

On the Fly



Suncoast Fly Fishers • June 2016

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Ken Hofmeister hooked this bluefish on a yellow and brown Clouser on the edge of the Demons Landing flats during the Urban Outing in May.

Photo By Ken Hofmeister



Some members decided to wade the flats near North Shore Park to stalk trout and ladyfish.

Photo By Bill AuCoin



Mark Hays (left) caught the winning 18.5 inch ladyfish, and Annie Hays (right) only caught a jack.

Photo By Bill Hays

Visit us on the web at www.suncoastflyfishers.com

Club Business

President's Message

By George Haseltine
SFF President 2016-17

*There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.
This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll;
How frugal is the chariot
That bears a human soul!*

Emily Dickenson wrote that. Far be it from me to argue with one so poetic and insightful, but I think we have found a Frigate at least close to this: the fly rod.

There is no poetry more beautiful than a perfectly timed backcast and a graceful, tight-looped, forward cast that gently places a delicate fly on the water's surface.

If we find ourselves searching for something

because we feel poor in body, mind or soul, then there is healing in all that involves fly fishing. New outdoor places, natural surroundings, early mornings, friendships, practice and accomplishment all work behind the scenes together to heal, direct and inspire.

For truly, this chariot bears our human souls. More than a long stick and string with a cork handle, a fly rod can be our passport to lands far away; places we probably wouldn't go if we didn't have it.

Don't believe me? Pick it up, learn how to use it properly and you may find yourself on a western stream matching the hatch or watching spinners fall to the water as trout gorge themselves on them. Or standing on the deck of a flats boat waiting for the sun to rise enough for you to

search the submerged grass through your polarized sunglasses hoping to spot those tailing redbfish, darting speckled trout or even a school of tarpon.

You will see the sun rise on many different horizons as you pursue some ever elusive, water born predator as it lays in ambush for the unsuspecting insect, minnow, crawdad, shrimp or crab. And here you are, with rod in hand and a fly tied to your tippet. You are here to outsmart this predator with a hook, fur, feathers and an enticing retrieve to make him think it is something good to eat.

All the while, something magical is happening inside you.

And then, as you unhook this very worthy opponent and return it back to the water, you will discover that you not only gave his life back to him, but he gave you



George Haseltine
SFF President 2016-17

yours. I personally thank each and every fish I catch, for I am grateful that he shared that moment with me.

Come to our meetings, attend our casting clinics, fish and eat at our outings. This is the only place where someone can lie to you and not make you upset. Read the message over the door at the Bass Pro Shop.

Never lose your sense of adventure.

News and Notes

By Bill AuCoin
Editor-in-Chief

Thursday, June 16 meeting

Our speaker is Gina Russo of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Center in St. Petersburg.

- Her topic is "Catch and Release Techniques: Fishing for Conservation"
- Alan Sewell will tie his snook fly which has been successful at catching linesiders on docklights

- Dan Bumgarner will tie flies and share strategies for catching Spanish mackerel.

- Fly Box Exchange, "Snook by Night" flies. Sign up with Myron Hansen

- Volunteer to help with youth camp casting lessons in Ruskin. See Tom Gadacz

Thursday, June 16, Youth Fly Casting Camp at E. G. Simmons Park in Ruskin

- First of two. Volunteers needed. Details below.

Saturday, June 18 Docklight Outing

- Check out the details in the Review-Preview article

in this issue.

- Catch a snook? Measure it and phone it in. Catch a red? Measure it and phone it in. Catch a seatrout? Phone it in if it's longer than 17.75-inches.

Tuesday, July 12, Youth Fly Casting Camp at E. G. Simmons Park in Ruskin

- Second of two. Volunteers needed. Details below.

Saturday, July 16, Free summer casting clinic for members only. July 16 @ Egan Field (ball field nearest the water) 9101 Blind Pass Road in St. Pete Beach

- Sign in and introduction to class; goals, pair share

- Casting stroke paint brush and water drill; Casting arc, No slack grass drill, Straight line path grass drill, Pick up and laydown (PLD) – pause - grass drill; False casting and feeding line – timing and casting arch and amount of line beyond rod tip, Roll Cast

Casting instructors Brian Clark and Tom Gadacz

- 8:00 AM to noon
- Sign in and

introduction to class; goals, pair share

- Casting stroke – paint brush and water drill; Casting arch

- No slack - grass drill
- Straight line path (SLP) – grass drill

- Pick up and laydown (PLD) – pause - grass drill
- False casting and

- feeding line – timing and casting arch and amount of line beyond rod tip

- Roll Cast
- Thursday, July 21 meeting
- Capt. Dan Bumgarner

- will tie flies and speak about catching Spanish mackerel in the summer

- Saturday, July 23 Outing
- Picnic Island Park in Tampa

Youth Fly Casting Camp. June 16 and July 12. Volunteers Needed.

- We are participating in the E. G. Simmons Youth Fishing Camp this year. This is a great event where we instruct youths to fly cast. We have all the equipment but need volunteers to help Tom Gadacz and Brian Clark with the set up and more.

- Please contact Tom Gadacz if you wish to

participate. thomasgadacz@yahoo.com or call 706-726-7899.

Also sign up at the meeting. **Where:** E. G. Simmons Park, 2401 19th Ave N W, Ruskin, FL 33570, 813-967-5988, 813-671-7655

When: June 16 and July 12 from 1:00 to 3:00PM. (Please arrive by 12:30 to help with setup)

Club Outings Locations for 2016

- June—Night Light snook outing
- July—Picnic Island Park, Tampa

- August—Lake Maggorie, St. Petersburg. Lunch will feature a BBQ rib competition.

- September—Chassahowitzka River
- October—Hillsborough River, Carl Hanson

- tournament against the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club (SFF is host.)

- November—Weedon Island Preserve

- December—Don Coleman Classic at Fort DeSoto Park with other fly fishing clubs in our area

Monthly Events

Members Answer the Question of the Month

Question: Florida residents who are 65 years of age or older do not need to buy a freshwater or saltwater fishing license. Is this a good policy? Should the age be raised or lowered and, if so, what age would be best? Why?

Woody Miller: This has been the law for 65+ years. It works. Let's worry about who's bathroom to use.

Bob Morris: I have been looking forward to this and I recently made the age. One

of the good things about getting older.

(No Name): I am 69 and I love the fact that I get it free. You can still buy one if you want to.

Ron Hill: It sounds like a good policy. I think that 65 is a good age.

Bill Scarola – 65 is good – ADD non-residents to the list!

Duane Mertz – Very good policy.

Bruce Evensen – 65 is perfect. I spent 50 years buying licenses. It's fair. It also includes free hunting licenses.

Paul Sequira – This is good policy and the age is quite right.

Dick Miekka – I like it, but I am over 65. Ask the young ones.

Katie Snow – It should stay the same. Let people enjoy Florida. They'll appreciate the beauty and

spend money in other ways to support the sport.

Ken Hofmeister – Works for me!

Joe Corr – 65 seems right (as long as they don't catch). Leave it as it is.

Annie Hays – Being a whipper-snapper, I think everyone should buy a license since most fishermen here are 65 or older, and FWC needs a lot more funding.

Disabled Veterans Go Fly Fishing

By Tom Gadacz

President, Florida Council, International Federation of Fly Fishers

On May 14, veterans, captains, guides, and volunteers had a great time on the waters in Palmetto, FL. There were 10 boats with their captain, a veteran and volunteer who went fishing in the surrounding waters. 21 disabled veterans participated. We assembled around 8:00 a.m. at the Bradenton Yacht Club and headed out to fly fish the surrounding waters. This event has been held since 2012 at the Bradenton Yacht Club and has been supported by the Anna Maria Oyster Bar and the Crosthwait Memorial Tournament.

PHWFF is a national non-profit (501c3) program that teaches veterans fly fishing, fly casting, fly tying, and fly rod building. It is helping heal the physical and emotional wounds of our veterans. Fly fishers all over the country organize fly fishing activities in conjunction with the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers and Clinics. This program is promoted by the International Federation of Fly Fishers and its charter and affiliated clubs.

Members of Mangrove Coast Fly Fishers, Mid Coast Fly Fishers, Suncoast Fly Fishers, and Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club donated their



Ted Haas, left, and his veteran worked mangrove shorelines for snook and redfish. Haas helped plan and manage the event along with coordinator Mike Reeves and Lawrence Lurie.

boats and guides to make this event very successful and honor our veterans.

This year's event was coordinated by Mike Reeves along with Ted Haas and former Regional Coordinator Lawrence Lurie. The purpose of the event is to get veterans out on the water to catch fish with a fly rod.

Many of the vets have spent time at VA facilities tying flies and learning how to fly cast. Several programs also include fly rod building programs. The veterans can build their own rod, tie their own flies and then get out on the water to use the fly fishing equipment that they made. All services are provided at no cost to our veterans.

So how did the day go? The sun was out with a mild breeze. Most fishermen picked a sheltered area to fly fish while others headed out

to the Skyway Bridge and braved the stronger winds. A few boats had great luck catching spotted sea trout, snook, and some snapper. We ended with lunch and recognition of those who caught fish and prizes for the veterans who attended this event.

This event would not have

been possible without the contributions of the captains and volunteers and the members of the Bradenton Yacht Club. We wish to thank all those involved in this event and to the many veterans who served to preserve the freedoms of our country. To them we owe our greatest appreciation.

SUBMISSIONS

Please try to keep submissions to 300 words or less

All pictures must be sent as separate jpeg attachments

Include name in email and document

We reserve the right to edit for grammar/spelling errors

Send submissions to wmaucoin@verizon.net

Bill AuCoin

Editor in Chief

Annie Hays

Layout Editor

Reviews and Previews

Outing Reviews and Previews

By Tom "Truk" Trukenbrod
Outings Co-Chair

Saturday May 22, 2016

Our Urban Outing was a great success. Participation continues to grow. Thirty-three fishers (and/or diners) had a wonderful morning of fishing. It was a sunny day with hardly any wind to speak of until just before noon. The water temperature was perfect for wet wading. Ladyfish was the targeted species and many were caught. Mark Hayes landed the largest at 18.5 inches. (Mark—Nice!) Bruce Carlton brought in a 17.75-inch trout. No red fish were caught this year, but we there was plenty of variety of others including blues, mackerel, and puffers.

We had a beautiful morning. There were boats out to the horizon and kayaks and waders all across the St. Petersburg waterfront. We had Cuban sandwiches with

2016 TOURNAMENT LEADERS

Species	Length	Leader to Date	Outing Caught
Longest bass	24-inches	Bruce Carlton	Walsingham Lake (March)
Longest sunfish			
Longest sea trout	17.75-inches	Bruce Carlton	Urban Outing (May)
Longest redfish			
Longest snook			
Longest ladyfish	18.5-inches	Mark Hays	Urban Outing (May)

Note: All fish entered in the yearly contest must be caught at a club outing and inside the defined zone. The new 2016 tournament started with the January outing at Pinellas Point/Bay Vista Park and continues until the final outing of 2016 at Fort DeSoto Park.

rice and black beans lunch served by Alan Sewell and beverages and watermelon provided by Mark Craig - A big thank you to both. -It is always a pleasure to be with new members like Arthur and Karen Birnkrant and Katie Snow who were welcomed while we worked on casting techniques, having fun, and the experiences from the day. Another awesome outing experience at St. Petersburg's Flora Wylie Park.

June Outing Instructions

Friday Night June 17, 2016 Docklight Fishing from sunset until sunrise on Saturday June 18. You can fish anywhere in and around the Tampa Bay waters. As usual we are looking for the largest snook. If you think you have a winner you can call me at 727-643-9294 on Saturday and leave a message. (PLEASE after 9:00 AM). If you catch a trout over 17.75 inches let me know. Redfish category has no entries for the annual tournament- Truk.

Docklight Fishing Tips

By Dan Bumgarner
Outings Committee

This month we become creatures of the night as we stalk the wily snook around lighted docks and bridges. The following are some things to keep mind.

1. SAFETY

Make sure you have all required safety equipment and it is up to date. Follow all the rules and regulations of proper night time boat operation. Fish with a partner and make them aware of the operation of your boat and how to contact someone in case of an emergency.

2. TACKLE

Go a little heavier around the docks. An 8 wt will work but a 10 wt is better. Leaders can be a little shorter at night and should carry at least a 30 pound bite tippet.

It is also a good idea to pre tie some tippets to the flies you expect to use with loops for attaching them to your leader. (Less tying in the dark with shaking hands after you get manhandled by one of those dock thugs.)

Another handy item to have is a good landing net. I know all the guys on TV grab the snook by the lower jaw but that is also a good way to get a hook in your hand and truthfully I think the net is better for the fish and the angler.

3. FLIES

Schiminnows, deceivers and gurglers tied in a couple of sizes would be a great start. Everyone likes them tied in white but don't overlook chartreuse and black as well. Dark flies in black and purple or brown and purple create a sharp silhouette in the dark.

4. STEALTH

No matter how good your equipment is or how well you can cast or how well your flies are tied if you are not QUIET you will fail. Organize your boat, a place for everything and everything in its place. Shut down your outboard well away from the dock you intend to fish and make your final approach with a pushpole or trolling motor on the lowest speed that will work. I do not recommend going barefoot

but do minimize foot noise.

5. BE COURTEOUS

Remember you are fishing in someone's back

yard so be quiet and watch your language if you miss that snook of a lifetime.

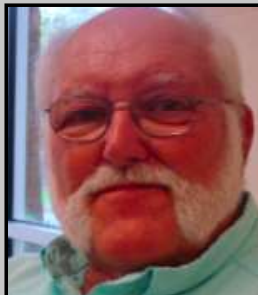
SFF Outings Committee



Tom "Truk" Trukenbrod
Co-Chair



Bob Burkard
Co-Chair



Dan Bumgarner



John Craig

Monthly Meeting

T. Allen Wyatt: Big Bass and Bream on the Fly

By Bill AuCoin
Editor-in-Chief

T. Allen Wyatt probably knows more about fly fishing for bass and bream than anybody, and he enthusiastically shared what he knows with Suncoast Fly Fishers at the May meeting.

It's Wyatt's business to know after all. He's head honcho at Andy Thornal Expedition Outfitters in Winter Haven. This is ground zero for professional in-store advisor for fly gear plus locally-tied flies. Customers are encouraged to ask him what's biting, what are the fish hitting, where, how can one catch them, what does an angler need, and when should someone hit the water?

It's also his personal passion to know this information first hand. At every opportunity he launches his boat and fly fishes the lakes that year after year prove Central Florida is the bass fishing capital of the world. Central Florida is also bream fishing capital of the world. After all, Bluegill also grow very big in this fertile temperate climate zone.

Wyatt has taken a lot of his fly fishing clues from traditional-tackle tournament bass anglers who strap down multiple rods on the boat to handle different needs. Wyatt loads four fly rods for each trip so he'll be ready to throw the right fly for almost every situation.

His collection of rods includes an 8-weight rigged with a Georgia bull frog. Another option is the spinner bait fly attached to a 16# tippet on a 9-foot leader.

Another 8-weight, "stiff-as-a-broom," rod helps him throw a full sinking line with a Gulley Worm -- Wyatt calls his the "Wet Willy." He uses a very short (two-foot) leader testing at 10 pounds.

The 5-weight, which carries floating line, has an olive wooly bugger or a Clouser on a size 6 or 8 hook. Anglers can also throw a size 10 foam spider in white with green legs.

Another 5-weight, his go-to rod, has a 7-foot leader with an 8# tippet that lets him throw a Boogle Bug-Amnesia on a size 10 hook. He rigs it in tandem with a soft hackle BH pheasant tail fly, on a size 16 hook. The dropper imitates an emerging midge or mayfly to entice a bream. Another dropper option is a scud fly or dragon fly.

Wyatt's got the fishing bug and, as a matter of fact, he's got the Florida bug know-how, too. When schools of bass start busting the surface here and there, he theorizes they're probably gorging on shiners that have left the safety of home (hydrilla) to eat emerging bugs. Midges, nymphs, mayflies, dragon flies, and scuds (grass shrimp) are all important. Often, Wyatt fishes a tandem with a floating and a tiny size 20-something as the dropper to sucker-punch the bream.

Wyatt said he gets practically giddy when he puts an imitation frog on top of a lily pad, knowing that a sizable bass is below, his large mouth salivating as he noses up toward the silhouette of that fat, juicy frog.

Another must-have for a shot at a lunker is Wyatt's



Allen used an electric drill to put the right amount of curl/furl in his Wet Willy worm, an adaptation of the John Gulley worm.

Gulley worm, which he tied at the May meeting. Like the plastic worm that is the go-to on all the bass trails, Wyatt's worm fly is the fly fisher's go-to for largemouth bass.

Wyatt was kind enough to reveal his favorite freshwater fishing spots to the club. While these areas are a bit of a drive from the Tampa Bay area, he encouraged everyone to make the trip with promises of bluegill and bass.

Wyatt said that Lake Spring, Hartridge, Shipp, and Little Winterset from the Winter Haven Chain of Lakes are productive fishing areas. In the Teneroc Management Area Lakes Two, Three, and Five are the best in the preserve.

Besides Lake Five, some

places for outboard motorists include Lake Hatchintha East near the Toho Canal, the north side of Walk in the Water near the creek mouth, Lake Kissimmee, and the east side of Rosalie.

For people with small boats or kayaks, Lake Otis, Martha, Elbert, and Mariam are great choices.

Visit Wyatt at Andy Thornal Expedition Outfitters. It's on Magnolia Avenue in Winter Haven. Call toll free at 800-499-9890. Email him at allen@andythornal.com.

If you can't go in person then check out the store online at andythornal.com. They carry all the made-to-last Orvis gear and more. Also on the site is a must-read article that Wyatt wrote about fly fishing for bass.



(Above) Wyatt's Wet Willy fly. (Right) club members approve of the Wet Willy fly.



All Photos By Bill AuCoin

Reports

Slip n' Sliding in the Oconaluftee River

By **Jeff Kopelman**
Contributing Writer

Rick Yarn and I went to the trophy section of the Oconaluftee River. I got in the river first and on my second cast caught an 18-inch rainbow. Rick was not even in the water yet. I yelled to him to help me net the fish. It took about 10-15 minutes to get it in. I caught a 19- and a 20 inch rainbow also.

Three others broke my line. One broke my line and then swam in front of Rick shaking its head back and forth. Rick said he couldn't

believe how big it was. I never saw the actual fish. I chased another one – the biggest one of the day – through the river for twenty minutes. I slipped on a rock, fell under water, and then when I got up the line snapped. I was so pissed I yelled out, "aw s--t." Rick said that's the first time he ever heard me yell out an obscenity after losing a fish. I was so worn out from chasing it and fighting the current and fighting the fish and all the while hoping my 3.5-pound tippet wouldn't break. I also caught three small trout. It was a blast.



Jeff Kopelman with rainbow. This is perfect-proof he was fly-fishing the trophy section of North Carolina's Oconaluftee River.



Go home and get some rest.



Thanks for the memories.

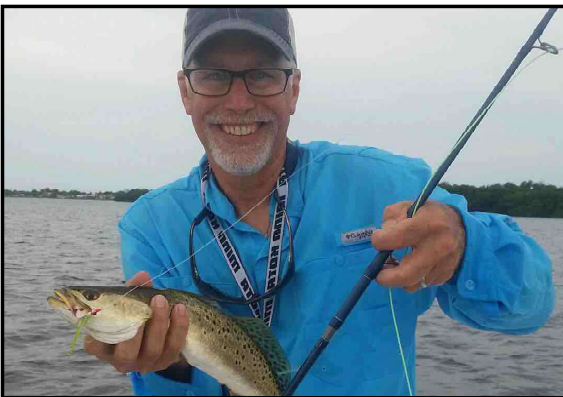
All Photos By Jeff Kopelman

Reports

Fishing Reports



Report: Have Fly Rod-- Will Travel. Bill Scarola moved about in late May and scored in freshwater and saltwater with (left) seatrout, (middle) a spotted bass, and (right) largemouth bass. Bill caught this 15-inch seatrout fishing on the Intracoastal Waterway near Clearwater. The spotted bass was caught on the bank at John Taylor Park, a 60-acre park in Largo known for its good fishing. The largemouth was caught on Lake Walsingham.



Report: Dennis Marquis On May 12, my son Ben and I went fishing on the bay side of Weedon Island from 7-10 a.m. The first cast with a rubber bait landed a nice sea trout. Then we put the spinning rod away and spent the next three hours landing trout on the fly. At last count we had over 25 trout, and they were still biting when we left. This was likely due to the great incoming tide under cloudy skies. I used a pink chartreuse and white Clouser, and Ben used a chartreuse and gold brown Clouser. We took four keepers for dinner.



Report: Al Pitcher I used a variety of bead flies I tied on #12 hooks while camping and fishing on the Ohio/ Indiana line. I caught a few fish a little bigger than the ones pictured, but this evening this is all the pond would produce. I fished with a Cabela's 4-wt.

Reports

Sowbug Roundup: Arkansas's Annual Tying, Lying, and Fishing Event

By Terry Kirkpatrick
Contributing Writer

Believe it or not, this is a fishing report.

I can't remember if this was my fourth or fifth Sowbug Roundup. The Sowbug Roundup is a three day tying event held in Mountain Home, Ark. Most people have never heard of a sowbug and wouldn't want to go to an international tying event that's named after a bug, let alone held in Arkansas, so let me take a moment to explain.

It started with a native of New Jersey by the name of Tony Spezio. Around 20 years ago he and his wife traveled to Mountain Home for the FFF's Southern Conclave and to do a little trout fishing. They fell in love with the White River area and bought a house before he left. But Tony's not the type of guy to leave well enough alone. Among other things he ties beautiful flies, builds bamboo fly rods and cedar strip canoes and he even built an airplane. It was his idea to invite the best fly tiers in the country to a three day "Tying, Lying, and Fishing" get-together on the White. They called it "The Sowbug Roundup" because sowbugs are the main trout food in the White River drainage.

The White River is a schizophrenic river, going from BIG bass impoundments to tail-water trout fisheries several times. The White's not a small river and you won't want to wade it when the authorities fire up all eight turbines on Bull Shoals or the four turbines on the North Fork of the White, but there's a lot of good fly fishing to be had at all times. The little town of Cotter even has the b____s to call itself "Trout Capital of the USA!" A lot of this is because of the tireless work of Dave Whitlock, a longtime resident of the area.

This year The Sowbug was held at the fairgrounds and 147 tiers from as far away as Japan and England participated. There were a

total of twelve tying sessions, one each morning and afternoon. I tied Thursday afternoon and Saturday afternoon. This gave me plenty of time to check out the vendors, drive to the rivers and lie with other tiers, such as Terry Tanner, who ran the Bass Pro Shops White River Fly shop until his retirement. I also had the opportunity to tie with guys from Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing out of Springfield, Mo.

Besides Terry, there was the Indiana contingent, led by Allen Fish. "Fishy" Fullum author of [Fly Tying with Common Household Materials](#) was there in all his glory. I got to say hi to fellow rod maker Harry Boyd and meet a new rod maker whose name now escapes me. I met people that I only knew through the internet and people I'd never met before. We all had one thing in common, fly fishing.

I did visit both the White and the North Fork of the White (known simply as "The North Fork") but I'm getting too old to fish in anything but ideal conditions and it was cold and rainy, and I wasn't going to spend \$200 up for a guided half day trip, at least not this time. There were plenty of other ways for me to spend my money. The vendors had almost anything you could want including my weakness, antique reels!

If vendors weren't enough, there were silent auctions, bidding auctions and drawings going on every afternoon. There were some neat "must have" things on the auction floor.

I knew better than get a bidder's number at the dinner/auction. The food was good the company was great and the prices on some of the auctioned items were way out of my price range. I believe one of the plates of flies went for over \$1,000.

Saturday night about 9 or 10 of us went out to an Italian dinner in north Arkansas. Tony Spezio and his wife were among us, and when he gave the food a passing

grade I knew it was good. Carl Hanson's name came up a few times. (Tony and Carl would have either been really good friends or they would have killed each other.) We ended up the night visiting with Tony and Dot until about nine when he said he was tired. Tony got out of the hospital the Wed. before the Sowbug after suffering a mild stroke. He said he hadn't felt very good Thursday, but he'd made a commitment to tie so he did. By Saturday he said he was feeling fine. But he did need his rest.

I'd planned an extra day to return to the home of my youth, so Sunday morning I drove north through the Ozarks, admiring the dogwood trees that were in bloom. I had time to visit the cemetery before attending church services at the church where I was confirmed. After that I had about two hours to kill before I had to start back for my return flight.

There was a Wal-Mart across the road from the cemetery and a day fishing license was only \$7, so it was time to go fishing!

Drive north out of Mountain Grove on state road 95 and turn left on state road 38. After you drive about nine miles take a right on Farm to Market "E" at the Baptist Church Camp. That stream you just crossed is Whetstone Creek. You'll climb to the top of the ridge that separates Whetstone from the Gasconade. At the foot of the hill, you'll be on the banks of the Gasconade. You'll need a johnboat or a canoe (a kayak will do.) to properly fish the river; it can be deep in places.

I didn't have a canoe or a kayak so I pulled on waders and fished the shores. I'd like to say that I caught a fish on every cast but I missed far more fish than I caught. But I did fool a fish into hanging on long enough to get it to shore. It was well at least I wasn't skunked size. The second fish ran my leader into a crack in a log and I



Terry Kirkpatrick

was sure it had broken me off. Just to make sure I walked down the bank until I could pull the line out of the crack and there was a very nice bluegill, thank you very much. In fact, it was as long as some of our bigger bluegill, but the fish wasn't as tall or as broad. This makes me wonder if our bluegills get fatter because they don't have to fight the current all the time. Hmmm? I knew that was going to be the best fish I'd get that Sunday and it was time to get back to the airport, so I reeled in and headed back to Springfield and my flight home.

I shouldn't have worried. My ticket originally sent me to Dallas and from Dallas to Tampa. Go figure. When I checked in at the kiosk, it sent me, not to Dallas, but to the agent at the desk. On that Sunday evening NOTHING was headed in or out of Dallas. So I got to spend one more night in a motel room in the Ozarks. I could have caught a really big bass, if I had known to stay on the Gasconade.

If fishing the White has ever crossed your mind I highly recommend planning your trip around the Sowbug. It's a group of friendly people who'll welcome you like a long lost friend. The fishing is great too. If you don't like trout there are very large largemouth bass in Bull Shoals and North Fork lakes. If you want a relaxing day fishing, try Bryant Creek, or even the Gasconade. You'll enjoy it. Maybe you'll join me there next time.

The Tying Bench

Docklight Clouser

By Paul Sequira
Contributing Writer

Our June outing is one of everyone's favorite trips, and we are all looking for a big snook. You don't need big or complicated flies (in reality minnow imitations, so we're talking bucktails and streamers here) and all white is a good choice. Some typical flies are: DT Special, Doty Snook Fly, Gartside Gurgler, Clouser Deep Minnow and Lefty's Deceiver. Your flies don't have to be very large, 2" to 3 S" flies depending on the pattern, work fine. The dressings for all of these flies and tying instructions are included on our website <http://www.suncoastflyfishers.com/> The Clouser Deep Minnow below is a favorite.

Clouser Deep Minnow
Dressing:
Hook: Your favorite Saltwater hook size 4-1
Thread: White 3/0 or Flat Waxed Nylon
Eyes: Med/Lt lead bar bell

Flash: Silver or pearl Crystal flash or Flasabou
Belly and Wing: White buck tail

Tying Instructions:
Mash down the barb and place hook in vise. Tie in thread with a jam knot approximately 1/3 shank length behind the hook eye. Make a small ball of thread at the rear of the tie-in point.

With the hook right side up (point down), tie on bar bell eyes directly in front of thread bump using a figure eight wrap. It is a good idea to place a drop of superglue or head cement on the thread after tying on the eyes.

With the hook still right side up (point down), tie in the belly of the fly with a sparse bunch of white bucktail. This should extend approximately half the length of the hook shank beyond the hook bend. Lash the bucktail down to the hook shank in front of and behind the barbell eyes.

Turn the fly over so that it is upside down (point up).



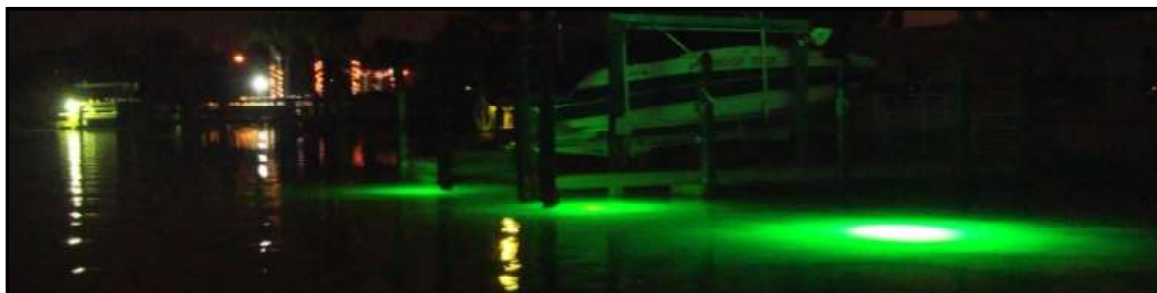
Keep this fly simple, sparse, and white.

Tie in 6 to 8 strands of silver or pearl Flashabou using the fold-back method directly behind the hook eye. Trim the ends of this even with or slightly shorter than the bucktail belly. Do not trim the ends of the Flashabou evenly; you will get more sparkle if the ends are slightly uneven.

Take another small bunch of white bucktail and measure it along the hook shank so that it is slightly longer than the belly. Line the

tips up slightly and trim the butt ends even. Tie the wing in over the Flashabou directly behind the hook eye.

Wrap a neat tapered head, whip finish, cut the thread and the fly is finished. It is not necessary but you may wish to change to a colored thread such as red or black at this point. Give the head several coats of head cement. If you desire, paint eyes on the barbell and coat them with head cement.



The Tying Bench

Smitty's Crystal Beetle

By Layne Smith
Contributing Writer

The Suncoast Fly Fishers have three freshwater outings in a row on the schedule. Get ready to fish Lake Maggorie, the Chassawitzka River, and the Hillsborough River.

I originally started this fly pattern tied with deer hair and peacock herl. When I got a job working for a printing company that had sheets of disposable closed cell foam that came to them as protective packing material for their printing plates, a lightbulb went on and I replaced the deer hair with strips of this foam and soon after replaced the peacock herl with Estaz to make a sturdier-built fly. And the rest, as they say, is history!

This floating "Bluegill Bug" is a highly effective terrestrial imitation. This fly is best used as a seeker pattern for surface feeding bluegill. Simply let it set for a few moments, then give it a slight motion to imitate life. The rubber legs wiggle seductively. It is best fished along the shoreline, over beds, under over-hanging branches or any transition area such as reeds going into rip rap, bushes going into lily pads or even sandy area going into cattails.

This fly has also caught bass, trout (maybe they thought it was a corn kernel) and many other species. A friend of mine told me he even caught a nice redfish on this fly. He was fishing it to imitate a ghost crab.

Materials:
Hook: Mustad 3366A #8 (Bend down barb and be sure hook point is sharp.)
Thread: White or Chartreuse Flat Waxed Nylon (Finer threads may cut foam.)

Shell: 1/8" Thick White, Closed Cell Foam, 5/16" wide by 1-1/4" long

Body: Chartreuse or Pearl Estaz

Legs: Medium, White Rubber Legs

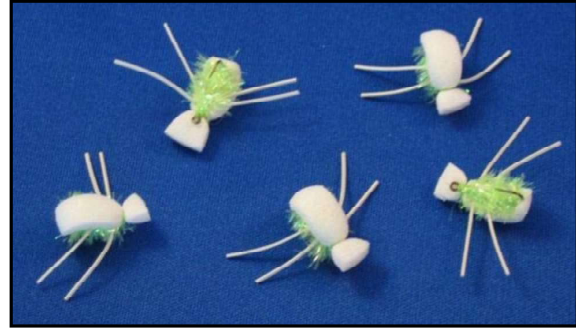
Tying Sequence:

Step 1: Attach tying thread behind hook eye and wind a thread base back to the hook bend.

Step 2: Cut a blunt point at one end of the foam strip and tie the point in at the hook bend, leaving the foam extending past the bend. Wrap the foam down a short distance around the bend.

Step 3: Tie in the Estaz body and wrap up the bend and along the hook shank to a little beyond the mid-point of the hook shank and tie off. Do not cut off the Estaz or tying thread.

Step 4: Fold a 3" length



Don't leave home for a freshwater fishing expedition without these flies.

Photo By Layne Smith

of rubber leg material in half and tie in the doubled rubber leg on top of the hook shank at its mid-point where the Estaz body was left. Cut the loop in the doubled rubber leg, producing four legs. Pull legs into position – two on each side of the body. Pack the body and legs back with a thumb nail or Brassie hair packer.

Step 5: Continue wrapping the Estaz body by taking one turn over where the legs are tied in, then wrap forward to the hook eye ahead of the legs. Tie off the Estaz and pack the body back with a thumb nail or Brassie hair packer.

Step 6: Pull the Foam shell taut over the top of the body and legs and tie down behind the hook eye. Hold the end of the foam up and form a thread head and whip

finish immediately behind the hook eye and cut off the tying thread.

Step 7: While pulling the end of the foam taut, cut off the foam leaving a lip of approximately 3/16". By pulling the foam taut while cutting off, the lip will automatically be slightly rounded. Using head cement on the head is optional. Some bluegill fishers claim that the odor of head cement turns off the fish.

Step 8: Trim all legs to the same length.

Color options:
Alternative color combinations include Root Beer Estaz and black foam for dark days. Tie with green foam and with yellow or white chenille body and chartreuse legs to imitate baby frogs.



Photo By Annie Hays

Smitty's beetles are highly effective in the Everglades canals where they land bass and bluegill.



Photo From Wikimedia Commons

Smitty's Crystal Beetles are great for finding clusters of bluegills.

Fly Fisher Tips

Fly Casting Clinic: Practice Makes Perfect

By Capt. Pat Damico
Contributing Writer

As a retired dentist, I am often asked about my golf game. Don't all dentists golf? I tell people I might take it up when I get older and can't fly fish anymore. As a guide and teacher of fly fishing, a fly fishing neophyte will ask to fly fish with me and also for me to give him casting help, all on the same outing. I never played golf. Imagine my son, a very good golfer as well as fly fisher, asking me to play a round of golf with him and his golfing buddies who are scratch golfers. To become proficient in either sport it takes a lot of patience and practice, perfect practice.

By Capt. Pat Damico
Tampa Bay Times Correspondent

Super catch-and-release snook fly action has begun. Snook continue to proliferate in our area. Sight-fishing is heating up with large females and groups of courting males easily seen when anglers pick early mornings with bright sun and easterly winds. The importance of tidal flow will put large numbers close to passes, especially if there is structure, debris, points, rip-rap or offsets, which give them additional protection. A boat is not needed unless it takes you to an isolated hot spot. The keys are to bring good polarized glasses with side shields and a hat with a

Captain's Corner: Snook Flies, Tides, and Tippet

wide, dark underside brim, and to stay on the sand. Beaches with a higher viewpoint are ideal. Avoid the low sun, which casts your shadow over the fish; they will be very close to the sand and usually occupy the troughs there. Stay out of the water and cast parallel to the sand. An 8-weight fly rod with a floating line is good, but a clear sink tip line is better, especially if there is any wave action that gives your fly a deeper, more lifelike presentation. White, lightly weighted baitfish patterns size 1/0 to 2 are the best. Select a fish that is facing you and place your fly close enough so that the fish can see it. A 30-pound shock tippet of hard monofilament with a loop knot will cover



Capt. Pat Damico

terminal tackle requirements. Check your back cast when starting; make sure curious beachgoers aren't nearby. - Article courtesy of "Tampa Bay Times."

How-To: Pomp and Suncoast Circumstances

By Bob Morrison
Contributing Writer

Pompano in the surf — Pompano are in the surf along the gulf coast close to the beach. Try sand fleas, gotchas, crazy Charlies, and small crab patterns.
Remember, minimum length is 11 inches from nose to tail fork and the daily limit is six fish per person.

Tarpon in the passes —

Tarpon are active around the passes near Anclote Island, up north in Pasco County, also in passes around Honeymoon Island in Dunedin, and at Tarpon Key, just east of the Skyway. Try for them with baitfish and crab patterns.

Quick-change artistry — If you are always in a hurry to change flies tie a small snswivel on your leader tippet to make quicker changes than you would by tying a

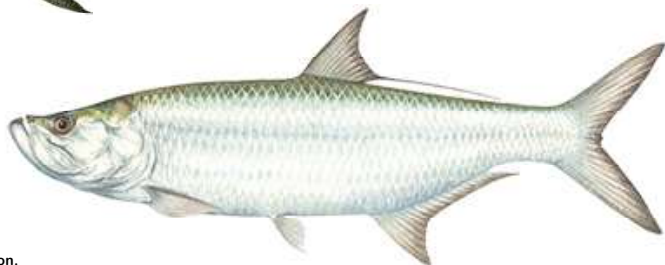
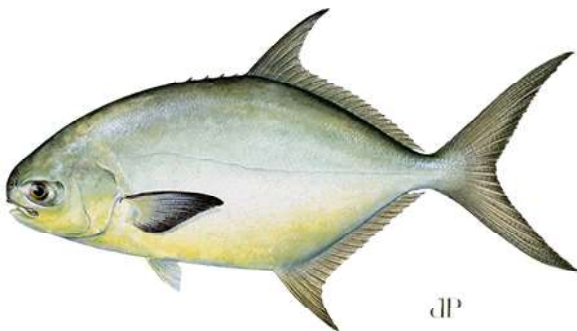
loop knot each time you change flies.

The Redfish Tease — If you are in a boat don't chase after schools of redfish. Try to position the boat so the school comes to you. Remember, cast so your fly crosses in front of and close to the school, retrieving the fly across and away from the leading fish just as a fleeing baitfish would.

Go Get 'Em and Good Luck!



Bob Morrison



(Above) Florida pompano (upper right) red drum (bottom right) tarpon.

Odds and Ends

Summer Reading List

By Tom Gadacz

President, Florida Council
Internation Federation of Fly
Fishers

Just because most members of the club have graduated school, they still need to keep up with their summer reading. There are many fine pieces of literature to crack open from classics like "The Old Man and the Sea" by Ernest Hemingway to current New York Times bestsellers like "It's All Easy: Delicious Weekday Recipes for the Super-Busy Home Cook" by Gwyneth Paltrow.

To help fly-fishing enthusiasts sift through the array of great books, here is a list of invaluable books to read this summer:

"Wading the Saltwater Flats with a Fly Rod" by Don Coleman is a great place to start for beginning fishermen. Coleman was a famous

Tampa Bay fly fisher and Suncoast Fly Fishers member who gives his accounts of successful fly fishing in this area. Conveniently all SFF members receive a copy when they join. If you can't find your booklet, it's available for purchase. Karen Warfel has some copies available.

Next is "The Curtis Creek Manifesto" by Sheridan Anderson. This is primarily a book on trout fishing, and some of the equipment information is dated, but this is an enjoyable book to read about fly fishing strategy, finesse, and tactics. Both beginners and seasoned veterans will find something to enjoy in this book.

Then there is "Cod" by Mark Kurlansky. Winner of the 1999 James Beard Award, this book is the biography of a single species of fish, but it may as well be

a world history textbook with this humble fish as its recurring main character. The harvest of cod in the Grand Banks was enormous and probably seemed endless, but it did end abruptly in the 1990's. What went wrong? Could it now be happening with other fish in Florida?

"The Organic Machine" by Richard White documents the short comings of development along the Columbia River. The organic machine is the conflicting human and natural claims to the environment.

"Wetland Riders" by Robert Fritchey is about the conflict to preserve coastal resources and the fight between commercial fishermen and the sport-fishing industry. Do the fish even have a chance due to over-fishing?

"Fly Fishing Through the Midlife Crisis" by Howell



Tom Gadacz

Raines, the former political editor of the "New York Times" and the "Tampa Bay Times." He weaves a story of friendships, aging and fly fishing.

"Deadly Drifts," "Crosses to Bear," and "You're Next" is a fictional trilogy by M. W. Gordon. The main character, McDuff Brooks, is in the witness protection program. He comes back as a fly fishing guide between Florida and Montana.

Satire: Suncoast Fly Fishers in Tarpon Tournament

By Annie Hays

Layout Editor

On May 12, 2016, Annie Hays became the first fly fisher to win a major tarpon tournament in the Tampa Bay area in 75 years.

"My fly fishing club and I weren't sure what to do for an outing this month," said Hays, "we're all a little tired of catching hundreds of fish in the Everglades, so the guys wanted a real challenge."

Hays's victory was not the only cause for celebration with her club, the Suncoast Fly Fishers. Second through tenth place also went to members of the organization. "The only reason Annie did better than me was because I taught her everything she knows about fishing," said Ken Doty, the second place winner. "Hell, I even tied the tarpon toad she caught that monster on."

When pressed to bad-mouth the competition further, Doty only laughed and walked away.

George Haseltine, president of the Suncoast Fly

Fishers, only had positive things to say about the day. "It's just super that our humble group caught so many great fish. We weren't even trying to win." Haseltine opted not to weigh his fish as he thought it might take the fun out of the day.

While the Suncoast Fly Fishers assembled under a pavilion to enjoy sandwiches and watermelon, other contestants in the tournament gathered in a clump of boats a mile off shore.

"The Tampa Bay Power Boat Classic is under attack from fly fishermen," said Tom Garrison, president of the Tampa Bay Power Boat Association. "How are we supposed to get sponsorships from Mercury and Penn if these guys upstage us with homemade tackle and kayaks?"

The association is considering mandatory horsepower regulations on outboard motors in order to enter the tournament next year. Regulations may also be set on minimum costs of rods and reels to ensure that

only high quality equipment will be used. "We have a reputation to uphold," said Garrison, "and cheap tackle will only tarnish the perception of the Tampa Bay Power Boat Association."

According to Hays, the reason for her and her club's success didn't come from poor tackle quality or the size of the club's kayaks. "Well, this might sound a bit odd," said Hays, "but this morning, me, my dad, and a bunch of the guys swore we saw a little skiff drifting over the flats surrounded by fog with three old guys in it. One had a long white beard and he said to try a white and red tarpon toad, the second guy with a huge beer gut yelled that the flats just north of there were THE place to be, and the last guy with a big straw hat and a short beard said in a quiet voice that he felt bad for forgetting the water melon again."

Ken Hofmeister, former club president and the third place winner, said, "this was like Jesus telling the disciples to fish off the right side of their boat. Once we



Annie Hays

all paddled to the east flats the tarpon were practically jumping into our kayaks."

When asked about their opinions on the possible boat requirements next year, the club collectively laughed and joked about young people's delusions.