

# TROUT TIMES



**Vanguard  
Chapter**

**Volume 18 Number 3      A Publication of Vanguard Chapter Trout Unlimited      [www.vanguardtu.org](http://www.vanguardtu.org)**

## Another Paint Creek Large Woody Debris Clean-Up

By Jeff Gerwitz

- INSIDE THIS ISSUE*
- Fly Tying Sessions
  - Chapter Picnic
  - Budget Fly Tying
  - Paint Creek Monitoring
  - President's Corner
  - Midwest Fly Fishing Expo
  - Membership Meetings Recap

ROCHESTER HILLS— This July the Vanguard Chapter performed another large woody debris clean-up as part of the Clinton River Coldwater Conservation Project. The CRCCP's goals are to generate public support for the Clinton River watershed as a valued recreational resource through data collection and efforts to improve water

quality, aesthetics, and access to the Clinton River and its primary cold-water tributaries.

The site was at a bridge over Paint Creek, just south of Tienken Road. In fact, this was the second clean-up at this

*Please see CLEAN-UP, next page.*

## Vanguard Chapter 2017/2018 Financial & Activity Report

By Joe Swantek

ROCHESTER HILLS— The Vanguard TU Board of Directors budget forecast for the fiscal year ending 9/30/2018 projected a loss of \$3,000. This was done in order to spend more of our invested funds to support additional conservation projects.

Here are some of our positive achievements during the past year.

Our March 2018 Michigan Fly Fishing Expo fundraiser achieved net income of \$2,521, which was the highest in the past ten years! This included \$906 in pre-sales of our raffle tickets. In fact, total ticket sales of \$1,427 was also a sales record for our Chapter.

*Please see REPORT, next page.*



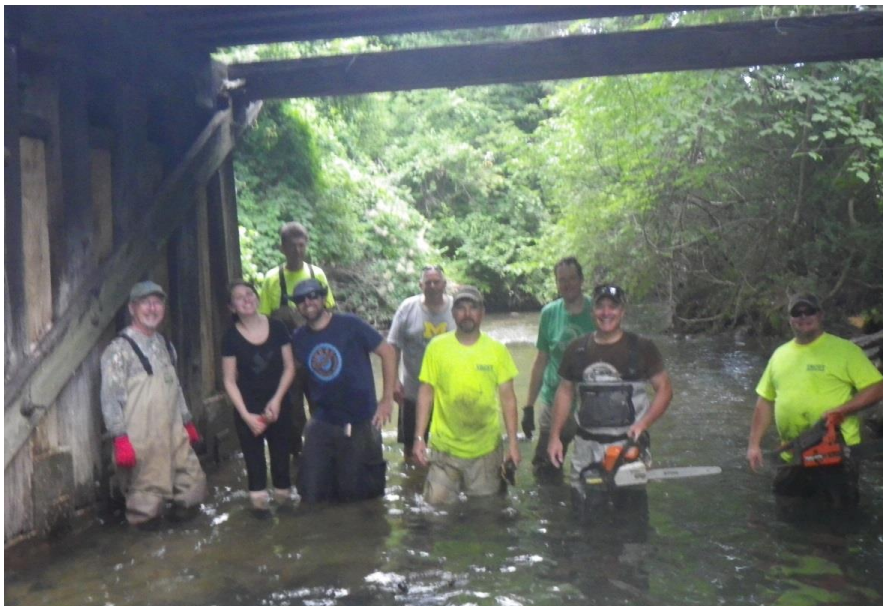
*BEFORE the clean-up.*

# CLEAN-UP

Continued from prior page.

site. This is one of the sites identified during the Chapter's 2015 large woody debris survey and was selected by the CRCCP team as one of the top 10 sites for removal. Due to the flashy nature of the creek, this bridge continuously traps a lot of wood during high-water events. I'm sure we will be back here again.

Several Vanguard members, along with Clinton River Watershed Council volunteers and Clinton Valley TU Chapter members, arrived at the trail



AFTER the clean-up.

## TROUT TIMES

Published by the Vanguard Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Joe Barker, Editor

Larry Butts, Chapter President

[www.vanguardtu.org](http://www.vanguardtu.org)

about 8:30 that morning. The "before" picture gives you a good idea of the work that we had ahead of us.

After a few hours, the site was clear and we were all ready to head home, a little tired and a lot dirty. The "after" picture shows what can be accomplished by a small group of dedicated volunteers.

The removal of large woody debris on Paint Creek will be an ongoing project for the foreseeable future. The CRCCP members plan to do two or three of these sites every year so watch your email for the dates.

# REPORT

Continued from prior page.

Our raffle prizes were donated, which helped to reduce our overall expenses. Our major cost was the \$287.50 booth rental, which had been split with Vanguard Fly Tying, Joe Barker's fly tying enterprise.

At the Expo, we signed up four new Vanguard Chapter members for which we will be reimbursed for by National TU during our next fiscal year.

During July 2018, we also sponsored one youngster to attend the Michigan TU Youth Camp.

Our Chapter received a \$2,500 Habitat Grant from the Michigan Fly Fishing Club to be used for restoration work on Paint Creek during 2018 thru 2020.

Team members from Vanguard completed a number of large woody debris management surveys and removed woody debris on Paint Creek from Lake Orion to Gunn Road. Over 60 sites were identified, photographed, and located via map coordinates from CRWC.

In support of the Clinton River Watershed Council, Vanguard members also helped remove large woody debris sites in the spring and the fall on Paint Creek.

Our Chapter members also supported the Upper Black River Association by improving an access site on the Sturgeon River.

Our annual Riverview Resort Spring Chapter outing on the banks of the Au Sable River achieved record attendance and contributed to our income stream.

The Vanguard Chapter monthly fly tying sessions continued to be very popular and well attended.

The Chapter signed up 37 new members through TU's First-Year Membership Initiative.

Please see *REPORT*, next page.



## AU SABLE RIVERVIEW RESORT

- 20 Miles East of Grayling, MI - 20 Miles West of Mio, MI
- Picturesque Lodge/Resort on Au Sable River at McMasters Bridge
- Unmatched Scenery!
- Lodge, Cabins, Loft available Daily, Weekly, Weekends
- For current Pricing Visit: [www.ausablecabins.com](http://www.ausablecabins.com)
- Call: (989) 344-2164 or Toll Free (855) 687-9501
- Email: [cabins@ausablecabins.com](mailto:cabins@ausablecabins.com)



# FLY TYING SESSIONS KICK OFF

By Jeff Gerwitz

ROCHESTER HILLS— This year's fly tying sessions started in October and we tied the Parachute Adams, which is one of my favorite flies, second only to the Woolly Bugger. The following is some history of the fly, courtesy of Wikipedia and the Simpson Fly Fishing website.

The Adams is a traditional dry fly primarily used for trout. It is considered a general imitation of an adult mayfly, flying caddis, or midge. It was designed by Leonard Halladay from Mayfield, Michigan, in 1922 at the request of his friend Charles Adams. The Adams has been considered one of the most popular, versatile, effective and best-selling dry flies since its creation.

Originally, the Adams had a tail of golden pheasant tippet fibers. Its wings were made of grizzly hackle, which were pointed forward. But over time, it was transformed into a Catskill-style fly with upright wings and a hackle fiber tail. It is still tied and fished in that fashion today, nearly 100 years after its origin.

The Adams has been tied with a variety of materials and variations. The most common variation is the Parachute Adams where

the hackle is tied parachute style around a wing base of white calf hair. The variation gives the fly greater buoyancy and visibility in rough water. Other variations include spent wings, down wings, females tied with a yellow body tag resembling an egg sac, and hair wings with different tailing material such as elk, deer, or moose.



The parachute style of fly tying developed independently in both America and Scotland. In Scotland, the concept of wrapping the hackle horizontally is attributed to Helen Todd. She was an employee of Alexander Martin, a fly fishing company in Glasgow. After reading an article in an American fly fishing magazine that described tying hackle "divided and spent," she conceptualized wrapping the hackle horizontally to achieve the same effect.

To facilitate tying the parachute fly, Martin designed a hook with a metal post. He used a sproat hook and placed the post about 1/3 back from the eye. The hackle was wound about the metal post. He applied for a patent in 1931 and it was approved two years later. The hook was advertised and sold as the "ride-rite" hook. House of Hardy, the famous English fly fishing company, began to sell both the hooks and parachute fly patterns in 1934.

The parachute patterns were noteworthy for landing upright on nearly every cast and being very visible to the fly fisher. But the hooks were on the heavy side and, consequently,

the fly did not float well. Therefore, their popularity was short-lived.

Nearly forty years later in 1971, Swisher & Richards published their noteworthy book, "Selective Trout." They advocated the effectiveness of

**Please see ADAMS, next page.**

## REPORT

Continued from prior page.

We gained addition revenue of \$1,484 from our participation with the Clinton Valley TU Chapter's annual banquet and another \$404 from our membership meetings' 50/50 raffles and auctions.

In addition to the above mentioned achievements, we made significant monetary contributions to the following organizations that support our conservation efforts: Michigan TU, Clinton River Watershed Council, Dinosaur Hill Nature Center, and the DNR Staff House at the Pigeon River State Forest.

Our first ever LADY ANGLERS IN ACTION event was a huge success!! Twenty-five new lady anglers participated in the event held at Van Hoosen Farm in Rochester Hills.

The Chapter was also involved in Adopt-A-Stream monitoring on Paint Creek, Gallagher Creek, and Stoney Creek, and did plantings on Paint Creek at Kern Road. Sediment monitoring was performed at three sites on Paint Creek and 16 woody habitats were installed.

We assisted with the release of salmon in the Clinton River as part of our support for the Salmon in the Classroom Program.

Gross revenue for the fiscal year ending 9/30/2018 was \$11,267.28 with expenses of \$12,807.90. As of 9/30/18, we have a bank account balance of \$4,720.07.

As of this writing, our preliminary budget forecast for the fiscal year ending 9/30/19 is still being finalized.

We will continue to support and make contributions to organizations that support our local and statewide conservation efforts. The Board of Directors are in the process of reviewing addition sources of revenue to support our partner organizations.

If any of our members have any ideas to generate addition revenue, we would like to hear from you.

# ADAMS

Continued from prior page.

flush-floating flies. The parachute fly was among the several patterns felt to be most effective. Rather than using a special hook, they created a post made of deer or calf hair, which kept the fly light. Today, CDC feathers and artificial materials such as Antron are frequently used as well.

Monthly fly tying sessions are held on the third Tuesday of each month at Avery's Tavern in Rochester Hills at 7:30 p.m. Avery's Tavern is located in the shopping center at the northwest corner of Crooks Road and M-59. Sessions are about two hours long. Sessions in November and December may be rescheduled depending on the holidays. The tying session dates can be found on the Vanguard Chapter website's calendar.

The plan this year is to tie flies that are simple with no more than three materials. All materials will be provided. Bring your vise and tools if you have them. The Vanguard Chapter has several sets of tying equipment that can be used by participants. Experienced tyers, total beginners, and all experience levels in between are welcome at these sessions. Please stop by and join in the fun!

**VANGUARD CHAPTER  
OFFICERS/BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*President*  
Larry Butts..... (248) 408-8595

*Vice President*  
Vacant

*Treasurer*  
Joe Swantek..... (586) 214-6015

*Secretary*  
Tom Lasek..... (248) 686-6233

*Directors*  
Scott Hummon..... (248)318-3770  
Ron Elzerman..... (248) 656-3591  
Ron Deaton..... (248)408-7483  
Mary Rosenbusch..... (248) 375-0892  
Nina Marci.....(586) 413-3344  
John Sabina.....  
Eli Stanesa.....(586) 413-3344

*Advisors*  
Tom Quail.....(248) 495-2615  
Jeremy Geist..... (248) 877-7256  
Michelle Dunham.....

# CHAPTER PICNIC KICKS OFF FIRST OF MONTHLY MEETINGS

By Jeff Gerwitz

ROCHESTER—The first monthly membership meeting of the fall season was a family picnic on Sunday, September 16, at noon at Rochester Park. The small pavilion near the main entrance served as the gathering spot.

The chapter provided hot dogs, brats, pop, and water (sorry, no alcohol was allowed in the Park). Members were asked to bring a dish to pass and a folding chair for their comfort.

Members had the opportunity to fish in Paint Creek and the pond before and after the picnic. If they didn't have fishing gear, there was gear that could be borrowed.

About thirty or so Vanguard members and their families showed up for a really nice afternoon. The weather was great and the food was even better. The brats and dogs were complimented by a lot of salads and desserts brought by the members.

The best part was the "Uncle Paul's Brookies" made by member Paul Breaugh. These desserts are out of this world. Hopefully he will bring them again next year.



# FLY TYING ON A BUDGET

By Joe Barker

KALAMAZOO—Tying one's own flies rather than buying them at a fly shop has a couple significant upsides. Instead of paying more than a couple bucks for a single fly, you can tie your own for a fraction of the cost. Second, there is the satisfaction in catching wily trout on a fly you've tied yourself.

There is an initial investment that needs to be made if you don't already tie flies. A good fly tying vise is the most significant cost. But you don't need to break the bank. My first vise that lasted for years and tied thousands of flies before the jaw wore out was a Thompson "A" vise that cost less than \$20. My current vise is a bottom of the line Regal vise that will now set you back about \$150. It's the second Regal I've owned. I always opted to include a solid metal base with my vise rather than rely upon a clamp on model. A base provides much more versatility in where you can tie flies. The Regal base itself is overpriced so look for a cheaper substitute.

The second most important items are the fly tying tools. A good pair of scissors is imperative. Dr. Slick makes some of the best for under \$20. I break all the rules with my scissors and cut lead wire and all other sorts of materials that will dull most scissors, but the Dr. Slicks maintain their sharpness for years and hundreds and hundreds of flies

Bobbins (which hold your thread), bodkins (the fine needle to pick out hackle and apply glue), and threaders (to feed the fly tying thread through the bobbin) are pretty much interchangeable so go with the cheapest. Speaking of glue, I don't use any on the head of my fly except for some parachute style patterns. If you want to use some, go to the dollar store and buy some fingernail polish. You'll save a couple bucks and it won't dry up as fast.

Please see *FLY TYING*, next page.



# Paint Creek: Important Monitoring Project

By Stan Roland



ROCHESTER— Michigan Trout Unlimited and its Vanguard Chapter are monitoring sediment in Paint Creek.

“Long-term sediment monitoring is a protection tool for Michigan streams. Sediment is the most prevalent pollutant in the state of Michigan. Excessive inputs of sediment can bury critical spawning gravel, limit food sources through the loss of habitat for macroinvertebrates, create monotonous habitat, and generally degrade the health of a stream. Because those impacts are great and sediment is a very common pollutant, it is critical to monitor our healthy streams to ensure sedimentation is not becoming a problem.” --Michigan Trout Unlimited River Stewards Program Long-Term Sediment Monitoring, Section 1.1.

Kristen Thomas, aquatic biologist with Michigan Trout Unlimited, trained twelve Vanguard members in sediment monitoring techniques in mid-July of 2018.

Four Paint Creek sites were chosen and marked with rebar stakes and/or GPS, photographs, and compass

bearings. Sites chosen were in the middle to downstream third of a riffle or rocky run.

One hundred samples were taken from the river bottom at each site. Typically, a sample was taken every three to four inches across the width of the river. Samples were then categorized by size from silt to boulders, or as bedrock or woody debris.

Eli Stanesa, Conservation Chairperson for the Vanguard Chapter, expects that samplings will be taken once each year in mid-July. Data will be shared with Michigan Trout Unlimited for analysis and storage.

At MITU, “particle sizes will be plotted and reviewed. Trends in particle size will be noted so as to identify areas where deposition of fine sediment may be occurring. If deposition appears to be an emerging problem, steps to identify and mitigate sediment inputs into the stream should be taken.”--IBID Data Analysis, Section 1.2.

Vanguard members are committed to protecting and preserving Paint Creek.

## FLY TYING

Continued from prior page.

In terms of fly tying materials, a good hook designed for fly tying is the foundation on which the fly will stand. But there is no need to get carried away with a top of the line hook. I've always defaulted to Mustad hooks which are the industry standard and the most reasonably priced. You'll not catch more fish or tie better flies with more expensive hooks. You can usually buy a pack of 50 Mustads for under \$7. Hook and Hackle Fly Tying sells their own versions for less than that. You'll usually pay twice as much for other brands of hooks. Start off buying only the type of hook (dry, wet, nymph, scud, streamer, etc.) in the size (#10, #12, etc.) you want to tie of a particular fly rather than going crazy with all shapes and sizes of hooks

The most significant fly tying material is a good grade of hackle. If there is any one thing that improves your fly tying and the look and effectiveness of your flies, it's a good grade of hackle. Unfortunately, it can get expensive. Whiting Hackle (formerly Hoffman) is the top of the line. The best way to beat the high cost is to limit the initial hackle purchase to the size and color you want to use. For example, if you want to tie some Hendricksons, dun colored hackle for a size 10 or 12 hook is all you need. Rather than spend anywhere from \$45-\$90 for a neck (which does offer a number of different sizes of hackle), Whiting offers “100 Packs” in specific sizes and colors. For \$20, you'll be able to tie at least a hundred flies.

For a Hendrickson fly, you will need longer hackle for the tail. Cheap Chinese rooster necks for that purpose can be bought for \$15 and will last forever. Wood duck feathers for wings and muskrat fur for the body of a Hendrickson will set you back a total of \$5 and tie hundreds of flies. Thus, excluding your original investment in equipment, tying your own flies will cost about 50 cents each. Shop Amazon or eBay for materials and save more.

# PAINT CREEK TROUT HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

By Eli Stanesa

ROCHESTER— Early this year, the Board of Directors of Vanguard Chapter voted to create the Paint Creek In-Stream Trout Habitat Restoration Project. The principal goals of the Project are to improve trout habitat in the stream and to improve the management of large woody debris within the stream.

The Project is intended to extend over several seasons and evolved out of the In-Stream Habitat Assessment completed by Michigan TU in October 2016. One of the conclusions of this Assessment was that the section of the stream between Tienken Road and the Clinton River is seriously deficient of in-stream fish habitat.

In April, the Michigan Fly Fishing Club generously awarded the Chapter \$2500 towards the Project cost and the process of obtaining the necessary Michigan Department of Environmental Quality permit was initiated. The first phase of the Project focused on the part of the stream behind Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve in the City of Rochester.



Figure 1.

The MDEQ permit was issued in late July and covered installation of 16 log habitat structures in the area shown in Figure 1. The log habitat structures installed consisted of 12” diameter, 10’ to 20’ long logs, which were strategically located and permanently secured to the bed of the stream.

All the logs were cut to length from downed trees on the site. Holes were drilled in the logs and then they were secured to the stream bottom with steel rods. The locations of these structures are shown schematically on Figure 2, below.

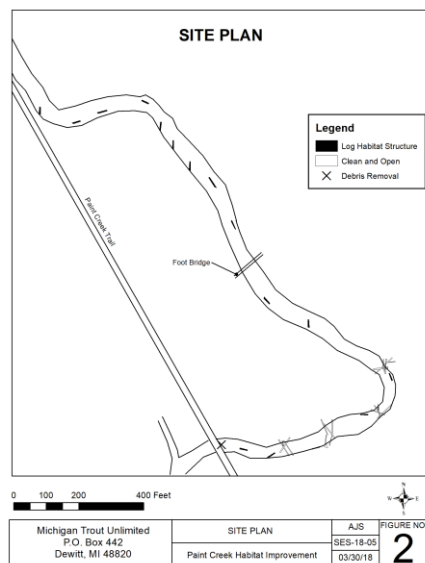
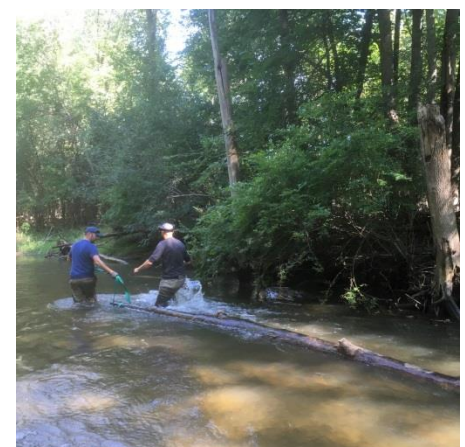
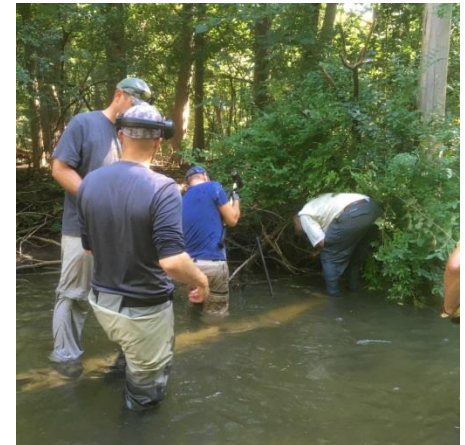


Figure 2.

To complete the work, the Chapter engaged Streamside Environmental Services, an experienced environmental consultant, and worked with Kristin Thomas, Michigan TU’s aquatic biologist. The installation was done during August and September. See photos below.

The total in-kind voluntary services of Vanguard Chapter, Michigan TU, and Clinton River Watershed Council was approximately 120 hours. The total cost was \$4,023.

Next year, working with Michigan TU, the Chapter plans to measure the trout population of this section of the stream using electro-shocking techniques. It also will seek a grant from the Embrace-A-Stream Program established by Trout Unlimited National to continue the Project in other sections of the stream in 2019 and 2020.





# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Larry Butts



While we make no effort to hide our love for trout fishing and life in the great outdoors, Trout Unlimited is first and foremost a conservation organization. Without the volunteer efforts to improve our coldwater fisheries over the past 50+ years, trout fishing would not be what it is today.

If you look back at photos in many of the Michigan DNR facilities you will see the wreck and ruin caused by the logging industry 100 years ago. In fact, there are still logs submerged in some of our rivers from those days. Logging scoured the stream beds, leaving few places where fish could spawn and their eggs be fertilized and survive.

In the past several years, the Vanguard Chapter, working in cooperation with other TU chapters, the Clinton River Watershed Council, and other conservation groups in Michigan, has made significant improvements. Locally, in our home waters of Paint Creek, we have surveyed large sections, identifying several locations in need of woody debris removal where it hindered the health of the stream, and planted woody debris in the same creek where it was needed to provide shelter for fish and retard erosion from the banks. This past summer we completed several projects along Paint Creek and are currently reviewing plans for next season's follow-up.

Over the past few years, local TU Chapters worked to have an old dam removed on Paint Creek that prevented fish passage upstream and cool water from flowing downstream to refresh the stream. Several years ago in Rattlesnake Creek near Atlanta, Michigan, we hauled stone to rebuild two spawning beds and within two months received photographs showing fish spawning on those beds.

In addition to our work in Paint Creek, we have had an annual work project in the Pigeon River area removing beaver dams, repairing erosion from access points, and installing new access to prevent erosion from recurring.

At the state level, Michigan TU, in support of the Anglers of the Au Sable, was successful in stopping the Henrietta Hill Fish Farm from raising fish commercially at an old hatchery in Grayling. Instead of the 300,000 fish that Henrietta Hills planned to raise to maturity, and the associated antibiotics and effluent from those fish, a settlement will return the hatchery to an educational facility and historical landmark.

I could on for pages, but my point is that while conservation is great for fishing and generally improves the ascetics of the surrounding area, the larger issue is the realization of how important clean, clear water is to our lives.

Too often water is taken for granted and some will even argue that "it does not matter if the rivers are polluted; we get our drinking water from pipes that come from the water and sewer department." The work continues as there is still much to do. As members we hope you will support our continuing conservation work by volunteering for one or more of our upcoming projects or by donating money to help pay for the professional planning and materials. If each of our members would contribute at least \$10 each we would be well on our

way. You can contribute at our website [www.vanguardtu.org](http://www.vanguardtu.org) using our PayPal account.

## Recent Actions by the Board of Directors

Conservation Chair Eli Stanesa is working with Michigan TU Aquatic Biologist Kristen Thomas to determine our plans for the upcoming year on Paint Creek. The work that we completed this season required significant assistance from our contractor both in labor and planning the installation of woody debris in selected areas of the creek.

It was also unanimously agreed to sponsor long time Salmon in the Classroom (SIC) instructor Jon Gray, who was our first SIC teacher that we sponsored. Having learned what to do and not to do in setting up the tanks and the program in general, we have agreed to pay \$250 toward his attending a symposium on SIC so that he can continue to help this program to grow statewide and hopefully encourage kids to be better connected to our environment.

Our annual Christmas Party will be held Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, at Avery's Tavern on Crooks Road near M-59 in Rochester Hills.

We will once again host Lady Anglers in Action next July. This program was a great success and one that we hope will lead to increased membership among women.

Please check our website for other upcoming events as we are able to confirm dates and activities.



**VANGUARD FLY TYING**  
 Joe Barker  
 Phone: (586) 206-1414  
 E-Mail: [jvngdrflytyng@aol.com](mailto:jvngdrflytyng@aol.com)  
 Facebook: Vanguard Fly Tying

**CUSTOM FLY TYING and FRAMED  
 SALMON, STEELHEAD & TROUT FLIES AT  
 AFFORDABLE PRICES.**

## VANGUARD WILL AGAIN BE AT MIDWEST EXPO

By Larry Butts

WARREN—Vanguard Chapter will once again be selling raffle tickets for \$5 each for a chance to win one of two great prizes at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo on March 9 and 10, 2019, at the Macomb Community College South Campus at the corner of 12 Mile and Hayes in Warren.

This is the Vanguard Chapter's main fundraiser for the entire year and supports our coldwater conservation work that is the primary mission of Trout Unlimited. We will begin selling tickets this month and they will be available at our monthly meetings, fly tying sessions, and online at our webpage – [www.vanguardtu.org](http://www.vanguardtu.org) through PayPal.

Please plan to buy a couple for yourself and sell several to your friends. Selling tickets in advance of the Expo has proven to be the most successful approach to fundraising.

First prize in the raffle will be a weekend for two at the Au Sable Riverview Resort across from the boat launch at McMasters Bridge near Grayling, Michigan. The cabin includes all the modern amenities with a kitchen, eating area, private bedroom, and a screened porch overlooking the river.

Second prize is a Sage 5wt., 9' long, graphite fly rod and case with a Sage model 2250 reel and line from RIO. Retail value is \$1,118.

The Expo is a great opportunity for Vanguard to recruit new members and provide information to the public regarding our conservation efforts.

It also is a great time to shop for the latest fly fishing and tying equipment and materials. Seminars provide a wealth of fly fishing information and insight for all levels of fishers.

## MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS RECAP: THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE MUDSNAIL THREAT

By Larry Butts

ROCHESTER HILLS— October began our new fiscal year as a Chapter with our election of officers and board of directors. The complete list can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.

We mark a smooth transition with the election of Larry Butts as president replacing Jeff Gerwitz, who did a great job over the past two years. New to our board is Nina Marci, the second lady on our board, and John Sabina, a former president of the Chapter. Michelle Dunham from Van Hoosen Farm has joined us as an advisor.

At our November meeting, Jeremy Geist, Great Lakes Restoration Manager for TU National and a Vanguard member, gave a presentation on the state of invasive species in our Michigan rivers and streams. In particular, Jeremy discussed the spread of the New Zealand Mud Snail (NZMS), which are so tiny they can become trapped in boots and gaiter guards on waders without being noticed.

Currently, the most successful treatment to kill these snails and disinfect your equipment is to thoroughly wet your gear in full strength Formula 401 and allow it to remain on these items for at least 20 minutes before rinsing off. It is important to disinfect your waders and boots before moving to another stream.

The New Zealand mudsnail has no natural predators or parasites in the United States and consequently has become an invasive species. Densities have reached greater than 300,000 individuals per m<sup>2</sup> in the Madison River in Montana. It can reach concentrations greater than 500,000 per m<sup>2</sup>, endangering the food chain by outcompeting native snails and water insects for food, and leading to sharp declines in native

populations. Fish populations suffer because the native snails and insects are their main food source.

Mudsnails are impressively resilient. A snail can live for 24 hours without water. They can, however, survive for up to 50 days on a damp surface, giving them ample time to be transferred from one body of water to another on fishing gear. The snails may even survive passing through the digestive systems of fish and birds.

First detected in the United States in Idaho's Snake River in 1987, the mudsnail has since spread to the Madison and Firehole Rivers, and other watercourses around Yellowstone National Park. Samples have been discovered throughout the western United States. Although the exact means of transmission is unknown, they are likely introduced by water transferred with live game fish and has been spread by ship ballast or contaminated recreational equipment such as wading gear.



Mudsnails have now spread from Idaho to most western states of the U.S., including Wyoming, California, Nevada, Oregon, Montana, and Colorado.

Environmental officials for these states have attempted to slow the spread of the snail by advising the public to keep an eye out for the snails, and bleach or heat any gear which may contain mudsnails. Rivers have also been temporarily closed to fishing to avoid anglers spreading the snails.

The snails grow to a smaller size in the U.S. than in their native habitat, reaching 6 mm (¼") at most in parts of Idaho, but can be much smaller making them easy to overlook when cleaning fishing gear.



# CROSSING THE BORDER FOR GREAT TROUT FISHING

By Joe Barker

CALGARY, CANADA—For the last two years, six intrepid members of Trout Unlimited, including the Vanguard Chapter, have explored the hinder regions of Alberta and British Columbia, Canada, in search of great trout fishing. No one has been disappointed. In fact, the fishing has been so impressive that a third trip is being planned for 2019.

The immediate advantage of fishing in the Canada region just north of Glacier National Park is that it has largely escaped the fires and drought conditions that have plagued so many parts of the American West. Lower snowmelt in the American Rockies has decreased water flows and higher temperatures have stressed many iconic Western streams such as the Big Horn, Yellowstone, and South Platte to the extent that they sometimes have to be closed to fishing.

That hasn't been the case in Canada at this point, although the impact of climate change there too will only be a matter of time. In the meantime, water flows in many of Western Canada's famous streams are running pretty much normal. In fact, high water has been more of a problem than low water conditions.

By fishing in late July, the group has experienced one of the more relished mayfly hatches: Green Drakes. This rather reliable and significant mayfly looks like an oversized Blue-Winged Olive that we are familiar with in Michigan, but run in sizes 10-12 rather than their minute Midwest counterparts.

The Oldman, Castle, Crowsnest, Elk, and Bull Rivers can be counted on to deliver a Green Drake spinner fall and emergence almost every evening, weather permitting.

However, fly fishing is not restricted to only the evening. Westslope

Cutthroat and Rainbows are the primary trout species, along with a few reclusive Bull trout. They are willing to slam a well-placed attractor pattern during the day. Nymph patterns will also work before the evening Green Drakes appear for their mating dance.

Hammering streamers against the bank is also a fruitful alternative, especially on the Bow River in Calgary, which has served as the initial landing spot for the trip. The Bow can be kind or stingy depending on her mood and weather conditions.

The first year, high water threatened to dampen expectations. However, it turned out to be a blessing as both huge Browns and Rainbows slammed tandem streamers with abandon. Several fish more than 20 inches were boated on the float trip down the big river.

The second year required much more work and success was hit and miss even though weather and water conditions seemed much more favorable. Part of the problem was that those same conditions spawned a drift boat hatch that put more pressure on the fish.

The Bull River remains one of my favorites since it is off the beaten path and has much more limited access than the Elk River, which runs through the scenic ski town of Fernie, B.C.

Getting to the Bull River is an adventure in itself. From Fernie brave souls can travel up and over forested ridges on a narrow logging road, sometimes only wide enough for a single vehicle with no guard rails, for almost an hour before catching a glimpse of the clear, cold waters of the Bull.

Even though a dirt road runs along much of the river, access is limited to a few spots. Fortunately, the difficulty in

getting to the river keeps the number of fishermen at bay. Once the river warms up in the afternoon, the river comes alive with Western Cutthroats. Although the fish are not fools, they can be forgiving. If you miss them the first time, give them a few minutes and they will be back.



*A Bull River Westslope Cutthroat.*

This last year, the group discovered a gem of a stream in one of the most scenic areas of Alberta: the Livingstone River. This stream is special since it is completely a catch-and-release sanctuary for Western Cutthroats and carves through a remote canyon section of the province. The area is popular with campers and horseback riders, but fortunately doesn't experience a lot of fishermen.

Like the Bull River, access is limited to a few locations because of the steep canyon walls and the distance of the only dirt access road from the stream. However, the Livingstone is much smaller than the Bull, which allows for easy fishing and crossing. Also, the Livingstone cutthroat have a knack for hitting any fly that passes near them no matter what time of day because of the high mountain nature of the stream. Got to love that!



*Getting ready to embark on the Livingstone.*