

# Forks Forum



Check out the web.  
No, not the one at  
the bridge that you  
look at to see what's  
hatching. I mean  
the world wide web.



*Meetings are  
held on the first  
Wednesday of  
the month, Sep-  
tember through  
June, 7:00 p.m.  
at Stockertown  
Rod & Gun Club,*

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**Forks of Delaware, Monocacy, Hockendauqua and Little Lehigh Chapters of Trout Unlimited—11th Annual Spring Event  
Stockertown Rod and Gun Club—March 16, 2013  
Doors open at 9:00—12:00—Free admission**

**Guest speaker, Jack Fekula**, from the Hockendauqua chapter of Trout Unlimited, will present a program called **“Yellowstone National Park and the Yellowstone Volunteer Fly Fishing Program”**. This presentation will feature fishing and the outstanding scenery and wildlife experienced within the backcountry of one of our most beloved national parks. Jack served as a volunteer for the Yellowstone volunteer program for several summers and has many unique experiences to share. His presentation will last about 35-40 minutes. After the presentation, the event will proceed into its most exiting part of its program—**Raffles—Raffles—Raffles**. We were very fortunate this year and received many high quality items from some of our local outfitters. A partial list follows; (Loomis 8' - 3 wt. rod, Orvis BBS II reel, various chest packs, fishing books, wading staffs, beginner fly fishing and spinning outfits, fly tying desks, many fly box with flies, lines, tippet, fly tying material and much more bundled prizes. Don't miss this event—Its always been a lot of fun and a great way to reconnect with friends and kick off the spring.

**Forks of the Delaware—Wednesday night programs  
Local activities/events**

**March 2,3 –Sportsman Show-Ag. Hall, Allentown**

The Little Lehigh chapter will be represented at the Lehigh Valley Sportsman show held at the Agri-Plex Agricultural hall in Allentown. Hunting guides, salt & fresh water fishing charters, cowboy displays & wares, boats, pop ups and trailers, ATV'S, camping gear, taxidermists, knives, guns, rifles, scopes, archery & fishing equipment, sporting seminars, new products and a small hunting & fishing swap meet to mention a few. [www.lehighvalleysportsmanshow.com](http://www.lehighvalleysportsmanshow.com)

**March 6th-Fly Tying night**

Please join us for a night of fly tying at the Stockertown rod and gun club. Bring your equipment and material and join the open format program were we share our techniques and patterns that work on the local streams such as the Bushkill, Saucon, Little Lehigh, Lehigh and Delaware rivers. We have very experienced and talented fly tying folks who love to share their experiences and knowledge.

**March 17th-Fishing and Hunting Flea Market**

Please come and support the fishing and hunting flea market held at the Stockertown Rod and Gun club. If you have items to donate, please contact Karl Loser, [kw1222@rcn.com](mailto:kw1222@rcn.com), (610) 597-4507 or bring to the March meeting

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### The 2012-2013 Officers and Board of Directors

#### **President**

Joe Baylog      jbaylog@rcn.com

#### **Vice President**

Thom Beverly (12) kbeverly@rcn.com

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**George O. Maxwell**

**Rod maker**

**Split Bamboo Fly Rods &**

**Rod making Classes**

#### Websites

National TU      www.tu.org

State Council      www.patroul.org

#### Report an Incident

To report a chemical spill or other environmental emergency, call the PA DEP Northeast region headquarters at 570-826-2511.

To contact Law Enforcement at the Southeast Region office of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, call 717-626-0228 or 855-FISH-KIL

## Presidents' message

### Runs & Ruffles- The President's Message, Spring 2013

I have contemplated how to begin my first letter to our membership for quite a while. It seems to me a president's first letter should try to bring new excitement or motivation to the group or stir it into some form of action. I've wrestled over many ideas on just how I could go about such a daunting task. Should I outline a grand and visionary plan? A detailed list of pet projects might be appropriate, or maybe I should emphasize the increasing number of challenges our local cold waters face in an effort to rally support. In the end though, what seems much more appropriate is to underscore what I believe makes our Forks of the Delaware Chapter so exceptional, the membership. I am truly lucky to have stumbled onto our group, for the relationships and friendships I've made have vastly expanded my opportunities to enjoy the sport of trout fishing and have enriched my life in total. We, as a group, are involved in many diverse projects to promote the value of and help protect our coldwater resources and I have no doubt we will continue to expand and refine those roles as time goes on.

What I would like to ask of our members is nothing more than to stop in and say "hi" when you can and take advantage of the great resource which is all of you, our chapter members. I would also encourage anyone to bring a friend to one of our meetings or events. These are great vehicles to get to know one another and a lot of fun to boot. With the upcoming occasions of the spring event, bugs and dogs, streamside meeting in June, or the summer pig roast the options and potential to get acquainted are many.

As winter slowly releases her grasp I'm sure your thoughts are taking you streamside in anticipation of the upcoming season. Maybe to a new destination you've read about, either exotic or local, or to waters you've always wanted to "get back too someday" personally Penn's creek and the Little "J" have been calling me back. If you're a fly tier you're filling your boxes, replacing the old with the new, in anticipation of this year's hatches or perhaps there is a new rod just waiting to be taken on her maiden voyage. Whatever it is I hope you have the opportunity to share some of your future experiences with your fellow members.

Finally, I would like to again thank Ryan Rush for his dedicated service to our group. Because of his leadership we are a strong and viable chapter.

Thank you for your time and I hope to see you on the water,

Joe

President—Forks of the Delaware Chapter #482

**Check out the Forks of the  
Delaware Chapter #482 Trout  
Unlimited Page on Facebook**

**www.forkstu.org**



## Past Events and Ongoing Activities

### Holiday Raffle update

The holiday raffle was a big success. All prizes were distributed and the chapter made a profit of \$495.

### October — 'My Healthy Stream' distribution

The books, "My Healthy Stream" were distributed to area schools and to the Easton Environmental Council.

### November 24 - Sober's Run-Bushkill creek tree planting

Volunteers from the Bushkill Stream Conservancy and Forks of the Delaware chapter of TU joined forces and planted some 1,000+ live stakes on two of the three PPL power line stream crossing sites in the Upper Bushkill Creek Watershed. The Forks of the Delaware volunteers included Bill Rush and his grandson, Joe Velopolcak, his daughter and friend and Kevin Cochrane.

### November — 'Trout in the Classroom' update by Brian Wagner

It seems that the survival rate at some of our Trout in the Classroom projects this year is lower than some past years despite good water quality in the aquariums. The teachable moment here of course is the comparison to survival rates in the wild. A female trout produces about 900 eggs per pound of body weight. Even though most of all fertilized eggs hatch nearly 90 percent of the wild trout fry die during the first year of life.

Tim Cunningham, science teacher at Nazareth Middle School, reports that all is well and they still currently have 250 fingerlings. They started with 327 viable eggs and 222 non-viable. Their students continue to monitor the water quality and keep it within acceptable parameters. They have examined the life cycle of trout and have used variations/mutations as they connect to their genetics and evolution units. As they get into spring, they will be making connections with the environmental unit (water quality, stream bank erosion, etc.). Bangor Middle School reported in with 381 viable eggs and 170 non-viable on the day of egg delivery on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Although the survival rate hasn't been as high, their remaining fry are healthy. Wind Gap Middle School reported in with about 40 healthy fry remaining. Wind Gap has set their release day at Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Our chapter has also provided copies of the My Healthy Stream books to all of our Trout in the Classroom schools. Prior to the egg arrival, we also supplied each school with any needed replacement equipment. Spring release dates—May 22, Wind Gap... more to come.

### 2012 Trout Redd Survey

The Forks of the Delaware chapter of Trout Unlimited conducted our fourth trout redd survey on two "control sections" of the Bushkill Creek (Northampton County) to establish baseline data, identify productive spawning sites and enhance awareness of wild brown trout spawning within the Bushkill Creek and protection of spawning sites. We did not survey in 2011 due to unfavorable stream conditions. The first survey (Section 2) was conducted on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Section 2 extends approximately 0.5 miles from the bridge at GJ Mills (lower limit) to the bridge at Edgewood Ave. (upper limit). The second survey (Section 1) was conducted on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Section 1 extends approximately 0.9 miles from the bridge at Stocker Mill Rd. (lower limit) to the bridge at Newlins Mill Rd. (upper limit).

From observations made at identified significant spawning sites, a significant portion of spawning took place the week of November 11th through the 17th. Section 1 has been very consistent with number of redds located throughout the study with all four surveys falling within the statistical error of each other. Section 2 held a similar number of redds (20) counted from 2010. A pair of trout were visible in section 2 near a redd at the end of the meadow on the Forks side during the survey. The 2008 redd survey had the highest number of redds in section 2 so far (26 redds). This may correlate to an upswing in the 2010 PFBC electro-fishing survey. 2009 had a poor redd count (11 redds) and 2010 had a rebound (20 redds). The 2012 PFBC electro-fishing survey had a dramatic downswing. Was this due to the 2009 spawn? It is difficult to determine with the amount of data collected so far. However, with an abundant amount of spawning in section 2 occurring near or in the PFBC "control" section and a good number of 7" or less trout found in their survey, will we see an upswing in their 2014 electro-fishing survey? Good question. We will have to wait and see.

There was also a large spawning area above the bridge on Bushkill Street near the city of Easton garage. There was still a pair of fish on a redd on November 18th (see cover photo of report). This area is not part of the study. This bridge had been reconstructed in 2011 and the area above and below had been used for spawning in prior years. Several redds were observed downstream from the bridge as well (underneath Route 22). Although somewhat antidotal, it appeared that a significant amount of spawning occurred later this year than in 2010, perhaps by as much as 5 days. To view the full report, go to [www.forkstu.org](http://www.forkstu.org)

## Past Events and Ongoing Activities—continued from page 3

### January 2—"Oregon Steelhead fishing" Dave Hess

Dave Hess, a Tight Lines Fly Fishing outfitter employee, gave an overview of Steelhead angling opportunities in both the summer and winter seasons. Tackle, techniques and logistics for fishing the Deschutes river, (summer), the Nehalem river, (winter), were presented. Anyone interested in more information should contact Dave at Tight Lines, (973) 244-5990. Forks of the Delaware chapter of TU thank Dave for his outstanding service and for sharing his varied and interesting experiences as well as his trip organization and fishing suggestions.

### January 14—March 14—Fly Tying class

The fly tying class has been a big success. Over 23 students are having a great time learning the techniques and skills involved in fly tying at Arndt's Lutheran Church in Forks township. Forks TU chapter president, Joe Baylog, has been the presenter to the class and Forks TU members, Thom Beverly, Steve Pacovich, Joe Velopolcak, Jerry Haas, Brian Kress, Dave Kubich, Norm Benton, Darcy Dillion, and Bill Heffner have been assisting the students.

Joe Baylog has graciously provided some of his favorite fly tying sites for anyone interested. They are noted below;

<http://www.charliesflyboxinc.com> - great site one of the best tiers in the sport with step by step instruction.

<http://www.flyanglersonline.com> - broken down into beginner, intermediate, and advanced.

<http://www.kwsu.org/Offers/FlyTying.aspx> - "The Anglers Art" series- three seasons of this program. LeRoy Hyatt is a great tier who is just fun to listen too—you will pick up some great techniques watching these programs.

**Note:** These links are also available on the Forks of Delaware TU web site.

### February 6 - Jeff Sabo PFBC biologist report

Northampton County Waterway Conservation Officer Jeff Sabo gave us an update on our streams and PFBC happenings. He mentioned that there is a pilot program which will serve as a test of providing a one-day fishing opportunity for mentored youth, prior to the traditional opening day of trout season in this region. A local opportunity is available at the Lehigh canal on March 23. See the <http://www.fish.state.pa.us/MentoredYouth.htm> web link for more details.

### February 8, 9, 10th - "Adventures in Agriculture" at the Palmer park mall

The Forks of the Delaware chapter of TU was represented at the "Adventures in Agriculture Event" at the Palmer park mall. Our chapter demonstrated fly typing and provided information on Trout Unlimited and the Bushkill creek watershed. Thom Beverly organized the event and the list of volunteers include; Thom Beverly, Bill Hefner, Rich Budihas, Dave Kubich, Joe Baylog, Brian Wagner, Norm Benton, Steve Pacovich and Joe Velopolcak.

## Something's Fishy with our Susquehanna Smallmouth Bass

# Susquehanna River Fishing In Trouble

**Susquehanna River fishing** may be in trouble. Once thought of as one of the top smallmouth bass fisheries, and also home to Walleye, Musky, Catfish and numerous other game fish, it may be in big trouble. For the past decade, fishermen who have been fishing for smallmouths over the past 40 years have noticed a change in the numbers of young smallmouth and the health of the adult smallmouth in the areas of the West Branch and Main Stem, near, above and below Harrisburg. The North Stem, up towards Scranton, appears to be not as affected.

The Susquehanna has amazing amounts of rock and the crayfish are unbelievable. If you are wading, you can literally see hundreds of crayfish scurrying around. For this reason, tubes are often a go to bait here. With the amount of sick fish being found. Many fishermen are concerned and there are numerous studies showing the effects of pollutants of the reproduction and immune systems of the fish.

The PA Fish and Boat Commission are aware of the problems but don't have the resources (or desire?) to push hard on this issue.

Here is an excerpt from the Patriot News and follow along to the original article. It is a big concern for all fishermen.

By John Arway

*Sick fish. Sick river. It's that simple. Once considered a world-class bass fishery, the Susquehanna River is plagued with disease that has been killing young-of-year smallmouth bass for almost a decade and has most recently resulted in unsightly lesions and open sores on adult bass. It is time for the Department of Environmental Protection to acknowledge the facts and add the river to the federal list of impaired and threatened waters, commonly known as the 303(d) list.*

[View the original article here.](#)

## Forks of the Delaware—Wednesday night programs Local activities/events—continued from page 1

### April 3rd-Brian Cowden

Brian Cowden, the Musconetcong Home Rivers Initiative Coordinator, will give a presentation entitled, "River restoration and protection in the Musconetcong watershed". Please come and support Brian as he presents the vital work being done on the Musconetcong river in New Jersey.

### May 1st—Bugs and Dogs

Please join our chapter as we have a cookout outside the Stockertown Rod and Gun club. Besides the grilling, picnic food and beverages, we also give casting demonstrations to beginners and discuss and catch the macro-invertebrates that we try to imitate with our flies. It's a great time to meet members within the chapter and plan and discuss your fishing trips of the summer.