th, and each was a great success. The first was a virtual banquet that was attended by nearly 50 members. The virtual auction ended on the same evening, with widespread participation.

Chapter president Scott Wagner and Dave Johnson hosted the event. Scott kicked off the event with a slide presentation that highlighted the numerous achievements of Kiap-TU-Wish this past year.

An awards ceremony followed. Randy Arnold thanked the many volunteers who participated in this year's habitat improvement projects. Gift certificates were awarded to Jim Tatzel, Dave Gregg, John Skelton, Trish Hannah, Pete Kilibarda, and Loren Haas as special thanks for their consistent participation at this year's clearing projects.

Tom Henderson was presented the Golden Trout Award for his outstanding leadership as a board member and his many and diverse contributions to the mission of Kiap-TU-Wish, which have enhanced our chapter's management, outreach, and impact.

The Silver Trout Award was given to Loren Haas in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the conservation of cold-water streams, his service as a six-year board member, and his leadership role in the chapter's Maintenance Committee and habitat improvement efforts.

Maria Manion was named recipient of the first-ever Judy Lutter Communications Award for her outstanding work as a former board member and editor of the chapter's newsletter RipRap.

Winners of the 4 x 100 Chance drawing were announced following the awards ceremony:

- Norling Bamboo Rod, Mike Fischer
- April Morning Painting, Mark Setterstrom
- Yeti 45 Tundra Cooler, Janet Rudnik
- Thomas and Thomas 3 wt. rod, Dave Kozlovsky

In total, a combined sum of \$10,000 was raised. Thank you all for your participation and for helping to ensure that Kiap-TU-Wish will continue to thrive and carry on it with its mission to improve the cold-water habitat in our local watersheds.



Lower Kinni
photo by Ken Hanson