



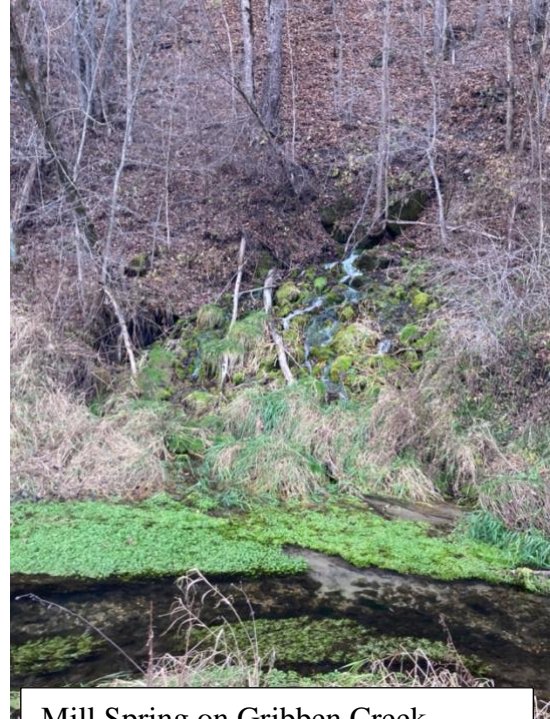
# TU Western Driftless Hotline



Editorial by Carl Berberich

## MPCA and TU Working Together

We just heard from Justin Watkins of the MPCA in Rochester. He stated that he recently met with 4 state departments (MPCA, DNR, MGS, MDH) and they all agreed and are ok with us (Minnesota TU Chapters) monitoring spring water in the Southeast for the state. He stated *“There is a specific stratigraphic position that is currently lacking in the spring monitoring network, so we want to focus you there.”* I assume that this is where we sample from springs that have multiple layers of rock, soil, and sediments, that the spring flows from. I would think that these types of springs would be flowing year-round and are in deeper valleys to fit these criteria. This state group will do some screening of spring locations over the next month and will meet next January to come out with a list of spring locations for us to do our sampling on. After that they will be working on the following process development: logistics, access, lab work and analysis. Depend on the size of the list and the frequency in gathering these samples, we might need a sizable team to do this. Maybe even members from Win-Cres for the eastern and Hiawatha for the western sampling? We will know more when we see the list and find out the processes.



Mill Spring on Gribben Creek

## Water Sampling and Pesticides

I've been hearing things about individual states banning the neonics pesticides, so I thought I should research this. There are some very interesting things happening not only about what states are doing, but also about research into the effectiveness of neonics. I found the following research by Cornell University which spent two-and-a-half years looking into this very question. <https://ambrook.com/research/legislation/states-ban-neonic-pesticides-neonicotinoids-new-york-california> The article says that despite some good news, research has shown that *“Most farmers are losing money by having these coatings on their seeds; at best they're breaking even, and the use is a very harmful one.”* They also state that *“only about 5 percent of the coating on a corn seed gets into the target plant; the remaining 95 percent persists in the soil and moves around when it rains or crops are irrigated.”*

The research is mainly on terrestrial insects and how neonics affect pollinator insects. It looks like there has been no research done on the neonics effects on aquatic insects or on how these pesticides could go into the water table. They also don't state how long these pesticides can last in the soil or groundwater until they could break-down. Which are all good questions. States banning neonics in some forms are, New Jersey, Maine, New York and Nevada.

## Hiawatha TU Saturday Fly-Tying

By John Weiss, HTU Board member

Carl Berberich had an audience of three Dec. 9 when demonstrating how to tie an elk hair caddis dry fly - his style.

Watching were Dave Hass of Chatfield, Tom Tye of Chatfield and Dan Olson of Rochester; Ray Ricketts sat tying midges across from Berberich and his audience.

The occasion was the weekly Hiawatha TU fly-tying morning at 125 Live at 125 Elton Hills Dr. NW., Rochester (it's the northwest corner of North Broadway and Elton Hills Drive). Tying will be held weekly, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. through March 9 (excluding Dec. 23).

It's meant to be informal, and it was, with watchers getting close-up looks and Berberich going over finer points. The next week, he tied a wet fly - the Partridge Orange, another classic fly. This time, there were more onlookers and more people tying flies. Again, anyone could ask questions and they did. All



who left took home a Partridge and Orange fly.

On Dec. 9, Berberich said that while the Elk hair Caddis is a classic dry, its name is usually wrong - it's mostly tied with deer hair because they are finer than elk.

One of the key things he uses for the body is the cul-de-canard, soft fluffy feathers from a duck's butt around a preening gland they use to waterproof their feathers, he said. He always ties on a #16 hook. And he uses them year-round not just when there's some kind of hatch. He will use them in a more traditional way of casting upstream but also casts them across or even down and skates them back.



The fly itself is very easy and can be tied in five minutes. Always use 6/0 thread because lighter thread will break when trying to flare the deer hair; his flies tend to be darker. His hook is a light wire scud hook because the eye faces down; an upward eye will interfere with the deer hair.

He also leaves a long tag of thread that he wraps around for a rib to strengthen the fly. That keeps the CDC in place and gives him many more fish. It is a unique style in his version of tying this pattern.

One key in fishing this fly, is to never use wet floatant like Gink on them. Instead, it must be dry silicone-based floatant only. He can catch a few dozen fish on the same fly but likes to clean it or dry it off with a shirt now and then, then puts on floatant. He wants fly to ride lower in the water. “It will bring fish up - SERIOUSLY,” he said.

Here are why the three watchers showed up at 125 Live:

Haas said he came to learn. “I just am interested in learning how to tie flies,” he said. “I’m a newbie.”

Tye said he came at the invitation of his wife. “I tie and my wife said you just go and see those guys,” he said. “She just wants me out of the house.” Again, he came to learn.,

As for Olson, he said he started fly fishing in California. “I’m more of a wannabe fly fisherman than a good one,” he said. He came to review his skills at tying.



For the Winter Fly-tying, there will be no class on Dec. 23, but it will continue Saturday Dec. 30.

## Win-Cres Happenings

By Mark Reisetter Win-Cres Board member

Several Win-Cres members who were in attendance at the Lewiston Water Quality meeting on December 4, shared that the main concern is regarding nitrates that are primarily found in rural wells. The EPA has ordered Minnesota to do more to protect citizens from nitrate pollution in drinking water.

Chuck Shepard spoke at the November Winona Rotary meeting regarding the Driftless Area and what makes it such a unique geological environment and special cold-water fishery. Chuck has offered to speak with any other interested groups.

Dusty Hoffman shared maps of the various streams under consideration for spring 2024 that need “willow whacking” and chemically treatment to prevent regrowth.

Tom Stoa reported that the city has poured the concrete pad and installed the bench at Lake Park honoring Joe Lepley that the Chapter had ordered. The plaque honoring Joe will be placed at a later date.

Thank you to Dr. Jennifer Biederman, TU Statewide Habitat Program Director, for her very informative update at Win-Cres' general meeting. Dr. Biederman spoke regarding the many recent stream improvement projects and plans for future projects.

Thank you also to Kristin Poppelton for her attendance at Win-Cres' November 29, general meeting. Kristin is the new MNTU Assistant Director in charge of communication and advocacy.

## **TCTU December News**

By Bob Luck, President of TCTU

TU is a decentralized organization with local chapters (such as Win-Cres, Hiawatha and TCTU), State Councils (such as the Minnesota State Council--MNTU), and a National Headquarters (TU National--or TUNA for short). Chapters, State Councils and TUNA all make fundraising appeals, which can be confusing to members. I hope to provide some clarity, with the disclaimer that this is my opinion, and any errors are my responsibility.

Except for a nominal rebate paid to chapters (described below), membership dues are retained by TUNA. These dues account for only about 10% of TUNA's budget, but they are important because the money is unrestricted and because they show the commitment and size of our membership nationwide. TUNA conducts additional fundraising activities with its individual members (as you can see when you open your mailbox) and corporate sponsors. It also gets much of its funding from grants—government and otherwise. TUNA uses the funds it raises to support paid staff (many of whom provide valuable services to MNTU and TCTU), maintain critical infrastructure (such as their website), advocate for cold clean water on a national basis, publish TROUT Magazine, and support conservation projects of national importance such as preservation of Bristol Bay. They do a bunch of other stuff, too, but these are a few of the things that stand out to me. TUNA does not provide much direct financial support to MNTU or to the chapters, other than an annual rebate of \$1 per member to each local Chapter. That is a fraction of the money needed to run our councils and chapters, but TUNA provides great support for us to conduct local fundraising. For example, they provide us with online silent auction and donation sites free of charge.

What stands out to me about the State of Minnesota is the generous funding it provides for Habitat Improvement and Environmental Education, primarily through the Outdoor Heritage Fund and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Minnesota also has some generous foundations and corporate donors. TU has been very successful in tapping State funds, which has helped Minnesota to become a national leader in Trout Stream Restoration and Youth Education. The credit for this goes to our State Council, MNTU, who have written grant proposals to obtain funding, and have created a track record of successfully implementing projects, which has given us credibility. MNTU can use a portion of the State funding to pay its staff and contractors to administer projects. But MNTU can't use State funding to apply for the grants, nor can it access State funds to do advocacy work. I view Advocacy as a critical need in the coming years. To make a difference in such areas as agricultural runoff, feedlot impacts and removal of fish passage barriers, we need to increase State Council resources so that we can lobby at the legislature, collaborate with like-minded organizations, and harness the grassroots power of our local chapters. The primary way to fund our State Council's advocacy efforts is via

donations from TU members in Minnesota, and Western Driftless Hotline readers living in Minnesota have no doubt seen appeals via email, postal mail and in the quarterly newsletter Trout Unlimited Minnesota.

How much should you donate to TU and where should you donate it? My philosophy about the “how much” is that you should donate a personally meaningful amount. We all have different financial circumstances, and we care in differing amounts about various aspects of cold-water conservation; whether you donate \$10 or \$1 million, if you find it meaningful, it is the right amount. “Where to donate” is also personal. I care deeply about the Kinnickinnic River in Western Wisconsin—it is a beautiful, threatened river and I learned to fish there, so I made most of my TU donations in 2022 to a fund that my local chapter created to help remove two dams on the Kinni. This year, I have shifted most of donations to MNTU because I believe we need to fund a strong advocacy effort in our state. I have not donated a significant amount of money to TUNA in the past few years, but I believe they do terrific work, and I will consider donating to them in future.

I hope that this overview has been helpful, and I encourage you to join me in considering a personally meaningful year-end donation to TU. There is still time! Here are some helpful links to make an online donation:

[TU National](#)  
[MNTU](#)

Chapters:

[Hiawatha TU](#)  
[Iowa Driftless TU](#)  
[Twin Cities TU](#)

Win-Cres TU by emailing Chapter Treasurer Dr. Tom Stoa at [tomstoa@gmail.com](mailto:tomstoa@gmail.com)

## Iowa Driftless Chapter

By Mike Rogers, President



**Next Chapter meeting**, January 4, 2024 – 7pm @ T-Bock’s Sports Bar & Grill in Decorah, IA \*MEETING WILL BE UPSTAIRS THIS MONTH\*\*

**Fly Tying @ Wasta’s Workshop**—Join for coffee, pastries, and fly-tying @ Wasta’s Workshop!

Saturday, January 6, 9am-12pm - 1468 Old Stage Rd. Decorah, IA 52101

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

## Flyfishing Women of Minnesota Update

By Sally Noll, Chair FFWNMN



While fall can tend toward less fishing and club activities, October and November were still busy months. In October, a steelhead-fishing trip on the Brule was organized by Hillary Pennella (Vice Chair). Several hardy women braved the not-so good weather to head out on the water. No big fish were caught but for some of the participants, this was a first-time opportunity for them to explore steelhead fishing. My thanks to the entire board and club member volunteers for their help to put on the many events this year!! We are so grateful for your efforts!

Our annual club membership meeting was held in early November. It was our first in-person club meeting since 2019 due to COVID disruptions. The meeting offered a time to socialize and bid on items in a silent auction to help support our club efforts in education. At the meeting, a year-end review was presented, and board election results were announced. We have three board members leaving at the end of December – Amy Anderson (Treasurer), Kimberly Pierson (Member at Large), and Monta Hayner (Past Chair). The 2024 board members consist of Hillary Pennella (Chair), Marissa Merriman (Vice-Chair), Jess Miller (Secretary), Treasurer (Jane Austin), Communications/Website (Ginger Flaten), Members at Large (Cyndee Fern, Jaime Lehman, Emilie Love, Marcy Russell), Past Chair (Sally Noll).

I would like to thank past and current board members for their service to the board. All our positions are volunteer positions, so the club could not function without these members!! I would also like to acknowledge Nancy Willette for donation of the silent auction items and to Sue Rousseau for donations of fly-fishing equipment that can be used in events and mentoring new members.

Event and education programs are being planned for 2024. We will also have our club booth at the Great Waters Expo 2024 in March at Hamline University in Saint Paul. Please stop by and visit our booth! Better yet please attend our “Fly By Night” Social that Friday night (March 15<sup>th</sup>). Everyone is welcome to come and socialize!

We do need some help from others if possible. The club is also looking for some donations of fly-tying equipment and supplies as our current set of materials has been used up or is in poor shape. These things would be used in different classes or loaned to members on a temporary basis. If anyone has some items to donate, please email Hillary at [ffwnmn@gmail.com](mailto:ffwnmn@gmail.com). Thanks for any help that could be provided.

For women that might be interested in our club and/or want to join, please visit our website. <https://flyfishingwomenmn.com/>





## Minnesota Driftless Trout Stream Checklist

By Jason Rieke

### What is Minnesota's Driftless Area?

The Driftless Area is a geologically unique region of the Midwest named for its lack of glacial “drift”, thus making it the drift-*less* area. This area encompasses the corners of southeastern Minnesota, northeastern Iowa, northwestern Illinois, and most of western/southwestern Wisconsin. This area is also known as Bluff Country (or “Coulee Country” if you are a Wisconsinite). The landscape is characterized by steep hillsides, deep valleys, karst topography, and trout streams. Some [research paper\(s\)](#) suggest that the Minnesota and Iowa driftless areas are not truly drift-*less* but rather should be considered “driftless-*style* topography” as the area has



some drift due to being covered with early glaciers but not the later glaciers.

In southeast Minnesota, the southern and eastern portions of the Driftless area are easily defined by the Iowa state line to the south and the Mississippi River to the east. Most maps and articles that I have seen tend to put the northern limit of the area in the watersheds of the Cannon River and the western limits at the western edges of the Zumbro and Root River watersheds. For the purposes of this article, we will be looking at the counties of Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona. I removed Dodge and Mower counties from the list; Dodge County doesn't have any designated trout streams and Mower county only has Woodson Creek, which is a stocked put and take stream.



[Trout fishing in southeastern Minnesota map](#)

[Driftless area map](#)

### Minnesota's Designated Trout Streams in the Driftless Area

I haven't found it clearly laid out, but the parameters for a trout stream to become "designated" seem to correlate with fish sampling, water temperature readings, and suitable habitat conditions. The designation of a trout stream changes the focus and amount of funds available for management, and intensifies the public permit review, water quality standard minimums, work restrictions, and county ordinances on the particular stream. According to the [Minnesota Legislature](#), there are 155 designated trout streams in the driftless area of southeast Minnesota. This accounts for an eye opening ~750 stream miles. To the benefit of anglers, ~1/3 of the stream miles also have public easements along them with ~250 miles of easement. That's a lifetime of exploration to be had. The designated trout stream list (and easement list) is continually evolving; new streams and stream reaches are added to

County	Trout Streams
Fillmore	40
Goodhue	11
Houston	36
Olmsted	6
Wabasha	17
Winona	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>



the list from time to time. [For example](#), Latsch Creek in Latsch State Park has recently been added to the list as well as a fairly long stretch of the North Branch Whitewater River from Carly State Park through the town of Elgin.

## Checklist and Resources

Exploring the Minnesota Driftless is a blast. Fishing all of the 155 designated trout streams in the area may be a lofty goal, but for many it can be fun to at least keep track of how many different streams they have fished. I have made a printable PDF checklist listing out all of the designated trout streams in the Minnesota Driftless - you can find it here: [Minnesota Driftless Trout Streams Checklist - PDF](#). I made the list with columns to check off what streams you have fished and whether or not you caught a trout in that stream. For those tech savvy anglers who want to track their trout streams on the web, there is a link to the same list on a Google Sheet. If you save your own copy, the sheet should automatically count up how many streams you have fished if you put an "x" in the cell next to the streams you have fished. You can find the sheet here: [Minnesota Driftless Trout Streams Checklist - Google Sheet](#). The sheet is shared in a view only format - save a copy of your own by following the steps below:

1. Click on the link to open Google Sheet.
2. If you are not already signed into a Google profile, login or set up a new one.
3. Click File -> Make a copy -> Rename as you would like -> Make a copy.
4. That's it - the spreadsheet is now in your own Google Drive and ready to be edited.

I am very curious to see if sharing these links via this platform works or not. Feel free to give me some feedback if it works or if anything is incorrect/could use some tweaking –

[jasonrieke21@gmail.com](mailto:jasonrieke21@gmail.com).

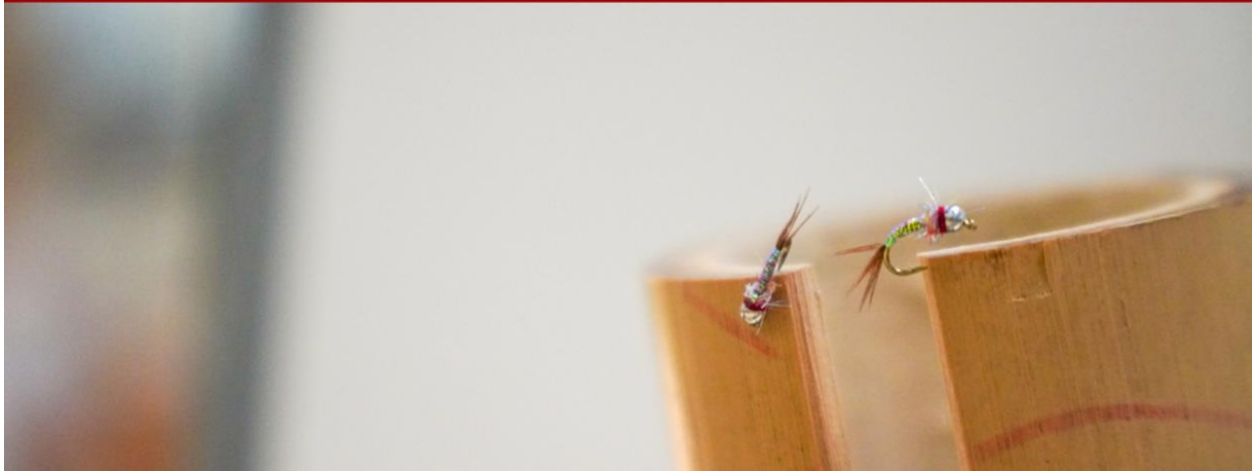
Helpful resources to map out your Minnesota Driftless exploration:

- [MN DNR Trout Fishing Map](#) - identifying designated trout streams and easements.
- [MN DNR Recreation Compass](#) - identifying easements and other Minnesota public lands.
- [Minnesota Natural Resource Atlas](#) - another interesting look at designated trout streams
- [OnX](#) - subscription based app that shows all property owners. I have found a lot of interesting access spots using this app and have years' worth of waypoints saved offline. Phone app and website.
- [Trout Routes](#) - subscription based app that shows trout streams (designated and some undesignated) along with public waters. Phone app and website. Works offline as well.

## Fly of The Month: Rainbow Warrior

By Lance Prado, HTU Board member

# RAINBOW WARRIOR



The fly of the month is one that not only has a ton of Christmas colors in it but is one that actually catches fish like crazy! I am talking about a fly pattern called the Rainbow Warrior. This is a very popular fly because of its success. This fly is relatively easy to tie. So, click on the YouTube link and follow along as I demonstrate how to tie this fly. All Materials to tie this fly are available at Root River Rod Co.

Hook: Umpqua Tiemco 2457 size 16

Bead: 2.3 mm tungsten bead

Thread: Veevus 12/0 Red

Tail: 6 pheasant tail fibers

Over-Body: flash extra small

Collar: Hareline Rainbow Scud Dub Light Shade RSD1

[https://youtu.be/4EiS5w4v\\_xI?si=xsVZTppiYsCDk7tz](https://youtu.be/4EiS5w4v_xI?si=xsVZTppiYsCDk7tz)

## Monthly Fishing Reports

**Lanesboro MN:** [Root River Rod Co](#) This month has been warm for the most part and looks like its going to continue into the new year. All of the designated fishing areas has been productive. We have been seeing fish rising to midges and lots of fish feeding subsurface. Streamers have also been productive for us using a smaller wooly bugger or similar type leech pattern. We have been using different size nymphs from 20-14. The new year is almost here and that means fishing opens up for all of SE MN catch and release. We are looking forward to the new year and new water and hopefully we get a lot of precipitation. Like always give Root River Rod Co a call or email if you're heading down to SE MN and have further questions.

Recommended Flies:

1. Rainbow Warrior #18-16
2. Zebra Midge #20-18
3. Wooly Bugger Black/Olive #12-8
4. Pheasant Tail Nymph #20-14
- 5 Partridge and Orange Soft Hackle #18-16

There are open fly tying nights every other week at Sylvan Brewing in Lanesboro. The next one is Thursday December 28th from 5-8pm. All fly-tying materials will be 20% in store the day of our fly tying event.



### **Decorah IA:** [Bear Creek Anglers](#)

Warmer weather is still providing days with BWO and midge hatches—fishing size 18-22 BWO dries and Griffiths gnats in the same sizes will work. Dropping soft hackle below dries and nymphs is effective as well.

For nymph and subsurface activity, small midges such as red and black zebras (size 16-20, add some dubbing and CDC for emerger style patterns), pheasant tail/prince nymph/copper john/Higa's SOS/rainbow warrior (size 16-18).

Stripping black and olive wooly patterns/streamers should be effective in deeper pools and when the fish are less responsive to nymphs.

### **Upcoming Events Schedule:**

**Hiawatha TU** Fly Tying at 125 Live in Rochester - Saturdays, Dec 30, 2023, and running until March 9, 2024- 9 to 11am. Free and open to the public.

**Hiawatha TU Members Meeting:** Tuesday, January 2, 7pm, 125Live - Chapter Meeting, program: Jason Rieke on winter fishing

**Iowa Driftless Chapter:** January 4, 2024 – 7pm @ T-Bock's Sports Bar & Grill in Decorah, IA

**Win-Cres Chapter Meeting:** General meeting dates will be January 24 – 6pm at Sobieski Lodge with Vaughn Snook of the MDNR presenting.

**Hiawatha TU Members Meeting:** Monday, February 5, 7pm 125 Live - Chapter Meeting

**Win-Cres Chapter Meeting:** General meeting dates will be February 28

**Hiawatha TU Members Meeting:** Monday, March 4, 7pm 125Live - Chapter Meeting

**MNTU's Great Waters Expo:** - March 15-17, Hamline University, St Paul

**Win-Cres Chapter Meeting:** General meeting dates will be March 27, 2024.

## 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>

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

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