

On The Fly

May 2015 Volume 25, Issue 5



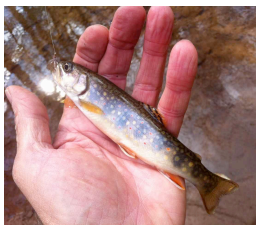
Bruce Emerson shares some of his secret spots from Venetian Isles to the St. Pete/Clearwater Airport. Page 3



The wind was our friend (or not) at the Emerson Point Preserve outing. Good fun. Good food. Oh, yeah, lots of good food. Page 6.



Annual Everglades canals outing. Oscars and club comraderie. Page 8



Little fish but a big reward. Pat Damico fishes dry flies with a bamboo rod on small Pennsylvania streams. Page 10

Also in this issue of On The Fly

NEWSLETTER OF THE SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS

On The Fly

May 2015 Volume 25, Issue 5

- News 'n' Notes 2
- Bruce Evensen's Secret Spots 3
- Club Outings reviews and previews 5
- April outing: Emerson Point Preserve 6
- Dick Miekka: In The Spotlight 7
- Hofmeister: Glorious glade canals 8
- Constantinous: Buckinghamshire 10
- Damico: Pennsylvania trout streams 10
- Tying Bench: Smitty's "Mini-Wormie" 11
- Pat Damico: Casting Clinic #66 12
- Bob Morrison: How-to 13
- Putnam: Fly Fisher Reflections 18
- Bill AuCoin: Flyfisher Flyover 20



Dick Miekka (right) is our Member in the Spotlight this month. Page 7

News 'n' Notes

Don Manning, RIP

Suncoast Fly Fisher Don Manning died Friday, May 1. The funeral service will be at 10 am on Wednesday, May 13 at Faithway Baptist Church, 603 Faithway Drive, in Seffner, Florida.

Thursday, May 21 Club Meeting

- Fly tier: Ted Hagaman ties the "Beer Can" Fly
- Speakers: Hagaman and Walt Durkin. Subject: Alaska DIY fly fishing
- Fly Swap: "Freaky Flies." This just in from fly swap guru Myron Hansen: "The fly swap sign-up for May is called *Freaky Flies*. Members are to tie flies that feature the use of the most unusual\unconventional tying materials. These can be based on materials they have used in the past or new experiments. These flies can be for fresh or saltwater. This should be fun."

Saturday, May 23, Club Outing

Hillsborough River with lunch at Trout Creek Park.

July 20 and 31 (Tentative), Fly Casting with kids, E. G. Simmons Park, Ruskin

Once again a number of Suncoast Fly Fishers are signing up to help teach fly casting to pre-teens at the this Hillsborough County park. Tom Gadacz is signing up volunteers now.

August 13-15, International Fly Fishing Fair

Riverhouse Hotel and Convention Center in Bend, Oregon. Demonstrations, workshops, youth activities, women's fly fishing university, auction, raffles and more. [Details here.](#)

October 2-3, Florida Council Fly Fishing Expo

Fly fishing exhibits plus workshops covering fly casting distance and accuracy, fly tying at the IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame and Museum in Dania, Florida.

Project Healing Waters Outing, Bradenton Yacht Club, May 16

Breakfast at 7, captains meeting at 7:30. Fishing until noon. Lunch at 12:30. Boat captains and other volunteers may be needed. Contact John Craig.

For Sale: Three New Wind River outfits

Al Pitcher writes, "I have three brand new Wind River Combo's for sale. Two are 6wt/ 9' and one is a 4wt/8'6". They are ready to fish. I paid \$80.00 each; will sell for \$75 each." Call Al at 727-542-0701.

Free Orvis Fly Fishing Clinics

Orvis is offering free Introduction to Fly Fishing courses in May and June at Flint Creek Outfitters in Tampa. Go [here](#) for dates and other details.

Bruce Evensen's Secret Tampa Bay Fishing Spots

By Bill AuCoin

At the April meeting member Bruce Evenson talked about snook, reds, trout and tarpon and very specifically told us where to find them and when.



Bruce Evensen with his favorite fishing hat, full of chartreuse and white Clousers and other grass flats and mangrove shoreline goodies.

still uses his spinning rod to help locate fish. A blow up on his MirrOlure MirrOdine tells him the fish are there. He stashes the spinning rod and pulls out the fly rod. Bruce makes an important point about fly fishing: casting a fly doesn't send the fish scattering like throwing a hard lure on that same stretch of water, over and over.

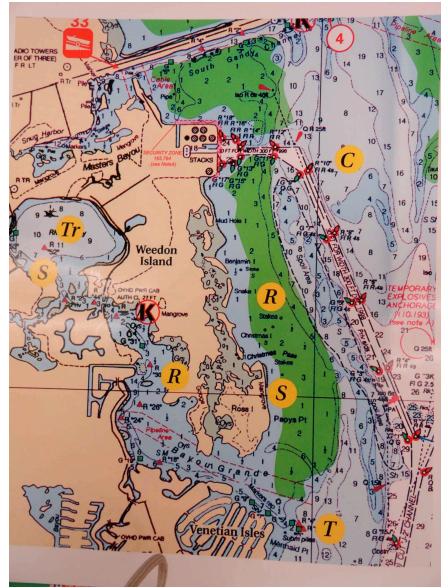
Oh, about those tarpon? They're in places you didn't think. Like: just east of 4th Street North in St. Pete at about 88th Avenue N. Behind Starbucks there is a residential canal area that holds juvenile tarpon. And that deep water between Venetian Isles and the Weedon Island grass flat? It holds big tarpon. They don't roll for some reason. But once Bruce threw out a ladyfish and a tarpon rose up and swallowed it whole. Don't tell anybody.

There was more, lots more. You were taking notes, weren't you?

Pull out a chart of Tampa Bay and zoom in on the western shore from Venetian Isles north to the St. Pete-Clearwater Airport. This has been member Bruce Evensen's prime fishing water over the years. From the age of 11 on he has spin cast and fly cast about every stretch of shoreline, mangrove island, sand or grass flat, and residential canal with notable success.

Bruce is one of the stars in the fly fishing department at Bill Jackson's Shop for Adventure in Pinellas Park, so it's his job to know the what and the where. He shared that knowledge with members at the April meeting as our spotlighted fly tier and speaker. While his fishing partner Al Audleman worked the laptop Bruce pointed his laser light to the satellite images and marked the exact spots where he has caught inshore trophies -- snook, reds, cobia, tarpon. White Clousers on a #4 hook are kind of a big deal.

Not that there's anything wrong with a hard lure. He ties on a streamer most of the time but he



Bill

We are Suncoast Fly Fishers

Suncoast Fly Fishers

P. O. Box 40821
St Petersburg, FL 33743-0821
www.suncoastflyfishers.org

Club Officers

Pres: Kirk Burton, 727-631-3033
Vice Pres: Tom Trukenbrod
Secretary: Dick Miekka
Treasurer: Karen Warfel

Board of Directors

Dan Bumgarner - John Craig --
George Haseltine- - Tom Gadacz -
Ken Hofmeister - Jeff Heer - Rick
Warfel

Committees

*Volunteers needed Please speak to
any officer or director at the meeting*
Casting Skills -- Pat Damico, MCI, and
Dayle Mazzarella, MCI
IFFF Liaison - Pat Damico
Fly Tying -- Myron Hansen
Membership -- Karen Warfel
Webmaster - Dick Miekka
Hog Roast - Karen and Rick Warfel
Club Outings and Lunches -- Open
Project Healing Waters -- John Craig,
Terry Kirkpatrick
Raffles -- Dave Barson
Programs -- Board of directors
Newsletter, publicity -- Bill AuCoin

Aims and Purposes

Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF) is a non-profit 501(C) 3 organization and a charter member of the International Federation of Fly fishers.

Suncoast Fly Fishers are dedicated to sharing their total fly fishing experiences and to developing interest in fly fishing in both fresh and salt water. We promote and teach both fly fishing and related subjects of fly-tying, rod building, fly-casting and knot tying. Through collaboration, fellowship, conservation and sportsmanship we help members become more skilled, have more fun, and be more productive in the sport. SFF supports the conservation of natural resources, boating safety and fishing regulations.

Monthly Meetings are the third Thursday of each month except December from 6 to 8:30 pm, Walter Fuller Park Recreation Center, 7981 26th Ave N., St. Pete



Directions to our meeting at Walter Fuller Park...

From 22nd Avenue N turn North on 72nd St. N. Turn left (South) on 26th Avenue N. Then turn right into the recreation center parking lot.

<http://suncoastflyfishers.com/meetings.html>

The Suncoast Fly Fishers, Inc. (SFF) is an organization of fishing enthusiasts who love fishing with the fly rod. We welcome all people of all ages with similar interests; regardless of their fly fishing skill level. We enthusiastically teach those that wish to learn or improve their fly casting, fly tying and related fly fishing skills. SFF meets monthly where we talk fly fishing, tie flies and most months feature a speaker with a program highlighting local fly fishing opportunities. SFF is a non-profit, 501(C)3 organization. SFF is a charter member of the [International Federation of Fly Fishers \(IFFF\)](#). SFF is a member of the [Florida Council of IFFF](#).

By U.S. mail: Suncoast Fly Fishers, P.O. Box 40821, St Petersburg, FL 33743-0821

Tom Trukenbrod: Suncoast Fly Fisher Outings



Saturday April 18, 2015 -- The Emerson Point Outing provided a great area for all the approaches to catch fish. Many waded in and many fished in kayaks trying to catch the targeted species of redfish.

Alas, only one red was seen... at the feet of Mark Hays.

It was a perfect day for fishing until the wind started to pick up, but that just provided an opportunity to practice casting with the wind.

Miriam and John Craig provided a nice lunch for the group and no one went hungry. Thanks again.

Saturday, May 23, 2015: Hillsborough River. Lunch at Trout Creek Park (See map, right)
Get your kayaks, canoes and boats ready for a peaceful trip down the river. Driving to lunch? Go to 12550 Morris Bridge Road, Thonotosassa.

For more information...

www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/recreation/areas/lh-troutcreek.html#

Trout Creek Park: 813-987-6200
Hillsborough River Canoe Trail map. Call Florida DEP: 877-822-5208
Hillsborough County Parks, 813-672-7876



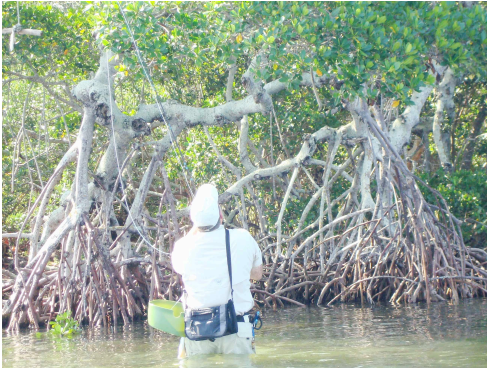
2015-2016 Outing Tournament Updates

Species	Length	Angler	Outing
Largest Bass -	15 inches	Larry Morse	February: Walsingham Park
Largest Seatrout	17.75 inches	JJ Jekielek	March: Blackthorn Memorial
Largest Sunfish	Open		
Largest Ladyfish	Open		
Largest Snook	Open		
Largest Redfish	Open		
Largest, other	Open		

Note: All fish entered in the yearly contest must be caught at a club outing, in the zone defined, and must be at least the legal size set by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission.

April Outing: Emerson Point Preserve, Palmetto

Sometimes the wind is your friend. Sometimes not.



The wind was not his friend. Bob Burkard caught the upper branches of a shoreline mangrove. It's okay. He got his fly back.



Bill AuCoin caught this speckled trout on the grass flats at the mouth of Terra Ceia Bay. It went for a chartreuse and white deceiver tied by Bob Burkard.

Emerson Point Preserve at the mouth of Tampa Bay is one of the most productive fishing areas on our side of the state.

Terra Ceia Bay is on its mangrove-lined north coast. Manatee River slices along its south shore. If the wind is coming from the north, fish the south shore. If the wind blows from the south, like it did (fiercely) at our April outing, fish the north coast. But, sometimes there's just no place to hide.



Big cheer. President Kirk Burton arrives with the waters and soft drinks.



Thank you John and Miriam Craig -- There was more than enough sandwiches, slaw and potato salad for 20 or so members who signed up for the outing. So the 10 or so members who actually did attend had quite a feast.

Member in the Spotlight... Dick Miekka

Hometown: I grew up in Grand Blanc, Michigan but spent most of my career while living in Sudbury, Mass.



When did you join the Suncoast Fly Fishers?

I joined Suncoast Fly Fishers sometime in the 1990s, but I'm not sure of the year. Perhaps 1997 would be a good average guess.

What is your favorite game fish to catch on the fly and why?

Probably the Atlantic salmon because it was the first species I ever caught on a fly, gives an excellent fight, is hard to catch, and is found in beautiful surroundings where it is cool in the summer. Second choice would be snook.

What are your top three places to fish?

I do not own a boat, so these are wade-fishing choices
Pinellas Point (near my home)

Desoto Park with lots of fishy locations

New Brunswick's Miramichi River, where it's cool when Florida is hot

What is your favorite fly rod and reel?

For salt water, my 2-piece Sage XI 9 wt. with Redington AS 9/10 reel.

For freshwater salmon fishing my (old) 4 pc 9 wt. Loomis GLX with my (even older) Bogdan 100 reel.

How and when did you get introduced to fly fishing? In about 1973 when invited to go salmon fishing and was embarrassed because the guide had to fly cast for me, then he handed me the rod when a fish was hooked!

Ken Hofmeister: Glades. Gators. Glorious Fishing

Suncoast Fly Fishers fly-fished the Everglades Canals April 24-25-26 and once again the water control canals west of Fort Lauderdale delivered. Big time.

They all came with high hopes. Some got fishing reports before leaving St. Pete for Ft. Lauderdale. Some scouted the waters early--some came Friday night. Anticipation was high in the La Quinta breakfast area as we swapped flies, lies, and logistics. First liar didn't have a chance.



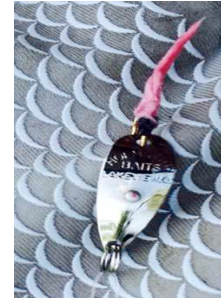
Ken Hofmeister with one of many non-native oscars landed on the fly

"Where? On What? How Big? How many? These were the springboard questions. Guarded information was shared (with a few minor details left out). Some truth was told. Stories from other clubs were less reliable since they had not taken " the SFF Oath." As usual, the largest fish grew larger; but, they got away! Who knows how big?

Saturday morning brought some new insights. Al Pitcher's gold fly spoon was the rave (rightly so . . .he out fished me on oscars until I got one of those babies. Alan ordered 24 on the spot!).



Al Pitcher's gold spoon fly was the go-to. Sewell ordered two dozen.



Alan used a purple fly with devastating results, and then conducted an experiment with a fly-sized DOA shrimp that bass loved. Many, like Truk, stuck with Smitty's beetle or Doty's spider. Doty liked his spider, as usual. All caught fish.



Ready for action, Alan Sewell at the tiller and Tom "Truk" Trukenbrod on the trolling motor at the start of a big day.

"Match the hatch," I thought as I watched oscar and bass gobble up the mulberries that fell from an overhanging tree. That's when the "Berry Bopper" was conceived. A purple bullet head with purple and green beads proved to be a killer for six Oscars until they decimated it with those teeth.

Mark Hays and Ken Doty fished under a bridge where the bass had grasshoppers cornered. They did well.

Continued on next page>>>

Continued from previous page

Ken Hofmeister: Glades. Gators. Glorious Fishing

Mark Craig landed lots of oscar under another bridge using a small white number. Poppers did well for both Craigs. Inspired by Mark's success, I dug into my bonefish flies and began catching oscar and bluegills on that subsurface fly.



Hey mister, throw me a fish

Alligator Alley

Gators were plentiful and one hung around our boat watching every fish landed. He would open his mouth whenever Al splashed the water with his rod next to this beast. I put a fly between his eyes which left him cross-eyed but not inclined to leave.

Ted, and his brother Jim did well on bass while fishing the South Miami canal. Myron and Kirk smiled a lot and revealed little of their hot spots. Adam Hays was smiling through his buff! Seems their outboard gave out. What to do? Bill Hays knew. Go to Bass Pro and buy a new 6 hp. Mercury! Adam had that Gheenoe leaving a Cigarette-Boat style wake in pursuit of those bass.

Randy Cleveland, from the Florida Fly Fishing Association in Cocoa, sent out an e-mail to his club members who were fishing from kayaks and other vessels. It said: "you catch 'em, you clean 'em, and I'll cook 'em." They brought their Saturday morning catch and had a noon fish fry at the main rest area ramp. Great success! So great that we have plans to do a joint fish fry next year. Yet another East Coast club is likely to get in on the action as well.



Dinner at Lester's was a highlight for food, fellowship, and fun. The server (front and center) was spectacular. If you missed it...you really missed it.

Ken

Andy Constantinou: From Buckinghamshire, England



Here's Andy playing at trout in the Latimer Park Fishery in Buckinghamshire, England



The fruit of his labor (or should that be labour?), a 4.5 pound rainbow trout

Pat Damico: From a small Pennsylvania stream



Small trout delivers a big reward for Pat Damico fishing a dry fly on a Terry Kirkpatrick bamboo rod



Soft plastics catch fish, fresh or salt. But those are jigs, jerk baits and worms flung by spin and casting reels. Well, hey, Smitty figured fly fishers should give soft plastics a go, too. For sunfish. For the shad run. For trout. (Think San Juan Worm.) No fur or feathers necessary. Scissor off the flexible rubber "feelers" from the gummie toys. Smitty got his at Dollar Tree. Or, order the Spirit River Squirmy Wormies from Feather Craft.

Materials

- Hook: Mustad 3366A size #10 (or your favorite freshwater hook)
- Bead: Glass bead (like Killer Caddis) size 6/0 color your choice
- Body: "Feelers" from a Gummie ball or toy
- Glue: Any CA Gel type super glue
- Tool: Dental floss threader

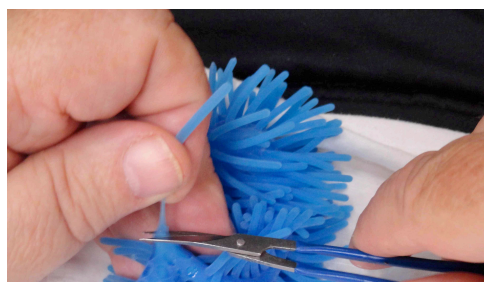


Smitty and the toy animals with dozens of soft plastic feelers.



Tying Sequence

Step 1 (below) Cut "feelers" from gummie toy (It helps if you stretch the material out from the toy before you cut, and cut where it starts to "fatten" as this will leave a knob of silicone at the end as a stopper for the bead). Cut extras and set aside.



Step 2. String bead (or beads) onto dental floss threader (1 string on 6 at a time to "tie" a half dozen at a time) ... or just do one at a time till you feel comfortable doing more.

Step 3. Place looped end of threader over a "wormie" at about the midway point and slide bead down loop and pull on threader until tail slides through bead. Slide bead down "wormie" towards the "knob." Stop when it rests against the knob. Set aside and repeat with rest of "wormies".

Step 4. Take hook and "Texas Rig" it from the "knob" end and through the bead. Make sure to have hook point come out the side of the "wormie" as soon as it clears the bead.

Step 5. Apply a dab of CA Gel onto shank of hook and then, grabbing the "wormie" right behind the bead, slide it up hook shank to the eye of the hook making sure you don't get any CA glue on your fingers (I usually push it up far enough so the "knob" folds around the eye ... when I release pressure on the "wormie" it backs off leaving the eye of the hook completely visible). If by chance some of the cement should fill the eye, just take a used feather and run it through the eye to clean it out.

Capt. Pat Damico: Fly Casting Clinic. Tip # 66



By Capt. Pat Damico, Master Casting Instructor

Is your problem with the rod? Or the line?

There are over 1000 different fly lines available. Is your rod the problem, your line or both? If you have a good grasp of casting essentials needed to make a good cast, spend some time with your fly rod and try different lines. I have had clients ready to discard perfectly good fly rods because the line they were using didn't match the task in hand. I always ask a casting or fishing client to bring their own equipment to see if the system is balanced. Matching the number on the rod with a line is only a starting point. A line that allows a quick short cast with a heavy fly will give disappointing results when casting distance with a light fly. Future tips will explore this further.

Pat Damico, St. Pete Beach



Is it the rod or the line? Capt. Pat Damico works with member Bob Burkard at the Maximo Park Casting Clinic in December.

Bob Morrison: How-To



Unwaxed dental floss Your tying bobbin may eventually build up a deposit of wax inside of its tube, from waxed thread or dubbing wax. You can clean out this deposit using a piece of unwaxed dental floss. Dipping the floss in lighter fluid will also help to dissolve the wax.

Armor All for line storage. Pizza box for storage. When storing lines off-the-reel, clean them well with any good line cleaner, and apply a coat of Armor-All. Leave a little backing attached to the line, since it is easier to tie two pieces of backing together than to knot the fly line to the backing when you re-install it. Finally, remember to store the line in that pizza box that I mentioned way back when, marked with the line size and type.

Check your backing. After storing your line, check the backing for weak spots. Repair them immediately, cutting out the bad spots and re-tying the backing. The backing can be stored on the reel.



Cricket anyone? Right about now a young, wingless, black grasshopper with a yellow or red stripe down its back is coming out of the ground. This critter, known as the Lubber Grasshopper, is eaten by freshwater fish. To imitate it you can use a black cricket pattern fly. Dave Whitlock's "Dave's Cricket" serves this purpose well, especially for crappies and largemouth bass.

Go get 'em and good luck

Bob

Special Friends of Suncoast Fly Fishers

Firefly FISHING LODGE & RETREAT, LLC



- ✓ Rustic lodging at 90-acre mountain, creek & river paradise
- ✓ Guided fly fishing/drift boat packages
- ✓ Customized family tours & activities

1414 Robert Miller Lane Mineral Bluff, GA 30559
706-374-4489 • fireflylodge@tds.net • fireflyfishinglodge.com

Guy Tillotson
President Phone: (904) 347-3138
Email: guy@grandslamgroup.com

GRAND SLAM GROUP, LLC
Sales & Marketing
www.GrandSlamGroup.com

3806 Guilford Rd. #6 Naples, FL 34112

© Paula Cannon 1996

Flint Creek Outfitters
Est. 1965 Florida

1502 N. Westshore Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33609
813 681 1888
store@flintcreekoutfitters.com

WWW.FLINTCREEKOUTFITTERS.COM

Spin Tackle

The Fly Guy

Capt. Pat Damico

2981 E. Vina del Mar Blvd.
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706
Tel: 727-360-6466
Web: http://captpat.com
Email: flyguy@captpat.com

Fly Tackle

ORVIS®
SPORTING TRADITIONS
Since 1856

FLY FISHING Star Valley Outfitters

- Lessons
- Casting
- Fly Tying
- Fishing Trips

Dayle Mazzarella
(760) 703-0118
email: emailmazz@yahoo.com



Metalfab Inc
ARCHITECTURAL METAL SPECIALISTS
WWW-METAL-FAB INC. COM

Tampa Bay
On The Fly

Fly Fishing and Tying
Equipment, Instruction, and Adventures

4203 W El Prado Blvd
Tampa FL 33629
Phone 813.443.0660

Enver Hysni
Cell 727.504.4062
info@tbof.com www.tampabayonthefly.com Fax 813.443.0662

Put your business card ad in our newsletter. Just \$100 (or auction items) for 12 monthly issues. Contact Karen Warfel, kmwarfel@yahoo.com

**Special Friends of
Suncoast Fly
Fishers**

Dollar for Dollar
Alpen is your Best Optics Buy!

Alpen Optics – Winner of **7 Outdoor Life**
“Great Buy” Awards. *More than any*
other optics company – EVER!

 **877-987-8370**
alpenoptics.com

Call ALPEN, use code word “Fly” to receive FREE keylight & catalog.

Tampa Bay Charter Fishing
with
Capt. Dan Bumgarner
aboard
"Teacher's Pet"

Ph. 727-526-7565 Cell 727-422-9163
USCG Licensed



 **SaltFlies**



Custom Built Saltwater Flies

CRAIG SMOTHERS
5526 SHADY BROOK TR.
SARASOTA, FL. 34243

PHONE: (941) 266-5209
EMAIL: SALTFLYS@GMAIL.COM
WEBSITE: WWW.SALTFLYS.COM



1-866-865-4695
WWW.ONOS.COM
Lifetime Warranty

 **JIM SWANN'S** 

Complete Fly Fishing Shop
Rods - Reels - Hand Tied Flies - Guide Service
Fly Tying Materials
Classes in Fly Tying and Casting

352-567-6029
13650 S. 98 By Pass
Dade City, FL 33525

To place an ad contact Karen Warfel
kmwarfel@yahoo.com

**Special Friends of
Suncoast Fly
Fishers**



WWW.NUCANOE.COM
PHONE: 888.226.6310

ANDY THORNAL COMPANY Since 1945

GATEWAY TO ADVENTURE SINCE 1945

(800) 499-9890

WWW.ANDYTHORNAL.COM



GOODYEAR • TOYO • COOPER • MICHELIN



727-822-3981

TODD MURRIAN

www.bobleetire.com

1631 • 4th STREET NORTH • ST. PETERSBURG, FL. 33704



CORTLANDLINE.COM
800-847-6787

Special Friends of Suncoast Fly Fishers



**APPALACHIAN
OUTFITTERS**

104 C Tennessee Street
Murphy, NC 28906
828-837-4165
www.appalachianoutfittersnc.com

Justin Mickens
Manager

Find us on:
facebook.

Everything Inside for the Outside

ORVIS
SPORTING TRADITIONS
Since 1896



Shop For
Adventure

WWW.BILLJACKSONS.COM
727-576-4169



**Key West
Express**

www.seakeywestexpress.com • 239-463-5733



CANE COUNTRY OUTFITTERS, INC.
727-549-1354

"Wherever the *WATER* may take you!"

Canoes & Kayaks

St. Petersburg, Florida



PLANTATION
on Crystal River

plantationoncrystalriver.com
800-632-6262



**International Federation of
FLY FISHERS**

Conserving, Restoring, Educating Through Fly Fishing®



WILKINSON
FLY FISHING

EST. 2012

www.wilkinsonflyfishing.com
www.facebook.com/wilkinsonflyfishing

David Putnam: Fly Fisher Reflections



What you don't know won't hurt you?

I can trailer my 16' skiff to St. Pete's Coffee Pot Bayou boat ramp in less than five minutes, and four others are within an easy 10-minute drive. That's my problem. I'm spoiled. We have fishing diversity like no other state, yet I fish in my backyard where I'm comfortable.

There's hot in-season fishing in every direction if I look at the "Action Spotter" in *Florida Sportsman*—countless world-class fishing spots, fresh and salt water. In under three hours, I can be bass fishing in Lake Kissimmee. South two hours there's Ding Darling Wildlife Refuge. It's another hour to Chokoloskee and Everglades City. The 10,000 Islands should be enough for good fishing, right? But north, there's Cedar Key for redfish and seatrout and Homosassa for monster tarpon. My hometown, Ft. Pierce, has great winter pompano fishing, 10-pound seatrout, and BIG snook on fly in the summer.

Yeah, Ft. Pierce is all the way across the state, a 3.5-hour trip, but the wildlife along the way can be spectacular on the early morning drive—deer, an occasional wild hog or big gobbler with a beard, Cara Caras, Sandhill Cranes and a variety of hawks. Last trip I saw two Swallow-Tail kites working hard near Okeechobee, swooping and diving. (There were dozens of rare Snail Kites at Lake Kissimmee last summer, a birder's dream.) A New York City wag once said after a visit to Florida, "It was dreadful. The air was full of uncooked birds."

I've been known to fish a lake on my way to or from the other coast for salt- water fishing. Makes a nice summer weekend...tarpon, snook, bass and bluegills. (A good motel room in Okeechobee runs \$50.)

When I lived in Colorado, I routinely drove three hours to launch our Boulder Boatworks 16' drift boat, a rowboat—snow on the mountain roads in late spring and ice on my fly rod guides. Fish were hard to come by, but they were small. (When I lived in Cleveland, I didn't even bother to fish.)

Continued on next page>>>>>

Page 2 ... David Putnam: Fly Fisher Reflections

We're so lucky here. The fabulous Florida Keys are beyond a reasonable weekend trip for me, but maybe they're closer for you.

The Gulfstream brings Mahi-Mahi and sailfish to within a mile of the boat ramp at Palm Beach. Anglers come from around the world to fish there during winter months. Five sailfish a day is common, doable from a large outboard.

Why don't we fish different areas? I'm not afraid. I've been lost, left the plug out, done all the dumb things you can do fishing—I hope. I've got marine charts. I'm familiar with most fishing techniques required in Florida. What else do I need to know? Nothing, really. I just need to get off my butt to enjoy the best fishing in the world.

Planning gets me excited. First thing I do is tie a few flies for species in other places. Nothing like tying bass poppers to vicariously "see" one get inhaled by a monster largemouth. Snook off Jensen Beach go for size 2 green-over-white Clousers with shiny barbell eyes. Schools of big snook smashing "brown bait" around my ankles...yes!

You get the idea. Like putting new line on a reel, tying flies takes me there. Gotta get the flies *wet*, right? With so many inland lakes to choose from, I'll have to do some research. I'll call a few tackle shops and try to remember to take a box of donuts when I stop by.

Maybe I'll trailer our boat up to a north Florida river and drift down. My wife, Marcia, likes to row. I'll fish, then we'll crank the 20 hp. Yamaha and power back to the ramp.

One of my favorite tools is the *Florida Atlas and Gazetteer*, a "Detailed Map of the Entire State." I use Gazetteers in every state where I fish and hunt. They're available in many tackle shops and book stores for around \$20. Boat ramp locations and back roads...it's got 'em.

In Alaska a few years back I fished some out-of-the way streams we never would have found without the *Gazetteer*, carrying a loaded .12 gauge on a sling. I'd rather have been wading alone at night in the Everglades with a box of Popeye's. Gimme more of Florida.

David

Bill AuCoin : Flyfisher Flyover



Yes, we have no bananas on this boat

Breaking News: Fly fishing only coming to Weedon Island Preserve. Just teasing. But my question is, why can't there be *Fly Fishing Only* signs in some saltwater fishing areas like there are in some freshwater streams? Why for fresh but not for salt? Is it a fishery-management issue? A tourism promotion thing? I got to thinking about this recently when I happened upon this thoughtful essay. ([Tenkarabum](#))

The Banana-Haters. Some anglers hate bananas on their boats. They really hate them. Fish won't bite if bananas are on the boat, they say. But it's stupid. There is no good reason, certainly no scientific evidence. It's just a superstition, like fear of pressing the button to the 13th floor on an elevator. So, I'm just wondering, maybe the superstition has it all wrong. What if bananas really help catch fish? Let's settle this. How about this? Starting now Suncoast Fly Fishers are asked to take bananas with you when you go fishing. Let me know if it works. Or not. More deep thoughts on bananas on these links: ([Washington Fly Forum](#)) ([MiamiFishing](#))

Lefty's life was this big.

David Putnam has alerted me to one of Lefty's book is now available for download on Kindle. It's *My Life Was This Big!* Did you know that Lefty was once the outdoors editor for the St. Petersburg Times? That is one of many high profile jobs he has had over the years including, David mentions, being official photographer for the National Wildlife Federation. ([Amazon](#))

Stu Apte: growing up in Miami in 1935

Stu Apte has had a damn big fishing life, too. Browsing, I came across this interview of Stu by another tarpon nut, Andy Mill, and Stu shared lots of fishing memories including about growing up in Miami and, when he was five years old, fishing with his 10-year-old big brother. "We did not have pennies to spare, so we would find transfers and we would take the streetcar then from there, downtown, to the county crossway where we'd get off. We had our hand lines. We did not have any money for bait, so we would walk up and down the sidewalk looking for pieces of fish or little pieces of shrimp or whatever. We had a hook and a nut from a bolt nut as our sinker and if we got lucky on a fairly soft tide we would catch some grunts and things like that. That is the only fishing my brother ever did. Miami was a very, very safe place back then." Read it all. ([Midcurrent](#))

Major brands get a big salute. What do Orvis, Costa, Fishpond, Patagonia, Sage, Rio and Redington have in common? Well, among other things, the answer is this: Trout Unlimited has those brands at the top of its list of the companies most friendly to trout and salmon. ([Trout Unlimited](#))

Oh, by the way. I went to Lowe's and bought one of those Pilot InstaBoost devices that I wrote about in the April issue of *On The Fly*. Just \$100. versus \$150 on Amazon. I notice they call it a "car" battery jump starter. I call it a boat battery jump starter. ([Lowe's](#))

Bill