



# TU Western Driftless Hotline



Editorial by Carl Berberich

## Great Waters Expo

The Great Waters Expo was held March 15-17 at Hamlin University in the Twin Cities again this year. MNTU state council manages this event, and MNTU was handed management of the Great Waters Expo by the Helgeson family, and it is a fundraising event for the State Council, supporting advocacy, communication, education, and other non-habitat efforts.

There was a new feature at this year's Great Waters Expo, and that was recognizing and thanking a person from each of the five Trout Unlimited chapters. These people received a Distinguished Service award, plus the MNTU state council presents a Dr. Thomas Waters Award for Minnesota Conservation. This was the first time that people are recognized for their volunteer work.

JP Little received the Dr. Thomas Waters Award for Minnesota Conservation.

The Win-Cres Chapter awarded Mike Jeresek. The Gitche Gumee Chapter awarded Don Mitchell. The Headwaters Chapter awarded John Leuth. The Twin Cities Chapter awarded Tony Nelson, and the Hiawatha Chapter awarded myself, Carl Berberich. I was shocked to find out that I was to receive this award. But I was also very pleased. It was a quite enjoyable event.



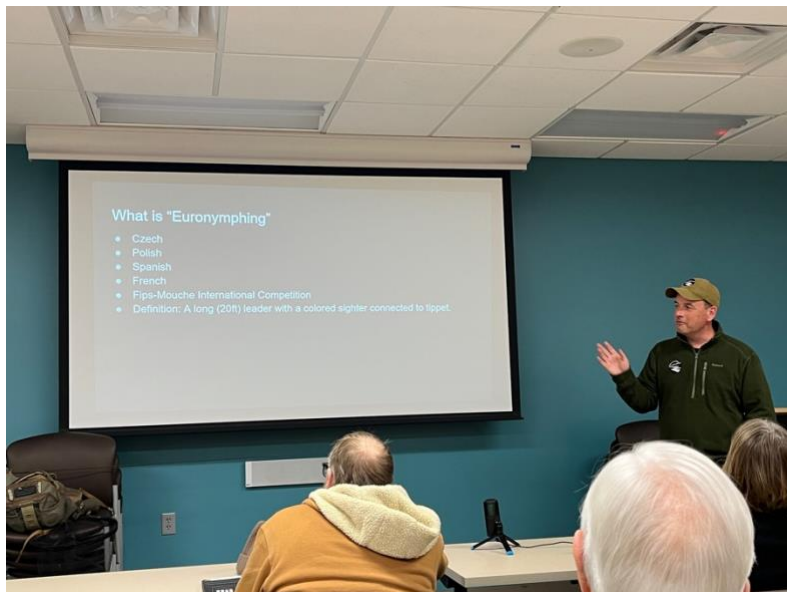
## Hiawatha TU March Members Meeting

By John Weiss, HTU Board member

About 25 members of Hiawatha TU and more online heard from Mike Toft of [whitewaterguiding.com](http://whitewaterguiding.com) who is passionate about Euronymphing that is a growingly popular way to fish trout and maybe catch a lot of them. Euronymphing is done using a long - 10- to 10.5-foot long rod, very thin line and a nymph or some other fly. The big thing is that it keeps the line, except for the tippet and fly, off the water so it has fewer problems with drift. Instead of a typical indicator, it uses indicator line called a sighter that is part of the line.

There are several kinds including Polish and French, which do it a bit differently, so they are just called Euronymphing. In many cases, the flies are much heavier to fish fast water and avoid the need for extra weights. All Euronymphing rigs have a 20-foot leader, he said. They can be fished in big and small streams, from a foot to several feet of water. It's also common to get doubles. "Once you get this technique down, it's deadly," he said. But you can't make really long casts with it; you sort of flip it, not cast it, and you can't do roll casts.

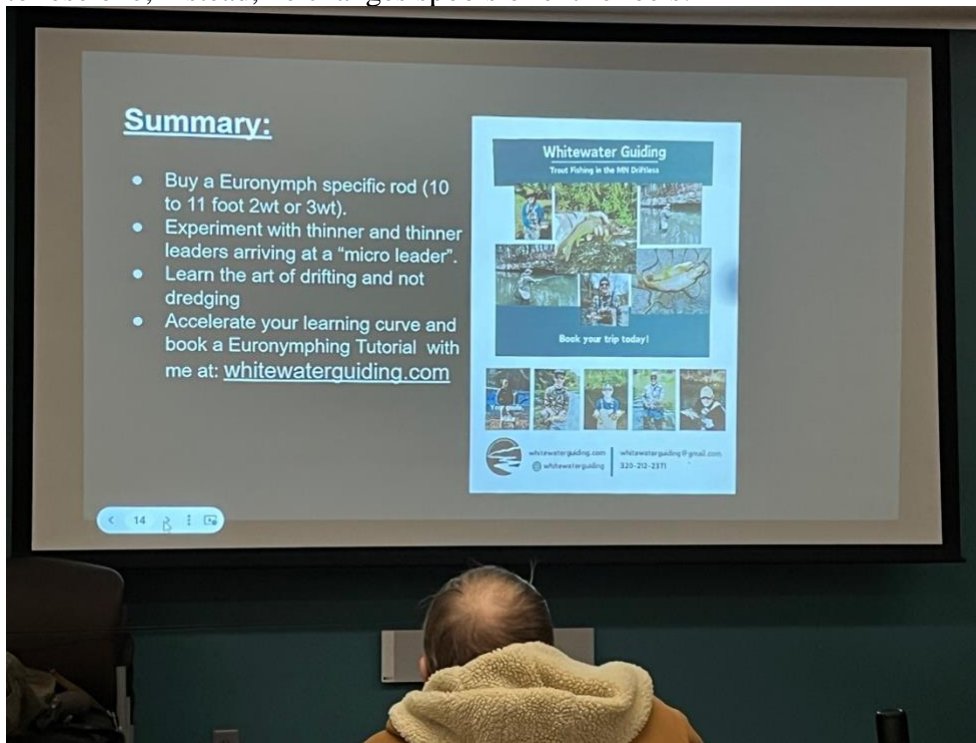
Toft said he began as a professional bass fisherman but once he tried Euronymphing, he sold his bass gear because the new system is so effective. "I am a complete nerd on



this," he said. He builds his own line, using a tippet ring to attach the tippet material that can be as light as 7X. But the rods are light, around 3-weight but have soft tips to help with the feel of the fish and absorb the power of even trophy fish. While the tip is sensitive, the butt is stouter to help play bigger fish.

Toft uses only a few flies, including perdigon, mop and streamers. But here's a crucial thing: **PRESENTATION TRUMPS PATTERN.**

It's possible to fish very close to fish; he once caught 29 trout standing in one place. He and a friend have caught more than 100 fish in a day, he said. The system works especially well in faster water out west, he said. Some carry two rods, but he doesn't like that because it's too easy to lose one; instead, he changes spools or entire reels.



## Win-Cres Happenings

By Mark Reisetter Win-Cres Board member

Win-Cres TU will be working with the Goodhue Fishing Club on April 6, from 9-12 at Goodhue H.S. teaching fly tying, casting, and stream safety.

The Goodhue High School Fishing Club will travel to Rushford on April 26 where TU guides will meet them at 8:15 a.m. at Creek Side Park to guide students for a 3-hour onstream experience. Please contact Dusty Hoffman or a board member if you are available to assist on either or both dates.

On April 27, Win-Cres TU will teach the scouts at Gamehaven Scout Camp fly tying, casting, and stream craft safety.

Regarding habitat work, Win-Cres and several volunteers removed barb wire and fence posts from landowner Jim Albrecht's farm. Thank you to the many volunteers. This work was a continuation of the April 19, 2023, Stihl workday's removal of trees and brush along Little Pickwick Creek.

April 3 beginning at 4:30 p.m. Win-Cres will pick up trash along a section of Lake Boulevard. Members meet at the parking lot off Huff and Hwy 61.

Managing invasive streamside Japanese Knotweed continues to be a Win-Cres priority.

Mike Jersek, by a unanimous vote of the Win-Cres Board of Directors, was selected to be the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award for his many years of volunteer service to conserve, protect and restore cold water fisheries and their watersheds in Southeast, Minnesota. Mike received this award at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo at Hamline University on March 16.

Win-Cres will host the Saturday, April 13, MNTU spring meeting in the Fremont Room at the Recreation Bar and Cafe in Lewiston starting at 10:00 am.

Roger Berg will oversee Win-Cres' booth at the Winona County July fair. Roger also shared that those interested in viewing the March 25, 6:50 p.m. presentation of "Aquatic Insect Populations... What is going on" can go to [twincitiestu.org](http://twincitiestu.org) to view it.

Thank you to Chuck and Judy Shepard for providing the meal at the February general meeting. Congratulations to Chuck on his retirement at Winona Health after 40 years and his leadership as president of Win-Cres TU!

On March 27 John Van Vliet, author of several books on trout fishing, will speak at our March general meeting. John's latest book is entitled "Trout Fishing in Southeast Minnesota". John will present his award-winning short film, "Into the Driftless," and share his insights, advice and tips for exploring the 24,000-square-mile unglaciated Driftless Area that covers portions of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois. This unique, beautiful and little-known region of the American Midwest is characterized by its deep valleys, high limestone bluffs and cold rushing trout streams. The Driftless has a mystique all its own and makes up one of the highest concentrations of trout streams in the world. If you've ever thought about fishing the remarkable Driftless Area, you won't want to miss this presentation. The meeting is open to the public and will be held at Sobieski Lodge on East 7th St. Winona. The social hour that begins at 6:00 p.m. includes a meal, and the program will begin at 7:00 p.m. Thanks to Bruce Fuller and Dave Schulz who will provide the meal.



Thank you to board member Klaus Friedli for sharing two of his recent research trips. First a float trip on the Andreadfsky River and the second research trip to Kodiak Island's Northern Archipelago. Both involved research with GeoSpatial Services. Great pictures and stories, thank you Klaus!

Win-Cres Officers were selected at the March general meeting. The office of president is for a one-year term beginning 2024. The slate of officers is as follows: Chuck Shepard President, Dave Schulz Vice President, Tom Stoa Treasurer, and Tom Stevens Secretary. A motion was made by Dave Schulz and seconded by Neal Mundahl to approve this slate. The motion passed.

## TCTU March News

By Bob Luck, President of TCTU

This notice may come in just under the wire, but anglers throughout the Driftless may be interested in TCTU's Chapter meeting on March 25 at 7 pm. Clarke Garry and Kent Johnson will discuss the current state of knowledge regarding aquatic insect populations in the Upper Midwest, threats to these populations, and some possible solutions. They will then tie this general regional overview to the multi-year (2022-2025) project they have been conducting to understand the past and present health of aquatic insect populations in the Kinnickinnic River. A timely topic as we get into Spring planting (and hatching!) season. The meeting will be on Zoom, and you can register [here](#). If you miss it, subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#), and you can catch it at your leisure.



**Recognize these anglers?** TCTU members Marissa Merriman, Hillary Penella and Caitlin Collins are featured in an advertising campaign for Tattersall Distillery's "Tightline" Vodka. Tattersall is holding a drawing for \$2600 worth of fly fishing gear and donating 4% of Tightline profits to our sister chapter in the "Eastern Driftless", KIAP-TU-WISH. Don't ask how it happens that TCTU supplies the models and KIAP gets the donations! To register for the drawing, visit the Tightlines page [here](#).

## Iowa Driftless Chapter

By Mike Rogers, President



**Next Chapter meeting will be Thursday, April 4th, 7pm @ T-Bock's Sports Bar and Grill in Decorah, IA.** The guest speaker will be Nate Hoogeveenn, the Iowa DNR's River Programs Coordinator and author of the paddling guidebook "Paddling Iowa". At the meeting we'll hear from Nate about the Iowa DNR's evaluation of the Upper and Lower Dams on the Upper Iowa River.

Also, don't forget about our annual fundraising event coming up on Saturday April 27th where we'll be hosting the International **F3T Film Festival**. The event will be held at the Hotel Winneshiek here in Decorah, Iowa. Doors open at 5 pm and the show starts at 5:45 pm. Tickets are on sale now at the link below. Your ticket gets you into the event and covers you for the appetizer buffet. There will also be a cash bar and some great prizes including a Helios 4 fly rod! Get your tickets now while they're still available!

### Driftless Chapter's Annual Fundraiser

#### Meeting Details

##### **In Person**

Thursday April 4th @ 7 pm  
Tbock's Basement

##### **OR Online**

Iowa Driftless TU Meeting  
Thursday, April 4 · 7:00 – 8:00pm  
Time zone: America/Chicago  
Google Meet joining info  
Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ukb-rnvr-mpm>  
Or dial: (US) +1 925-905-9636 PIN: 395 678 548#



**COSTA** **SKWALA**

**f3t**

**FLY FISHING  
FILM TOUR  
2024**

**Saturday April 27th**  
**Doors Open @ 5 pm/Show Starts @ 6pm**  
**Hotel Winneshiek Opera House**  
**Decorah, IA**

**Buy Tickets** **Donate :)**

**ADVENTURE ENTERTAINMENT** [www.flyfilmtour.com](http://www.flyfilmtour.com)

PIPER NUNN

## Flyfishing Women of Minnesota Update

By Marissa Merriman, Vice Chair FFWNMN

Fly fishing women of Minnesota hosted another successful Friday Night Social at the Great Waters Expo. Thank you to all who attended the event and supported our club.

### Upcoming Events:

Fly Fishing Women of MN is offering an intro to fly fishing for women in collaboration with Dakota County Parks. All are welcome! You don't have to be a Fly Fishing Women of MN member to attend.

Location: Lebanon Hills Visitor Center  
860 Cliff Road, Eagan, MN  
55123



Start Time: Saturday, April 29 10AM – 12PM

About: Join us for a hands-on introduction to the sport of fly fishing, designed especially for women, taught by the Fly Fishing Women of Minnesota. Ages: 16 & older.

Fee: \$15/person

Registration Required Through Dakota County Parks at:

[https://web2.myvscloud.com/wbWSC/mndakotactywt.wsc/search.html?Action=Start&SubAction=&csrf\\_token=884b1f7b84decbd0d66842295d299611307db48b49256dbc1bac11386d3aa5e9&module=AR&category=ADULT&type=FISHING&location=&keyword=&keywordoption=Match+One&primarycode=&beginmonth=&endmonth=&subtype=&age=&grade=&instructor=&daysofweek=&dayoption=All&timeblock=&gender=&spotsavailable=&bydayonly=No&beginyear=&season=&display=Detail&multiselectlist\\_value=&arwebsearch\\_buttonsearch=yes](https://web2.myvscloud.com/wbWSC/mndakotactywt.wsc/search.html?Action=Start&SubAction=&csrf_token=884b1f7b84decbd0d66842295d299611307db48b49256dbc1bac11386d3aa5e9&module=AR&category=ADULT&type=FISHING&location=&keyword=&keywordoption=Match+One&primarycode=&beginmonth=&endmonth=&subtype=&age=&grade=&instructor=&daysofweek=&dayoption=All&timeblock=&gender=&spotsavailable=&bydayonly=No&beginyear=&season=&display=Detail&multiselectlist_value=&arwebsearch_buttonsearch=yes)



<http://www.flyfishingwomenmn.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/flyfishingwomenofmn/>

# Spring Fever

By Jason Rieke



Late February morning in the Driftless

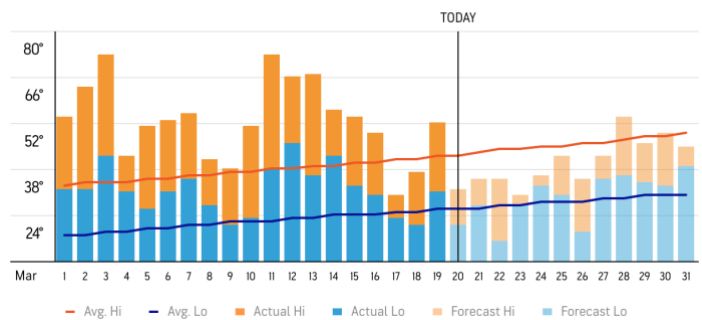
## spring fever noun

: a lazy or restless feeling often associated with the onset of spring

Anyone else feeling a little restless and ready for spring? After months of mild temps, and seemingly more days that have felt springlike than have felt like winter, we enter into the actual calendar time of spring with temperatures below normal and a high chance of getting a few inches of [snow](#) in the next week or so. Go figure. I don't know about you, but I am ready for spring and the big changes to the landscape that the new season brings. We have been seeing scenes like the one above since November - hopefully the next month brings some greenery!

The end of March and beginning of April is a great time to be in the driftless. Spring is coming (or has already come and left, and will be coming back again?) 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 can be great, and the crowds are still relatively low, though I would say that things have been busier this year than in the past due to the nicer weather. That said, the angler pressure currently still pales in comparison to what we will see after the opener comes and the influx of anglers that it inevitably brings. While the fishing can still be great, sometimes the

TEMPERATURE GRAPH



Source: [AccuWeather](#) on 3/20/24



solitude can be a little less after that point. I hope that you get some time in the spring season and find some scenes like the ones below. Tight lines!



Angler Kyle Moses hooked up on a bluebird spring day in the Driftless

## Bamboo Flyrod Raffle

By Mark Reisetter

The Hiawatha and Win-Cres Chapters of TU are having a raffle to raise money for our state program of “Trout in the Classroom” which this year has a presence in 60 schools.

We want to expand this program, especially here in the SE corner of MN. Next year, Rushford-Peterson High School, which has a teacher who has stepped forward, will be provided a tank with a cooling device along with 500 rainbow trout eggs. We also provide the necessary teacher training so that students will learn to monitor the water conditions to keep the “hatchery” conditions in prime condition, which will lead to the big day in the spring when students will release the trout in an area stream.

The cost of each raffle ticket is \$10. The raffle drawing will be held May 6 at the Hiawatha Chapter meeting at 125Live in Rochester at 7 pm.



The **first prize** is a 2 weight split bamboo fly rod made by Harry Boyer from the Earl Stanek collection.

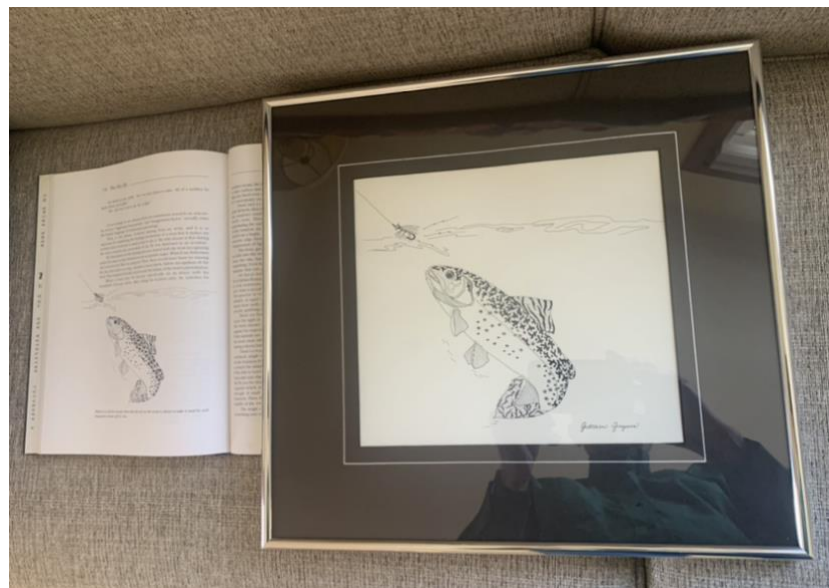
The **second prize** is a 1/2 day Guided Fishing Trip with St. Charles guide Mike Toft of [whitewaterguiding.com](http://whitewaterguiding.com).

The **third prize** is an autographed copy of Gary LaFontaine’s “The Dry Fly” along with a framed Original Illustration from the book by artist Gretchen Grayum.

Raffle tickets are \$10 and may be purchased from either Hiawatha

or Win-Cres members. If you don't want to hunt down a board member, tickets can also be purchased by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope and a check for the desired quantity of tickets (at \$10 per ticket) to:

Hiawatha Trout Unlimited  
PO Box 7064  
Rochester, MN 55903-7064



## Fly of The Month: Carp Crawler

By Lance Prado, HTU Board member



Fly of the month is a simple carp fly that is very effective. With the carp ponds unfrozen now and the water warming up, carp will be getting more active. Spring is a great time to target carp on the fly since they will be up shallow. I like to call this fly the Carp Crawler.

Ingredients for the fly are:

TMC 708 size 8

Red Veevus 8/0 thread

Large bead chain eye

UV shrimp pink dubbing

MFC Bunny Brush in olive

YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AzomPbbac>

## Monthly Fishing Reports

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

Trout fishing the last couple weeks have been fantastic for anyone looking to us dry flies. We have been seeing a great Stonefly hatch, Midge hatch and Blue Wing Olives are starting to show up. The streamer bite has also been great too. Water is still very low and clear but most days there is a great hatch and the fish are not as spooky.

Recommended Flies:

#20-18 Sparkle Midge  
#16-12 Black Stonefly Dry or Nymph  
#18 Blue Wing Olive Dry Fly  
Mini Dungeons, White, Olive or Brown

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

Nothing new to report regarding water levels and conditions—as low and clear as before with spooky fish. Fishing overcast conditions is as beneficial as ever as well as fishing longer and lighter tippets.

With an early spring has come an early arrival of BWO hatches with strong midge hatches more days than not. Fishing dry patterns such as BWOs, Adam's, Griffith's gnats, and other small midges in sizes 18-20 are a good start. Dropping a softhackle or small emerger behind your dry is a good idea.

When nymphing, we're having success on smaller prince and pheasant tail patterns (sizes 16-18), zebra midges (size 16-18), pink squirrel (size 16), and caddis/cased caddis (size 16-18). Fishing small leech patterns in size 12-16 dead drifted, stripped, or with a slight twitch action are also remaining effective.

## **Upcoming Events Schedule:**

**TCTU's Chapter meeting:** on March 25. Clarke Garry and Kent Johnson will discuss the current state of knowledge regarding aquatic insect populations in the Upper Midwest

**Win-Cres Chapter Meeting:** General meeting dates will be March 27, 2024. John Van Vliet, author of several books on trout fishing, will speak at our March general meeting.

**Hiawatha TU Members Meeting:** Monday, April 1, 7pm 125Live - Chapter Meeting. Brian Nerbonne, MNDR

**Driftless TU Chapter Meeting:** April 4, 7pm @ T-Bock's Sports Bar and Grill in Decorah, IA

**Mill Creek Workday:** April 20, Sign up at  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050B49AEAD2DAA8-48689995-mill>

**Hiawatha TU Members Meeting:** Monday, May 6, 7pm 125Live - Chapter Meeting. Monta Hayner presenting. Bamboo Flyrod raffle drawing.

## **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>

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