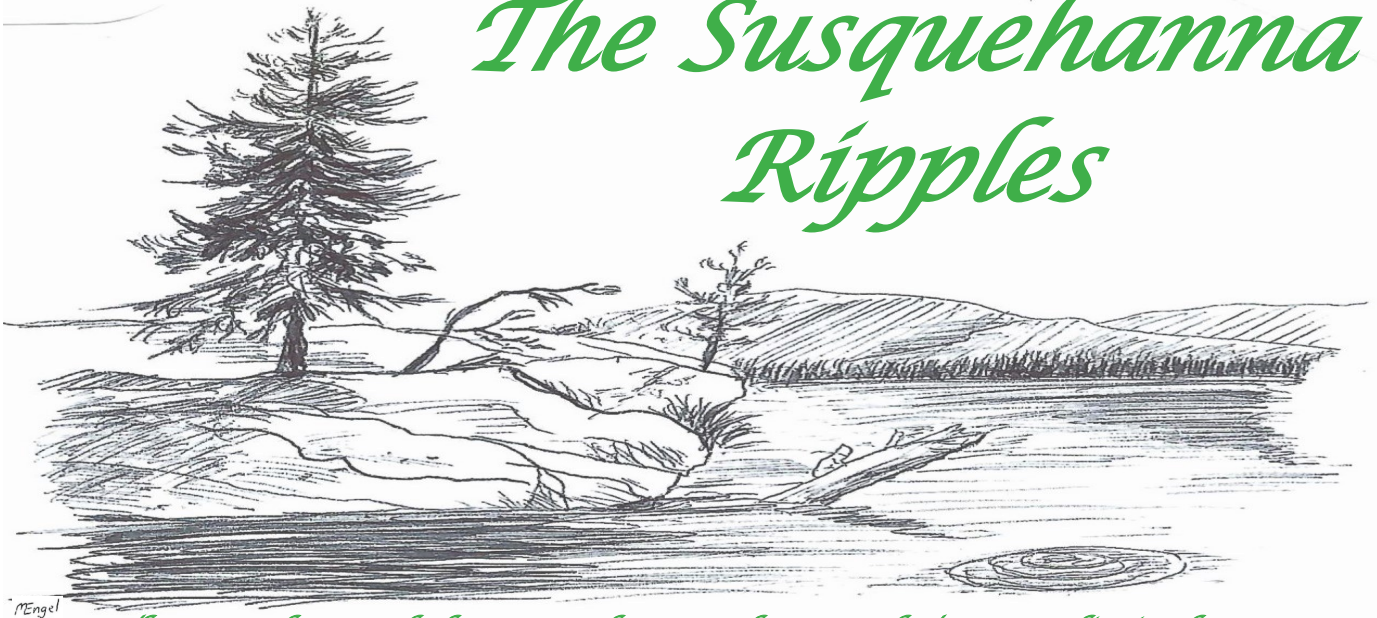


# *The Susquehanna Ripples*



*The Newsletter of the Susquehanna Chapter of Trout Unlimited #044*

## **PA Fish & Boat Commission to be Featured at Trout Unlimited Susquehanna Chapter Meeting**

The public is invited to a meeting of the Trout Unlimited Susquehanna Chapter featuring PA Fish & Boat Commission representatives. In attendance will be Waterways Conservation Officers representing Clinton, Lycoming, Sullivan and Western Bradford Counties. Also in attendance will be PA Fish & Boat Commissioner Eric Hussar, who represents the 5<sup>th</sup> District of PA, which includes Tioga, Lycoming, Bradford, Sullivan, Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union counties. Topics of discussion will include news and updates regarding fishing regulations, approved trout waters, special regulation fishing areas, stream access and fish stocking. Other news and updates at the State and District level will be offered, along with opportunity to ask questions.

The meeting will be held on **Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the Covenant Central Presbyterian Church, 807 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, in Williamsport.** Parking and entrance to the Church is at the rear of the building with access off of Campbell Street.

For more information, please see our website at <https://susquehannatu.com>.

**Please note the change in date for this meeting. The meeting will be held on Thursday February 15, 2024**

**GUYS, BE VERY CAREFUL SHOPPING ON AMAZON. I ORDERED MY WIFE A NECKLACE AND THEY SENT ME A FISHING REEL. 🤖**



<http://www.seppo.net/cartoons/displayimage.php?pos=-1509>

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**MUNCY CREEK CLEANUP**

March 3 @ 1:00 PM

- Meet at the High School
- Divide into 5 groups
- Set out and clean up five popular sections of stream

HHS Fly Fishing

The Hughesville High School Fly Fishing Club will be having a stream clean up. Please consider helping out and if you have any questions, please contact the HHS Fly Fishing Club via their facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/hhsflyfishingclub17737>

*Welcome New Members*

**Daniel Smith**

Current Membership stands at 321

**Our Official Newsletter**

The **Susquehanna Ripples** is the official newsletter of the Susquehanna Chapter of Trout Unlimited. It is published 8 times a year: January, February, March, April, June/July, September, October, and November. Please consider submitting something of interest to our readers; a story, stream report, recipe, photograph, gear review, etc. Submissions received will be placed in the next available issue. All submissions can be sent to [susquehannatu@gmail.com](mailto:susquehannatu@gmail.com) / [boblbaker@comcast.net](mailto:boblbaker@comcast.net).

**Chapter meetings** are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (unless otherwise noted) and are always free and open to the public and begin at 7:00 pm . Meetings are held at the **Covenant Central Presbyterian Church, 807 W 4th St, Williamsport, PA 17701**, in the Fellowship Hall (unless otherwise noted). Parking is at the rear of the Church and enter off of Campbell Street.

No meetings are held in May, June, July, August or December



## **“Mother of Bead Head Nymphs”**

By Roman Moser

Translated into English by Burr Boston

It was the summer of 1978, over 30 years ago, when fishing friends from Tyrol asked me to guide them for a few days on the Gmundner Taun in Austria. Those were the days when the grayling population was at its best. The eutrophic waste water from households, slaughterhouses and dairies, caused an immense insect population followed by the salmonidae. In those days, the cormorant, fish otter and merganser were still exotic foreign terms and no one ever thought that this fly-fisherman's paradise would ever change. How grave “clearing” and “protectionist measures could have on the environment can now be seen in the current condition of the trout streams in the German-speaking area.

Let's get back to my Tyrolean friends. After successful days of fishing they gave me a farewell gift of an unweighted nymph on a (snelled) blind hook on a short piece of monofilament called a “riesel” nymph. They told me that these imitations were used on a rig in the Inn river with a spinning rod and a Tirolean Hoelzl, a rolling lead weight (bouncing betty) at the line tip. The really big grayling were being caught on the bottom with this method and they suggested I should adapt the nymph for flyfishing and test on the Traun river.

Of course, my curiosity was aroused and off I went to the nearest crafts shop to purchase some Indian pearls (plastic beads). I had already had some poly-crepe nylon thread in rust brown and thin gold wire from the fly-tying guru and mentor Norbert Eipeltauer from Vienna. I quickly produced a gold bead head nymph, with added lead weight.

The nymph sank slowly tied on a #14 and 16 hook, but the effect on the fish in the Traun was exorbitant. I can still remember fishing with the gold bead head nymph in the Hager Wiese, a flat, slow-flowing section of the Traun, when 3 of the native grayling went for the nymph at once. A brown trout beat them to it (rainbows weren't stocked at the time) and greedily inhaled the shiny little thing.

Then the graylings had their turn and that all year round. The gold bead head nymph was not only successful on the Traun. This pattern was sensational in the rivers of the “Salzkammergut” region of Upper Austria, home to many Thymalli and Farios.

### **The step to a “heavy head”**

After a while I started wondering how to get into the deep runs and to the big bottom graylings. The plastic heads were simply too light. In those days we used a heavily weighted Pallaretta nymph on a sinking line with varying results. But I wanted to get way down and let the fly dance along the streambed on an extremely long leader with a floating line. There was only one way to go – It needed a heavy head, a metal head. I purchased some brass beads from the Pompel company in

Vienna, that didn't have a conical drillhole and that I just managed to get over the bend in the Partridge Captain Hamilton L3A#10. Weigh down with additional lead, I was ready for the dive. I was pleasantly surprised at what followed – and so were the graylings.

Later I bought brass beads from Cabelas USA, which were then being used for spinner bodies. The heavy gold bead head nymph was born. However, I didn't discover it. Using it for fly-fishing and weighing it down with brass (metal) was certainly my contribution. Using genuine gold beads would have been the absolute hit, something my young teacher's budget wouldn't allow. Imagine losing one of those flies on the streambed- I would have become a pearl diver myself. The tungsten beads made using MiM technology (sinter) was not known at the time. Years later articles in the magazine “Fliegenfischer” attracted the attention of some free-riders to the shiny big heads of the nymph and these free-riders proceeded to capitalize on the idea by painting their head with gold powder (Bakelar).

### **What is the birthplace of the first gold bead head nymph?**

It was probably the northern Italians who dressed up their “riesel nymphs” with Murano glass beads. Different colors of natural silk threads were wound around a blind hook, giving it a semi-transparent especially attractive appearance when wet (bleeding through). Then the pattern went through Graubuenden in Switzerland with the spinning rod and dangling nymph system to Tyrol. The East Tyrolean Berno Schober, one of the most famous tiers of riesel nymphs, was based here.

This type of bait fishing was being practiced in the Swiss lakes as well at the time, where yellow perch and lake coregonos were caught. The Japanese also supposedly recognized the attractiveness of such a nymph with a large gold painted head far earlier than the European version appeared. They successfully fished these on Tenkara rods, a long rod without a reel using a short line.

### **A bead rolls around the world**

In the mid-80's I was often in England, the birthplace of fly-fishing. Alan Bramley, the proprietor of Partridge hooks in Redditch at the time, had invited me to demonstrate my fly-tying skills at the vise at various events such as the Game Fair, Chatsworth Angling Fair, or his own Fly Tying days. Naturally, I tied some pike streamers, which some turned up their noses at – how times have changed- and the gold bead head nymph.

This drew the attention of some local greats such as Oliver Edwards, Malcolm Greenhalgh and Bob Church. It was an enormous success. Great Britain was in gold head fever, nevertheless, some purists saw them as lures and rejected them. Barry Unwin, proprietor of Fulling Mill flies couldn't keep up with the demand. At the time, he was also producing flies for Orvis USA and some of these nymphs landed in Tom Rosenbauer's (present Orvis mgr.) fly box.

*“Mother of Bead Head Nymphs” continued  
from previous page*

For the longest time, the little golden bead nymphs sat unnoticed in his fishing vest until one tough fishing day. He fished the nymph and caught so many fish he felt obliged to include the pattern in the Orvis selection and write an enthusiastic article about it for ‘Fly Fisherman’ magazine. He did, however, also refer to its first use in fly-fishing and the developer of the metal beads (he gave credit). Both the American fly-fishermen and material suppliers went head over heels- everyone wanted in on the hype. One supplier actually wanted to patent the pattern. After being reminded by Tom Schmuecker of Wapsi Flies of the Austrian originator they put an end to the process and taught the supplier a lesson.

### **Beads or pearls – there’s no difference.**

Today, nymph beads are available in all sizes, colors, weights and materials – even fluorescent rubber. Meanwhile, the US Americans have taken a step back to the original pattern and use mini-beads for the midge pupa imitation. These are hard, shiny plastic beads that fit on a #20-24 hook. Countersunk, faceted, hexagonal, slotted or with raised eyes, every type of bead imaginable is being used today. This efficient type of nymph fishing is here to stay.

### **Have I created a monster?**

I sometimes have my doubts. Was it wrong to give the inexperienced fly-fisherman the opportunity to hook a fish in deep water? To be successful when he otherwise wouldn’t have the expertise to succeed? Now I’m intentionally being provoking. Venturing into the third dimension is no problem today and the easy constant success unfortunately prevents any progress being made at casting and presentation techniques. “Splish-splash” nymph fishermen are seen everywhere, but they couldn’t present a dry fly further than their big toe. So they return to the very promising gold head nymph technique. Limiting yourself and self-discipline are called for here. Especially when fish are rising, this heavy ammunition should not be applied.

Regulations prohibiting weighted nymphs, lead shot, strike indicators, or sinking lines and sink tips are necessary. ‘Dry-fly only’ sections on rivers are often an alternative overlooked. In my opinion, fishing under the surface should only be allowed in deep enough, fast currents, high water or limited to specific times of year.

In 1990 I had the idea for the cone heads (golden bullet heads, copied by an Italian and sold to Veniard first) for streamer fishing and in 2004 the flat sculpin heads used in imitating sculpin streamers, stone-fly nymphs (copied by the US Flymen company).

### **Rising midge pupa (gold head midge pupa)**

Insects with complete metamorphosis, the evolution-

ary development through a pupa stage, is only seen in midges (Dipteras) and caddis flies (Trichopteras). This short phase of free swimming is basically only to rise from the stream bed to the surface. What a waste of energy. But it makes perfect sense. The development to a mature insect capable of reproduction takes place in small stages through metamorphosis. Caddis use their middle pair of legs in a rowing motion to rise to the surface, but the tiny gnats or mosquitoes need additional force.

In the little pond in my yard I could observe how big Chironomidae rose slowly to the surface like balloons. The head and thorax part of the insect with the tracheal tufts had an apparent glisten to them as if filled with gas. Many experts may doubt this, however, I am of the opinion that the rapid separation of the pupa and adult skin in particular in the head and thoracic region of the insect is of the utmost importance for its survival. First, the back seam splits open. Gas or fluid as a separating layer can not be denied in this case. From below, the fish sees the insect’s upper body as swollen and sparkling against the background of a bright sky. That is exactly what the gold head midge pupa imitates. When the fish sees this it is as if the dinner bell is ringing. Mature midges and consequently the pupa are found in and on the water year round. Even if the fishing is difficult in the colder seasons, on the relatively warmer days the dipteras can simply not stay put on the streambed. They swim jerkily just over the streambed always trying to reach higher water levels and ultimately, the surface. That is also exactly how the gold bead head nymph should be fished; using a continuous short, jerking rising motion.

### **Materials**

**Hook:** bead head hook #8-20

**Head:** gold plated countersunk bead

**Weight:** lead wire or substitute

**Body:** polycrylon thread in rust brown (flat nylon body thread)

**Ribbing:** fine gold wire

**Hackle:** short bunch of brown hackle fiber

Reprinted from *The Lycoming Sportsman, Vol 1, No. 1*  
*Spring and Summer Issue - 1965*

*[We've come a long way protecting our streams since those days, but as new stream protection issues arise from today's resource extraction development activities we still must stay alert.]*

## **CLEAN STREAMS**

by **KEN CORSON, Chairman**

With rivers running red, a sorry situation exists in Pennsylvania. Almost everyone knows and public opinion certainly holds that waterways of this State can no longer be used as sewers to dispose of human, animal, industrial and acid mine wastes. For eighty years, obsolete laws and decadent court decisions have kept Pennsylvania's streams red and impure with mine water discharges. Although the people in this Commonwealth have spent nearly \$350 million for sewage treatment plants to comply with Department of Health orders, the mining interests of this State continue to defile 2,900 miles of streams.

What is most irritating about this callous defilement is that the mine leaders belligerently claim they have the right to pump mine acid into our streams because they have the law on their side. What is even more galling, mine operators are opposing every attempt being made by municipal officials to control nuisance conditions in their cities.

What has the Bureau of Mines done in past years to deserve such public trust? So far as the North Branch of the Susquehanna is concerned — nothing good. On January 22, 1959 the Susquehanna River broke through the thin wall separating the river bed from the Knox Mine at Pittston. Twelve miners drowned and their bodies were never recovered. Box cars were used to plug the huge hole in the river bank. General opinion is that somebody blundered in permitting mining too close to the river barrier. Proper inspection is a responsibility of the Bureau of Mines.

On October 5, 1961, three government-donated pumps were thrown into operation at the Glen Alden Corporation shaft in South Wilkes-Barre. No less than 300,000 fish were killed and the North Branch was ruined for fifty miles.

These pumps were installed under the supervision of the Bureau of Mines. Again somebody blundered for the planned operation of these pumps was not reported to the Sanitary Water Board or the Fish Commission. No permit was taken out to cover the enlarged scale of pumping which reached 19½ million gallons per day. In plain words, the Bureau of Mines goofed. Glen Alden paid a \$45,000 restitution fine to the Fish Commission for this mistake.

In spite of these tell-tale errors, no explanations of how such accidents occurred have ever been related to the public by the Bureau of Mines. Certainly there is nothing in this dubious record to give the people of Pennsylvania much confidence in the capability of this Bureau to protect their interests. The miners themselves may well hold similar doubts upon considering the tragedy at Pittston.

This recital of coal region court decisions and calamities is written because the State Legislature now in session is considering amendments to existing laws governing both anthracite and soft coal strip mining.

A strong soft coal strip mine bill passed the House in 1964 only to be watered down by the Senate legislators who cut public representation on the Land Restoration Board to virtually zero. Similar didoes took place when the House inserted strengthening amendments to the Administration's anthracite strip bill. The Senate refused to go along with the House and the amendments sought by the auto-bus loads of people from Plymouth were defeated.

Really aroused by these back-sets to the Clean Stream program, members of the House of Representatives mostly from the Anthracite and Bituminous sections of the State, are now storming back. Two bills have been introduced, namely House Bill 132 and House Bill 485. Sportsmen and Conservationists of Pennsylvania are watching how their Senators vote again this year. Curiously enough, some Senators coming from the counties along the mine acid plagued Susquehanna River flunked the vote test last year. Your State Senator may bear watching on this issue.



**Susquehanna Chapter of Trout Unlimited**  
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**Williamsport, PA 17703 - 1132**

**Since 1964, the core mission of our Chapter is to work to make positive contributions to the protection, conservation and restoration of our Coldwater fisheries and their watersheds of North Central Pennsylvania**

**Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

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TU does not make email addresses available to outside parties, for any reason, ever. Please help us conserve resources by providing your email address.

SEND APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO:



**Trout Unlimited**  
**PO Box 98166**  
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Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

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**#044**