

Craftsman Corner

Paul Julius: a bamboo fly rod maker at an early age

By Scott Grady

So how lucky is Paul Julius? He lives in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin and makes and fishes split bamboo fly rods. From one rodmaker to another, I'm jealous!

For many fly fishers, somewhere in their early years there is a split bamboo fly rod. It's usually a cheap rod, well used, perhaps handed down from a family member or a fishing mentor. Paul's first rod was a nine-foot, three-piecer that was missing about a foot off the tip section.



"I think I was about 12 years old at the time, and I thought it would be neat to be able to fix up the old rod or make a new one. So the seed for making rods was planted early."

Paul started his first bamboo rod about 10 years ago.

"I always wanted to make rods, but time to do so was always not there."

After accumulating the tools, he finally got his rodmaking shop to-



gether.

"I learned early on that the rod-making process shouldn't be rushed or hurried, and I still believe it."

When you get a good look at Paul's rods, you will see it is time well spent. Recently Paul donated one of his Driggs River rods to Trout Unlimited to be used to help raise money at the TU National Convention banquet in Madison on September 28. Someone went home with a big smile on their face.

Paul likes Paul Young rod tapers. Mr. Young was a Michigan fly shop owner and rod maker who understood upper Midwest trout streams. Paul Julius has modified those tapers to his own taste by smoothing

out the numbers of the taper. For the Driftless Area, Paul likes his Driggs River and the Perfectionist tapers the best. These rod tapers — along with flamed cane, darkened hardware, and appealing wraps — make for beautiful, versatile, great-casting fly rods.

ting and hand planning each rod. He doesn't work with fiberglass or graphite. To Paul, "Bamboo has always seemed to me to be the right material for trout rods."

Paul hears back from his customers from time to time. They mostly tell him about the fish they catch.

"Always makes me smile 'cause that's what the rod is meant to do."

Paul can be reached by e-mail at maker@pjuliusrods.com or via his website at pjuliusrods.com.

(If you know someone who is crafting items for trout fishers, let Scott Grady know. Maybe we can tell his or her story here in Craftsman Corner. Contact Scott at oossg@vbe.com. -Ed.)



As with most rod makers, Paul holds a special place for the first rod he made, which he still fishes a lot yet today.

"Some days I like to use the Driggs design and some days the Perfectionist," he says.

Paul specializes in bamboo, split-

Watershed Access Fund

Over \$8,000 raised for trout access grants

By Doug Brown

The 2012-13 fundraising campaign is nearly over, and the response has been very good. We have raised over \$8,000, with 80 private donations and five TU chapters contributing.

That kind of financial support has been put to good use. Last year, the Central WI Chapter was awarded a grant to help acquire land along the White River in Waushara County. All contributions will be used solely for Wisconsin acquisitions.

The current grant request limit is \$5,000. Because two chapters may each request for a single acquisition, and each chapter would have to match at 50%, the new limits would provide as much as \$15,000 for a single purchase or easement. So for all you chapters looking for purchase help, this should go a long ways.

Please consider a generous contribution to the Watershed Access Fund. Access is critical for anglers and for TU to do habitat work.

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Here is my contribution of \$100 or more to the Watershed Access Fund

(Make your check payable to "Wisconsin Trout Unlimited")

MAIL TO: TU Watershed Access Fund
% Doug Brown
R4800 Timber Ln.
Ringle, WI 54471

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Address _____
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