



The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

May 2026 Edition

## Dick Schot New Member Outing

Submitted by Glen Easterbook

This year's New Member's Outing was challenging on the fishing side. After the heavy rains and solid snowpack that made for historic flooding and environmental problem in the northern half of the lower peninsula the AuSable river became a river of worms. This upset the bite as far as bug hatches were concerned. However, 13 members of which 7 were New Members very much enjoyed the outing.

We had presentations in the evenings from Kevin Gardner (history of WaWaSum), Jeff McGowan (tying flies of the AuSable Region), Arty (providing tours on the North Branch hot spots), Jason Bergwell from the Grayling Fish Hatchery for a presentation on the hatchery.



We got everyone on the river in drift boats thanks to Jess and John Schmidt from Bay City area. John did some casting instruction as well. The dock has been replaced at WaWaSum after having been damaged by high water.



The food and accommodation were excellent. The weather cooperated but was a little chilly at times. All-in-all a good time was had by all.

The following new members attended this annual event: Craig Small, Jenelle Farris, Wally Kotlarczyk, Michael Thomasian, Kevin Klaeren, Andrew Bishop and Michael Sinclair.

Many thanks to all that helped make the trip a success: Bill Yaw, Mike Thomasin, Mike Sinclair, Karl Gross, Arty Mikkola, Ed Jones and others all helped to make the event a success.



### Upcoming Club Events

- 05/14/26: Smallmouth Outing
- 05/20/26: MFFC Banquet
- 06/03/26: Summer Meeting
- 06/06/26: Scout School
- 07/01/26: Summer Meeting
- 07/16/26: Bourbon & Browns
- 07/18/26: Club Picnic
- 07/25/26: Education Outing
- 08/01/26: Montana Trip Week #1
- 08/05/26: Summer Meeting
- 08/08/26: Montana Trip Week #2
- 08/15/26: Montana Trip Week #3
- 09/02/26: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 09/07/26: Board Meeting
- 09/16/26: Club Meeting (Activity)
- 09/20/26: Driftless (Viroqua, WI) Trip
- 10/07/26: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 10/14/26: Board Meeting
- 10/21/26: Club Meeting (Activity)
- 11/04/26: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 11/11/26: Board Meeting
- 11/18/26: Club Meeting (Activity)
- 12/02/26: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 12/09/26: Board Meeting
- 12/16/26: Club Mtg (Garage Sale)
- 01/06/27: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 01/13/27: Board Meeting
- 01/20/27: Club Meeting (Activity)
- 02/03/27: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 02/10/27: Board Meeting
- 02/17/27: Club Meeting (Activity)

For the most current listing of events, check our club's website: [mffc.org](http://mffc.org)

## Michigan Fly Fishing Club – Business Section

### Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026

#### Roll Call:

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm

Present: T. Schotts, J. Bada; J. Eriksson;  
J. Aukee; J. Aitken; N. Tabaka, K. Lipp,  
T. DeFauw, J. Haxton

Absent: J. Harris

**Approval of the Minutes:** minutes from  
03/11/26 approved

**Approval of the Agenda:** Kevin Lipp  
made a motion to approve the amended  
agenda. Todd Schotts seconded the motion  
which carried for 03/11/26

#### Officer's Report

**President:** T. Schotts

- Introducing Nancy Klimco as the  
new Recording Secretary

**Vice President:** J. Bada – no report

**Treasurer:** J. Aitken

- Budget tracking, we are tracking  
under budget currently for the year.
- Copies of next year's budget will be  
handed out in the 05/06/25 club mtg

**Corresponding Secretary:** – no report

**Membership:** J. Eriksson

- We have 411 members at the close  
of the Fiscal Year, July 31, 2025
- 36 new members have joined since  
the Ultimate Fishing Show.

#### Visitors' Comments:

- Joe Sprys and Kevin Lipp gave a  
summary of the Expo.

#### Visitors' Comments: (continued)

- Visitors: Vern White, Scott  
Freeburg, Bill Yaw, Joe Sprys and  
Nancy Klimko

#### New Business:

- Jim Aitken Presented the new  
budget for 26 - 27 fiscal year.  
Budget approved as amended.
- Motion to accept Nancy Klimko as  
Recording Secretary; motion  
approved
- Motion for Investigating purchasing  
equipment for future club (Zoom)  
meetings; motion approved

#### Old Business: - no report

#### New Business:

- Conservation Granting: Bill Yaw  
and Kevin Lipp presented the  
recipients of the grants for this year;  
grants were awarded to:
  - Anglers of the AuSable
  - Clinton River Watershed
  - Project Fish (Educational)
  - Project Fish (Operations)
  - Huron River Watershed
  - Portable Toilet at Dam 4  
(Lovells, MI)
  - Cedars of the AuSable
- Jim Aitken Presented the new  
budget for 26 - 27 fiscal year.  
Budget approved as amended.



2024 - 2026 Club Treasurer: Jim Aitken getting a nice steelhead on the PM



### 2026 - 2027 Club Officers

#### President:

**Todd A. Schotts**  
*mailto: president@mffc.org*

#### Vice President:

**Vern White**  
*mailto: vicepresident@mffc.org*

#### Treasurer:

**John Eriksson**  
*mailto: treasurer@mffc.org*

#### Membership:

**Scott Terzich**  
*mailto: membership@mffc.org*

#### Recording Secretary:

**Nancy Klimco**  
*mailto: recordingsecretary@mffc.org*

#### Corresponding Secretary:

**Jon Bada**  
*mailto: correspondence@mffc.org*

#### Director At-Large:

**Norm Tabaka**  
*mailto: ntabaka@gmail.com*

#### Director At-Large:

**Terry DeFauw**  
*mailto: tdefauw59@aol.com*

#### Director At-Large:

**Bill Yaw**  
*mailto: byaw96@gmail.com*

#### Immediate Past President:

**Kevin Lipp**  
*mailto: kjlipp@gmail.com*

### Club Editors & Publishers

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#### Club Facebook Administrator:

**Joyce Haxton**  
*mailto: rainbow10trout@gmail.com*



# Michigan Fly Fishing Club's Spring Events

## Trout Opener & Remembrance (Grayling, MI)



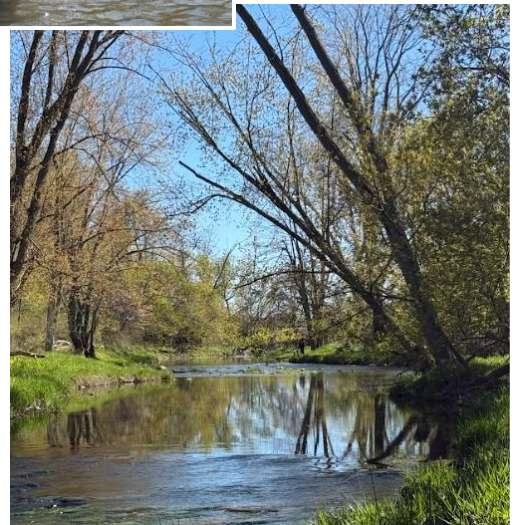
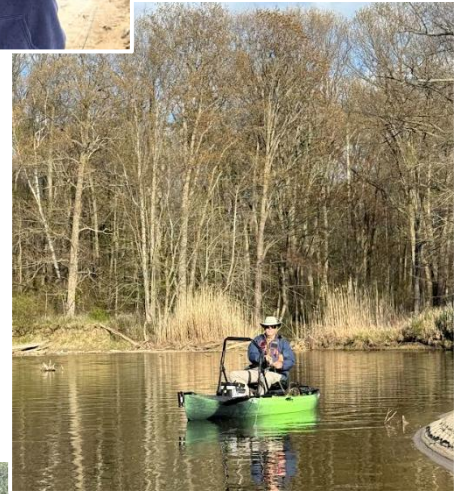
Remembrance Ceremony on April 25<sup>th</sup> at Gates AuSable Lodge: special ceremony for local fly fisherman who had past away over the past year. Al Haxton provided the tribute to our fellow brethren.



But someone actually caught a nice 17" brown trout on Opening Day! Mike Heztler while he was on Erik Symour's driftboat near the McMaster Bridge takeout.



## Smallmouth Outing (Port Austin, MI)



Bob Niemi seeking Jerry Regan's advice on how to cut the long gray hair from some outgoing VP while sipping ginger ale at the garage of Jeff McGowan on the Friday evening prior to the Opener.





# Michigan Fly Fishing Club's Spring Events(continued)

## Smallmouth Outing (Port Austin, MI)

*(continued from the previous page)*



Event Chairwoman, Renee Gall tying her favorite smallmouth pattern



Going to need a bigger net (above)



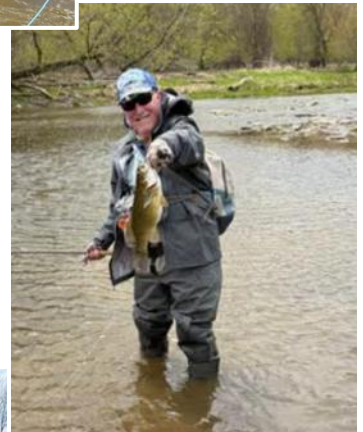
Todd Schotts showing how to do it on a kayak (above)

## Other Results (prior to the Outing) around Port Austin, MI

from Steve Burhalter & Jon Bada



Scott Freeburg showing that he can use the kayak for Port Austin smallies as well



The recliner on a kayak for afternoon naps (below)



## A Jolt and a Recovery: DNR Staff Successfully Complete Steelhead Egg Collection After Lightning Strike Damage

(written by **Olen Gannon** & **Joe Mickevich**)

After a lightning strike at the Little Manistee River Weir (Manistee County) threatened to derail steelhead egg collection for this season, the Department of Natural Resources rallied to collect approximately 4.2 million steelhead eggs for Michigan's state fish hatcheries. Staff were able to proceed with collection at the Little Manistee Weir, as well as deploy the Lower Platte River Weir (Benzie County) as a backup egg source for the first time, both of which contributed to the successful collection of steelhead eggs for future stocking throughout the state.



During severe weather the night of April 13<sup>th</sup>, the Little Manistee River Weir facility was struck by lightning, which took out the main power, backup power source and emergency alarm

notification system at the facility. This resulted in a loss of some of the fish being held in maturation ponds, as the systems that sustained the fish were offline - egg collection was scheduled to begin the following morning.

Once the damage was discovered, staff worked swiftly to restore power to the facility and collect eggs from the live fish on-site. Egg collection proceeded at this location in the following weeks, with the final collection there occurring April 29<sup>th</sup>.

The DNR quickly identified the weirs at Platte River State Fish Hatchery as the best available backup source for steelhead eggs. The Lower Platte River Weir was deployed April 17<sup>th</sup> to block further upstream migration of steelhead and eventually divert them to a holding pond for collection. The fish were trucked from the lower weir to the maturation ponds at the Platte River State Fish Hatchery, where steelhead egg-take operations began May 5<sup>th</sup> and wrapped up May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Until now, the Little Manistee River Weir served as the state's only egg-collection facility for steelhead, making it vulnerable to rare, unpredictable occurrences (like the lightning strike) that could render the facility inoperable. Equipment that was damaged due to the storm was repaired and replaced as appropriate, and the DNR is pursuing an improved alarm system for the facility. Despite the unfortunate loss of fish, fisheries managers do not expect any lasting negative impacts to the fishery.

While the Lower and Upper Platte River weirs were a valuable backup source for steelhead eggs, providing nearly half of the total collected this year, the weirs were not set up for this purpose. These weirs are typically used for coho salmon egg collection, during which fish are harvested, as it is the end of their life cycle. Steelhead, however, can spawn multiple times

in their lives and are returned alive to the river after gametes (eggs and milt) are collected. Extensive modifications to the Platte River facilities to allow fish to be returned to the river would be necessary for the location to serve as a steelhead egg-collection site in future.



“We made it happen, but there was a significant reallocation of staff time, overtime hours and modifications to typical egg-collection operations,” said Joe Mickevich, southern area hatchery manager for the DNR. “As a result, and with staffing levels at a bare minimum, we are still working to complete the fish stocking and survey work that was affected and is dependent on weather and water conditions.”

This season's severe weather presented additional challenges during this high-activity time, not only due to the need to triage steelhead egg collection, but also because staff were monitoring high water levels and department-owned dams.

“This spring season has been full of challenges for the Fisheries Division,” said Randy Claramunt, chief of the DNR's Fisheries Division. “But we rose to those challenges. Our staff's teamwork, resilience and focus allowed us to adapt to the changing situation and continue to meet our mission to manage the fishery for public benefit.”

## Wake of the Flood: Anglers of the AuSable and Mason-Griffith Founders Chapter of Trout Unlimited Team Up

April 2026 brought historic rains and flooding to all of Northern Michigan. The AuSable watershed was no exception. Fed by continuous rainfall and melting snow our normally stable streams swelled to historic levels. The rising, raging water moved not only items within normal stream banks, but far above. The water force moved docks and items that were not secure. Islands were modified, trees tumbled, and fish habitat was destroyed. This created many blockages that made navigation difficult if not impossible.

Over more than a decade the Anglers of the AuSable (AOTA) and Mason-Griffith Founders Chapter of Trout Unlimited (MGFTU) have installed and repaired fish habitat structures in the upper watershed. When the extent of the damage caused by



these recent floods became apparent, the AOTA & MGFTU took immediate action. We decided to work together to mitigate the flood damage and expedite recovery efforts. Each

(to be continued on next page)

## More Conservation News and Additional Member Pictures

### AOTA & MGFTU Team Up

(continued from previous page)

organization will tackle specific reaches of the AuSable to offer systemic coverage to the post-flood river. Our priorities are simple: First, the river needs to be made safe for river users. Second, a survey will be needed to determine the status of trout habitat in the river. coverage to the post-flood river. Our priorities are simple: First, the river needs to be made safe for river users. Second, a survey will be needed to determine the status of trout habitat in the river. Finally, we will develop action plans for specific sections of the AuSable.

As the water levels recede, the partners are planning to do surveys to determine the status of fish habitat within the river. Both have postponed the restoration work planned for this year. Instead, focus will be on restoring existing fish habitat impacted by the flood. This effort will be a complicated process. First there is an evaluation of what is in place, and an evaluation of the present stream conditions. In reality, the river will be different, rearranged and sculpted by Mother Nature. But significant work is needed to make the river the best trout fishery it can be. Once plans are in place, permits are needed to conduct restoration work, and these can take months to receive. We are working as quickly as possible. Regardless of this enormous task, the AOTA and MGFTU are committed to seeing this effort completed. First, we ask for your patience. This will be an expensive and lengthy process. We need your help. Please consider a donation to both organizations to assist in this river restoration effort.



Donations can be made to the Anglers of the AuSable by sending a check to P.O. Box 200, Grayling, MI 49738 or donate online at: <https://ausableanglers.org/support-the-river/>

Did anyone happen to see this YouTube video?

### Michigan Fly Fishing Secrets: FST Season 4 Ep 5 Michigan

presented by Flylords and Simms Fishing. The video features Mike Schultz (of Schultz's Outfitters) and Josh Greenberg (Gates AuSable Lodge). Two great ambassadors for the State of Michigan's fly fishing industry.



### Spring Days on the Pere Marquette

(submitted by Rick Rademaker)

On May 5th and 6th, I had the opportunity to spend two days floating and fishing in Michigan's beautiful Pere Marquette River with longtime friend and guide Jeff Hubbard of Outfitters North. Jeff and I have shared many days on the water over the years, and one thing about early May in Michigan is that you truly never know what kind of conditions you're going to get - weather, water levels, and fish activity can all be a surprise.

After the heavy rains and flooding that swept across much of the state leading up to our trip, I expected high, stained water and difficult fishing conditions. Instead, we were greeted with a pleasant surprise: the river had dropped back close to normal levels and the water clarity was excellent. Even more surprising was the number of steelhead still holding in the system.

Seeing that opportunity, we focused on some proven holding water using an egg and salmon fry combination. The steelhead cooperated, and along with few hookups, I landed a couple of fish, with some nice brown trout mixed in. Of course, as every fisherman understands, "the big one" managed to come unbuttoned and disappear back into the current. Still, I landed some memorable fish, including one particularly unusual steelhead with a pronounced humpback that looked almost like a cross between a steelhead and a pink salmon.

Both days brought mostly sunny skies - conditions that can make fish a little wary - but despite that, the fishing remained productive. The mornings and evenings were chilly, though the sunshine felt great, and perhaps the best part of the trip was simply seeing spring fully arrive along the river. Trees were beginning to leaf out, daffodils were blooming, and wildlife seemed to be everywhere. During our floats we watched turkeys strutting along the banks, deer moving through the woods, eagles soaring overhead, and even muskrat and mink working the shoreline.

At times like that, I'm always reminded of the words of John Voelker: "*Wild trout, unlike men, will not - indeed cannot - live except where beauty dwells.*"

It truly felt good to be back on the river again.

Heading into day two, the forecast called for cloudy skies, and we were optimistic that conditions might line up perfectly. Unfortunately, the weatherman missed that one completely, and we were greeted once again with bright sun and clear skies. We committed to fishing streamers throughout the day, and white patterns proved to be the ticket. The fish were definitely spooky at times, but we continued to move fish and put together another successful day.



## MFFC Events and Outings w/ Chairperson's eMail (Hyperlink)

Hyperlink for eMail

Outing and Events	2026 Dates	Where	Chairperson(s)
MFFC Banquet	May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Italian American Banquet Center (Livonia, MI)	Scott Freeburg
Summer Meeting	June 3rd	Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena (Plymouth, MI)	
Scouting Merit Badge School	June 6th	Wayne County Community. College - Ted Scott Campus (Belleville, MI)	Norm Tabaka / Dave Oakley
Summer Meeting	July 1st	Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena (Plymouth, MI)	
Wawa Sum: Bourbon & Browns	July 16 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup>	WawaSum Lodge (Grayling, MI)	Tom Coleman
Club Picnic	July 18 <sup>th</sup>	Multi Lakes Conservation Club (Commerce Township, MI)	John Eriksson
Grindstone Port Hope Youth Outdoor Education Day	July 25th	Grindstone Port Hope Sportsman Club Education Outing (Port Hope, MI)	John Eriksson
Yellowstone, MT Trip #1	August 1 <sup>st</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT)	Al Haxton
Summer Meeting	August 5 <sup>th</sup>	Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena (Plymouth, MI)	
Yellowstone, MT Trip #2	August 8 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup>	Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT)	Al Haxton
Yellowstone, MT Trip #3	August 15 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT)	Al Haxton
Driftless, WI Trip	September 20 <sup>th</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup>	Viroqua, WI	Jerry Deputat
Ultimate Fishing Show	<b>TBD</b>	Suburban Collection Showplace Novi, MI	Jon Bada
Midwest Flyfishing Expo	March 12 <sup>th</sup> (Friday: 1pm - 9pm) March 13 <sup>th</sup> (Saturday: 9am – 6pm)	Oakland County Expo Center (Waterford, MI)	Kevin Lipp / Joe Sprys
White River, Cotter, AR	March 16 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup>	White River Trout Lodge	Jon Bada
Youth School	<b>TBD</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>Chairperson Needed</b>

**Editor's Note:** to proceed onto the Hyperlinks show above: from your desktop computer- press on the CONTROL key and click over the colored box



### Upcoming Club Events News / Updates

#### Bourbon & Browns

- 4 spots remain – see dates above and contact [Tom Coleman](#)

#### Yellowstone, MT Trips

- Week #1: August 1<sup>st</sup> – August 8<sup>th</sup>: An entire four (4) person cabin is available
- contact chairperson [Al Haxton](#)



#### Wisconsin Driftless Outing

- In September of this year, MFFC members will again be heading west about 500 miles to explore the renowned Driftless Area in western Wisconsin. Though the outing is currently maxed out at 15 members, we will work on securing additional lodging if there is more interest expressed.
- Details of the outing can be viewed on the MFFC website. If you are

having trouble viewing the content, just google on your browser “MFFC Driftless Outing”

- contact chairperson [Jerry Deputat](#) or call (248-798-3089) for additional information

#### Midwest Flyfishing Expo

- We have secured the Oakland County Expo Center for 2027 and back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend of March.

# Michigan Fly Fishing Club – the Back Page

## Spring Days on the Pere Marquette *(continued from Page 6)*

One brown trout, in particular, stood out from the rest. Its brilliant golden coloring and intricate spotting pattern were absolutely stunning. Brown trout never cease to amaze me with their endless variety of colors and markings, but this



fish was exceptional. A couple of people later commented that it resembled a golden dorado more than a Michigan brown trout.



In the end, it was everything a spring fly-fishing trip should be: two beautiful days on the water, good fishing, wildlife, sunshine, a few Don Aquilera Rocky Patel cigars, and time spent with a good friend on one of Michigan’s classic rivers. It doesn’t get much better than that.

### Summer Speaker Schedule (held at Plymouth Cultural Center & Ice Arena - 525 Farmer St, Plymouth, MI 48170)

**June: Matt Dalton** – kayak fishing on lakes & rivers including equipment, set-up tips & techniques

**July: Joe Jelseno** – bass fishing on the Flint River watershed

**August:** TBD – watch the email eBlast announcements



### Summer “Non-Meeting” Wednesdays’ Fishing Schedule

**Wednesday Afternoons:** 4:30pm – Dusk  
watch the email eBlast starting June 1<sup>st</sup>



Michigan Fly Fishing Club  
P.O. Box 530861  
Livonia, MI 48153