



TU Western Driftless Hotline



Editorial by Carl Berberich

Where Have All the Insects Gone?

This is the alternative title for the TU DARE's Driftless Symposium's '*Risks Posed by Neonicotinoid Insecticides to Wisconsin's Wadeable Streams*' presentation by Mike Miller of Wisconsin's DNR. He presented a scientific report on the effects of neonic insecticides on invertebrates in Wisconsin. This video is on YouTube and can be found at <https://youtu.be/rYsy21NHt0>.

Basically, 100% of all corn seeds, are coated with this insecticide and 65% of soybeans are coated with it. This insecticide is far more deadly to insects than DDT from the 1950's; however, it appears to cause much additional harm to aquatic macroinvertebrate species too. It is an interesting video to watch.

FYI: Feedlot Size Expansions Issues in the Western Driftless Counties

1. The Fillmore County (in southern MN) board on Feb 28 just voted to double the Animal Unit feedlot number from 2000 AU to 4000 AU. It was stated by the press, that correspondence, petitions, and direct testimony to the county board was largely against this increase. However, it was approved unanimously by the board. What is the next step in the controversy?
2. The Winona County (southern MN) has a feedlot cap at 1500 AU, which has been under debate and lawsuits for the last few years. However, there have been several large fish kills in Winona County and many rural wells are contaminated with nitrates. Whereas the local Daley Farms wants to expand feedlot size to 6000 AU and has sued organizations and individuals against this.
3. In Iowa, according to Mike Rogers President of IA Driftless Chapter, the legal issues with Supreme Beef's expansion near Bloody Run Creek (near Marquette, IA) to 11,600 cattle is still waiting for a Judge's final ruling. Trout Unlimited has joined with The Izaak Walton League to fight this in court.

Two groups in Minnesota that oppose this are:

1. *Responsible Ag in Karst Country (RAKC)*: RAKC is a group of farmers, rural residents, business owners, and other citizens from southeast Minnesota who are deeply concerned about protecting our drinking water, clean air, small towns, property values via responsible agriculture.

2. *Land Stewardship Project*. [Website](#): They are having a get-together on April 13 in St Paul, MN. This is Family Farm Breakfast + Lobby Day! From LSP: “After a delicious, locally- and sustainably-sourced breakfast, where you’ll have the chance to connect with public officials, we’ll head over to the Capitol to meet with your legislators and other public officials, such as the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and Attorney General Keith Ellison! Lobby visits will be arranged on your behalf and training is provided. Transportation and overnight accommodations are available as well.”

HTU Chapter Members Meeting on March 6

By John Weiss, HTU Board member

*“Cuba, the “Pearl of the Antilles,” is one of the **most important biodiversity hotspots worldwide**, being the most biologically dense and diverse island in the Caribbean – with some of the most pristine beaches, the largest and densest forests, and the healthiest reefs.” One is the Jardines de la Reina.*

“It’s estimated that the currently permitted 2,000 divers and 1,000 sport fishing visitors (to Jardines) generate nearly \$10 million a year in revenues, of which over \$1.5 million directly or indirectly support park protection.”

Marlene Huston did her bit more than a month ago to help fund restoration and preservation of the Jardines. Oh yes, she also caught some really nice fish and saw Cuban culture (including how to make cigars).

Huston, who we know for her teaching fly casting, spoke in early March to Hiawatha TU members, most in person, some on ZOOM.

She said a friend in November told her about an Italian company that arranges for the divers and anglers to go to Jardines. In her case, it was for 14 U.S. fly anglers to go to the area, spend several days on a 120-foot-long boat and go out on seven 17-foot skiffs for 5 1/2 days of fishing.

She was in the tourism business for many years and often wonders how one could go to Cuba. Now she knows. “I jumped on the chance to go because I know that it limits anglers and is really a pristine area to fish.”

Just getting the gear she needed was a job. She brought along 8- 9- and 10-weight rods, along with heavy tippets and special saltwater reels and line to fish for permit, bonefish and tarpon. One mistake she made was not getting them early enough to become really familiar with the much heavier rods than those generally used around here. (She even tried a 12-weight: “that was hard.”) Her new rods will, however, be great for muskie and northern fishing, she said.



Oddly, the flies she brought with would be familiar to many trout anglers, such as Clousers. While she brought several dozen flies, she used maybe three the whole time. It was all catch-and-release except for a few other species caught for dinner.

She said she flew into Miami Feb. 2, met with the other anglers and got the rest of the documentation (there was a lot of it). Only recently have Americans been allowed to fly directly to Cuba. The next day, they landed in Camagüey and spent the first night there, seeing the sights in a '55 Chevy. And she learned a lot about Cuban cigars and rum. The next day, the 14 took a three-hour boat ride to the 120-foot boat and met their seven guides.

Three pairs of anglers stayed together the whole time while the others switched fishing partners and guides daily. "In Cuba, those guides are like gods" and earn a lot more than doctors, she said. There was no chance to buy anything else on the boat, or in the city, for that matter; she had to bring everything with her. But she found she brought much more than she needed.

On the full days, after an early breakfast, two anglers and a guide would go out on skiffs powered by 70-hp motors. Once in the flats, which might not be more than 3 feet deep, the guide would use a 27-foot fiberglass pole and search for the fish. It was a bit early in the tarpon season so only the smaller ones were available. Later, the ones that could weight much more than 100 pounds, would come into the shallows. They didn't just cast, cast and cast some more, but would wait for the guide to see a fish and they would then cast to that fish. Each angler had a half hour in the casting area while the other waited.

Temperatures regularly pushed into the 90s, but the wind helped cool them. They had to cover up nearly all their skin, but she went barefoot, using special reef-friendly sunscreen.

They used the watch face system (fish at 2 o'clock) but that was a problem because the wind and the guide moved the boat. But that was no problem because "in the excitement, you forgot about it," she said. The biggest problem was she was used to setting the hook on trout where you just give it a slight tug with the rod tip up. In Jardines, you dropped the rod tip and stripped in line fast and hard. "You never stop stripping." One day she missed more than she caught.

Guides "get excited because they want you to catch fish." They record each fish caught or missed. With tarpon, you don't even have to land it, just getting it to stand on its tail "is considered a big deal. I lost a lot of fish that but that didn't matter."

Permits were fewer than tarpon or bonefish so if you caught a permit, "it's game on because they are the hardest to catch." If you caught one, you tried for a grand slam - a permit, bonefish and tarpon in one day. If you could bring in a tarpon close enough to touch the leader, it counts for a fish caught. The fish can take you to backing two or three times.

The area was once overfished but now, with more regulations about numbers of anglers and keeping fish, it's coming back. Also, the fishery is connected to the Florida fishery because they are relatively close. Because ecotourism working well in Cuba, other countries are beginning to do the same thing.

Looking back on it, she said she would have gone better prepared to cast the new rods. But she said she would “go back in a minute” because fishing was great, and she loved seeing the different culture.

Win-Cres TU Chapter Meeting March 22

By Tom Stevens Win-Cres Board member

Win-Cres welcomed and thanked Paul Krahn, TUDARE Stream Restoration Specialist, as our guest speaker. Paul shared his responsibilities and focus of working with various partners to implement habitat projects in the Driftless area which encompasses 24,000 square miles. Paul shared the coordination of NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) and the RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program) to address on-farm-watershed concerns and the combined emphasis to address stream habitat for not only trout but all non-game species such as amphibians, reptiles, birds, etc. Paul shared the NCRS financial assistance

parameters, funding sources, and requirements for landowners including the various types of habitat work that could be considered for funding. Paul also highlighted what is happening in Iowa and Wisconsin including such things as culvert inventories.



Paul also provided information regarding the WiseH2O app and how anglers can use their phones with this app to evaluate the health of a stream and share that information with the appropriate resources.

Win-Cres thanks Paul for a very informative presentation highlighting the work of various partner organizations to improve upland conservation, water quality, fish habitat, and including other stream populations.

Iowa Driftless Chapter

By Mike Rogers President of Driftless Chapter



Ever pull a rock to identify the bug life in your local stream to find little, tiny cocoon type tubes attached to the bottom of the rock, or even see these “cocoon” with a little green worm like creature protruding from it? If you’ve bugged out on turning rocks like many of us, chances are you have seen these and know that they are caddis larva. Some caddis, build casings with materials such as rocks/sticks as well as using their silk to hold it all together. There are a few purposes that these are thought to be used for by the caddis, but regardless of that exact reason, they can be highly effective in trout streams when drifting through the currents as if they’ve been washed downstream.



To tie, I start with a size 14-16 jig style hook to really help elongate the casing--they are naturally straight and would not look proper on a midge/grub hook. You can use a black bead-head for this, but I like the look better without a bead-head and instead using a solid few wrap of lead-free wire. From there, using black thread, secure in the lead-free wire from the hook bend forward to about 2/3 of the way to the hook eye—you will need room to display the emerging green caddis from the casing. Wrap the thread to the back end of the wire and prepare dubbing. Dubbing preparation can be your own concoction, but I think a small mix of dark brown, black, and a slight bit of dark green provides the best and most natural casing colors. Tie dubbing mixture in and wrap up to the end of the lead wire closest to the eye of the hook and give a few wraps to secure it. From there, prepare a dark green dubbing and make sure you dub this on finer than you did the casing dubbing as the caddis should be smaller in diameter than the casing portion. Dub this to just below the eye of the hook, leaving enough room for a prominent black head, which you can achieve simply by giving several wraps above the green dubbing with your black thread. Legs for this fly are totally optional—they provide a great look but might not be the difference between more or less fish. If you choose to tie in legs, rotating your vice with the fly upside down and tying in a few fibers of partridge is a good choice.



COSTA YETI SIMMS

FLY FISHING FILM TOUR

Hotel Winneshiek Opera House
Saturday April 29th in Decorah, IA
Doors Open @ 6 pm
Scan QR Code to Purchase Tickets Online

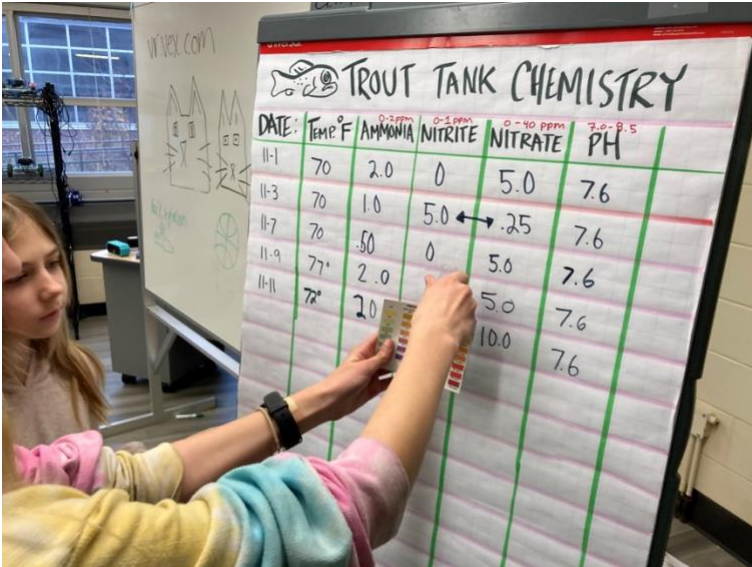
TOUR INFO AND TICKETS AT FLYFILMTOUR.COM

PRODUCED BY JUPITER-TATE ENTERTAINMENT

Logos: PUFFIN, ANGLING, DRIFT, ROAM, SAGE, DALES, SA SCIENTIFIC ANGLERS, BAREWATERS, Outside

TIC: Minnesota Trout-In-the-Classroom Questionnaire Results

By the Anthony Middle School, Minneapolis, MN



The whiteboard displays a table titled 'TROUT TANK CHEMISTRY' with columns for DATE, TEMP °F, AMMONIA (0-2ppm), NITRITE (0-5ppm), NITRATE (0-10 ppm), and PH (7.0-8.5). The data is as follows:

DATE	TEMP °F	AMMONIA (0-2ppm)	NITRITE (0-5ppm)	NITRATE (0-10 ppm)	PH (7.0-8.5)
11-1	70	2.0	0	5.0	
11-3	70	1.0			7.6
11-7	70	.50	5.0	.25	7.6
11-9	77	2.0	0	5.0	7.6
11-11	72	2.0		5.0	7.6
				10.0	7.6

What/Who and How is TIC involved - Grade level/topic, # involved, etc.
7th grade – Life & Physical science (60 kids)

How long has TIC been running at your school?
2 years

Where do students release their trout in the spring?
Vermillion River – near Farmington

What are students currently learning about related to TIC?

We have been studying chemistry – acids, bases, pH – great ways to incorporate the trout tank environment and prepare for our upcoming ecosystems unit.

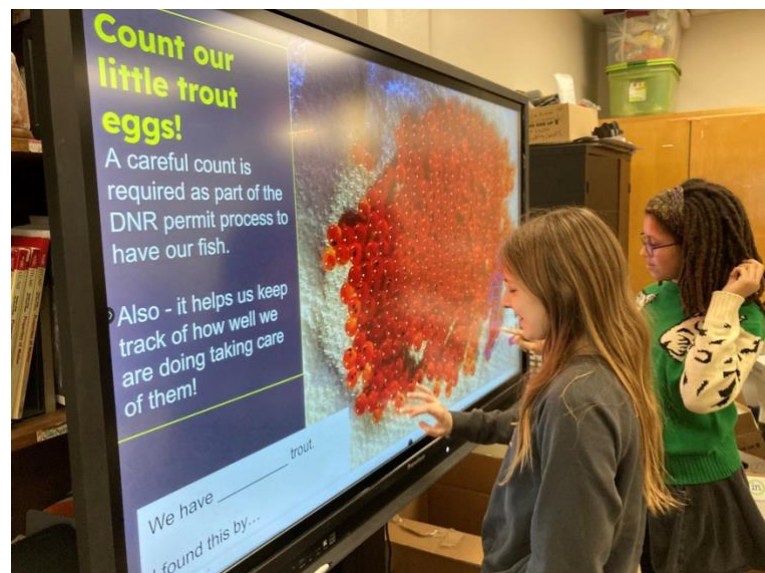
Do they do any special TIC activities, projects, or field trips during the school year?

We typically have the aquatic insect presentation come out and students LOVE it! We use that intro as part of our study of ecosystems and food webs. The students then use TU resources to redesign a channelized stream that incorporates both abiotic and biotic factors that they've learned about during our study of trout habitats and our "trout tank".

When time allows, we have the students tie flies and learn more about the different life stages of those aquatic insects.

What are a few highlights from your time in the program?

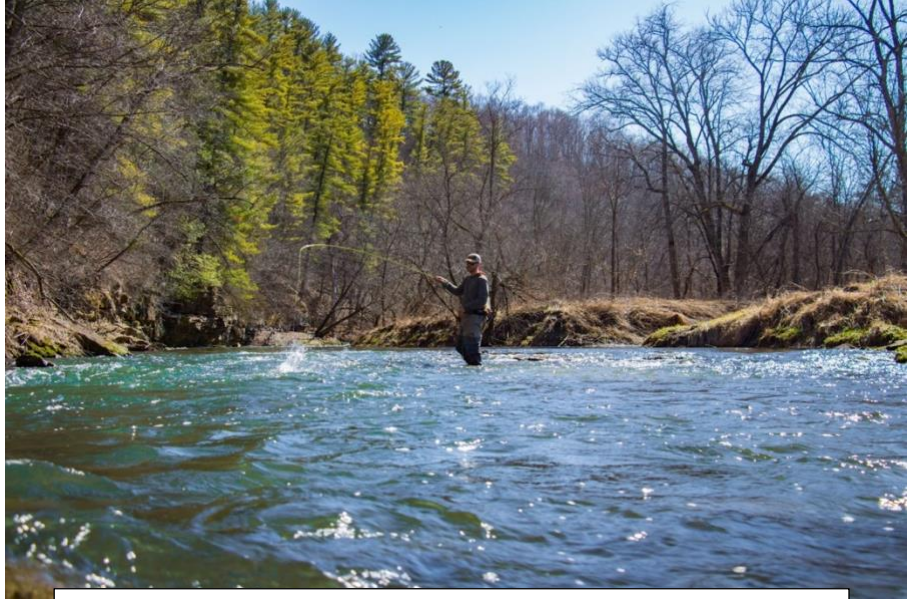
I've seen some students that are a little hesitant to engage in chemistry "dive" in when the chemistry involves the trout. There is a certain sense of importance about learning chemistry topics because they directly tie into the fish that students see every day. The students are always fascinated by the aquatic insects that are in the lakes in streams around them. It really does open their eyes to conservation of the aquatic ecosystems we have here. The students really take to heart their role as stewards of our in-class ecosystem and take that with them when they leave.



Early Spring in the Driftless

By Jason Rieke

The end of March and beginning of April is a great time to be in the driftless. Our snowpack has begun to dwindle, and it won't be long before it'll be gone. The smaller creeks in the area are shaping up and it won't be long until the bigger systems clear up as well. Spring is coming and so is some great fishing! We currently sit in a nice little window between the break of winter and the catch and keep opener on April 15th. The fishing is great, and the crowds are still relatively low. After the opener there is typically an influx of anglers, and while the fishing can still be great, sometimes the solitude can be a little less.



Angler Kyle Moses hooking into a springtime trout. March 30, 2019

What to fish:

When there isn't an obvious hatch going on (or even sometimes when there is...), my favorite way to fish this time of year is to throw small to medium streamers. Flies in the 1-3" range with some flash and action from sili legs tend to work well for me. After a long winter, trout in the spring seem to be ferociously hungry. Watching a fish attack a streamer with reckless abandon and witnessing the barbaric eat is unforgettable. When the conditions are right these spring days can be some of the highest fish count days of the year. When the conditions aren't right, I may resort to throwing nymphs but more times than not I'll be stubborn and stick with a streamer. Sometimes it pays off with the nicest fish of the day.



Day before trout opener streamer eater. April 14, 2017

Other spring advantages - rare fish:

In the driftless we have mainly brown trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout. For the lucky few that have come across them, we also have a beautiful hybrid; the tiger trout. Tiger trout are a cross between a male brook trout and a female brown trout. In other areas of the country, these fish are produced in hatcheries and stocked into rivers and lakes. In the driftless these fish are a wild yet rare anomaly, a true gem. I'm not quite sure what it is about this time of year, but the majority of the tiger trout that I have caught and have seen caught by others have been in the spring.



SE MN tiger. April 29, 2018



SW WI tiger. April 2, 2020

S

Whether you would like solitude before the trout opener crowds come, a fun day of streamer fishing, or a chance at a rare tiger trout, early spring is a great time to fish the driftless.

New Aquatic Management Area: Little Cannon River

By Bob Luck, President TCTU

The Little Cannon River is one of the best kept secrets in Southern Minnesota. The trout population is not that large, but there are some huge browns in the river! One of the reasons it is a well-kept secret is that there has been no public access. That has changed now. A stretch of the river south of Sogn was purchased by the Trust for Public Land and turned over to the DNR which has turned it into an Aquatic Management Area.

A dedication ceremony for the new AMA will be held on April 12th from 4 to 6 pm, and TU members are invited! Feel free to come early with your rod!



Details, location, and registration:

<https://tu.myeventcenter.com/event/Little-Cannon-River-Aquatic-Management-Area-75026>

Terrestrial Predators Research Project

By John Weiss, HTU Board member

Fellow trout anglers, Dr. Jennifer Cochran Biederman is seeking our help.

She is a biology professor at St. Mary's University in Winona and recently decided to study terrestrial predators on trout. It all started with a conversation with Dr. Doug Dieterman, a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources fisheries researcher, she said.

Most people think that winter or spring flooding is the worst time for them, but they found out that mortality is higher in fall. "It was a little unexpected," she said. The question is why?

Maybe they are more vulnerable because they are spawning and maybe there are more predators. To find out a little, Biederman and students caught some fish in late summer in Winona area streams and a few in winter but none in spring.

They attached a 30-inch fish line to their fin; on the other end was a window sash weight. That was heavy enough for the fish not to be able to move but light enough for predators. They set up trail cameras.

They found great blue herons were around a lot as were raccoon. Herons could take fish though raccoons are probably too slow and only eat dead fish, she said. They did see coyotes in the area of the fish but didn't see any take trout. There were bald eagles and osprey around and they know mink take trout in the Black Hills. Otters do take trout, but they tend to be in larger rivers.

Biederman would like any angler seeing an avian or mammalian predator taking a trout to contact her. She will need time, stream and which predator. Email her at jlbieter@smumn.edu



Dr. Cochran Biederman

Fly of The Month: Deep Sparkle Pupa

By Lance Prado, HTU Board member

The Deep Sparkle Pupa was designed in the mid 70's by Gary LaFontaine. Through underwater observation and great scholarship, Gary realized that, generally, Caddis Pupa, once they cut their way out of the pupal cocoon, will drift along the bottom for great distances before ascending to the surface to hatch out. To imitate this behavior and the brightness of the insect, observed during his underwater observation, Gary searched for a material that would imitate this brightness. He found sparkle yarn, and you and I will forever be in his debt



for making such a discovery. Sparkle yarn created the brightness in the fly that Gary was looking for. The material also trapped and retained air bubble, which also added to the brightness of the fly.

Gary understood from his underwater observation that the brightness of the caddis pupa was a major triggering characteristic for the Trout. Once he had a fly that solved the brightness question, the once mysterious and almost unsolvable caddis hatch was now simple: During the early part of the hatch, fish the Deep Sparkle Pupa. Once the trout turn to the surface and start picking off pupa there, a quick change to an Emergent Sparkle Pupa solves that problem. All materials and flies are available at Root River Rod Co.

Hook: Jig hook size 16

Bead: 3 mm copper tungsten bead w/Loctite super glue

Thread: Veevus 14/0 Rusty Brown

Bubble: Hareline's Sparkle Emerger Yarn Light Olive

Core: Senyo's Fusion Dub, Copper/orange

#1 Head & Legs: Hareline Hare's Ear Plus, Dark Brown

#2 Head & Legs: Hareline Hare's Ear Plus, Light Brown

[Deep Sparkle Pupa tying video](#)

Monthly Fishing Report

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

We are waking up from winter in our little corner of the Driftless. Water temperature of our creeks are starting to increase, and that means the metabolic activity of both our Trout, insects and other trout food is increasing too. In other words: Everyone is getting hungry! It's time to look for consistent BWO and midge hatches. Look for food sources to be more distributed throughout the water column and not so bottom centric. Our guides at RRR Co. have started the shift from winter tactics as we look for hatches to match. The Trout are leaving the deep pool and moving up into the riffles to feed. BWO are starting to appear, and we are getting reports of fishable hatch on selected creeks. Look for hatch at the warmest time of day - Generally in the 12p to 2p range. Midges continue to have a strong presence, and a zebra midge, or your favorite offshoot will still catch a lot of fish. The classic orange scud with a midge dropper is still hard to beat. Streamer fishing is starting to really get interesting. We are seeing more chases and hooks ups. And don't forget about soft hackles. Were a big soft hackle fans at RRR Co. Swinging a size 16 -20 peacock and partridge (or your favorite soft hackle) through the riffles as the day warms, is a pretty good idea right now.

Suggested flies:

- Zebra midge & Pupa size 20-22
- Orange and Grey Scud 12 - 16
- Pheasant Tails in 16 - 20
- BWO emerger 18 - 20
- BWO adult 18 -20
- Soft Hackle 16 - 20

Decorah IA: [Bear Creek Anglers](#)

Spring is truly starting to show its face as of lately with warming water temperatures and even some BWO hatches on several different streams. Most streams in NE Iowa are sitting in the mid-40's and our water levels are continuing to look better and better after flows have been down the past couple of years. Fishing caddis nymphs and mayfly nymphs will likely produce the most fish any given day but keep your eyes open for midge and BWO hatches—when surfacing, be sure to fish longer leaders with finer tippet, where you might need to go down to 6x to account for the small dries that will be effective. For dry flies when fish are rising, start small and think Griffiths gnats and BWO patterns. Both are simple to tie, and both will need to be in the 18-22 hook size range.

For nymphs, fishing caddis larva patterns (size 16-18), basic zebra midge patterns in black, red, and tan (size 16-20), pink squirrels (size 14-18), mayfly patterns such as pheasant tails or even stonefly patterns such as prince nymphs and copper johns (size 14-18) can work in imitating mayflies well enough even with a small stonefly population in NE IA.

Fishing tandem rigs is encouraged, especially with your first fly (top fly that is tied to rod's tippet) being a larger nymph to sink, and the bottom fly rigged with an emerger to trail and drift higher up towards to film line.

HAPPY FISHING!

Upcoming Events:

Win-Cres TU: April 1 Goodhue school's trout fishing days: April 1 in Goodhue

Hiawatha TU Members Meeting: Apr 3 - Dan Duwaulter from TU – WiseH2O water quality with measurements and stream locations.

Iowa Driftless Chapter Meeting: March 2, 7pm at T-Bock's in Decorah, IA. If anyone wants to attend remotely, send an email request to Mike Rogers at tuiadriftless@gmail.com

Win-Cres TU Members Event: April 19 Stihl power tool demonstration at Little Pickwick Creek

Hiawatha Trout Unlimited Bamboo Rod Raffle: April 22, 2023 at 7:00 pm. At Sylvan Brewing in Lanesboro, MN.

Win-Cres TU April 28 Goodhue school's trout fishing days: April 28 fishing near Rushford

Iowa TU Driftless Chapter Banquet/Fundraiser: April 29, 2023 starting at 6:00 pm. At the Hotel Winneshiek Opera House in Decorah, IA.

Hiawatha TU Members Meeting: May 1, 2023 - Melissa Wagner DNR

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/>
[2023 MN DNR Driftless Stream Projects Map](#)

HTU Board of Directors:

Officers

Open	President/Chair	
Open	Vice President/Chair	
Bernie Nigon	Treasurer	bernard.nigon@gmail.com
John Weiss	Secretary	weiss239@gmail.com
Paul Krolak	Habitat Coordinator	pkrolak@gmail.com

Directors

Greg Goodnow		fishandpets@kmtel.com
Shane Huston	Website Coordinator	webmaster@hiawatha-tu.org
Carl Berberich	Newsletter Editor	cberberic@gmail.com
Lance Prado		lprado2727@gmail.com

Win-Cres Board of Directors:

Officers

Chuck Shepard	President	shepard@hbc.com
Dave Schulz	Vice President	milsch@hbc.com
Tom Stoa	Treasurer	stoa@hbc.com
Tom Stevens	Secretary	tstevens0873@charter.net

Directors

Bruce Fuller		bwanafuller@gmail.com
Dave Shaffer		dshaffer1000@gmail.com
John Weaver		john.weaver@winona.k12.mn.us
Klaus Friedli		kfriedli@smumn.edu
Mark Reisetter		jmarkreisetter@gmail.com
Neal Mundahl		nmundahl@winona.edu

Paul Girtler
Roger Berg

pgirtler@fastenal.com
bergr3@msn.com

MNTU State Council Contacts

Brent Notbohm MNTU President/Chair
John Lenczewski MNTU Executive Director
Scott Criqui MNTU Executive Assistant
Mark Reisetter MNTU Vice Chair Southern MN
Randy Brock MNTU NLC Representative
Amber Taylor MNTU Education Program Supervisor

blnotbohm@hotmail.com
jlenczewski@comcast.net
scott.criqui@mntu.org
jmarkreisetter@gmail.com
rwesleybrock@gmail.com
mntu.education@gmail.com

Copyright © 2023 Hiawatha Chapter of Trout Unlimited, All rights reserved. For permission to reproduce any article in this newsletter, contact editor cberberic@gmail.com