

A LOCAL CHAPTER OF  
AMERICA'S LEADING NONPROFIT  
COLDWATER FISHERIES  
CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

# THE MERSHON MUDDLER

◆ *Newsletter of the William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited* ◆

1989, 1996 & 1997 RECIPIENT OF THE MICHIGAN COUNCIL TU CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

## Meanders

A few thoughts from  
the president  
*Todd Zwetzig*

The year 2018 is coming to a close and the Mershon chapter has had another great year. We kicked off the year with a great Walleye Dinner and presentation from Phil Cook in January, fly-tying and fly-fishing classes, a Grin & Grub at Tri-City Brewing with Bob Linsenman in February, a very successful banquet in April, a great AuSable River cleanup day with a good turnout of Mershon chapter members, a well-attended trial run of the Fly-Fishing Film Tour at State Theatre in Bay City, a great evening of shooting and food at our October outing at the Saginaw Gun Club, and, finally, a day of surveying brown trout redds on the south branch of the AuSable River. I hope you had a chance to participate in some of these events, had some fun, met a few new friends, and helped support and maintain our cold-water resources. I would also like to take a moment to thank all the members who worked extremely hard to make these events successful. Your sacrifice of time and resources do not go unnoticed, and you are to be commended for your effort.



*Todd Zwetzig, chapter president*

The coming year promises to be a great year also. In addition to all the same events as last year, we plan on adding new ones this year. One of the exciting items we are planning is the showing of the Fly-Fishing Film Tour (F3T) at the historical State Theatre in Bay City. Stay tuned for more information about this event as it promises to be an exciting day!

Unfortunately, 2019 will also have some challenges. In the last issue, I talked about the recent discoveries of PFAS at Camp Grayling, Lake Margrethe, and at the mouth of the AuSable. As of this writing, Legislature is also considering a bill to gut wetland protection and one to undermine the cleanup of PFAS. These are major concerns to the AuSable as well as all other cold-water streams in Michigan and will need our attention. Now, more than ever, our cold-water fisheries need your help. Please stay connected with the Mershon chapter through our website, Facebook, or one of our events to stay informed on how you can get involved.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to meeting you at one of our upcoming events.

—Todd Zwetzig,  
President

## Winter Extravaganza and annual meeting coming in January

*by Todd Zwetzig, chapter president*

On Monday January 21st, we will be hosting our Winter Extravaganza, at Sullivan's Restaurant on Gratiot Road in Saginaw (near Center Road intersection, South side). Doors open at 5:30pm, with dinner served at 6:30pm. Dinner will be \$20 per person. Taylor Ridderbusch from Trout Unlimited will be presenting about Asian Carp and what is being done to stop them from entering the Great Lakes.

This is also the annual meeting for the Mershon chapter, so please mark your

calendars. We have some directors that will be completing their term limits and will need to be replaced. This meeting will be open to voting for new directors and to proposed chapter bylaw changes. In addition, I would like to let everyone know that attended last year that we have made arrangements to be in the bigger room at Sullivan's this year.

Hope to see you there! ♦

### William B. Mershon Chapter Trout Unlimited

### Winter Extravaganza and Fish Dinner

**Monday, January 21, 2019**

**Program and Annual Meeting-membership  
vote on proposed By-Law amendments can be viewed at  
[www.mershon-tu.org](http://www.mershon-tu.org)**

**Sullivan's Restaurant  
5235 Gratiot Saginaw, MI 48638  
Time: Cocktails/Social Hour 5:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m.**



Cost: \$20.00 per person  
Pay at the Door.

Questions, Reservations please call  
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We are trying to go paperless, please give us your email address for future notifications!

## Fly-fishing Film Tour headed to Bay City again in 2019

*by Todd Zwetzig, chapter president*

**I**t's official! After a very successful trial run of the Fly-Fishing Film Tour at State Theatre in Bay City this past Fall, we are excited to announce we will be showing the 2019 Fly-Fishing Film Tour again at State Theater!

Some details are still in the works, but you can mark your calendars now for Tuesday, February 19th.

We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to team up with Little

Forks Outfitters of Midland to bring this film to you. As always, past-president Bo Brines has gone above and beyond in his support for the William B. Mershon Chapter and worked very hard to make this happen.

Stay tuned for more details on this great event! ♦

## Thanks, Maple Grille!

**T**he Maple Grille generously hosted a fundraising event for our chapter recently. We encourage all our members, supporters, and everyone else they may know who appreciate great food and beer to patronize the Maple Grille in Hemlock, Michigan.

The Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited offers its appreciation for sharing the Maple Grille's excellent venue as a fundraiser for our chapter. The menu was eclectic, the viands and beverages iconic and delicious, and the staff, as always, were excellent hosts for all. The many TU

supporters present certainly enjoyed the evening, and all agreed they would be back.

Thank you for your support of cold-water conservation in Michigan. See you on the water. ♦



## Chapter director position available

*by Howard N. Johnson, Director  
Nominating Committee Chair  
989-280-0381 | hnjohnson@aol.com*

**T**he Wm B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited is seeking chapter members who are interested in serving as chapter directors.

A chapter director is responsible for the general supervision of the chapter's affairs. A director's duty is to attend monthly meetings from September to May of each year, providing direction and guidance with chapter activities. A director's term of office is three years.

If you would like to learn more about this important position within the chapter, please contact Howard N. Johnson or any chapter officer or director before the chapter's annual meeting in January. ♦

**E**ach year, participants from the Women 'n Waders events have requested more opportunities to meet and expand their skills. Fly tying is the perfect way to accomplish this during our cold Michigan months.

On January 19, from 1:30 to 3:30, Water Front Market will be the location for women from all over the state to eat lunch, tie a variety of flies, and build their network of fishing buddies. The patterns have been selected with the novice in

mind. No experience or equipment is needed. Members of the Mershon board have generously donated supplies and expertise.

If you would be interested in joining us, contact Laurie Seibert at [lbeachteacher@gmail.com](mailto:lbeachteacher@gmail.com). Reservations are required.

Water Front Market is located at 925 N Water St, Bay City, MI. Plan on arriving between 12:30 and 1:00pm to enjoy the wraps and soups this deli is famous for. ♦

**Women, Wraps,  
and Wooley  
Buggers**  
*Women's Fly Tying Event*  
by Laurie Seibert,  
chapter vice-president

## 2018 Brown Trout Redd Survey—South Branch of the AuSable River

by Howard Johnson, chapter director

**T**he brown trout redd survey on the south branch of the AuSable River was completed on November 2 & 3, 2018. Nineteen members of the Wm. B. Mershon Chapter, Mason-Griffith Founders Chapter, and AuSable River property owners participated over the two days. Thirteen reaches were surveyed between Chase Bridge and Truettner's Landing, below Smith Bridge.

This is the sixth year of the survey; therefore, until we learn where the productive spawning areas are, different reaches are being surveyed each year. This year, we found a total of 89 redds and added a reach this year below Smith Bridge Landing to Truettner's Landing.

Five reaches had increases this year over the last year surveyed (2016),

while eight reaches had decreases compared to the last year surveyed. The reaches with the greatest decrease are in the center sections of the Mason Tract.

High water levels prevented the volunteers from completing one reach entirely and reduced the length of surveyed water in two other reaches. The high water also made it more difficult to detect redds. This handicap may account for the overall reduction in redds surveyed.

This year's team leaders from MGFTU included Boyd Dillon, Jim Lawless, Bruce Hambell and Bob Andrus. MGFC's Director Gerry Lake provided training. Other volunteers included: Bob Lafferty, Steve Loudon, Mike Meyer, Larry Brown, Jim Redford, Gary Torkeo, Mark Rais, Joyce Haxton, Ed Boris, Gene Williams, John Williams, Nate Winkler, and Tim Weiler. Howard N. Johnson coordinated the south branch redd survey.

Steve Johnson will tabulate and plot all GPS points to river maps. We are very grateful for his work plotting the GPS points in past years. We will start to see the most productive areas of the river for redds development.

This survey on the south branch of the AuSable River is coordinated with a similar survey on the main branch by the Mason-Griffiths Founders Chapter of TU and another survey on the north branch by Anglers of the AuSable.

Chapter volunteers team-up with other volunteers to wade a one-mile section of the south branch to inventory brown trout redds. Each redd location will be measured and the GPS coordinates will be recorded. Any protective fish cover will be noted.

The location and size of spawning trout redds provides:

- DNR Fisheries an estimate of the female trout population
- Yearly averages of redd sizes identifies trends of fish size
- Identifies protective cover needs
- Identifies productive and non-productive river reaches

If you would like to help with next year's survey, please email chapter director Howard N. Johnson at [hjohnson@aol.com](mailto:hjohnson@aol.com). Additional detailed information will be sent to you along with training information. ♦



# Gods of Fly fishing

by Bob Kren, Mershon Advisor and Mr. Flyfisherpersonguy

Some while back, an Indian, from Bombay or Mumbai or somesuch—why can't they make up their minds about city names?—told me that there are 300,000 deities recognized in Hinduism. Another impeachable source, Wikipedia, says that there are 32,000,000. Talk about inflation! Must be confusing to pick one out for daily prayers, but there have to be plenty to satisfy every possible need.

That mammoth mythology got me to thinking about the gods and demigods and semihemidemigods that could apply to fly fishing. Here's the bare beginning of a list, based loosely on the stories of ancient Greece, for things common in fly fishing. Get ready for heroes heroing, adventurers adventuring—in short, mythology for us mortals.

- Aeolus, the god of wind and windknots, the god likely responsible for Alexander the Great's encounter with the Gordian knot, the mother of all snarls. How many of us have wished that the solution to the tangles we get with tandem rigs could be simply done away with by using a machete, or a chainsaw? But we try, pointlessly, to untangle the mess, figuring that such a simple act as casting couldn't possibly produce a mammoth macramé. It can, and it does. You think that's the wind in the trees? That's Aeolus, watching you pick and pick, and laughing. He also invented the tailing loop.
- Poseidon, the god of the seas and leaky waders, had two brothers—Zeus, king of all the gods, and Hades, lord of the underworld. Turns out that the boys' father, one Cronos or Cronus or Kronus—again with the alternative names!—had eaten Poseidon and Hades and his other

kids, but Zeus vanquished Cronos, forcing Cronus to barf up children: this was, apparently, not an uncommon thing in those days, or these, for that matter. The Greek gods were pretty serious folk, what with all the incest and philandering and begatting, so Poseidon was granted the ability to make us miserable on the water, like our finding and fighting the source of wader wetness, purely for his own chuckles. Just imagine that somewhere—Olympus, probably—a bunch of drunken gods are watching you dump water out of a set of waders, on a 72,000 square foot TV screen. More like a Hooters than you might want to think.

- Artemis is the goddess of the moon and the hunt. It's no stretch to add fly fishing to that list: just imagine Joan Wulff with a crossbow, a good dog, and a ten-foot six-weight. If you wish to curry Artemis' favor, try bowing down when on the water (which is a sign of respect, and keeps you out of the fish's view), hollering "Oh, Gawdless!" (instead of the usual thing you yell), gazing skyward hopefully while you look for where your fly is hiding in the bushes, respecting property rights (I just tossed that one in), and hiring a woman to cure you of your tailing loops.
- Zeus, the Head Honcho once Kronus was gone, is the god of lightning. Some folk say that graphite rods were invented just so flyfishers could get hit by one of Big Z's bolts. That's just silly, but I always keep my rod tip really low as soon as I hear the slightest rumble, even if it's just me or the gaseous bozo I go fishing with. Oh, and Zeus is also the possessor of the patent on fire, and got really mad when Prometheus gave fire to humans, who screamed when he put it into their bare hands. It's a matter of conjecture whether the following counts as childbirth, but Athena, fully armed, jumped straight out of Zeus' brain during the worst

hangover EVER!—sort of like "Alien," but prettier.

- Hera was Zeus' wife and, how shall I put this, um . . . sister. They had some kids together, in the usual way, by which I mean Zeus' brain never entered into the picture. Zeus messed around—a lot—and Hera was really jealous that she wasn't getting enough brotherly love. So she performed her usual wifely duties, mostly various types of complaining, and made Big Z miserable. Hera especially despised one of Zeus' "love children," Hercules (played by a young Charlton Heston). She gave Herc twelve tasks, like reading everything the Borgers ever wrote, or tying a Jock Scott in under twelve seconds using only his personal body hair, or cleaning up the Flint River. Which he did. Yay, Herc!
- Here's a shoutout to Athena, goddess of wisdom, courage, inspiration, civilization, law and justice, strategic warfare, mathematics, strength, strategy, the arts, crafts, and skill. Why bother with any of the other gods when Athena can grant you all these? Imagine yourself onstream: which of these do you need most? Law and justice not so much, unless you're trespassing again, and maybe not arts and crafts. But all the rest, for sure. And at the tying bench many of these apply, except again for law and justice. Law and justice might well be disposable, but that's another story.
- Apollo was the god of healing, the god of light, the god of truth, the god of medicine, and the god of music and musicians. One of his most important jobs was to bring up the sun every day, that is to say, he's in charge of the daily scheduling of hatches. (Demeter handled the sequencing of the seasons, and what's supposed to be hatching on a given day.) Once dawn has arrived, though, you're on your own. That's where Ares, the god of war, comes into play. Ares didn't care who won the

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

battles, he only liked conflict. Demeter dictates which bugs, Apollo gets the bugs there, while Ares watches the battle of brain (us, dummy!) with instinct, and sometimes roots for us, and sometimes for the fish. Ares is the god we have to acknowledge when we spend a whole day “practicing technique” onstream, instead of actually catching fish.

- Aphrodite was the goddess of love and beauty. And beautiful beautiful tweets. Tweeting while fly fishing is not approved by Aphrodite, but it’s a beautiful thing to see you double-hauling while catching up with ten others on the river, none of you catching fish. When people come by in kayaks or innertubes, swilling beer and getting in the way, I often wish that Aphrodite would pay more attention to beautiful people on the river, instead of in the abstract. Some of the floating people I’ve encountered on the river make Medusa, she of the snake hair and petrifying gaze,

look gorgeous by comparison: too small swimwear isn’t flattering, and what it reveals should best be concealed. I imagine that the view from below an innertube makes the fish giggle—I know I would.

- Daedalus and his son, Icarus, were held captive on the isle of Crete, and had plenty of time for fly fishing, after Daedalus—a really inventive guy—found out that he could glue together pieces of split bamboo and make a great flyrod: before that, people just used the bamboo fragments themselves for rods, which were good on delicate presentations, but lousy on distance. Anyway, patents not having been invented by lawyers, pretty soon everybody was making flyrods, and Daedalus had to get into the flytying business. All those feathers, all those patterns, but the really big feathers went to waste. So Daedalus fastened the big feathers into wings for him and his son, so they could escape from Crete. He had to use wax—there being a shortage of glue, from everybody building all those flyrods!—to hold the feathers to

bamboo frames, and, well, Icarus flew too close to the Sun, the wax in his wings melted, and splash! Oy!

- Dionysus was the god of wine, comedy, and tragedy. He had a great sense of humor, probably from the comedy, and especially from the wine. He was a shape-shifter, and could make himself into anything he wanted to resemble. Now there’s a potent combination. How else to explain that a 30-inch trout turns out to be only 6 inches long (or 15 centimeters in most of the civilized world)? Is that mistake of yours “tragedy”? Depends on how you look at it: comedy happens when you’re just below the effluent outlet at the sewage treatment plant and the operators decide to “let ‘er rip!” Tragedy is when I get a paper cut.

That’s it for now, fly-fishing fans, for mythology the way it really was!, in our own fashion. There are forces much bigger than we, out there on the water, and it ain’t just the fish. Take care, wade safe. ♦



## Fly-Fishing Dogs (or the lack thereof)

By Snarly Windknot

Let me begin by saying I love dogs. Big dogs, little dogs, hunting dogs, work dogs, even those useless little foo-foo dogs; I love them all (with the exception of pit bulls, which I think should be eradicated). I know there are cat people and horse people who will disagree, but I believe the most valuable creature on earth, aside from humans themselves, are dogs, and there are certainly some people who by their actions have in fact made themselves less valuable to the rest of the world than dogs. Dogs provide protection, they do work for us, but most importantly, they provide companionship.

Now having said that, I must add that, based on my experience, there are very few good fly-fishing dogs. Importantly, I'm not speaking of fly-shop dogs. I'm just talking about fly-fishing dogs, or the lack thereof. I have had the pleasure over the years of knowing some outstanding fly-shop dogs. You know the kind I mean, dogs that greet customers at the door and make even first-time visitors feel like old friends. I have even seen experienced fly-shop dogs that would, after greeting you at the door, position themselves near the hottest flies you shouldn't miss, or sale items you need to make note of. On the stream, however, even these highly skilled and experienced canines become useless distractions at best.

Let me use my dog, Greasegun, as an example. Greasegun loves to go fly fishing. If I open my truck's door to load my gear, Greasegun will be in the cab before I can swing my rod tube behind the seat. In fact, if I just start for the closet where I keep my fishing gear, Greasegun bolts for the front door to make sure he's the first one to the truck. Now, he does serve a purpose in that he inventories my gear as I throw it into the truck to make sure I didn't forget something

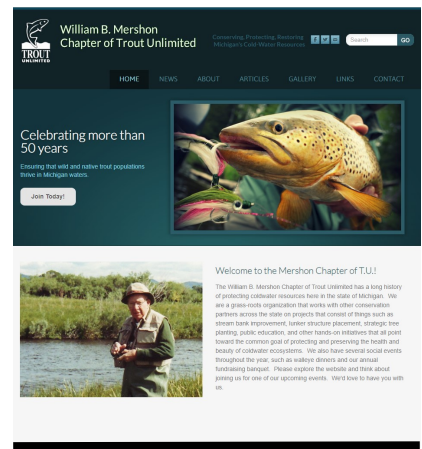
important, like the sandwiches. Then, on the drive to the river, he checks out every stream we pass or cross to evaluate its potential for holding trout.

But once we actually get to the stream he ceases to be man's best friend and becomes this creature straight out of some Stephen King novel bent on tangling my line, breaking my rod and destroying any opportunity I might have to catch trout. As I crawl stealthily toward the stream bank, Greasegun bounds over top of me in pursuit of a grasshopper. As I move cautiously across a gravel bar at the tail-out of a honey-hole, Greasegun splashes into the water for a quick drink before bounding off, hot on the trail of a gopher. And, should I be lucky enough (with all this ruckus going on) to actually catch a fish, he dives in, steps in the landing net, and gets tangled in my leader, usually resulting in the trout spitting the hook, which gets stuck in Greasegun's foot or nose, sending him off like a rocket tangling my line in all the brush on the bank as he goes. And, yet, he can't understand why I don't want him right beside me while I'm fishing.

Now you may take umbrage with what I have said and be able to site numerous examples of talented fishing dogs that are truly an asset on any fishing trip, be it a quick visit to a local stream or one of those cross-country odysseys to some storied blue-ribbon river. But my response will be, "Oh yeah, well, take Greasegun fishing with you just once and see if your positive viewpoint remains steadfast!" or something that when cleaned up will be close to that. And, I'm serious about lending you my dog. I can assure you Greasegun is eager to carry out his part of this adventure. ♦

## Check out the Merшон Chapter of Trout Unlimited online

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# How to tie the deer hair popper

by Don Meyer, chapter past-president

**T**his fly is mostly on bass, sometimes on snook and redfish. Try it at night for large trout instead of a mouse pattern. It makes lots of noise and creates a wake.

## Materials Needed:

- Hook:** -1/0 or 2/0 hook  
**Thread:** -140 utc thread to match fly  
**Legs:** -Sili legs. I prefer chartreuse/fire orange over all others  
 -Sparkle of your choice, but do not use too much. We are imitating a frog here.  
 -Ice dub to help splay legs  
**Body:** -Saltwater hackle. 3 mixed colors per side with shiny side in. I try to hold about 2.5" long.  
 -2 Saltwater hackle of corresponding colors wrapped to cover all tie in points. This is tied with good side forward.  
 -Pony tail using any less-than-favorite thread, as this just keeps materials out of the way when tying deer hair

In next issue, we will finish the fly with deer-hair techniques.



Step 1: choose 140 thread of color to match fly.



Step 2: mark the hook at 7/8" from end.



Step 3: start the thread and leave it at the hook point.



Step 4: choose a tail made from sili legs to match the fly color.





*Step 5: add legs and flash, tied to the 7/8" mark.*



*Step 6: ice dub of appropriate color dubbed into ball to spread leg feathers.*



*Step 7: choose 3 feathers per side, here with 3 colors.*



*Step 8: choose 2 feathers to wrap around messy-looking tie-in point, tied with good side forward.*



*Step 9: tie in all the feathers.*



*Step 10: use any thread to "pony tail" feathers out of the way in preparation for tying in deer hair.*

***In next issue, we will finish the fly with deer-hair techniques.***

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# 20-Plus

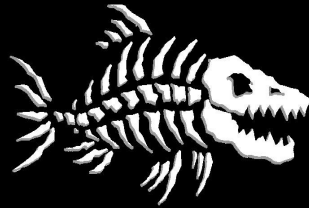
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## Streamer Club

*An elite club for those fishers who love to throw the big stuff for monster browns and rainbows.*

**Contact Jac Ford  
for more information  
or to sign up for the next event**

Call or text Jac Ford for more info: 989-280-3238.  
20plusclub.weebly.com | facebook.com/20PlusClubMI



# AuSable Troutfitters

Guided Fly Fishing for Trout, Steelhead, Bass

[www.ausabletroutfitters.com](http://www.ausabletroutfitters.com)

Capt. Todd Zwetzig

989.225.2478

WILLIAM B. MERSHON CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING SCHEDULE

*All Board meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month  
at 5:30 p.m. at W.L. Case Funeral Home, 4480 Mackinaw Road, Saginaw*

Wednesday, January 2, 2019

Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

—No meetings during summer months—

**We welcome you to attend any of the board meetings.  
Your input is an invaluable resource in our efforts to serve the resources we enjoy.**



# THE MERSHON MUDDLER

◆ Newsletter of the William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited ◆

P.O. Box 6920 Saginaw, MI 48608-6920

**Address Service Requested**

## Clip and Save: 2019 Mershon Event Calendar

(More complete information and updates will be found on our website,  
[www.mershon-tu.org/news](http://www.mershon-tu.org/news) and on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/mershon.tu](https://www.facebook.com/mershon.tu).)

**Winter Extravaganza and Annual Meeting**  
5:30pm at Sullivan's Restaurant, Saginaw

*Monday, January 21, 2019*

**Fly-Fishing Film Tour**  
State Theater, Bay City

*Tuesday, February 19, 2019*

**Spring Banquet**  
Saginaw Valley State University

*Thursday, April 25, 2019*

**Monthly Board Meetings:** 5:30 – 7:00 pm,  
1st Wednesday of each month  
at W.L. Case Funeral Home, 4480 Mackinaw Road, Saginaw  
(No meetings during summer months)