



TU Western Driftless

Hotline



Editorial by Carl Berberich

Minnesota's trout fishing Catch and Keep season opened on Saturday April 12. It was wildy successful. Many many people were out fishing. Here is a picture of below the dam in Lanesboro. However, there was not large groups of aquatic insects hatching out, as there has been in the past.



Another event the happened was on Monday April 21. This was an informational hearing on [SF3083](#), a bill to regulate neonic treated seeds. Neonics are routinely found in Minnesota streams at levels harmful and lethal to aquatic insects yet neonic-treated seeds are not regulated. Protecting and improving our trout fisheries requires we act to protect and improve the aquatic insect populations that trout depend on.

At this time, it would have been very helpful if our very good friend Jeff Broberg could have attended that meeting. Jeff was scientific geologist, known state-wide and was considered a giant on Minnesota's conservation scene, and he died Saturday, April 12 from complications of pancreatic cancer.



In a Facebook post on March 29, Jeff shared his cancer diagnosis and thanked friends and family for their prayers. He said he was waiting for more details from the Mayo Clinic and asked for time to process the news. The disease progressed quickly, however, and two weeks after the social media post, he passed away (April 12).

This was quite a surprise, and he will truly be missed by many. He lived on a farm located on the headwaters of Trout Run, just outside of Whitewater SP.

Hiawatha TU April Meeting

By John Weiss, HTU Board member

Luke Pfeffer of Root River Rod Co. spoke to us *April 7* about spring hatches. He's a full-time guide and works in the shop. He said he has fly fished for about 20 years and he's been guiding with drift boats for about four years, even on the Zumbro River in Rochester.

We are coming into the prime time for hatches, he said. When they happen, trout feed selectively. The mayflies, caddis, stoneflies, midges and terrestrial are all trout food, with midges the majority of trout food in winter; they work any time.

March, look for blue-winged olive mayflies, especially on cloudy cool day. There are no terrestrials to speak of.

In April, it's BWO and black caddis soon. May, the majority are sulphur pale morning duns and green caddis

He showed a chart, much like the Bartz Charts, of what to look for and when (see accompanying photo)

And don't forget streamers, it's the meat hatch. "Streamers are always working," he said, even mid winter and the heat of summer.

One interesting thing he noted was that he likes utilitarian flies, nothing fancy.

To find out what to use, slow down, watch the stream, look for what's in the air or on the water, he said. But there could be a masking hatch when one bug is in the air but trout are keyed in on another one.

Matching size is really critical and get a clean drift. "I will change my tippet before I change my fly," Pfeffer said.



At times, something below the surface is what fish are keying on, more emergers.

Streamers mimic prey species. Early on, they might be one inch but grow bigger when summer comes along.

it takes some nuances at time, such as clipping off part of the hair of a fly so it rides lower in the water like an emerger. Or he will use a longer tippet or a smaller one. It's more of a shotgun approach. "I'm a big fan of smaller flies, especially when it comes to midges." haystack is great.



What are threats?

Pesticides are a big thing, especially neonics now. And habitat loss as well as pollution.

QUESTIONS:

Hendricksons are around but not nearly as prolific as they once were.

Brown drakes are around, and they bring out the bigger trout. They come out in early June usually. Around size 10, best when sun is going down.

Yes, there are muskies in the Zumbro River. They have come up to the Rochester dam and are also in the river below Lake Zumbro dam.

5-weight rods are most versatile, but you need much heavier one for muskies. At times, he can fish for two species in a day, such as trout around Lanesboro until the North Branch Root comes in and then it's smallmouth. Or he fishes trout in the morning and Smallies in the afternoon.

The image shows a "Seasonal Hatch Chart" table with the following data:

Month	Mayflies	Caddis	Stoneflies	Midges	Terrestrials
March	BWOs	Not Typical	Early Black Stones	Yes	No
April	BWOs, Hendricksons	Black		Yes	No
May	Sulphurs, PMDs	Green Caddis	Yellow Sallies	Yes	No
June-July	PMDs, Cahills, Brown Drakes	Tan, Green Caddis	Golden Stones	Yes	Yes
August	Tricos	Tan Caddis	Yellow Sallies	Yes	Yes
Sept-Oct	BWOs	Tan Caddis	No	Yes	No

TCTU April News

By Bob Luck, President of TCTU

April Chapter Meeting with Bill Sherck

We have a special chapter meeting planned on Monday, April 28th at 7 pm at the Fat Pants Brewing Company in Eden Prairie and online via Zoom.

Bill Sherck is a long-time, outdoor television producer and show host with a soft spot for both trout streams and fly rods. Over 30 years in the journalism business, he's earned 30 Emmy Awards for his unique style of outdoor storytelling. Bill will join us to share some of his favorite stories about trout fishing, trout stream conservation, and the characters he has met along our streams.

If you have already registered, see you there! If not, please click [here](#) to register.



TCTU Adventures are back!

When: Thursday evening May 15 through Sunday May 18. Stay one, two, or three nights or just come for a day to fish!

Where: [Maple Springs Campground](#)

Join us for an informal fishing trip where we will meet the TU Mid Missouri Chapter on their annual Driftless Region trip. This is a DIY social trip designed to bring members together for camping and fishing fun. The campground is located near Forestville State Park just west of Preston.



There are no formal activities planned but expect a Saturday happy hour to share fishing tales and perhaps an MN vs Mid-Mo cornhole or bocce match. We will also be recruiting some hosts to help out less-experienced anglers.

We'd love to have a few folks from WinCres, Hiawatha, or Iowa join us. For details and registration, click [here](#).

Win-Cres Happenings

By Mark Reisetter Win-Cres Board member, Tom Stevens Secretary

On Monday, April 21, fishing guides met at 8:15 at CreekSide Park in Rushford to guide Goodhue students for a 3-hour onstream experience. May 3 the Sheldon Valley Sportsmen Kids Fishing Contest will be held at 9:00 a.m. down river of Schech's Mill in Houston County, MN. Win-Cres has been asked to work with students on fly/spin casting and fly tying. Contact Chuck Shepard (shepard@hbcj.com) if you can assist.

Joe Lepley's sister and husband attended the Fly Fishing Expo to accept the TU Distinguished Service Award given posthumously in Joe's honor. At the Expo Mark Reisetter received MNTU's 2025 Dr. Thomas Waters Award for lifetime achievement.

Win-Cres trash pickup day was April 9 at 4:00 p.m. Volunteers met at the parking lot off Huff and Hwy. 61.

Tom Stoa brought up for discussion the possibility of having 4 general meetings as opposed to the current 5. Discussion was held regarding possible dates, shared food responsibilities, rental cost of Sobieski Lodge, etc. Mark Reisetter proposed that Win-Cres consider a fundraiser to support the Trout in Classroom project again this year. Discussion was held regarding a December social for Win-Cres members. Dave Schulz will contact Winona mayor/city council regarding the need for a street light on the street in front of Sobieski Lodge.

Dave Shaffer, Win-Cres Habitat representative to MNTU, reported that he will share with habitat director Dr. Biederman any submitted suggestions given to him regarding streams in need of HI work.

The following dates are for the upcoming 2025-26 Sobieski Lodge general meetings: October 22, December 3, January 28, February 25 and March 25,

Iowa Driftless Chapter

By Mike Rogers, President

DRIFTLESS CHAPTER ANNUAL FUNDRAISER BANQUET AND IF4 FILM TOUR—

Join us on Saturday, April 26th at Hotel Winneshiek in Decorah to take part in a night full of fishing and conservation fun. The doors will open at 5pm, and along with the showing of this year's IF4 Film Tour, the event will have great food included, a cash bar, raffles, auctions, and more! You can find tickets for the event on the IF4 website, or by visiting our chapter website, www.iadriftless.org

FLY TYING AT IMPACT—a great group of friends and chapter members meet each and every Wednesday from 11am-2pm to tie flies and socialize in the front window space of Impact Coffee in Decorah. There is no agenda, no need to RSVP, and we always love to see new faces!

Fly of The Month: Pat's Midge

By Lance Prado, HTU Board Member



This is a great midge dry fly that is very effective. This dry fly was created by Pat Dorsey and it has been one of our go to dry fly patterns since we discovered it. Give this pattern a try and see for yourself. All materials are available at Root River Rod co and including flies already tied for you.

Materials:

TMC101 #18

EP Fiber White

Peacock Herl

12/0 Veevus Black Thread

Metz Graded Grizzly Hackle #18

Shop <https://rootriverrodco.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eFABwpGrlc&t=4s>

Monthly Fishing Report

Lanesboro MN: [Root River Rod Co](#)

Caddis have shown up to the party and the fish have been very active. We have been getting reports of great Caddis hatches on a variety of streams in SE MN. Also BWO's have been going well during the day between 12:30-3pm. With the recent rains the streams have been reacting great to them and are not blown out or too off color to fish only the main branch of the Root River seems to be affected and is up a foot. Streamers are still very effective before or after the hatches.

Recommended Flies:

#16 black Caddis
#18 Bwo
#16 Blowtorch Nymph
#18 Pheasant Tail Nymph
#16 Hares Ear Nymph
Pink Squirrel Nymph
Barely Legal Streamer Brown/Yellow or Olive/White
Backflop Jig Leech Streamer
All flies are available at Root River Rod Co

Decorah IA: [Bear Creek Anglers](#)

BWO hatches as well as midge hatches—BWO patterns in size 18-20 and midge size 18-22

Caddis have just now started showing up, with just a few sightings of them, no true hatches to target, but look for them in the next few days and onward. Size 16-18.

Some of our best nymph choices as of late have been—Higa’s SOS (size 16-18), Pheasant tail with orange collar (size 16-18), prince nymph (size 14-16), Blowtorch (size 14-16), Hare’s Ear (size 16-18), Pink Squirrel (size 14-18), grey/tan scud (size 14-18), and black or tan zebra midges (sizes 16-20) (red collar on the tan zebra midge seems to add some interest for the fish).

It’s also a great time of year to toss streamers, big or small or in-between. Black, Olive, Yellow, are all favorite colors whether fishing small leech jigs, or larger articulated streamers.

Upcoming Events Schedule:

TCTU Chapter meeting: will be held on Monday, April 28th at 7 pm in-person at the Fat Pants in Eden Prairie and via Zoom.

Hiawatha TU Highway 52 Cleanup: Date - May TBD. Our annual Hwy 52 Root River clean up. We meet at the Parsley Bridge Rest Stop.

Resources:

[SE Stream Conditions](#) (MN DNR)

[State Map Trout Streams](#) (MN DNR)

[Southeast Streams](#) (MN DNR)

[AMA](#) (MN DNR Aquatic Management Areas)

[WMA](#) (MN DNR Wildlife Management Areas)

[SNA](#) (MN DNR Scientific and Natural Areas)

[State Forest](#) (MN lands)

[Driftless Hatch Chart](#) (Driftless Region)

[MN DNR Fish Kills Reporting](#) (or call 651-649-5451 or 800-422-0798)

[Trout-In-the-Classroom Map](#) (School Locations in MN)

[Wisconsin DNR Trout Streams](#)

[Iowa DNR Driftless Trout Stream Maps](#)

[IA WMA](#) (IA DNR Wildlife Management Areas)

[HTU's Iowa Driftless Stream Map](#)

HTU Website: <https://hiawatha-tu.org>

TCTU Website: <https://www.twincitiestu.org/>

TCTU Events: <https://www.twincitiestu.org/events.html>

Fly Fishing Women of Minnesota Website: <https://flyfishingwomenmn.com/>

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