

SENECA

VALLEY ANGLER

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www.senecavalleytu.org

September Chapter Meeting

Wednesday, September 26, 2007

Up-County Regional Service Center
First Floor – Room A
12900 Middlebrook Road
Germantown, MD 20874
240-777-8000

7:00-8:00 p.m. — *Social Hour*

8:00-9:00 p.m. *Program*

The summer is coming to an end, school has started, and fall fishing is almost upon us. We hope you had the opportunity to enjoy some of the local coldwater fisheries since the beginning of the year. We invite you to come and meet your fellow members, share fishing stories, and learn some valuable tips. The topic this month will be:

BUGS AND INVASIVES

Susan Rivers

Biologist, Maryland Inland Fisheries

First, there are the “bugs”

As we anglers know, bugs and when they hatch are of great significance to anglers. But bugs play another important function, as they are accurate indicators of the quality of the water and its surrounding habitat. When a pollution event occurs on one of Maryland's waters, baseline data on the conditions before the pollution event occurred is essential. It is needed not only for providing evidence to establish responsibility for the pollution, but also for evaluating and determining the biological and economic damage to the stream/lake and its surrounding habitat. Susan will reveal to us the correct procedures for sampling - how she goes about collecting the bugs, and then appropriately cataloging and organizing the collected data, so that it will stand up in a court of law, if necessary.

Second, there are the “Invasives”

As many of you already know, all over the country, our fishing waters are being invaded by a wide variety of exotic species. Maryland has not been spared from this invasion or from the negative impact these

invasives inflict upon our fishing waters. For example, consider these specific events:

- An infection of the Whirling disease parasite at the Mettiki Rearing Station and Jennings Randolph Net Pens in 1996, and again at these facilities and the Bear Creek Trout Rearing Station in 2007.
- Snakeheads invading the Potomac Watershed and other Maryland waters.

In addition to the above cited invasives that have been found in Maryland, in nearby States (e.g., (West Virginia) and further north, (e.g., Vermont) there have been outbreaks of the invasive algae *Didymosphenia germinate*, more commonly known as ‘didymo’ or ‘rock snot.’

Susan will cover and expand upon the impact these invasives have on our fisheries, and will provide us with information on what practical measures we anglers can take to halt the spread and detrimental impact of these exotics.

Bring a friend or your spouse! We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Future Events

Sept 26	SVTU Chapter Meeting
Oct 17	SVTU Board Meeting
Nov 21	SVTU Board Meeting
Nov 28	SVTU Chapter Meeting
Jan 16	SVTU Board Meeting
Jan 23	SVTU Chapter Meeting and Election of Officers for 2008

Chapter Banquet/BBQ

The Board is discussing the possibility of holding the next BBQ/Auction in the second quarter of 2008. We are in need of someone to Chair/Co-chair this effort. Contact a Board member if you are interested and for information on what is involved.

This activity is the primary source of funds for the Chapter's conservation and educational activities, which include both stream conservation projects and two annual youth fishing clinics.

Attendance at the BBQ/Auction averages about 50-60 persons, including family members; therefore, the majority of our membership do not participate. Those of you who cannot attend a BBQ can show your support by making a tax-deductible donation. Make your check out to Seneca Valley Trout Unlimited and mail it to the Clarksburg address on the front of this newsletter.

Reduction in Chapter Meetings

Chapter membership ranges from 325 to 350. Despite this number, attendance at meetings is low; averaging less than 15 members and guests. Your Board of Directors, which meets monthly, has

struggled with this for years, trying to assemble interesting programs and dynamic speakers, in an effort to increase attendance. It becomes difficult to attract the best speakers when they realize how few people are likely to show up for their presentation.

We have asked for suggestions of topics that members are interested in, but have received very limited feedback. As a result, the Program Chair has no real idea what will draw more members to the meetings. Perhaps most of you are so busy that you cannot take the time to attend the meetings. We greatly appreciate the fact that the majority of the SVTU membership renews each year, and many of you (about 10%) are life members, but the Chapter can do little more than survive without your active participation in the Chapter's programs, activities, and governance – we currently have active participation of only 10-12 members (this is obvious from the repetition seen in the list of Chapter Officers, Committee Chairs, Board members, and Council Delegates below), most of whom have been actively participating for years. It's time for some others to step up and revitalize the Chapter!

Whatever the reason for the low participation, the Board has made the difficult decision to reduce the number of Chapter meetings per year, from eight to five [Sep, Nov or Dec (depending on when Thanksgiving falls), Jan, Mar, and May]. We will continue to provide two hardcopy newsletters yearly (in September and January), since most of you are not on our e-mail distribution list. In addition, we are continuing to maintain the Chapter website (www.senecavalleytu.org) (it was recently moved to a new server and is being re-done) and will send occasional e-mails about Chapter activities and programs to those who are on the e-mail distribution list. See additional articles regarding this in this issue.. We also plan to upgrade our raffles, to include some nicer prizes.

If you have a particular interest or skill, or are just willing to help, consider joining the Board or filling an Officer role to help keep your Chapter active. Contact me at 301-916-8141 or oakss@comcast.net

Stan Oaks, Jr.

Mid-Atlantic Council News

Noel Gollehon, SVTU Treasurer, is serving as Chair of the Mid-Atlantic Council of Trout Unlimited (MAC) for the current year. The Council includes the six TU Chapters in MD and the District of Columbia.

The MAC met on July 21, at Big Run State Park, in western MD. The agenda included updates on: Whirling Disease and what is being done to address it in MD; water allocations in western MD; this year's successful Youth Conservation and Fishing Camp; the TU National position on stream access issues; the Eastern Abandoned Mine Project; and the State-wide

brook trout initiative. In addition, reports were presented on: a proposed new MAC budgeting and financial planning process; the TU National leadership Council meeting; and Awards Committee nominations.

Current SVTU Officers and Board

Officers:

President – Stan Oaks
Vice President – Al Smeltz
Secretary – Charles August
Treasurer – Noel Gollehon

Board Members:

Stan Oaks Jr. (*ex officio*)
Al Smeltz (*ex officio*)
Charles August (*ex officio*)
Noel Gollehon (*ex officio*)
Leslie Gollehon '07
John Starmer '07
John Lachin '08
Nate Wallace '08
Garry Bush '09
Don Campbell '09

Committee Chairs:

Conservation Chair: Noel Gollehon
Deputy Conservation Chair: John Lachin
Program Chair: Garry Bush
Newsletter Editor: Warren C. Junium, Jr.
Education Chair: *Vacant*
Banquet Chair: *Vacant*
Membership Chair: *Vacant*
Activities Chair: *Vacant*
Fishing Trip Chair: *Vacant*

Chapter Delegates to the Mid-Atlantic Council:

Stan Oaks (*ex officio*)
Al Smeltz
Charles August
Nate Wallace
John Starmer
Ron Uleck
Vacancy

2007 Meeting / Program Review

Our January meeting agenda included a presentation by Jim Greco, a well known local fly fisherman, fly-tyer, and member of the Potomac-Patuxent Chapter. He talked about winter midge fishing, the flies and techniques to use, and demonstrate how he ties several midge patterns. In addition, the election of Chapter Officers was held (results are listed above).

William Heresniak, of Eastern Trophies Fly Fishing, was our speaker for **February**. He spoke about fly fishing in Western Maryland for Trophy Trout, Smallmouth Bass and Tiger Muskies, and the flies and the techniques that work. We were able to "see" the fruits of his labor in the reproductions of two of the

fish which have been caught on the North Branch of the Potomac River including an amazing 43" Tiger Musky.

Our **March** program included a presentation by Chaz Macdonald. Chaz showed us his unique and very effective techniques and skills that he applies to bring to net wild brook trout caught year around in limestone and freestone streams open to the public in Pennsylvania.

Shannon Moore, who leads the Watershed Management Section at Frederick County, was our speaker for the **April** meeting. She revealed locations of the various fish populations in the nearby streams and rivers of Frederick County. Shannon also elaborated on the programs she has helped establish and implement to protect and restore stream habitat in Frederick County.

Chapter Activities

American Rivers Clean-up – On April 21, some of our members participated in the American Rivers clean up. They helped clean up sections of Beaver and Black Rock Creeks, and planted some trees and shrubs along Black Rock Creek. Special thanks to all who participated.

Little Bennett Stream Walk and Cleanup – Al Smeltz, Noel Gollehon, John Lachin, Garry Bush, and Stan Oaks spent about four hours on Saturday, May 19, conducting a stream walk and cleanup on Little Bennett Creek in Clarksburg. The purpose was to become more familiar with the stream and to pick up trash along the banks and in the streambed.

Children's Fly Fishing and Conservation Clinic – For many years, SVTU and Black Hill Regional Park/MNCPPC have co-sponsored an annual Children's Fly Fishing and Conservation Clinic. This year's event took place on Saturday, July 7, from noon until 3:30 pm. We had nine participants, ages 10-16, and nine volunteers (Noel and Leslie Gollehon, Al Smeltz, Tom Wirfs, John Lachin, Mike Critzer, Vic Ezerski, Glenn Cumings [Black Hill naturalist], and Stan Oaks). The clinic included a fly tying presentation, lunch (hot dogs, snacks, and a cold drink), a presentation on fly fishing, and a fly casting demonstration. This was followed by one-on-one instruction by the volunteers. The children were taught how to use a fly rod, casting safety, how to set the hook, how to release a hooked fish. Although the fish were not particularly cooperative, everyone caught and released at least one bass or panfish, thus the clinic was a success.

SVTU Fly Tying Clinic

Several members participated in a very successful multi-session fly tying clinic given by "Professor" Vic Ezerski. We hope to have more of these in the future, if there is an interest.

Book Review: *Casting a Spell – The Bamboo Fly Rod and the American Pursuit of Perfection*, by George Black

Casting a Spell is a history of the American bamboo fly rod industry, from the development of the first bamboo fly rods by Samuel Phillippe, before the Civil War, up to now. However, it is not an all encompassing history. Rather, it focuses on what the author calls the "Catskills-Maine" tradition and is almost biblical in the genealogy of how the craft of building bamboo fly rods was passed down to several current builders. Note is given to others, such as Dickerson, in Michigan, but they are bit players on this stage.

Hiram Leonard, who used Phillippe's ideas, is the patriarch of this clan. Leonard and his craftsmen developed many of the construction techniques, including the first beveling machine and tapers still used today. Working and learning in Leonard's workshop were the Hawes (Loman and Hiram), Edward Eustis, Fred Thomas and Ed Payne, all of whom went on to develop a reputation as bamboo fly rod craftsmen in their own right. From there, Black traces how sons and cousins and nephews continued the tradition. He also introduces others who were directly influenced by this group. Some of them are well know, such as Everett Garrison and Hoagy Charmichael Jr, as well as others who are less well or unknown, yet important to the modern tradition, such as Sam Carlson, Ray Gambordella, Per Brandin, and Glen Brackett.

The author of this interesting book did not begin fly fishing until he was in his forties and developed a love for bamboo fly rods soon thereafter. He bought his first bamboo fly at an antiques mall in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Instead of a prized rod, it turned out to be a Japanese-made one that was sold in U.S. military exchanges in Japan in the early 50's; however, this did not deter Black from pursuing his interest in bamboo rods. A journalist by trade, he traveled to vintage tackle shows all over the Northeast, meeting bamboo fly rod dealers and builders, and getting introductions to people who continue to struggle to make a living constructing bamboo fly rods in the Leonard tradition.

Woven into this story is the conflict between crafting high quality rods and the need for high production rates to make a successful business. Many of the noted craftsmen were very poor businessmen and struggled to make a living making bamboo rods. Several had their reputations damaged when big

businesses bought them. Influencing the bamboo fly rod industry are well known businesses such as Abercrombie and Fitch, Spaulding, Orvis, and L.L. Bean. The most interesting in the chapter on the influence of big business is what happened to the bamboo rod production at Winston Rods, after it was bought out David Ondaatje in 1991.

Another important story within this book is how the change from Indian bamboo to Tonkin cane (*Arundinaria amabilis*, or Tea Stick), which is grown in a single valley in southern China, influenced the development of the bamboo fly rod industry, and the problems that were caused when Mao came to power and it became illegal to import bamboo from China. Compounding the shortage of *A. amabilis* was the introduction, at the same time, of inexpensive fiberglass rods. This double whammy destroyed the bamboo fly rod industry and the individual rod makers almost disappeared. Black provides an excellent history of how the knowledge and tradition were kept alive by a few dedicated craftsmen.

Black's style is much closer to John McPhee's (*Coming into the Country*, *Survival of the Bark Canoe*) than it is to John Gierach's folksy style. Black's book is thoroughly researched and well written, and will be enjoyed by anyone who is interested in bamboo fly rods and the history of their development in the "Catskills-Maine" tradition.

Submitted by Garry Bush

How to Predict the Weather Without a Forecast

Long before technology was developed to predict the weather, people had to rely on observation, patterns, and folklore to avoid being caught off guard by the elements. Though not foolproof, here are some of the methods used:

- **Check the grass for dew at sunrise.** If the grass is dry, this indicates clouds or strong breezes, which can mean rain. If there's dew, it probably won't rain that day. However, if it rained during the night, this method will not be reliable.
- Remember the rhyme: "Red sky at night, sailor's delight; Red sky at morning, sailors take warning." Look for any sign of red in the sky (not a red sun); it will not be a bold orange or red the majority of the time, but that depends a little on where you live. If you see a red sky during sunset (when you're looking to the west), there is a high pressure system with dry air that is stirring dust particles in the air, causing the sky to look red. Since prevailing front movements and jet streams usually move from west to east, the dry air is heading towards you. A red sky in the morning (in the east, where the sun rises) means that the dry air has already moved past you and what follows behind it (on its

way towards you) is a low pressure system that carries moisture.

- **Look for a rainbow in the west.** This is the result of the rising sun's morning rays, from the east, striking moisture in the west. Most major storm fronts travel west to east and a rainbow in the west means moisture, which can mean rain is on its way. On the other hand, a rainbow in the east, around sunset, means that the rain is on its way out and you can look forward to sunny days. Remember: "*Rainbow in the morning, need for a warning.*"
- **Detect which direction the wind is blowing.** If unable to immediately detect the wind's direction, throw a small piece of grass into the air and watch its descent. Easterly winds can indicate an approaching storm front, westerly winds the opposite. Strong winds indicate high pressure differences, which can be a sign of advancing storm fronts. Deciduous trees show the undersides of their leaves during unusual winds, supposedly because they grow in a way that keeps them right-side up during typical prevalent winds.
- **Take a deep breath.** Close your eyes and smell the air. A proverb says "*Flowers smell best just before a rain.*" Scents are stronger in moist air, associated with rainy weather.
- **Check for humidity.** Many people can feel humidity, especially in their hair (it curls up and gets frizzy). You can also look at the leaves of oak or maple trees. These leaves tend to curl in high humidity, which tends to precede a heavy rain. Pine cone scales remain closed if the humidity is high, but open in dry air. Under humid conditions, wood swells (look out for those sticky doors) and salt clumps (is that salt shaker working well?).
- **Watch the clouds.** Clouds going in different directions (e.g. one layer going west, another layer going north) - bad weather coming, probably hail. **Cumulonimbus clouds** early in the day and developing throughout the day - greater chances of severe weather. **Mammatus clouds** (formed by sinking air) - thunderstorm is dissipating (not forming). **Cirrus fibratus**, aka "mare's tail," high in the sky like long streamers - bad weather within the next 36 hours. **Alto cumulus clouds**, like mackerel scales - bad weather within the next 36 hours. The old sailor's saying for these types of clouds is "*Mares tails and mackerel scales, tall ships carry short sails.*" **Cloud cover on a winter night** - expect warmer weather because clouds prevent heat radiation that would lower the temperature on a clear night. **Cumulus towers** indicate the possibility of showers later in the day.

- **Observe animals.** They are more likely to react to changes in air pressure than we are. If birds are flying high in the sky, there will probably be fair weather. (Falling air pressure causes discomfort in birds' ears, so they fly low to alleviate it. Large numbers of birds roosting on power lines indicates swiftly falling air pressure.) Seagulls tend to stop flying and take refuge at the coast if a storm is coming. Animals, especially birds, get quiet immediately before it rains. Cows will typically lie down before a thunderstorm. They also tend to stay close together if bad weather's on the way. Ants build their hills with very steep sides just before a rain. Cats tend to clean behind their ears before a rain.
- **Make a campfire.** The smoke should rise steadily. Smoke that swirls and descends is caused by low pressure (i.e., rain is on the way).
- **Look at the moon during the night.** If it is reddish or pale, dust is in the air. If it is bright and sharply focused, it's probably because low pressure has cleared out the dust, and low pressure means rain. Also, a ring around the moon can indicate that rain will probably fall within the next three days. Remember: *"Circle around the moon, rain or snow soon."* Submitted by Warren C. Junium, Jr. with help from Wikipedia.

Chapter Meeting Raffles

As those of you who regularly attend Chapter meetings know, we often hold raffles for small prizes, such as fly tying supplies, hemostats, books on fly tying or fly fishing, hooks, etc. A suggestion was made at the last Board meeting that we provide some nicer prizes for the raffles, to include items such as a rod, reel, gift certificate for a new line or new waders, a fly tying vise, and fly tying tools. The first upgraded raffle will be held at our September 26 meeting. Come to the meeting to see what you can win, buy a few tickets, and enjoy the speaker and camaraderie of others interested in conserving our coldwater fisheries.

SVTU Website

Organize a special fishing outing, spread the word about a new fly, tell us about a conservation opportunity, and share your fun and serious information with your fellow SVTU members and others who visit the SVTU web site. Go to the SVTU site, www.senecavalleytu.org, click on 'Forum,' under 'PAGES' on the right side of the front page. We are up and running and I am not plagued by Russian spammers now. You will have to register again even if you were registered on the old site and do remind me if you don't get recognized in a few days. Use john@senecavalleytu.org if you need to remind me.

E-Mail Newsletter Requires Your Action

We changed our web hosting company and had to adopt a new mail list software program. On June 18 you should have received an email from Seneca Valley Trout Unlimited svtu@senecavalleytu.org entitled "Please confirm your subscription." The message explained the situation briefly and asked you to click on the internet URL that you see reproduced below:
http://scripts.dreamhost.com/add_list.cgi?g=p65mJDogjKUmn .

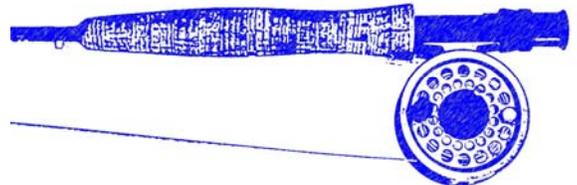
To date, only a little over 60 of you, out of over 200 who received the message have confirmed that you want to continue to receive the SVTU mailings. We can understand if you really don't want to get our Chapter information direct by e-mail but remember we only send out two of these hard copy newsletters during the year and do not announce meetings by postcard or monthly newsletter as in the past. The website does have information on meetings and other events but our mailings get that information directly into your inbox.

We plan on sending an invitation to the whole mailing list again soon or you can go back to the June 18 invitation. We urge you to confirm your interest by clicking on the URL so that we can keep you informed of meetings and social, educational and conservation activities in a timely manner.

John Starmer

Editor's Note

Contact me if you have articles, photos, fish stories, fishing/stream reports, etc. that you think might be appropriate for inclusion in the next edition of the newsletter. My e-mail address is:
wjunium1@hotmail.com



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