



Newsletter of the  
Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter  
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**September 2021**



## **RIPRAP**

Restoration, Improvement &  
Preservation through Research  
& Projects.

## **CHAPTER MEETING**

Great news!!! The September 1st chapter meeting will be held in person at Rush River Brewing (990 Antler Ct, River Falls). There will not be a program, simply a chance for members to catch up face to face. Although the venue will be open beforehand, the event “officially” kicks off at 6 pm, but show up anytime. Beer and soda will be available for purchase from Rush River Brewing. Pizza will be provided, and a food truck will be there too; great eats from the Chef Shack (Bay City, WI). We will have the lawn to use for casting rods and perhaps some games. If you have a favorite fly rod to share bring it with. Hope to see everyone there!!!

Spawning brook trout photo by Dennis Pratt  
Fire photo by Gerd Altmann

**Conserve**

**Protect**

**Restore**

## **The Drift**

Hope you all had a great summer and got some fishing in. With the COVID vaccine and things getting back to “normal.” I did not notice the increase in anglers that I did last year. Speaking of getting back to normal, I am pleased to announce that we will be meeting in person for our September meeting which will be a get together at Rush River Brewing in River Falls. I am looking forward to seeing everyone in person again!

Chapter habitat and monitoring projects continued this summer. You can read about this in updates from Randy Arnold and John Kaplan — thanks so much to the volunteer crews that assisted in these projects, it wouldn't be possible without you!

Upcoming activities this fall include restoration tours for UW-RF at the Red Cabin site and at Pine Creek for the Landmark Conservatory. We will also be participating at the Pheasants Forever Youth Game Fair on September 11<sup>th</sup>. We are still looking for volunteers for this great event, so if you are interested, please contact me at [driftless23@gmail.com](mailto:driftless23@gmail.com).

I'm writing this in mid-August, before leaving for Colorado on the 20<sup>th</sup> to visit family and spend some time hiking, biking, and of course fishing. I'm heading out with some trepidation, reading about all the river closings out West and air quality alerts, due to the severe drought and the resulting fires. With fewer options to fish, boat ramps are becoming battle zones with fist fights and tires being slashed. I tend to seek out the more remote, non-famous water, so I'm hoping to not run into any issues.

I'm also hoping that this summer is turning a point for our country to start taking climate change seriously. There has been some disbelief of climate science graphs, charts, and figures, but with almost everyone across the U.S. experiencing the effects first-hand these past few years, the acceptance is now starting to sink in. In our area we have been dealing with heat and drought and have had our share of extreme weather in the recent past, and we are still recovering from last year's flooding. Just this past week the Viroqua area got hit again by the 100 year floods that now seem to occur every two years.

The effects of our 1.0°C global temperature increase will continue for the near future, we have ignored the warnings far too long and have reached a tipping point. The recent UN report calls it a “code red for humanity” and stresses the need to keep the increase in global temperatures below 1.5°C. We can still avoid the next tipping point and so it is important not to hang our heads and give up.



Changes are being made at our local level. Our local DNR is currently working on brook trout reserves to make sure our streams have sustained populations. You can volunteer to help with the restoration efforts. Recycling efforts at home and work continue to grow. The vehicles we drive account for more than 25% percent of US emissions, but more and more electric cars and trucks are becoming available each year and their prices are dropping. Homes and businesses are incorporating solar and wind energy. We can use our votes to elect officials who will take action against climate change. Together we can do this!!!

# From the Editor



Where is that flannel shirt? I pined for it over the whole summer. I should know better, because at my age you have to be cautious about wishing your life away. I figured, though, what's a couple of months in the broad scheme of things?

I remember summers on the Iron Range, where I grew up. They came late and were never as hot as they are now. I never wished the days away back then; every hour was precious. For me, summer started the day school let out. When I wasn't playing baseball, I was fishing. Fortunately for me, my grandpa, my dad, and all my uncles fished. The Iron Range is dotted with a myriad of lakes, back then filled in abundance with wall-eyes, Northern pike, bass, and large panfish. I'm still amazed at how many fish we caught in those days, when braided Dacron line was still favored over monofilament, fiberglass was king, and a depth finder was something only the U.S. Navy could afford.

In my early fishing days, my main partner was my Uncle John. He had retired from the mines and, to my great fortune, bought a small fishing boat soon after—a 12-foot Sea King with a 5 HP Johnson outboard. We fished almost every evening at our favorite nearby lakes; some were wall-eye hotspots, others were bluegill and sunfish havens. Before we hit the lake, Uncle John would ask "Dairy Queen or A & W?" What a dilemma for a 10-year-old kid.

Panfish were my favorite quarry. At that time, I fished for them with a bobber and worm. It wasn't until I was in my early teens that I first fished them with a fly rod. I had a friend whose parents owned a cabin on a small lake, and who would occasionally invite me up to the cabin to spend the weekend. My friend's dad had a Shakespeare Wonderod fly rod—you know, the white one with the burgundy threads and bumpy finish. It had one of those automatic fly reels on it with a level line and a piece of stiff monofilament for a leader. We used to take that rod down to the dock, which was surrounded by lily pads and fallen timber. What denizens do you suppose inhabited that environment? If you guessed panfish, you win the prize (there really isn't a prize). My friend's dad had a few of the old balsa wood small poppers and we would cast (lob) them out to the edge of the pads. Voilà, a crappie or bluegill would sip the popper in, and the fight was on. The sensation and experience of hooking a fish on that flyrod was totally different from hooking one on my short fiberglass casting rod. I was smitten.

Following my initial introduction to flyfishing at the cabin, I began my quest to become the next Joe Brooks of the flyfishing world. Then in my late 20s, I took a casting class at the U of M, and remember the instructor telling us that we had to learn to fish "fine and far off." The class was extremely beneficial in that I learned to cast a "real" fly rod that was outfitted with a proper reel and line—a balanced system, as my favorite coulee trout chaser would describe. After that it became apparent that I needed that balanced system in order to take the next step up the fly fishing ladder.

As luck would have it, one of my co-workers was dating a pretty redhead who worked at 3M and had access to the Company Store. They gifted me a Phillipson fiber glass rod—my first high-end rod (at least I thought so), and with my Pflueger Medalist reel and Cortland fly line I had my first balanced system. I fished with that rod on the Willow River numerous times and never caught a fish. I could have called it quits, but that memory of the Wonderod still lingered, I knew in my heart better days were ahead. And sure enough they were.

A move to Stillwater, Minnesota in the late 80s, and my discovery of Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop, Gary Borger, and the Kinnickinnic River pretty much set the stage for my ongoing journey within the world of fly fishing. So thank you Bob, Jean, and Gary for getting me started for real in this wonderful sport which, to this day, has brought me indescribable satisfaction and a realization, more so now than ever, that each day is precious, just as they were way back then growing up on the Iron Range, standing on that old wooden dock pulling in lunker crappies and bluegills with that Shakespeare Wonderod.

Our September RIPRAP begins with a report from our new president Greg Olson. Alan and Martha Hopeman kindly share with us a brief history of the Hayward Fly Fishing Company and the retirement of its longtime owners Wendy Williamson and Larry Mann. Paul Johnson is back behind his vice, and also shares his BWO special pattern in our Fly Tyers Corner. Greg Olson pens a wonderful story telling of his "noble pursuit" to master the Trico hatch and how a chance meeting lead to new on-stream successes fishing the "white curse." Philip Kashian provides us with his encounter with the "fish of the season" (no spoiler alert here). And to my delight and I am sure yours, RIPRAP welcomes back Skip James' Loose threads. Read On!



# From the field

## Habitat Improvement

*Randy Arnold*

There has not been a whole lot going on this summer on which I can report. Loren and I assisted Kasey's crew on a shocking survey of the Von Holtum easement on Plum Creek. In doing the habitat restoration there, Nate and Kasey wanted to experiment with different types of habitat on distinct reaches of the stream to determine which types of habitat were more suitable for promoting brook trout production. The bottom area where the stream was narrowed the most had some impressive fish numbers but the middle section where the stream was wider and offered a more diverse habitat seemed to hold the greater number of brook trout including more young of year fish.

Nate and his crew are currently working on Cady Creek (see project photos on the next page) and we will have a seeding mulching workday at the site to wrap up the lower half of what will be a two year project. Nate has installed a number of habitat features in this stretch that will provide a very favorable environment for brook trout.

Kasey contacted me to ask that we provide 2 volunteers for each of 4 days worth of large stream electro-shocking surveys. While not the volunteer opportunity which we have experienced in pre-Covid years, where up to 6 volunteers participated on each survey day, it was still good to be returning somewhat to normal.

I held one workday in late July where I was joined by Jim Tatzel and Pete Kilibarda. We followed up the contracted mowing work on Parker Creek by treating the stumps of brush and small trees with herbicide to prevent their re-sprouting.

There is currently a restoration project underway at the property of Neil Anderson, who lives just downstream of the Quarry Road bridge on the Kinni, by the Earthworks Nursery. There is no public easement in place on this property. Neil worked through the DNR and has hired a private contractor to repair damage done to the stream banks on his property by last year's flood event. Due to the lack of a public easement, TU guidelines prevented us from providing anything more than volunteer labor to assist on this project.

This past Saturday, during a constant light rain, I was joined by Loren Haas, John Kaplan, Pete Kilibarda, Neil Anderson, and his nextdoor neighbor, and we constructed 8 lunger structures to be installed in his streambank as part of the restoration.

I hope to be able to meet up with Kasey in the field later this summer to identify stream sites in need of brush and tree removal to be done in the coming fall and winter months.

## Stream Monitoring

*John Kaplan & Kent Johnson*

Kiap-TU-Wish monitoring activities have continued throughout the spring and summer on five of our local streams: the Kinnickinnic, Willow, Trimble, Pine Creek, and Plum Creek. We have temperature loggers placed in all five of these streams and we downloaded data from them this spring and will do so again this fall. All total, there are 29 loggers in these streams.

We sometimes find it necessary to move the loggers due to changes in the stream bottoms — they become buried in silt or, we may have to replace them due to dead batteries or their unexplained disappearance. Temperature data and water samples are also collected from Pine Creek and the Trimble at County Road W and are analyzed by an independent lab in St. Paul. These samples are collected four times per year.

Two weather stations are being operated to collect data on air temperature, relative humidity, dewpoint and rainfall amounts. Data from these stations allow a better understanding of the effects of local weather on stream temperatures.

The Kiap-TU-Wish chapter also provides financial and volunteer support focused on maintaining the USGS flow-gauging stations on the Willow and Kinnickinnic Rivers as well as a temperature monitoring probe on the Willow.

Our chapter also continues to spearhead the use of the WiseH2O app. For those of you who aren't familiar with the app, it allows the user to collect and share data on water quality and stream habitat conditions. We have 10 individuals, "target angler," who have been using the app at specific locations on 10 different streams in Pierce County. There are also a number of "general anglers" who are using the app when and where they choose. Data from the app will be invaluable in monitoring the cold water resources in our area. Anyone who would like to learn more about this app and how to use it can go to the WiseH2O website: [www.mobileh2o.com/mh2oapp](http://www.mobileh2o.com/mh2oapp). If you have questions, please contact:

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# Habitat Project: Cady Creek

*photos by Dustin Wing*

Nate Anderson of the Wisconsin DNR reports that, as of August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Phase 1 of the Cady Creek Project has been completed. Nate and his crew used 6,264 tons of shot rock to complete 1,600 feet of both banks of the stream. This equates to 1.9 tons per foot. In addition to the rock, Nate and his crew were able to install 93 root wads, enhance 7 islands, and install 3 ERO structures, 1 rock V weir, 7 spawning riffles, and numerous mid-stream and bank boulders. A grass water run was also installed at a site where significant erosion was occurring.

In 2022, an additional 770 feet of stream-bank will be restored using 3,000 tons of rock to be hauled to the site during this fall and winter. This site has already been prepped so the second phase of the project should take only a couple of weeks to complete with good dry weather. The Cady project should be fully completed by next July. Congratulations to Nate and his DNR crew and to all of our chapter volunteers for an outstanding job and for providing yet another fabulous place to wet a line.





# A Passing of the Torch.

ALAN & MARTHA HOPEMAN

Wendy Williamson and Larry Mann, founders and long-time owners of the Hayward Fly Fishing Company, have sold their business and are retiring. They have been long-time supporters of Kiap-TU-Wish and other Trout Unlimited chapters. They will be missed, not only for their leadership and advocacy of fishing and conservation issues, but also for their personal relationships with many of us. The Hayward Fly Fishing Company frequently donated a guided float trip to the Kiap-TU-Wish holiday party auction. Those of us who have been around for a while will surely remember that Larry and Wendy were the featured guest speakers at a past Kiap-TU-Wish banquet.

Larry and Wendy met while working as guides in Colorado. Following her father's death they moved to Hayward, where Wendy was born and raised and wanted to be closer to her mother. They purchased their Hayward headquarters building in 2004 and established the Hayward Fly Fishing Company.

Larry and Wendy built the Hayward Fly Fishing Company from scratch, ultimately having up to 7 guides in the field at a time, including Larry and Wendy. After 17 years of growing the business, they sold this labor of love to Stu Neville, who has guided for them for eight years. Stu is a Minneapolis native with Hayward family connections.

Despite their love of fishing for trout Wendy and Larry decided early on not to offer guided trips for trout. Their decision was partly based on economics, but more largely ethical. Much of the trout water in northwestern Wisconsin warms considerably in the summer to temperatures that exceed those that are beyond the preferred range for trout survival. In these stressful conditions hooking mortality is high, and they felt that increased fishing trips would overstress the resource. Instead, they focused on fly fishing for bass and muskie fishing, using drift boats on their local rivers. They were the first to guide for muskies from drift boats, which enabled them to successfully carve out a niche that provided nearly the year-round sustainable river fishing.

What does the future hold for Wendy and Larry? Fishing, of course, with family and friends. And they like fishing with veterans groups—they recently did a trip with Wounded Women Veterans—and will do volunteer activities in that realm. They love to teach fly fishing and are exploring other options to do that. On behalf of all fly fishers and fans, we thank them for their past support, and wish them all the best in their “retirement.”

Meanwhile the Hayward Fly Fishing Company is in capable hands and will continue to operate under Stu Neville's ownership. Stu is pleased to move into an ownership role of such a well-established shop, and is excited about where the business can go in the future. “My business here benefits from fantastic aquatic resources and water quality, and I'm committed to using the business as a platform to help educate anglers about how they can look after the water they enjoy.” Best of luck to Stu also.

## Views from this Side of My Vise

PAUL JOHNSON

When I left you last spring, I was really looking forward to summer. I was looking forward to spending a lot of time on a trout stream. I was looking forward to spending a lot of time at my little lake cabin. I was looking forward to spending evenings out on the patio with a good book. I was really looking forward to our annual fishing trip to Yellowstone after having to cancel last year due to Covid.

I really do not want to reflect back on how my summer ended up. The hot and dry conditions forced me to take a pause on my trout fishing. It is so dry at the cabin that the lake and river are very low and very weedy. I cannot even get to some of my favorite spots in my boat. Most evenings have been too hot to enjoy sitting on the patio. To add insult to injury, we ended up cancelling our Yellowstone trip due to draught conditions triggering “Hoot Owl” fishing restrictions that prohibit fishing between 2pm and midnight.

Even with all of that, I can still find solace at my fly tying desk. My tying vise does not just hold hooks — it holds potential!

Right now I am busy tying up a bunch of BWO Special dry flies. I am dreaming about a cold and damp fall day. In that dream, I can see fish rising up and sipping in my #18 dry fly. In that dream I can feel every head shake the fish makes down through my 4 weight fly rod. Even though right now it is very warm and humid, my fingers feel cold as the fish slips out of my hand and heads back to its favorite hiding spot in the stream.

Maybe that is why I enjoy tying flies so much. Tying allows my mind to forget or at least move away from all the negative things that are going on around me and just dream about the potential of the fly that I just finished tying.

# The Trico hatch: A Noble Pursuit

GREG OLSON

**H**e told me there was plenty of water and fish for both of us. I could fish one side of the run and he could fish the other. I was surprised and delighted.

This fishing trip started the previous October. Upon the close of the trout season, I decided to work on my small game: BWOs, midges, and the trico. I needed a lab, a dependable spot on the river to fish these hatches for weeks with relatively the same currents, bugs, and fish, working on different fly patterns, casts, approaches, tippet size, everything. Having found such spots on Pierce county streams, I sought a good summer trico run near our cabin in northern Wisconsin. At a November KIAP meeting I asked my table mates if they knew of a dependable trico hatch in northwest Wisconsin. Most trout fishers would sooner give up their first-born than disclose such things, so I wasn't surprised at the silence. But at the meeting's end a member from my table sidled up beside me. He glanced around and, when he was sure we were alone, whispered, "I know of a trico hatch near your cabin." I looked around, feeling like I was in a James Bond movie, and whispered back "Yes, go on."

After whispering profuse thanks to my informant, I couldn't get back to my car fast enough. I leapt to the glove box to retrieve a pen and paper to write the details of his directions, lest I forget on the drive home. My proof of insurance card now contains, around its borders, the directions to this honey hole.

Winter turned to spring and spring to summer. On home waters, I'd improved my midge and BWO fishing. At the cabin, Hendriksons and caddis had come and gone on the Namekagon, Brown Drakes on the Brule, and Hex on the White. It was time to face what Vince Marinaro dubbed the "white-winged curse." With directions in hand (now on a fresh sheet of paper), I set off before dawn one muggy August morning to fish the trico hatch. I should have done my scouting in the light of day, as forest roads in the area are woefully lacking in signage, but I finally turned on the right one. Now to find the trail to the river in the half light and dense foliage. Robert Frost may have found "two roads diverged in a yellow wood" but I found many more than two. I would start down one only to see it peter out, turn away from the river, or no longer match my information. Fearing that I would miss the hatch altogether, I stumbled upon an obvious clue...an older gentleman stringing up a fly rod roadside. I pulled up to ask, though I figured I knew the answer. Of course, he was there for the trico hatch, and as I alluded to at the beginning, he graciously asked me to join him.

I had come rigged and ready to go, and waited for him. He was very proud of the new Orvis 3wt his son had given him the year before. He must have observed me tapping my foot and glancing at my watch every 15 seconds because he remarked, "it's pretty cool this morning; we won't see tricos until 9:30." More at ease, I walked the trail with him at his leisurely pace. The trail divided and we took the one "less traveled," which I would not have done without him. At the river he pointed out a decaying bench, covered in moss and almost reclaimed by the forest. He said this location had a trico fall, though not as good as farther downstream, unless a northern wind blew the trico cloud to this location (which I have since found true). He explained that, when no longer able to wade these waters, his

dad would sit on that bench and watch him fish the hatch.

We made our way downstream and I helped him across the riffle at the head of the run. Once across, I lengthened my tippet to his specifications and tied on a small dun pattern he said would appear first. We spoke of jobs, retirement, wives, kids, and fishing. I asked what other waters and hatches he fished. I had to laugh when he said he no longer fished the steelhead run on the Brule. With the crowds and lack of courtesy, he described steelheading as "barbaric," but called trico fishing "a noble pursuit."

I became anxious as 9:30 am came and went, but within 5 minutes the trico duns arrived. I waded back across the riffle and got in position. Soon the water was boiling with fish! I frantically started casting to each and every rise, at times changing my target mid-cast. I looked across the stream and my companion was carefully packing a pipe with tobacco. "Only little ones coming up right now; wait a bit for the big ones to take notice. Oh, another thing, try to target one fish at a time," he suggested. I took a deep breath, and looked for a "confident" rise from a bigger fish. I locked on to a target, presented my comparadun, and the fish came up and ate the fly. I struck too hard and broke off. I clenched my teeth and looked to the heavens. When I looked back down, my partner was playing a nice fish. "Doesn't take much pressure to drive home a #22 hook, which is a good thing when using 6X," he said. Heeding his words I soon hooked up to a nice fish. This continued for a while and then there was a lull in the action. Soon the tricos in the cloud began to fall like snow. "Switch up to a spinner pattern," I heard from across the river. Now the fish were much more selective, but repeated casts would result in a take or put the fish down. When it was finally over, my friend opted to cross back to my side from downriver, the riffle crossing being a "bit too exciting" he said.

We continued chatting on the hike out and I thanked him for sharing both the run and his knowledge. As we wriggled out of waders, he produced a hip flask and said we must toast "this fine morning." I explained it was a bit early for me, but he insisted, saying it was a fine scotch, so I took a sip. I had happened to do a bit better than my friend during the spinner fall and I gave him my remaining few of the "hot" pattern, since he didn't tie his own. We then parted ways, hoping to see each other again. I haven't seen him since. I hope he is doing well and just avoiding fishing on the weekends, which will be my strategy in retirement.

I returned a couple of weeks later. Nearing the river, I saw fog swirling past that old bench like current in the water. I imagined I saw an old man sitting there, hands folded on top of his cane, his head wreathed in pipe smoke. He looked out upon the river and I followed his gaze to see a younger version of my friend casting to rising fish. I thought this sight would give me the "willies," but it had the opposite effect. I stopped at the bench, took a deep breath, and reviewed the lessons I learned that first day. I realized that I could see myself sitting there, hopefully many years from now. I have passed the love of trout and fly fishing to my children, and when I reach the point when I should no longer step in this stream, I am comforted knowing that I will be more than content to watch them in this noble pursuit of big fish on the tiniest of flies.



# The Fish of Season: And a Shake of the Head

PHILIP KASHIAN

It's funny how the fish I remember are often the ones I just miss. Tonight I fished the tail end of my favorite hatch, the sulphur—or, scientifically, the *Ephemerella Invaria*, for the truly nerdy folks, who have a copy of *Selective Trout* by Carl Richards and Doug Swisher on their night stands; some even own aquariums in order to watch and learn more about the life cycle of the mayfly. Sadly I am not one of those folks. But I digress.

It has been a hatch like many others I've experienced. Starting out with a smattering of bugs, then building to the height of the emergence producing a few 20-fish nights, all caught on dry flies. Sometimes the yellowish body and other times a green body; experts know the difference, whereas I usually just give it a shot and then switch when one works better than another. With a stretch of 90 plus degree days, things went downhill, in a similar yet different fashion than last year when a major flood killed off the sulphur hatch. As temperatures returned to the 70s and water temperature dropped to a less than lethal level for trout, fishing picked up and the trout seemed moderately interested, at least those 16 inchers in two fish increments.

I was bested by my partner, by four to one — somewhat gratifying for me as I have been her teacher, and truly I do get a huge kick out of her catching, however I do count. We were blessed this

early evening with a nice steady rain, much needed; where ½ inch means more to me than one more 8-inch fish.

After dropping her off at the house, blessedly across the road from our home water, I went downstream, knowing that the color of the stream was offcolor enough for my other favorite hatch, the chartreuse streamer, a go-to for me courtesy of Bob Clouser.

The downstream section I fish is usually not frequented by the fly-fishing crowds that frequent my river; fewer fish, yes, but more fish per fisherman. It's a stretch where a smallmouth may be in the offing on occasion, and it contains sandy holes that make for a cool dip.

To my delight, the fish of the season struck my streamer. I set, and saw the head and the long space between it and the tail, only to be stymied by the shake of its head. Yes, this is the lost fish I will vividly remember, 17", 18", perhaps the vaunted 20", who knows. I never will. They say better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all. Well maybe, but damn I wanted to catch that fish.

So yes, these are the fish I remember, the muskie that follows to the boat, the large mouth boil, those fish that could have been but due to fate or bad luck were not to be. Nice to know, though, that they are still there waiting.... Maybe tonight, with a mouse?



Photo by Philip Kashian



# Skip's Loose Threads

Hey, thanks for helping me carry my trusty folding chair down to the dock. It was a present from my wife. I'm a little gimpy these days, and can't walk on uneven surfaces. No more wading trout streams for me! Before we continue our conversation, let me open the old Thermos and pour us a cuppa joe. There's a fishing dock right over there behind us, beautifully built of wood with a four foot railing so the kiddies don't fall in the water, and it works fine for bait fishing with spinning rods, but it stinks to fly cast from. And if a family were to show up while I was casting, it would be dangerous for us all to be on the same platform.

How's the coffee? Notice a little twist in the taste? That stuff costs thirty bucks a bottle, but you only need a jigger or two to improve the brew. I'm using a Sage RPL four-piece seven and a half footer for a five weight line. It's thirty-five years old. How's that for a "beginner's outfit." Same size and weight I used on the Kinni in the 70's. Course in those days they didn't make them in four pieces very often, and certainly not my glass Fenwick rod. The reel isn't fancy either, just an old reliable Hardy LRH Lightweight. I remember working at Bob Mitchell's, teaching guys and gals to cast with that kind of outfit out on the lawn in the back. That was before graphite became popular and Sage came out with the 389LL in 1987, probably the finest trout fly rod ever designed. The line here is a Sage taper designed for graphite rods like the RPLs and their modern counterparts. Let me string up this baby, and we'll have some fun. Yes, my leader is hand-tied, from Trilene XL, the softest, stretchiest mono there is. Doesn't take much to sink it either, if you want that. And talk about price...you can buy 300 yards of this for the same money as a 30-yard spool of fancy, fly shop tippet material.

I'm going to use a little dry fly as a strike indicator, and tie about thirty inches of two-pound test Trilene tippet to the bend of the hook. Then we'll hang a midge larva imitation to that and hope that there's enough breeze to cause a ripple on the surface.

There are lots of good midge larva imitations. I tie mine on long-shank eighteen and twenty hooks, with a red or white glass bead for a head, a lightly dubbed body in mossy green, ribbed with copper wire, and a tiny tuft of dark green maribou for a tail. The Bluegills, Sunnies and the occasional Crappie like the look, and they have no problem eating those tiny hooks. The dry fly I use most for a strike indicator is a Parachute Adams with a bright, white wing for visibility. Want a refill on the coffee?

I'm casting into water from three to eight feet deep, letting the copper rib sink the midge larva, and keeping a close watch on my Adams. If there's a little breeze on the water, the Adams will move up and down, making the tail fly bounce in tandem, a life-like gesture that most fish can't resist. I'm using a hand twist retrieve to fish the water thoroughly, but slowly, so that the larval imitation will sink straight down from the surface fly.

There's a fish! The Adams just disappeared. I'm lifting the rod, but it doesn't take much to set the hook. When's the last time you've caught a four-inch fish? Not much fight, but notice how this one's playmates are all gathering around, trying to steal the fly from the mouth of the poor sucker who ate it. The water's so clear, you can watch everything. I guess we'll land this one sky hook style. Small but aren't they beautiful, with those dark iridescent greens against white bellies and orange chins! That's the first one of the day. I don't think I'll be bored very soon. Want a sandwich to go with your coffee?



Photo by Skip James



# THE BWO SPECIAL

**Hook:** Dry fly hook size 18-20

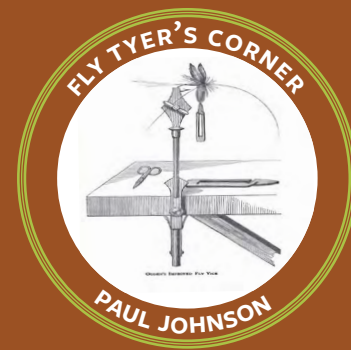
**Thread:** 14/0 Olive

**Shuck:** Mayfly Brown Zelon

**Abdomen:** Tying thred or BWO Superfine Dubbing

**Wing:** Deer Hair/Elk Hair/CDC fearthers (Dun)

**Collar:** Dun Rooster Hackle



The Bwo Special is my go-to dry fly in the early spring and again through-out the fall season. Cold and wet days seem to be the best. I will typically tie this pattern on a size 18 dry fly hook. However, I will always have some down to a size 20. Even with the small size, the fly floats very well and is typically easy to see on the water.

This fly is actually a failed attempt on my part to tie Jim Thomson's Cripple Dun. Back in 2008, I was taking a tying class at the old Bentley's Fly Shop that Jim was leading. I ended up forgetting a few of the details after the pattern, but when I asked the fish about it, they seemed to like how I changed things up.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** If you are interested in viewing more of Paul's tying expertise, search out his YouTube channel and add yourself to his growing number of subscribers. You won't be disappointed.

- Start your tying thread at the 2/3 mark and lay a base of tread back to the bend of the hook.
- Tie in a length of Zelon at the bend of the hook and tie down on top of the hook shank. Trim the tail end of the Zelon to a length about the gap of thehook.
- Spin your bobbin counter clockwise to uncord (flatten) your tying thread. Form a tapered thread body. (On a size 18 hook, you can use dubbing to form the abdomen of the fly.)
- Clean and stack a small clump of fine deer hair. Tie the deer hair in on top of the hook at the 2/3 mark. Start by making 2 loose wraps, then pull tight. Make 6 or 7 additional wraps to secure the deer hair.
- Lift the butt ends of the hair and clip off the excess, leaving just a short stub of the butt ends.
- Advance your thread to the front of the clump of deerhair. With your tying thread, form a dam in front of the deer hair to get the hair to stand up..
- Return your tying thread to the back of the deer hair clump. Prepare a rooster hackle feather by closely trimming the barbs off the stem ( 1/4" or so). Tie in the feather at the point where you originally tied in the deer hair.
- Advance your tying thread to the front of the deerhair clump. Palmer the hackle with 2 turns at the back of the clump of deer hair and 1 turn in front. Secure the hackle with your tying thread. Clipthe excess. Whip finish or make 2 or 3 half-hitch knots to tie off your thread.
- Go Fish!



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## Creel Survey Announcement

### *DNR to conduct Angler Creel Survey on Rush River.*

This year the Baldwin DNR staff is conducting an angler creel survey on the Rush River, beginning on the May 1st fishing opener and continuing to the close of the fishing season on October 15th. This survey is designed to evaluate fishing pressure, angler demographics, and harvest statistics on the river. The survey will be focused from Martel to south of El Paso. Your cooperation in this survey is much appreciated! If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact Kasey Yallaly, Fisheries Biologist, at [Kasey.yallaly@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Kasey.yallaly@wisconsin.gov), 715-977-7354.

## Hap Lutter Appeal

Suzanne Constantini, Kiap-Tu-Wish Treasurer, reports that our annual Hap Lutter Appeal is off to an excellent start. Donations are being received on a regular basis and to date nearly \$4,000 has been contributed to the appeal. Thank you to all of you that have participated so far. Your contributions will support our continued effort in the preservation of our cold water streams.

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