

# On The Fly

August 2012 Volume 22, Issue 8

**Prez Sez,** *By Tom Gadacz, President, Suncoast Fly Fishers*

***Fishing is Hot***

Florida is usually one of the warmest places in the country during the summer. This year we seem to be one of the least hot places not only along the east coast but also the Midwest. What has been really hot is the fishing. Several members have been reporting successful outings and catches of 19 to 22 inch trout. Successful flies have ranged from green back minnows to gurglers.



Day fishing requires good sun protection and one of the best types of protection is clothing. Sun protective shirts, pants, hats, facemasks and gloves are better than sun block lotions. Many long sleeved shirts and long pants have ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) 50+ protective qualities to minimize sun exposure. Head and face protection are very important and wearing a wide brimmed hat and even a facemask is necessary.

*Breathe Like A Fish* offers a micro fiber UPF 50+ shirt with an attached mask. *Triple J* sells an UV nose-guard protector. There are several factors that influence the protective qualities of a fabric and some of these include the weave (tighter is better), color (darker is better), weight (heavier is better), stretch (less is better) and wetness (dry is better). The other major factor that affects protection is the addition of chemicals such as UV absorbers or UV diffusers during the manufacturing process. Consumer Reports rated NO-AD sun block lotion as one of the best. It protects against UVA and UVB rays but needs to be applied every two hours.

Another alternative is night fishing. This is perhaps one of the most pleasant ways to fish in this area during the summer. The most productive areas are dock lights. When fishing these areas it is important to stay a distance from these private docks and respect the privacy of the owners. A trolling motor and headlight are two necessities. The outing this month is night fishing so take advantage of this event and have a great time catching.

***Prez Sez continues on following page***

*Also in this issue of On The Fly*

NEWSLETTER OF THE SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS

## On The Fly

August 2012 Volume 22, Issue 8

• News 'n Notes	3
• Sewell, Previews n Reviews	4
• Hofmeister, Lost and Found	5
• Jones, Dock Light Update	6
• Going Dark: ReadySetGo	7
• Hofmeister, One Big Lake	8
• Mazzarella, Ham and Snake	9
• Tying Bench: Dan's Hoo Fly	10
• Annie Hays, Bighorn Fly Camp	11
• Oldenski, Venomous Creatures	14
• Morrison, How To break a rod	16
• Hays, Knot Knerd's Five Favs	17
• Damico, Cssting Clinic	18
• AuCoin, Fly Over	21

# We are Suncoast Fly Fishers

Prez Sez, continued from page one...

## **SFF and the Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing and Interactive Museum.**

We are continuing to work with the Museum and the classes on fly-fishing are scheduled for after Labor Day. The exhibit is in the planning stages. The 24 X 12 foot wall will have a large image of a fly fisher and our logo.



Exhibits of Carl Hanson, fly-fishing flies, youth fishing and conservations are some of the themes that are being planned. This is one of the three SFF activities at the Museum.

The three activities planned include participation in high school fishing clubs and introducing the students to fly fishing, classes on fly fishing at the Museum, and an exhibit on fly-fishing in the museum. If you are interested in participating in any of these activities, please contact Ken Hofmeister, Richard Oldenski or me.

## **Florida Council FF Expo Cancelled**

The Expo for October of this year has been cancelled. The resort that was chosen will not be able to complete their scheduled renovations. Please remove this from your calendar and check the web site for further information. <http://www.fff-florida.org/>  
*Tom Gadacz, President, Suncoast Fly Fishers*

## **Monthly Meetings**

Suncoast Fly Fishers meet the third Thursday of each month (except December) at Walter Fuller Park, 7891 26 Avenue N. St. Petersburg, FL 33710

- 6:00 – 7:00 pm – Fly tying and casting
- 7:00—8:00 pm – Meeting and program

## **SFF Club Calendar**

- August 16 meeting, Walter Fuller Park. John Adams and Bill Lott present our August 16, SFF program on how to catch tailing reds.
- August 18-19, Night Time in Pinellas County. Docklight and other in-the-dark fishing.
- September 8 – Free Fly Casting Clinic with Pat Damico, Master Casting Instructor. Register now, [pat4jaws@hotmail.com](mailto:pat4jaws@hotmail.com), 727-504-8649
- September 20 meeting, Walter Fuller Park – Brad Lowman presentation
- September 22, Fred Howard Park Outing
- September 22-23, SFF exhibit at Florida Sportsman Show, Tampa Fairgrounds. Florida Sportsman is providing free exhibit and casting areas for the Suncoast Fly Fishers to help show-goers learn to tie and fly cast.
- October 27, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. The SFF will have a fly tying table at Marine Quest. We need fly tyers to help teach kids how to tie their first fly. Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg.
- November 17 – Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing tournament at Bradenton Yacht Club. Contact Capt. Pat Damico.

### **Suncoast Fly Fishers**

P. O. Box 40821, St. Petersburg, FL 33743-0821  
<http://suncoastflyfishers.com/>

### **Club Officers**

President: Tom Gadacz 727-360-8030  
Vice President: Woody Miller, 727-560-6086  
Secretary: Ken Hofmeister 725-521-1637  
Treasurer: Roger Blanton

### **Board of Directors**

Dan Bumgarner – Kirk Burton  
Hugh Copeland – Mark Craig  
Pat Damico – Myron Hansen– Alan Sewell

### **Committees**

Volunteers welcome. Please speak to any director.  
Casting Skills – Pat Damico, Dayle Mazzarella  
FFF Liason—Pat Damico  
Fly Tying – Myron Hansen  
Membership – Roger Blanton  
Webmaster – Woody Miller  
Hog Roast – Richard Oldenski  
Outings – Alan Sewell  
Outing lunches – Richard Oldenski, Mark Hays  
Project Healing Waters – John Craig, Terry Kirkpatrick  
Raffles – Tom Hummel, Bryan Jankovic  
Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing – Kirk Burton,  
Tom Gadacz, Ken Hofmeister, Richard Oldenski  
Programs: Board of directors  
Newsletter/Publicity – Bill AuCoin

## Suncoast Fly Fishers News 'n Notes

**August 16 meeting program – How to catch redfish.** John Adams and Bill Lott will be presenting our August 16, SFF program on how to catch tailing redfish in the Spartina grass and elsewhere. Expect to hear helpful tips, techniques, and see stimulating videos (among them, one of Ken Doty stalking and landing a tailing red). The Q & A session with these seasoned fly fishers should be a winner. At 6:00 you'll experience a redfish fly "show and tell" with Bill and John. John will demonstrate how to tie some of his favorites, including the fly he used to land the pictured redfish. *Ken Hofmeister*



**Florida Gulf Coast Center and Interactive Museum - Largo.** Club initiatives – fly fishing instruction and a display – are moving along smoothly. Ken Hofmeister reported on the Fly Fishing 101 Class scheduled soon after Labor Day from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Students will learn to tie Schminnow and Spider flies, learn to roll cast and to cast overhand, identify five local fish and where to catch them, and tie knots needed in rigging a fly rod. They will know where to go to improve skills and knowledge (SFF web site, newsletter, and meetings of course).



### Free Fly Casting Clinic with Capt. Pat Damico, Master Certified Fly Casting Instructor

- Saturday September 8, 8:30 to 3 p.m.
- Maximo Park, St Petersburg
- All experience levels welcome over age 13
- Coffee, donuts, lunch and beverages provided
- Bring your own equipment
- FREE to FFF members. Others must join FFF to participate.
- Register: [pat4jaws@hotmail.com](mailto:pat4jaws@hotmail.com), 727-504-8649



**FLY CASTING CLINIC**

Saturday, Sept 8, 8:30 am to 3:30 pm  
Maximo Park, St Petersburg  
Hosted by Suncoast Fly Fishers, St Petersburg, a Federation of Flyfishers Chapter Club  
All experience levels welcome over age 13  
Bring your own equipment or notify us if you need anything

Hot and sunglasses necessary  
Coffee, donuts, lunch and beverages provided

**FREE to FFF Members**  
others must pay FFF \$20 per person with luncheon starting at \$25.00  
Reserve clinics have limited capacity  
Capt. Pat Damico, FFF Master Certified Fly Casting Instructor, and his team will provide individual attention to all participants

Register:  
[pat4jaws@hotmail.com](mailto:pat4jaws@hotmail.com) or 727-504-8649  
For information regarding membership in Fly Fishers, go to <http://sff.org>



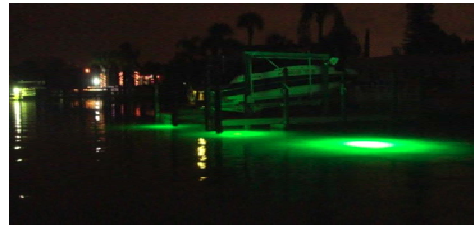
## Alan Sewell's Fishing Reviews & Previews

### July 21, Hillsborough River Float and Fish

The club fished the Hillsborough River in July. Yes, it did rain a little bit (20 inches) before this outing. And yes, there was a little bit of movement of water (miles into the forest). The water was open to fish with any vessel, not just paddle craft, as you will read in another story this month about the members who decided to float from Morris Bridge to Trout Creek. There was so much water that they could not find the main channel. They went into the woods so far alligators were afraid to go. Needless to say, they missed lunch. We ate it at noon and then decided to hunt for lost members. They did finally make it to the landing. Lunch was great, as always, thanks to Richard. Watermelon never tastes as good as after a hot paddle trip. Fishing was not so good, but we never go on an outing just for the fish. Food was great, friends were great, and it was a fun day. Perfect weather. No bass, but a 9.75-inch sunfish was caught by Robert Fisher for the prize. He caught it on Smitty's Crystal Bream Killer. Smitty broke two rods on this trip and had to fish with the tip of one rod.

### August 18 -19. All-Night Fishing -- Pinellas only

This club outing is our night time fishing excursion. Fishing will be anywhere in Pinellas County. Docks, bridges, private lighted docks in canals, and the beach and passes. The prize will be won by any member catching a snook, trout, and redfish. Longest total of inches wins. Fish from sundown to sunup. No breakfast at this outing. Call Alan at 470-4570 after 4 pm. Sunday with your results. NOTE: See more night time fishing tips from members on pages 6 and 18.



### My fishing at night rods

I like to carry three rods at night when I am casting to lighted docks or bridges. I use an 8-wt with floating line with a white fly similar to Ken's snook fly. This is for casting to trout and ladyfish. I use a 9-wt with sink-tip and a white Clouser for dropping a fly under the docks. The other rod will be a 10-wt with saltwater taper with a larger white minnow imitation. This is for turning large fish away from the structure. The 10 is what I always throw first. Watch the light for a few minutes before you troll up to make the first cast. You are looking for some type of movement -- shrimp jumping, minnows moving in and out of the light or perhaps mullet or catfish swimming around the dock. You may see snook and trout stacked up or feeding. If you see nothing, check the next light. Make your first cast into the dark shadows. Slowly move forward until you can cast to fish or the dock. This is not a casting clinic. Be very quiet and only make one slow, soft cast to the target. Work the fly back to the boat, pick up the line and cast to another spot. NO DOUBLE CAST. The most important tool is the trolling motor. You must have one to place the boat in the right position and to move around the structure slowly and quietly. Do not run the motor on anything except SLOW. It will spook the fish on high speed. If you hook a big fish, you or someone needs to run the motor on high away from the dock. This is a good way to turn the fish from the dock and maybe even catch it. Good luck. My night time step down leader tests are 50(4')-30(3')-20(2')-40(1'bite tippet.)

### Update: Fishing Tournament

**Trout - Mark Hays - 18.5 inches**

Bass - open

Redfish - open

**Sunfish - Robert Fischer - 9.75 inches**

Other Fish - open

Snook - open

Sunfish - open

IMPORTANT -- All fish must meet minimum size by FWC rules. Any fish may be entered for each category when we are having an outing and you must pass the strictest investigation.

# Suncoast Fly Fisher Report

## **LOST AND FOUND -The River**

By Ken Hofmeister



OK, we knew the Hillsborough River was 8-9 feet higher than normal. Current was moving rapidly at Morris Bridge when we met Robert Fischer and Layne Smith coming out. Robert had landed the prize-winning fish (his only fish) there. They were going to *drive* to Trout Creek from there to see if fishing was better. Good decision!

Ann and I launched our kayaks along with Kim and Rick, who launched a canoe around 9:30.. River was moving rapidly—for a while. Then we entered the swamp where we could but wonder what happened to the river. Lots of trees and bushes in the water on either side of us; but, no river channel to be found.

Forget fishing. Where was the river? Ann and I followed the slight current for twenty or thirty minutes until even that current gave out. Logs, trees, and bushes were in water where wild hogs would normally roam. Ann correctly observed (several times) that we were not in the river channel. Finally I saw some vegetation that would grow along a riverbank and noticed a red flag marking the channel. We could no longer hear Rick and Karen. But now some pride could be preserved since we wouldn't be calling for search and rescue. We followed those red flags until we came upon friendly fly-fishers.

Alas, our canoe companions using GPS and Verizon Maps went back to see if they could find the channel. They found it; however, they didn't know that, so they paddled back a ways before turning around.

We knew the SFF rules about lunch and were lucky enough to be there at 11:30. Naturally, some had already sampled the fine lunch Richard, Alan, and Mark had for us. Where were Karen and Rick? A phone call confirmed they were on their way and would arrive about 1:30 needing a ride (keys were in the Morris Bridge car—who hasn't done that?).

Thanks to Rick's, Ann's, and Richard's valiant efforts to fight off the wolves, sandwiches were saved for the late arrivals.

Was it a good trip? Sure. We didn't turn over. No snakes were seen and only one gator was spotted. Bird life was beautiful. Best of all, nobody was bleeding from holding up a mudfish for a picture.

# Suncoast Fly Fisher Report

## **Dock light Update**

By Tom Jones

### **Time to get out your Gurglers!**

Recently, I was out fishing some underwater dock lights, protected from the 10 mph west wind by local homes. I was using minnow patterns in calm water and not having much success. Then, having decided to look for a more productive light, I came across a windy light that was teeming with large Speckled Trout. They were ravaging the surface-swimming shrimp which were jumping several feet out of the water. It was so obvious that I quickly gave up my go-to flies and switched to a white gurgler (1/8" white foam, white hackle, white buck tail, 8 strands of polar flash—Should I be telling this much?).



*Above, Tom and a recently-landed docklight trout.*

It was clear, right away, that we were in for a banner catch. What made it extra sweet was that my fishing buddy, beginning fly fisher Kim Greene, had been bemoaning the fact that he was never with me on a really good "catching" trip like the kind he had heard me describe so often. He and his son Lance were in for a real treat.

The first trout boated was 20", the second, 19 3/4", and the third, 21". But my hope was that Kim would get to experience hauling in at least one good trout. Feeling a bit selfish by that time, I stopped to help Kim with his casting (Pat Damico is so right when he says, "Do your practicing in the yard, not in the middle of a fish feeding frenzy on the water". I'm not sure those are his words but you remember the admonition.). While I was using Kim's rod (and the gurgler he had tied) to demonstrate how he might improve his casting, I hooked another fish. I quickly handed the rod back to Kim and he landed it like a veteran — a 19 1/2" Trout. There were also a couple of not-quite-legal trout and ladyfish, one of which Lance boated with my fly rod.

Later, on the way back to the boat ramp, not seeing any more shrimp jumping, I switched back to a tiny DNA anchovy pattern and hooked a hefty trout that got away. As I was cleaning the fish I had kept for dinner, sure enough, the stomach contents revealed that they had been dining on small shrimp, not the 1 1/2" anchovies I had been seeing for months. Good enough reason to keep a variety of flies in your box.

*Summer fishing at night is a hoot! Thanks to Ken Hofmeister who introduced me to night fishing by putting me onto a 24" snook from his boat a couple of years ago.*

### **Breaking news from Tom on 8/2...**

Last night I only caught one keeper trout. I was trying the same flies as the last trip and they were ignoring them. I finally got out a larger minnow pattern and hooked an 18 1/2" trout. In her stomach were a variety of small minnows and one large greenback. So, I guess it's time for the larger baitfish patterns.

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# Ready-Set-Go

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## *Savvy Insider Tips for our August All-Nighter*

### **Tom Jones: Be quiet and considerate**

- One tip that must be heeded is we must be "stealthy." When night fishing, especially around residential docks, we must be absolutely quiet.
- Noise, even conversational tones, travel across water like a loud speaker. Residents whose docks we use are understandably annoyed at hearing a conversation in their back yard when they are trying to sleep. And they will often turn off the dock lights to get rid of the intruders. So, be considerate of your unwitting hosts to preserve our short term and long-term relationships.
- By the way, while you are being polite to our homeowner friends, you'll be enhancing your fishing experience. Stealth will also keep from spooking the fish. Every time you tap the hull of your boat by dropping something you make the fish a bit more wary, if not scattered, and it takes a while for things to calm down to where they will bite your fly.

### **Mark Hays: Get a late start**

- Do not start too early. After 1:00 am most anglers have gone home, most barking dogs have gone to sleep and the waterways are much quieter. This makes for happy fish.
- Fish light colored flies. I prefer all white and sparsely tied. If you see fish and they refuse to eat, especially if they follow but return to their holding spots, first rip out any flash or tinsel in the fly. If that does not work, then try a smaller fly. I start with a #1 or #2 but may use a #4 if necessary. My favorite fly, if shrimp are present, is a gurgler. Surface strikes are exciting. If that's not working, then a Puglisi-style Neer-hair fly is hard to beat. When the baitfish are small, a #4 Carl Hanson minnow or Ken Doty's marabou fly works.
- Most of my dock fishing is done with a 10-wt rod and straight 30-lb. leader but some nights only trout and ladyfish show up and I use a lighter rod and leader. You might guess which rod is in my hand when the "big one" shows up.
- Position your boat with a plan before the first cast. Have an idea of how to land a large fish before just casting and waiting for disaster. Its fun to describe the big one that got away but there is greater satisfaction in taking a photo and releasing a good fish

### **Ken Hofmeister: Fish the Ada Potato**

- Trolling motor is a must. Approach dock in lowest forward speed. Use trolling motor to get large fish out from under the dock for a fair fight in the canal or channel.
- Glasses—wear glasses and hat for eye protection. Read Richard Oldenski's article in July issue of *On The Fly* about removing hooks from your body.
- Start with a gurgler (usually 2 ½ to 3 inches) white with Estaz Grande body and white buck tail with white rubber legs on #1 or #2 hooks). Switch to some sub-surface fly like Ada Potato, Red-eyed bristle bomber, Mostly Grizzly. All are listed in the fly tying section of [www.suncoastflyfishers.com](http://www.suncoastflyfishers.com) in *On the Fly*. Also, use some of Ken Doty's snook flies or Alan Sewell's Neer Hair fly patterns (same source).
- Cast once to get range before casting to your better docks. Skip the false casting. Plan to leave flies caught on docks. I don't get on people's docks—even if I know them.
- Carry a couple rods so you can quickly switch from surface to sub-surface, 5 wt. to 8 wt.
- Be sure all lights are working (including spot light) and wear a headlamp.
- Night fishing is not a casting clinic—take partners who can cast. Shoot a picture of your best fish and send it to the newsletter. Suncoast Fly Fishers are skeptical.

## Suncoast Fly Fisher Report

### Lake Okeechobee: One big Lake

By Ken Hofmeister

David Putnam and I ventured south to check out the impact of a full moon on Lake Okeechobee bluegill and shellcrackers. Monday afternoon's site proved to be high and hot water. The few bass and bluegill caught were going for top water spiders, beetles, and bass bugs.

Tuesday morning at a different location proved to be a different story. David was onto fish like a bird dog would be onto a covey of quail. David had landed three fish before I got out of the boat. The water was clear and cooler (83 degrees). Shellcrackers and bluegill were seen swimming around in the grass at our feet.

Tossing a black St. John's Sinker with white legs, I caught 13 fish the first half hour. Putnam was way ahead of that. After awhile, we tried to find flies that they would not hit. It seemed that an orange St. John's Sinker with chartreuse legs was their least favorite. Smitty's black bead head with some red on it wasn't too well received either. Any other sub-surface fly worked.

While photographing the various flies hanging out of the fish's mouth, I dropped the fish and the camera in 3+ feet of water. Ever try to search thick weeds at that depth while keeping rod, gear, and valuables dry? I kept saying to myself: "Don't move your pivot foot and you will find the camera."

Finally, I called David and asked him to walk away from those feeding fish and hold my things while I dove for the camera. Ah ha! I did find it and took a few more pictures before the camera went bong, bong, bong and the screen went black.

Returning home after a very successful day I tried the camera and it worked. Tough Olympus camera! I sent a picture of a 12-inch shell cracker to Ken Doty and Mark Hays (who were going down there the next day) and challenged them to top that.

They did—and then some. It's a big lake.



*Lake Okeechobee delivers 12-inch shellcrackers – known as the "panfish with an attitude" -- for the fly angler. Ken reports that Ken Doty and Mark Hays had a huge problem. It seems Doty's 48-quart cooler wasn't big enough.*



*Ken said David Putnam was "onto fish like a bird dog on a covey of quail."*



*Catching was so good our club guys started casting flies they thought wouldn't work. It didn't work.*



## Suncoast Fly Fisher Report

### **Mazzarellas Work Wyoming's Summer Magic**

*...And what salt fly fishers can learn from stream anglers, courtesy of Dayle and Barbara Mazzarella, Suncoast Fly Fishers who fish Wyoming's rivers every year after the snowmelt's rapid water rush settles down.*

As the hot and humid settles over the Florida suncoast it's nice to know that the weather and fly-fishing are hitting their prime in other places. Here are reports and pictures from Suncoast Fly Fishers Dayle and Barbara Mazzarella in Wyoming Report.

While we were on the subject, we asked them to share their thoughts on ways saltwater fly fishers could learn from their fresh water counterparts and vice versa.

Dayle's observations, below are very interesting.

"My experience is that salt water anglers moving to fresh water stream fishing generally lack short distance accuracy with light lines, mending, and entomology skills, while the stream angler going to salt water lacks distance, quick casting, and strip-setting skills.

"I'm not sure, but my observations are that we stream people don't really have too much to offer the really good salt water people. They already understand stealth, "matching the hatch", etc.

"Both groups have good wind condition casters, and casters in general. I feel like both groups would do well to fish in the other's environment. Anytime we expand our skill set and knowledge base it helps us on our home waters!"

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*Editors note: Thanks Dayle and Barbara. Summer fly fishing in Wyoming is clearly a winner. Our temperatures have been cooler than normal this summer... but the fishing is hot. We'll save a few for you for your return.*

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*Dylan Mazzarella, 12, (Dayle and Barbara's nephew) shows off a rainbow trout he caught on the Ham's Fork River near Kemmerer in Southwest Wyoming. "He's quite a fly fisherman," said Dayle.*



*Josh Peavler with another Ham's Fork rainbow*



*Snake River Cutthroat, aka Fine-spotted Western Slope Cutthroat. Dayle's client John caught it on a dry fly on the Snake River. Dayle snapped the picture just before the fish squirmed and slipped back into the water. Estimated length – 19-inches; estimated weight: 2.5 to 3 lbs.*

## Tying Bench – Ballyhoo Fly by Capt. Dan Bumgarner



*Capt. Dan's Ballyhoo Fly. Tie some for the*

Capt. Dan says..."I originally tied this in chartreuse as a juvenile ballyhoo imitation. I made the thing up last summer and must admit I have not used it extensively. I saw juvenile ballyhoo on the flats and new that trout will eat them as well as small needlefish so tied the fly to imitate the forage. I have fished the fly with a short piece of light wire leader for mackerel and had some success. While the chartreuse version would work under the dock lights I think the white version would be better. I really need to tie some of these on smaller hooks say size 4 and 6. I believe the smaller flies would be much more effective under the lights."

*August all-nighter*

### Materials

**Hook**-34007 Mustad....**Wing** - Supreme Hair....**Flash** - Pearl Crystal Flash. **Eyes** - Small silver bead chain.....**Thread**- Match wing color with red used for beak tip

### Tying Sequence

Tie in thread about an eighth of an inch behind the eye and lay a solid bed of thread back to the barb.

Select a bundle of supreme hair a little larger than a pencil lead and about twice the length of the hook.

Adjust supreme hair bundle to form tapered ends.

Tie the bundle in at its midpoint right above the hook point. (Photo 1)

Mount bead chain eyes on top of bundle tie in point.

Fold the forward facing end of the hair bundle back over the top of the eyes and bind it tightly to form the tail. (Photo 2)

A small amount of flash can be tied in at this point if desired.

Form a smooth bed of thread back up the hook to the starting point and tie it off then tie in a small section of red to form the beak tip. (Photo 3)

Use clear nail polish to cover the beak wraps.



## ***Annie Hays: Being Different is Good***

[Editors note: Suncoast Fly Fisher Annie Hays application and essay landed her a slot on the "[Bighorn River Youth Adventure](#)" in Fort Smith, Montana, June 22-27. Congratulations, Annie, and thanks for this report.]



***"There were eight boys and four girls including myself on the trip. As I fished and ate with everyone that week, every day I caught myself wondering, "Why weren't there any people like them at my school?"***

### **By Annie Hays**

For many years in school it was apparent that I was different from my fellow classmates, particularly all the girls. I don't think I met a single girl in school who fished, and the few boys who enjoyed the outdoors were so immature that I couldn't talk to them about it. The boys always turned the fishing conversations into ways to brag about something to impress the other immature boys within earshot. The girls only wanted to talk about Disney, Caribbean cruises, and the Jonas Brothers. As you can imagine, I didn't have many friends as a kid. Sure, I eventually made great friends when I got to high school, but none of them were "outdoorsy" either, so we didn't have as much to talk about as I would have liked. Thus, I considered my love of the outdoors, and later for many of the same reasons my love of old rock music, a curse of sorts. Sure everyone over about 40 years old I talked to about my love of Led Zeppelin and fly fishing thought I was the coolest kid ever, but what good was that when I was stuck in school with kids my age all day, five days a week?

Continued>>>

***Annie Hays, continued from previous page***

However, on my recent trip to the Bighorn River in Montana where I attended a fly fishing summer camp sponsored by the Bighorn Alliance, I realized my unusual hobbies were good things. There were eight boys and four girls including myself on the trip. As I fished and ate with everyone that week, every day I caught myself wondering, "Why weren't there any people like them at my school?" The girls all loved the outdoors and were not afraid to roll up their sleeves, get dirty, and come home every day dog tired and sunburned. One girl, Maddy, even liked almost the exact same kind of music as me. The boys were extremely polite and totally capable of having a conversation about anything from fishing to duck hunting to life back home without being obnoxious.



***"At our last dinner together, Frank Johnson, the man in charge of this summer camp, told us that we had all been given a wonderful gift by being a part of this camp. The way he wanted us to repay him and all the other people who made this possible (Dave and Zoe Opie, the guides, everyone who fed us, the members of the Bighorn Alliance, etc.) is to share the joy of fly-fishing with others. I decided that I should start a fly fishing club at Saint Leo University where I will be attending college in the fall."***

That week we never ran out of things to laugh at. On the first night Connor, a boy from Colorado, ripped his shorts while we were playing volleyball. After our first day of fishing we had a drift boat race on a lake in the mountains. It must have been pretty painful for the guides whose boats we were rowing to watch us, especially when some boys rammed our boat when the race began.

On the third day of fishing I caught my largest fish, a 20-inch rainbow, early in the morning, but I didn't catch anything that afternoon. Towards the end of the day, our guide told the boy I was fishing with, Connor, to go be the guide and get me a trout. As we quietly walked across the shore to sneak up on the trout, Connor jumped two feet back yelling "AAAHHHH SNAKE!!!!" He had almost stepped on a huge bull snake that we then realized was dead. All in all, it was the best six days of my life.

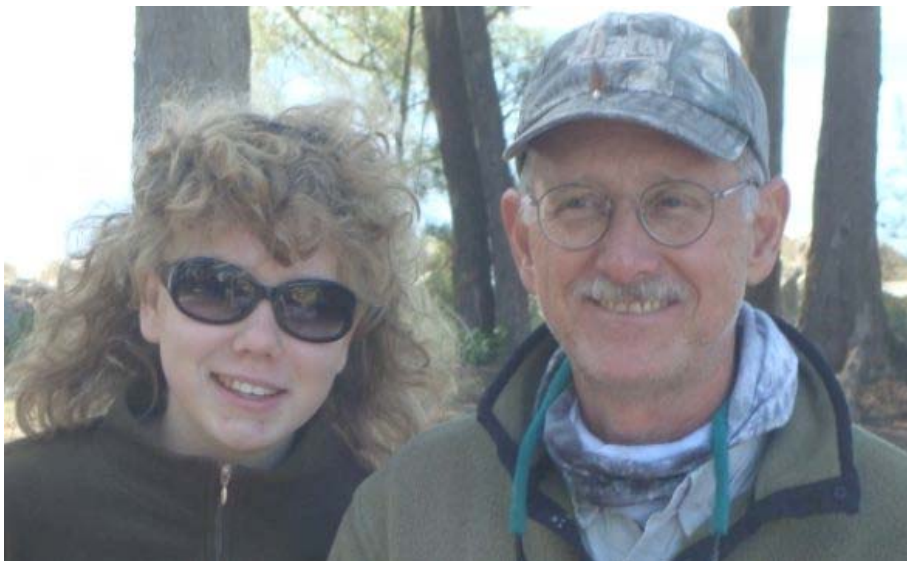
Continued>>>>

***Annie Hays, continued from previous page***

As we were saying our final goodbyes on the last morning, I realized that my love of the outdoors had caused me to have fewer friends than the social butterflies in school, but the friends it did give me were far more interesting and funny than the average teenager. Also, although I've never been to Europe or on a cruise, I seriously doubted that those kinds of "normal" vacations were even remotely as fun as this camp had been. Most importantly I realized that I needed to stop seeing my love of the outdoors as a social problem, but rather as a blessing.

At our last dinner together, Frank Johnson, the man in charge of this summer camp, told us that we had all been given a wonderful gift by being a part of this camp. The way he wanted us to repay him and all the other people who made this possible (Dave and Zoe Opie, the guides, everyone who fed us, the members of the Bighorn Alliance, etc.) is to share the joy of fly-fishing with others. I decided that I should start a fly fishing club at Saint Leo University where I will be attending college in the fall. If people like my fellow campers and I existed, then there must be others, right?

So who knows, maybe when I come to the next meeting I'll bring some girls who think a twenty five inch rainbow trout caught on a homemade Adams is a more beautiful sight than Justin Beiber flipping his hair, and some boys who major in philosophy and think John Gierach is a much deeper philosopher than Aristotle.



**Annie Hays and her dad Mark.**

## ***Fly Fishing Injuries***



### ***Venomous Sea Creatures***

*Stingrays, catfish and jellyfish have a law. It's called 'Stand Your Ground.'" Be careful out there. Bring vinegar, hot water and ibuprofen. Here's why.*



***By Richard Oldenski MD***

One of the great things about fly-fishing is that it gets us outdoors to enjoy the wonders of nature. However, when we enter the world of nature, we are entering an arena that we share with the "wild things," often trespassing into their homes and habitat. Most animals are fearful of us and will try to avoid us. Some, however, are equipped with awesome defense mechanisms, and they will "stand their ground" against their predators and unwary fly fishermen. While fishing the flats or the surf, we risk an unpleasant encounter with some of these well-armed critters; namely: Stingrays, catfish and jellyfish.

Rays gracefully swim on the flats and in the surf, or hide themselves camouflaged in the sand. If a predator gets too close, they reflexively whip their tail forward, stabbing a sharp barb into the aggressor and injecting a venom that causes immediate and intense pain.



Leopard ray image courtesy of [Freenaturepictures.com](http://Freenaturepictures.com)

Catfish are equipped with barbs at the tips of their dorsal and pectoral fins. When they are threatened, these fins become erect and stick out, effectively doubling their size and making their dagger sharp barbs visible to predators. Some species of catfish have barbs that are equipped with venom sacks which tear open and inflict more pain when the barb stabs their enemy.

Jellyfish tentacles are loaded with sacks called nematocysts which release a stinging venom on contact. The nematocysts do not penetrate deeply below the skin, but they stick to the skin and cause a painful red rash in a pattern that resembles a string of beads.

**Sting ray and catfish stings can be treated the same way. Immerse the wound in hot water, as hot as you can stand without getting burned.**

## ***Venomous Sea Creatures, continued***

Heat breaks the chemical bonds between the proteins in the venom molecules and deactivates the venom. After 30 to 90 minutes in hot water, the pain will be almost completely gone. Ibuprofen will also relieve the pain and inflammation. If you see the barb protruding from the wound, carefully remove it with forceps or a hemostat.

The venom causes a very intense pain, about a 20 on a scale from 0 to 10, but it usually is temporary. A more serious outcome is infection. Unless you are absolutely sure that no part of the barb is left in the wound, you should get medical attention. The doctor will examine the wound and probably do a debridement procedure to remove any remaining parts of the barb, slime, dirt and other matter that might carry bacteria. If appropriate, the physician may prescribe an antibiotic. If it has been five years since your last tetanus shot, you'll need a tetanus booster.

For jellyfish stings, the best immediate treatment is vinegar. If you do not have vinegar, rinse with warm saltwater. Do not use freshwater which will cause the nematocysts to absorb water by osmosis, swell, burst and release more venom into the victim. Next, carefully remove any tentacles and scrap off the nematocysts with the flat edge of a knife blade or credit card. Ibuprofen may help relieve pain. Once the nematocysts are removed from the skin, an application of ice or a cold pack may relieve the pain. If skin irritation continues, get medical care for further evaluation and possibly a prescription for a topical steroid.



**Jellyfish are almost invisible or may resemble a small plastic bag. I recently just missed one while wading at Bunces Pass.**

With proper treatment, these stings usually heal without any serious consequence. Prevention, however, is always better than treatment, and there are behaviors we can practice to avoid or minimize these injuries. Wear waders or wading boots, and shuffle your feet as you wade along the flats or in the surf. Long pants and sleeves offer some protection. Crimp down the barbs on your hooks to make it easier to release rays and catfish if you hook them. If you bring them to shore or in the boat, toss a towel or rag over the barbs before you attempt to remove the hook. Pay attention to what's floating in the water around you. Jellyfish are almost invisible or may resemble a small plastic bag. I recently just missed one while wading at Bunces Pass.

These critters are out there; let's stay out of their way.

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# How-To

*By Bob Morrison*



## **How to break a \$500 Thomas and Thomas fly rod but save your camera and cell phone. Maybe.**

Last year, up north, I wrote a tip advising my fellow fly fishermen not to forget to put their cell phones and cameras in some kind of waterproof container before going fishing. Later on the same day I headed out for the Nissitissit River in Pepperell, Massachusetts (Neat Names, eh?), and forgot my own advice. After about an hour on the river I dropped a strike indicator, lunged for it as it floated away, slipped and fell in, landed on my 500-dollar T&T rod, broke it in half, and soaked both the camera and cell phone. A passing Samaritan pulled me out of the river before I drowned, waded back in and rescued all three pieces of my formerly two-piece rod. What a guy! Two lessons learned: first, that there are some really good people among fishermen, and second, that you should never fail to follow your own advice. One more lesson--avoid run-on sentences, like those above. P.S. The phone was finished, but the camera dried out after a week under a sun lamp, and is still in use.

## **How to pay \$4.00 instead of \$20.**

You have probably used a little device called a Ty-Rite, which looks like a short writing pen and has a small hook instead of a nib in its tip. The Ty-Rite is used to hold the bend of a hook while tying the leader tippet to the eye of the hook. This is a handy and useful gadget, but you need two sizes of Ty-Rite, one for small flies and another for larger flies such as we use in salt water. At ten bucks apiece there goes twenty. So, as a less expensive alternative, I suggest that you visit your local Radio Shack and ask for a package of two Mini Hook Clips No. 270-372 or Mini Test Clip Adapters No. 270-334. The clips are similar, though the Adapter is a bit longer. I've tried both, and they both work well. Finally, you can't beat the price at \$3.39 per pair compared to \$20 for two Ty-Rites, one small, one large. The Mini's work well for hooks size 22 all the way up to 1 or 1/0. You may not need a Mini for a loop knot, though it's good as a holder, but for any knot where the leader is twisted around the leader, such as an improved clinch knot, you just can't beat it.

## **How to keep your feet clean by the muddy banks of a stream**

I keep a stool and an old bath mat in the trunk of my car. I sit on the stool and put my feet on the mat when putting on waders or wading shoes, as well as in removing them. The stool beats sitting on the car bumper, and the mat keeps my feet out of the dirt.



## Need to Know Knots

### *Confessions of a Knot Knerd*

*Valuable lesson learned in Sister Mary Whack-a-Knuckle's Third Grade.  
Write "Do not tie Joey's shoes to the desk" on the blackboard 150 times*

**By Mark Hays**

Most of my life I have been fascinated by knots. It's amazing that something so simple can hold my interest for so many years.

My first really good knot was accomplished while fishing with my German immigrant grandfather. Our standard procedure was to arrive at any dock with two direct drive Pflueger bait casters. He would bait one, hand it to me and I would immediately create the largest backlash imaginable. I would then hand the rod back to Opa and try again with the second rod while he picked out my first mess. After several hours of this he would declare enough and would buy me a grape Nehi and a beer or three for himself.

I only shared this story with you to expand the length of this article as I am told that most writers are paid by the page and Bill asked for at least 150 words. If I had simply repeated my favorite knot, the Uni Knot, 150 times, the flash backs of Sister Mary Whack-a-Knuckle's third grade class would have been too painful to recall. "I will not tie Joey's shoelaces to the desk leg" 150 times on the blackboard still makes me shudder. Again, you see my passion for knots at an early age.

Seriously, the knots I use the most are simple:

1. **Fly line to leader butt - 5 turn nail knot.**
2. **Joining leader sections - barrel knot**
3. **Light tippet to fly - improved clinch knot**
4. **Heavy bite tippet to fly - MirrOlure knot (improved clinch knot with a loop)**
5. **If it is dark or windy or I have forgotten my bifocals, any of these can be substituted with a Uni knot.**



## Pat's Fly Casting Clinic

### **Modifying Fly Rod Length**

*By Capt. Pat Damico, Master Casting Instructor*

#### **Casting tip # 33:**

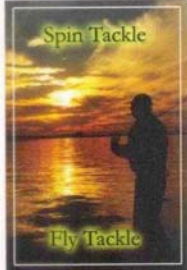


When selecting a fly rod for a specific need, a longer length is usually an advantage. Many of us fish freshwater situations and a few saltwater instances when a smaller rod would be more appropriate, usually because of casting space. Next time you have a long rod and wish you had one shorter, place your casting hand further up on the butt section moving your grip toward the first stripping guide. Practice casting off to the side or horizontally while holding the rod this way. As you "shorten the rod" your line hand may be needed to support the reel. Be versatile!

#### **Pat Damico: How to fish lighted docks**

1. Nine-foot, fast-action rods in eight or nine weight should be equipped with thirty-pound fluorocarbon shock tippets.
2. Pick an area with lot of lights close to the water in areas near deeper water.
3. Fish when there is maximum tidal flow. Fish will face into the current.
4. Fish slow-sinking shrimp and baitfish flies.
5. Wear a hat-brim light to change flies and unhook fish at the boat.
6. Crimp the barbs on flies, it will make release easier.
7. Use a stripping basket.
8. Keep the rod tip close to the water.
9. Stealth is key. Noise should be eliminated.
10. If you get a hookup use your electric (but not in reverse) to move away from the dock.

# Special Friends of Suncoast Fly Fishers



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459-5899.  
Jim Swann - fresh water 352-567-6029

### Some of our favorite websites...

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[Suncoastflyfishers.com](http://Suncoastflyfishers.com)

[FloridaSportsman.com](http://FloridaSportsman.com)

[Fishermanscoast.com](http://Fishermanscoast.com)

[FlyFishinSalt.com](http://FlyFishinSalt.com)

[SaltwaterSportsman.com](http://SaltwaterSportsman.com)

[AnglingTrade.com](http://AnglingTrade.com)

[CaptPat.com](http://CaptPat.com)

[Earthnc.com/online-nautical-charts](http://Earthnc.com/online-nautical-charts)

[SaltwaterTides.com](http://SaltwaterTides.com)

### New Website Recommendation

Recommended by Bill AuCoin

[Bing.com/maps](http://Bing.com/maps)

Enter a location, like Weedon Island, click on the "aerial" view, then zoom in. You'll get a straight up and down look at the water and I think you'll find that the focus is sharper and you won't get as much reflection from the surface of the water as you do with Google maps.

Members, got a good fishing website you want to share with other Suncoast Fly Fishers? Email Bill AuCoin, [wmaucoin@verizon.net](mailto:wmaucoin@verizon.net)

# Fly Over

## *Here and there in the world of fly-fishing*

By Bill AuCoin  
Editor, On The Fly

### **Symbicort goes fishing, sort of.**

Once again a TV ad steps in it big time. You've probably seen the TV commercial for Symbicort about how this COPD medicine lets an older man join his son and grandson on a wade-fishing expedition. So far, so good. But is it just me or are we watching another national ad with off-putting gear? Like, you know, we're looking at him carry a spinning rod BUT IT'S MATCHED WITH A FLY REEL. AAAARRRRGGGHHH. Plus, it's hefty enough for tarpon but he's going to wade a trout stream? Aaaaarrggghh, times two. Watch the commercial [here](#). What do you think? Lemme know...wmaucoin@verizon.net

### **Belgian cast?**

Are heavy flies giving you a bad case of tailing loops and wind knots? Then, how about using the Belgian cast? It's also known as the oval cast. (Okay, back cast from the side, forward cast over the top, and never, ever let the fly stop moving.) For a better description visit the Midcurrent site. [Here](#).

### **Heavy tarpon leader?**

There's a guide in the keys who ties tarpon leaders that test 50 lbs or more. Well, okay, you're thinking, but if the 'poon is really determined to take your fly to Mexico. Does he get to take your fly line, too? Midcurrent magazine has a lively discussion going [here](#).

### **Think habitat?**

If you want to know what fly to throw to a redfish, first you've got to understand the habitat. You know this if you attended the SFF meeting with Dr. Aaron Adams last year. Oh, you didn't go? You're in luck. He has written and posted a terrific article about this on his website, Fishermanscoast.com. [Here](#).

### **NYT salutes Lefty**

If there's a fly fisher with rock star status his name is Lefty Kreh, the pioneer of saltwater fly-fishing, and at age 87 he remains a major force in the sport and the industry year after year. The New York Times recognized Lefty recently with this major feature. Go [here](#).

### **A River Runs through Detroit**

Give polluted rivers and streams a chance and they will restore themselves and fishing will get good again. Actor Tom Skerritt, who played Rev. Maclean in fly fishing's megahit movie -- *A River Runs Through It* -- talked to writer James Swan. Both were born in Michigan but both now live on the West Coast. And, you know what, they want to go back to fish those home waters again. Read the article [here](#). Btw, Suncoast Fly Fisher Bill Gross recently returned to his home state of Michigan for some it's-good-again trout fishing. It was, he said, "good!"