

On The Fly

Newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg
Promoting fly fishing, fly tying, fly casting, and marine conservation in a family fun atmosphere



September meeting 3



Meet Mr. Crab 11



Big Gun Shoot-Out 19



Tie-a-Thon 7



Squally August outing 8



Jack Collins' tarpon 13



Where to fish the September outing 12



New member, new water 16



SFF President Letter – September 2019

Hello everyone,

I look at the carbon copied emails I get and I am amazed and overcome by how much you all are continually doing for Suncoast Fly Fishers.

You keep me in the loop, but I am not the motivating force. You're doing all these things out of your own generosity and enthusiasm to the benefit of us all! THANK YOU!

There's not enough space here to include all your names, but I will tell you when I see you. You know who you are.

Whether you're cooking for an outing, working with our Veterans at the VA, watching our money or keeping track of our members on expertly prepared spread sheets, teaching us to tie flies, working on our web site or face book, putting together, or contributing to the best Newsletter in the world, searching for ways to give back to our members, writing a zillion emails looking for a way to award scholarships to aspiring conservationists, planning our monthly outings, Brisket, Venison or Chili feasts, or the Annual Hog Roast, teaching casting at our clinics or before the general meetings or giving a presentation at one of our meetings, you all are an inspiration.

You come from St. Petersburg, Tampa, Pasco County, Dunedin, Clearwater, Apollo Beach, Palm Harbor, Safety Harbor and beyond to meet each month and attend our clinics and outings. All providing for the best fellowship, sharing and "fish-fibbing" that can be found.

And you are willing to share your fly fishing adventures with us via "On the Fly."

I look at those pictures and read those articles and think "I know that person". I call them by their first names. Even if I haven't had a chance to fish, I can fish vicariously, through your sharing.

Summer time usually slows things down for us because our Northern members go back for a while. Not slow down this year. We had over 40 at our tie-a-thon general meeting (of course we had free pizza). There were over 35 at our last August Outing (OK, we did have Brisket. See the pattern?)

It's OK if we are an eating club with a fishing habit. I really enjoy it all.

Never lose your sense of adventure.

George

George Haseltine
SFF President 2016-20
727-423-8110 Cell & Text

Meetings and Outings

Thursday, September 19 Meeting

5 pm: Fly Casting for distance and accuracy.

6:30 pm, Walter Fuller Park Rec Center, 7291 26th Avenue N. St. Pete



Walt Durkin

- **September 19 Meeting.** Our speaker is Walt Durkin, wade-fisher extraordinaire. Walt will talk about two of his recent fly fishing expeditions, one to Grand Cayman and one to Belize.
- **Club and FFI dues are due. See below.**
- **Outing change:** We'll be meeting for lunch at the Crab Shack at 11400 Gandy Blvd.
- **Drawing:** Free. You could win a subscription to Tail Fly Fishing Magazine.
- **Fly swap:** Tie and bring three of your favorite flies.
- **Come early: Big Gun Shootout (and just for fun) practice.**

Quin Berry will be setting up distance markers and accuracy targets around

5pm and would like to get club members to try their casting skills. You don't have to commit to the Big Gun. This is also for club members who would just like to have some **fun** casting before the meeting.

Now you can pay your club and FFI dues at the same time

The SFF Board has decided to collect SFF and FFI dues annually. This will greatly simplify our record keeping to determine if our members are active FFI members. Since we are a Charter member of FFI we are entitled to certain benefits such as low premium liability insurance, umbrella filing with the IRS and club discounts on merchandise.

In return the Charter status requires that all club members also be FFI members in good standing. Beginning this month, we will be collecting both your SFF and FFI membership dues.

For the past 2 months Karen and I have been working with FFI to determine the balance each member needs to pay to keep their membership in sync with the SFF membership. We have been sent a list of all our members with the amount that needs to be paid to FFI this year to allow us to regularly bill for both SFF and FFI membership in the future. In other words, all members will have the same due date for FFI membership.

Beginning next year everyone will be on the same schedule except for new members. After we reconcile the payments for this year, subsequent payments will be our standard SFF membership dues (\$15 for single and \$25 for family) and FFI dues of \$35 for regular members (including family membership) and \$25 for senior (65 years or older). Some members have let their FFI dues lapse and will be paying more than \$35. Most members will be paying less than \$35 since they have already paid for part of the newly established date. If you have submitted a membership fee to FFI in the last 3 months (except for new members) please let us know since we may need to make additional adjustments.

We greatly appreciate your support in simplifying our record keeping and facilitating active membership in FFI.

Tom Gadacz, SFF Treasurer

Karen Warfel, SFF Board Member and Membership

Meetings and Outings

Saturday, September 21 Outing.

- The board has agreed to change the September outing location. We'll not be meeting for a picnic lunch at Cypress Point Park in Tampa. Instead we'll meet up for a real sit-down meal at the **Crab Shack** at 11400 Gandy Boulevard.
- Fish anywhere in middle or Old Tampa Bay.
- The outing prize goes to the SFFer catching the longest redfish. Shoot a picture and email it to Bill AuCoin, wmaucoin@verizon.net, or text it to him: 727-417-6676.
- The longest redfish will also take the lead in that category for the annual tournament. SW leaders to date are Snook 24-inches, Ladyfish 22.5", Redfish (empty), Seatrout 20".



Mr. Crab Shack



Saturday, October 12 Carl Hanson Memorial Outing

- We'll compete against the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club on the Hillsborough River.
- Note: It's the second Saturday in October, not the third

Thursday, October 17, Meeting, Walter Fuller Park

- **Speaker:** Steve Gibson, kayak fishing guide. Steve will tie his famous Myakka minnow fly.
- **Drawing:** Win a subscription to Tail Fly Fishing Magazine.
- **Practice:** Big Gun Shootout distance and target practice starting at 5 pm.



Steve Gibson's Myakka Minnows

Suggestion Box

Email your ideas to President George Haseltine at ghh343@aol.com

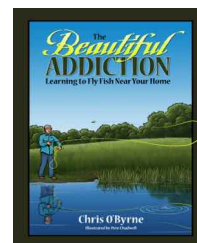
News and Notes



SFF member Darryn Manley, a pilot with the U.S. Coast Guard based at the St. Pete-Clearwater airport, is flying supplies to the Bahamas. Darryn's update: *We have been very busy. So far we have transported water, MRE's, medical teams, and rescue personnel down to the Bahamas and surrounding areas. Things are just getting started really.*



SFF ally Chris O'Byrne has written a book – *The Beautiful Addiction: Learning to Fly Fish Near Your Home* – that entertains and motivates fly fishing newbies and oldies alike. The book can be purchased at Amazon, Barnes & Nobles and other retailers. Here's a link to the publisher, **The Peppertree Press**.



The Big Gun Shootout has been scheduled. It's Sunday, Nov. 17, 9 to noon. Three person teams and individuals compete for fly casting distance and accuracy. See **Quin Berry** at the meeting (He's in the back of the room and he has your name badge, too.) Quin has been holding Big Gun practices twice a month. One practice is before the meeting. The other practice will also be at Walter Fuller Park but on a different Thursday. You'll get a notice.



SFF member Michael Larkin, PhD, recently did a podcast on tarpon biology. That's his specialty at NOAA Fisheries. Mike gave an amazing presentation to the club at the May meeting. Here's **a link** to the podcast.



Some months ago **Bob Morrison**, our *How-to and Fishy Factoids* columnist, suffered a whammy, then a double-whammy: severe cuts on his leg. He's still in rehab at Palm Garden of Pinellas working on getting back his balance and building muscles. He'd love to hear from you.

Bob Morrison, Room 148, Palm Gardens of Pinellas, 200 16th Ave. SE., Largo FL, 33771. His phone number is 727-735-3209.

Save these Dates

- November 16-17, Florida Sportsman Expo
- November 17, Big Gun Shootout, Picnic Island Park, Pavilion #611
- December 14. Fly Casting Clinic. Woodlawn Park, St. Petersburg
- December 20. Holiday Party, 6:30-8:00 at Bill Jackson's Shop for Adventure, Pinellas Park

Check the club calendar for updates

We are Suncoast Fly Fishers of St. Petersburg



Suncoast Fly Fishers

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

Club Officers

Pres: George Haseltine
Vice Pres: Rick Warfel
Secretary: David Redd
Treasurer: Tom Gadacz

Board of Directors

Quin Berry, Bill Scarola, Bob Burkard, Bruce Evensen, Ryan Sollars, Cliff Nigh, Karen Warfel

Committees

Volunteers needed. Speak to any officer or director at the meeting

Casting Skills: Pat Damico, Dayle Mazzarella

FFI Liaison: Pat Damico

Conservation: Cliff Nigh

Fly Tying: Myron Hansen

Membership: Tom Gadacz

New Members: Rick Warfel

Webmaster: Dennis Marquis, Bob Burkard

Facebook: Woody Miller

Hog Roast: Open

Outings: Bob Burkard, Hilton Bruch, David Redd, Bill AuCoin

Project Healing Waters: Alan Sewell, Ted Rich, Dave Barson, Dave Redd, Terry Kirkpatrick

Outreach, shows: David Redd, Bob Burkard, Bill Scarola, Tom Gadacz

Raffles: Dave Barson
Succession Plan: Rick Warfel

Programs: Board of Directors

Publicity: Bill AuCoin

On The Fly

Bill AuCoin, editor
Duane Mertz
Anne Hays
Bob Hood
Tim Elms

Aims and Purposes

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.

Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF) is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization. SFF is a charter member of the Fly Fishers International (FFI). SFF is a member of the Florida Council of FFI. SFF supports the conservation of natural resources, boating safety and fishing regulations.

Monthly Meetings. Guests welcome.

Third Thursday of every month (except December) at St. Pete's Walter Fuller Park Rec Center, 7891 26th Ave. N. 6 to 8:30 pm.

Directions to our meeting at Walter Fuller Park. From 22nd Avenue N turn North on 72nd St. N. Turn left (West) on 26th Avenue N. Then turn right into the rec center parking lot.

Monthly Outings

Club members meet up every month for a fly fishing outing and lunch. Usually it is scheduled on the Saturday after monthly meeting on the third Thursday of every month.

Contact us by mail: Suncoast Fly Fishers, P.O. Box 40821, St Petersburg, FL 33743-0821

Visit our website and Facebook pages, too

SuncoastFlyFishers.com

[Facebook/Suncoast Fly Fishers](#)

Club and FFI Membership combined

Suncoast Fly Fishers currently has 133 members including 16 family members and 6 honorary members. Annual dues are \$50 (\$40 for seniors), payable in September. This also includes benefits and annual membership in [Fly Fishers International](#) and the [Florida Council](#) of Fly Fishers International

- **Suggestion box:** What can the Suncoast Fly Fishers club do for you and for other members? Email your ideas to club president George Haseltine at ghh343@aol.com

Join. Renew. Apply.

August Meeting Tie-a-Thon

Photos by Bill AuCoin, Duane Mertz, Anne Hays

Members brought their vises and fly tying materials and tied the flies of their choice at the August Tie-a-Thon.



Tie-a-thon organizer Bruce Evensen brought and shared materials for members to tie Clousers.



Myron Hansen (l) watches Smitty (right) work his magic. Others at the table, from right: Cliff Nigh, Truk Trukenbrod, Dennis Marquis, and David Redd.



Truk Trukenbrod tied Ken Hofmeister's Ada Potato Fly.



David Redd feels good about this one.



Alan Sewell lines up the feathers just right.



Truk's Ada Potato Flies



Ada Potato Fly created by former club president, Ken Hofmeister. Ken told club members used the blue and green polyester fibers from his three-year-old granddaughter Ada's toy duster.



Ken Hofmeister, who died last year, tied the Ada Potato Fly at many club tie-a-thons.

August Urban Outing: Rain, Rain Go Away

Come again another day. A weekday would be fine.

Our August outing was a wet one. A few challenged those low slung, black cumulonimbi. What the heck; you only live once, you know. Lightning didn't strike anybody's graphite rod but eventually the heavy rains and wind motivated everybody to move out of harm's way. Members came early for lunch and huddled under pavilion at Bay Vista Park. The topic of conversation? Weather, of course.



Pres. George Haseltine thanks brisket chefs Bob Burkard (l) and Rick Warfel (r).

Dennis Marquis, Bill AuCoin, and Duane Mertz. AuCoin and Marquis waded into a little bay off of Bunces Pass and cast flies into the mullet schools. Finally, AuCoin landed a snook, a 20-incher, on a Bob Burkard shrimp fly. (Don't tell anybody, but AuCoin sprayed it with Gulp Shrimp.)

Mark Hays, Anne Hays and her boyfriend Robert Mitchell had a fulfilling breakfast at Skyway Jack's on 34th Street S. then they fly-fished the urban pond



Wade-fishers view. Uh oh. Looks like another squall is headed our way.

Well, then, the picnic lunch was on the table. David

Redd was carving a roast. Soon, the subject brisket. It was amazing. One roast was grilled slow and low overnight by VP Rick Warfel. It was delicious. Burkard confided later that his Green Egg grill vents heat if it gets too hot but, just in case it doesn't, a remote alarm wakes him up. He got a good night's sleep.

A few members dodged the squalls (or tried to) and fly fished (or tried to). One group met up at daybreak at the parking lot at North Beach on Fort DeSoto Park. That was Tom Gadacz, Mandy McGarry,



Sheltering in place at Bay Vista Park.



Daybreak at Fort DeSoto Park. Tom Gadacz, Mandy McGarry, and Duane Mertz fly-fished the drop-off at Bunces Pass. They kept one eye on the water and one eye on the clouds.

just behind the restaurant. If you zoom in on a satellite image you see the pond connects

to Boca Ciega Bay via Clam Bayou. They caught little (little!) snook and, hey-hey, Mayan cichlids. But Mayan cichlid was not the designated species. It shoulda been because nobody admitted to catching the outing prize shiny object – ladyfish. Oh, did I mention that the lunch was amazing?

Bill AuCoin

Anne Hays

Corned Beef Hash with a Side of Snook



Anne Hays with an itty-bitty urban pond snook.

The fishing prospects looked grim for the August outing. When my dad Mark Hays decides not to bother hooking up the boat, and also decides that going to Skyway Jack's for breakfast would be a better use of our morning than fishing, then you know it's going to be a rough day. Despite the poor outlook, my boyfriend, Robert Mitchell, decided to join us.

The three of us enjoyed a superb corned beef hash breakfast at **Skyway Jack's**, and the rain showed no sign of stopping as we walked out of the restaurant. My dad then remembered that there is a pond behind the restaurant which connects to Clam Bayou and the bay. Just for the heck of it, we decided to walk over the wooden fence and observe the water.

In about one minute, we saw three strikes from what we presume were baby Tarpon eating minnows on the surface. We hurried to the truck and got our fly rods ready. Dad put on a gurgler and Robert and I had two of Dad's Schminnow flies.

It should be mentioned here that Robert had not particularly enjoyed his first experience with a fly rod. I had let him borrow mine during the Skyway outing earlier this year, but like every beginner, he had a hard time grasping the graceful art of casting. Dad I and left him alone on one part of the pond with no trees behind him to practice his casting.

Dad fished by the drain that was fed from the road runoff. After about ten minutes, he hooked a baby Snook that was about 14 inches long. Then another. He let me trade places with him, but I wasn't having any luck.

As I worked my way down the bank away from the drainage area, I felt a familiar tug at the end of my line. By tug, I mean my fly was swallowed by a rock that fought back. When the fish surfaced from the water, I yelled frantically at Robert to grab my phone for a picture, because no one would believe this without photographic evidence. I had caught a Mayan Cichlid. By the standards of our Everglades trips, this was a mature Cichlid. It measured about 12 inches.

For those who have not joined us on our Everglades trips, the Mayan Cichlid is an invasive species that is flourishing in the freshwater canals of South Florida. They generally live near rocky banks, and they fight about as hard as a largemouth bass. Besides the fact that these fish should not be in our area, they are very susceptible to cold weather. One or two frosts would kill all of them.



Robert Mitchell is getting the hang of it, for sure.

Anne Hays...Corned Beef Hash with a Side of Snook

Not far from where I caught the Cichlid, I caught my own baby Snook. Then finally, after about an hour, Robert managed to catch his first fish on a fly rod. He brought in two baby Snook of his own, and he got his casts down to about three false casts before letting the fly hit the water.

Naturally, Dad caught a couple more Snook and a large Cichlid that was about the size of mine. We decided to try the other side of the pond, but by the time we drove a couple blocks over, the rain had let up and the sun was out. The pond went dead and the air turned into a sauna.

New park just right for a winter outing?

Dad decided to go for a drive to search for a new outing location. There is a brand-new park with a kayak launch that connects to the St. Pete side of Clam Bayou. The launch puts you in the middle of a mangrove swamp, so we think this might be a good place to fish in the dead of winter. While I was checking out the new bathrooms at the park, I saw on my phone that we were about to get slammed by a huge storm.

The three of us jumped in the truck just as the typhoon hit. We headed to Bay Vista Park and huddled with Alan Sewell under the overhang near the parking lot. It's a pretty bad storm when you stand under a shelter and still get soaked. We decided to brave the sideways sheets of rain and help secure the brisket under the club's lunch spot.

While the brisket was absolutely worth braving the weather for, watching our club members try to walk through 6-inch puddles and sideways rain to get to the mouth-watering brisket was about as entertaining as a Charlie Chaplin film. People were walking with their umbrellas directly in front of them to keep them from turning inside out as the wind blew back their raincoat hoods.

Thankfully, the rain let up as lunch neared, and no one who waded at Fort De Soto Park got caught in a rip current.



Mark Hays with an urban pond Mayan cichlid.



Look closely and you'll see a little pond behind Skyway Jacks (red pin). Canals connect it to Clam Bayou and Boca Ciega Bay. (Apple maps)

Bob Burkard: September Outing. Lunch at the Crab Shack



Outings Chairman Bob Burkard

Summary: Meet up for lunch at 11:30 at the Crab Shack restaurant at 11400 Gandy Blvd. in Pinellas County. Everyone pays for their own lunch. The outing prize goes to the member catching the longest redfish. Get a picture. We'll have a nice outgoing tide at Gandy Bridge with a major solunar between 7 and 10 am.

We are trying something different this month and want to fish a new area for our outing: Instead of meeting up at Cypress Point Park in Tampa, we're moving to the St. Pete side of Tampa Bay.

You have lots of

convenient fishing options but the important thing is that we'll be meeting for lunch at the well-known **Crab Shack** restaurant on the south side of Gandy Blvd. Get there early and hold some seats for late arrivers.

WADE IN: You can wade in and fish the flats off 4th Street North (687) or you can wade in through the mangroves on the north side of Gandy Blvd. and fish grass flats.

KAYAK LAUNCH: You can launch your kayak on either side of Gandy Blvd. before the bridge. See the map with the text bubble.

BOAT LAUNCH: You can launch at the Gandy Boat Ramp on the Hillsborough County side of Gandy Blvd.



September outing fishing and lunch locations. Enlarge page to read bubble text.

2019 CLUB OUTING TOURNAMENT LEADERS THROUGH AUGUST

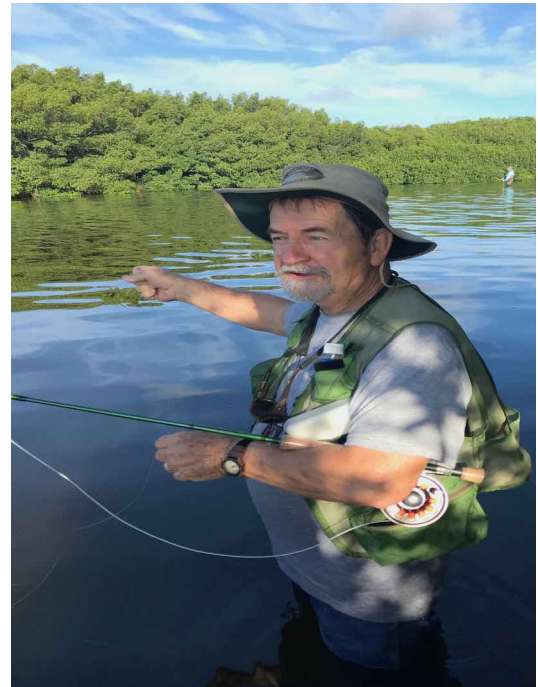
Species	Length	Leader to date	Outing (Month)
Longest sunfish			
Longest black bass	13.5"	David Redd	Walsingham Lake (Feb)
Longest snook	23.5"	Truk Trukenbrod	Dock-light/Beaches Outing (July)
Longest redfish			
Longest ladyfish	22 1/2"	Dennis Marquis	Weedon Island Preserve (Jan)
Longest seatrout	20"	Mark Hays	Dock-light/Beaches Outing (July)

Prefishing September's Outing: Upper Tampa Bay

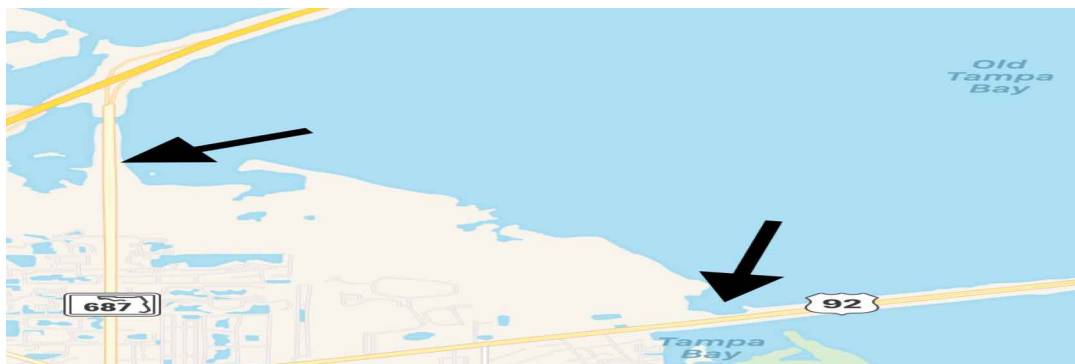
Bruce Evensen agreed to lead Suncoast Fly Fishers to one of his favorite park and wade spots just off of 4th Street N. just a bit south of the I-275 on-ramp to the Howard Franklin Bridge. Tom Trukenbrod, Hilton Bruch, Bob Burkard, and Bill AuCoin took him up on the offer on a weekday in late August. It's definitely a fishy-spot, a wade-friendly cove with a shoreline covered by thick mangroves with several rain-drain streamlets that attract gamefish. Bruce likes to fish these spots on an outgoing tide. But on the day we were there the tide and a breeze from the north made the water higher than normal. No catches there. Bruch, Burkard and AuCoin drove down to Gandy Blvd. and wade-fished the flats north of Gandy. Same result. The tides on September's outing day will be better, and so will the fishing. Take it to the bank.



Bob Burkard (l) and Hilton Bruch waded back to the autos then drove south and wade-fished the Old Bay flats on the north side of Gandy Blvd.



Bruce Evensen points out some of his favorite shoreline spots when he wade-fishes Fourth Street N. in St. Pete.



Arrows point to the two areas where anglers can wade-fish Old Tampa Bay on outing day. Top left arrow points to the 4th Street N. park-and-wade spot on the east side. Bottom arrow points to the Gandy Blvd. wade in spot. There's a path, well-hidden, through the mangroves. Park on the south side of Gandy and walk across the lanes...carefully.

Smitty's Fly Box: Chili Pepper Fly



Layne (Smitty) Smith

The Chili Pepper Fly is mostly a yellow fly with a trace of red. It's simple to tie, with a strong profile, subtle action, and it works on every freshwater fish from brown trout to largemouth bass, and on inshore saltwater fishes, too. This is a simple streamer of feathers and thread - uniquely beautiful and unusually productive.



Powerful Magic: Chili Pepper Fly

MATERIALS

Hook: Mustad 9674, Daiichi 1750 or similar

4XL ring-eye streamer hook, sizes 4-6. Salt? Use Mustad 33011.

Thread: Red or orange 140 Denier (6/0) to match

Body: Red Flatwaxed Nylon

Tail: Golden pheasant yellow body feathers

Wings: Up to five matched pairs of golden pheasant yellow body feathers.

Cheeks: Matched pair of golden pheasant red body feathers

Flash: (Optional) 1/8 inch strip of Baitfish Emulator Flash tied in before Step 5

Eyes: (Optional) Jungle cock, prepared ring-necked pheasant church windows. Note: Take small church window feathers; strip off fluff, dip fingertip into Softex or use a dab of Sally Hanson's Hard as Nails. Coat feather by drawing between coated finger and thumb blowing on it to harden in elongated shape. You may have to do this a couple of times to get desired look. It will closely resemble jungle cock when finished. Finish with a thin coat of Solarez UV Resin.

TYING STEPS

Step 1: Ring-eyed hooks in sizes 4 and 6 look best with the typical feathers from this smallish bird. Feel free to use any 3xl to 6xl streamer hook to vary the sink rate and length of the baitfish profile to meet conditions. I like a 3xl, with the final fly having a strong oval profile to match a shiner. A 5xl or 6xl hook gives a slimmer profile mimicking a smelt. The first step is to lay down a smooth thread base.

Step 2: Tie on one yellow/gold pheasant feather from the saddle as a tail. I like to tie this in "flat" along the top of the shank with the length equal to 1.5 times hook gap.

Step 3: Match three pairs of body feathers for markings and size to complement the hook length. Stripping the fluff and preparing the feathers ahead of time makes for a very easy tie. Advance the thread to the one-third point on the shank and tie on one feather per side. This first pair covers about half the tail. Half hitch and advance the thread.

Step 4: Tie in a second pair of feathers at the 2/3 point on the hook shank. Half hitch and advance the thread to within two hook-eye widths of the eye. Tie in the final pair of veiling feathers.

Step 5: Match a pair of red cape feathers to be used as cheeks.

Step 6: Mount the cheeks, tie off and clip excess. Wrap a neat thread head and coat with Solarez UV Resin.

Jack Collins: Snug Harbor Tarpon

Bruce Evensen and I went out around 4:30 and weren't finding much action on the slack tide. Bruce hooked a snook but lost him before getting him to the boat. I had a couple of hits but no takers. With about a half hour left, I tied on a green Puglisi baitfish pattern which had a few vertical stripes, size #2. I didn't expect much but trolled to my final spot. With a few paddle strokes to go and then, wham! Fish on!!

Then the jumping began. My first tarpon and it was on a fly I tied which was attached to a leader I had tied. All the knots held. He was a beauty that Bruce, my camera man, said had jumped as much as five feet in the air. After the third jump, crap, he threw the hook.

I had to pause and reflect on the fight. That beauty had been at the boat several times so I got a really good look at him. He had zigged and zagged while circling the kayak. After pulling me in circles around the cove, one final leap and the fly was thrown free, the line went limp.

Anyway, I threw the fly and line back in the water and continued to troll to the final spot. Then, after less than 5-6 paddle strokes, wham, number two, fish on!

Tarpon number two. Same fight. Same acrobatics. Same exhilaration.

Luck of the Irish was with me this time. With Bruce's help, I was able to net him and get a couple pictures.



One of my most exciting catches in Tampa Bay: my first tarpon, yahoo!

Life is grand in Tampa Bay.

Jack

Dennis Marquis: Fort DeSoto Snook Report



Since Cindy and I live on Tierra Verde, we frequent the portion of Fort DeSoto beach just north of the Ft. DeSoto gift shop (which is just past the actual fort). This is south of what people call the North Beach. We find it to be quiet, especially since the kids have gone back to school. We park on the grass facing the dunes/water and walk into the beach through the dunes.

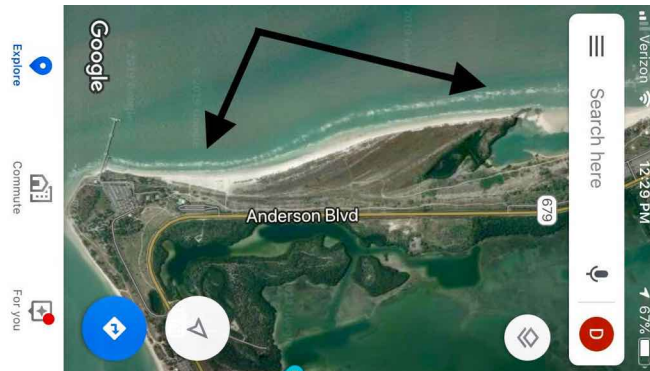
The dune walk to the beach is an additional treat because of the wild flowers, insects and birds that you see on the way. We often see snook in the surf as we take our walks. When I say often maybe 2-3 while walking. Friday August 30th between 12:30pm and 3pm was an exceptional

day.

We lost count after 20 snook - I did not have a fishing rod with me.

The winds were out of the east therefore blowing over the dunes toward the water. The water was very calm and clear. The beach was nearly empty of people. I checked the tide chart for that day, high tide was at 12:40pm. The sun was in our favor as we walked the beach, lighting up the surf making it easy to see whatever was in the water. Snook were easily visible in 6-inches of water out to about 1.5-feet. Most were slowly cruising, some stationary. I was able to get within 6-feet of some without spooking them.

I am not sure if snook in these numbers are cruising that beach all the time and because of the number of people in and around the water, we don't notice them, or perhaps now that the summer crowds are gone the snook have moved in - if you have an opinion I would like to hear it.



The picture shows the area of beach we frequent. BTW, and a bit funny: if you decide to walk this section of beach, be ready for a surprise. The north end of the beach is that "rumored" section where some people choose to sunbathe with less than a suit on. Believe Cindy and I, it isn't a rumor we do see the occasional "all natural" bather.

Dennis

PS: Good news, Cindy agreed that from now on, I should bring a fly rod to the beach and have it ready as we walk!

Tim Elms: New Member - New Water *From Denver to St. Pete*



Welcome to the Suncoast Coast Flyfishers, Tim Elms

Howdy! I joined SFF this past July and thought I might give you my newbie perspective on the club. If you moved to area or recently thought about fly fishing and are reading this online as I did before joining I hope you read this and don't think twice about joining in. I had never joined any club of any kind in my life. I've always been a social person but never joined an organized club. But, being new to an area pushed me to meeting like-minded folks.

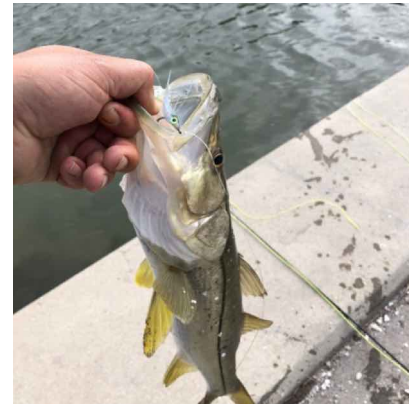
My wife and I moved from Denver to St. Pete in July of 2018. Growing up in the Rocky Mountains I have fished some of the most sought-after streams and rivers. But, SALTwater?? Nah. Tuna? Is that what you all fish for??? Sharks? Oh heck no. Live bait right? Salt

strong??? What's that???? Red Tide???? Huh?

After settling in I went straight to St. Pete Fishing Outfitters and was pleasantly surprised with their fly fishing section. I met fellow member Cliff Nigh and we chatted for a bit. He mentioned his fly tying class and SFF. I bought some of his minnows he ties and was ready for snook.

I realized fast that my gear was out-gunned. So, I had to upgrade to a decent 8-wt and a reel worthy of saltwater with a real drag. My first saltwater fish on a fly was a snook. But the whole strip set technique was a new way of fishing and boy did I get humbled. The trout I was used to usually just surrendered to being hooked.

After researching Suncoast Fly Fishers, I didn't know if I wanted to join or keep the archives of this newsletter as a great resource. My wife encouraged me to go to a meeting and see if it was my cup of tea. And of course, she was correct.



Tim's first snook on the fly.

The meeting in July was a welcomed eye opener. I met many insightful members right away. I also met an amazing number of members and anglers who have a different style from fly fishers I've met before. Everyone was extremely friendly, knowledgeable, and more than willing to help a newcomer out with tips, tricks and locations. This was a pleasant surprise as many fly fishers I have met in the past are very secretive, very elitist, very gear oriented and kind of just reclusive. I think the saltwater experience is very different in many ways. There is so much water, so many fish migrating, and so little of us whipping bugs -- I mean Clousers -- that we all just want to help and share.

That evening I wrote my check and sat for the snook docklights and beach panel. Mark (Hays), Mark (Craig), and Alan (Sewell) were hilarious, insightful, and in true suncoast style not pretentious in any way.

Continued on next page

Tim Elms: New Member - New Water

I took their advice to heart and went to the beach at Pass-a-Grille that Saturday at sunrise. It was some of the most exhilarating fishing I had ever experienced.



Tim hit the beach at sunrise and caught one jack crevalle after another. Welcome to saltwater fly fishing.

The conditions were unlike any fly fishing I had done before, calm wind, hot water, sunrise skies, no people around, bait fish everywhere, and just me a with floating line and a deceiver. I didn't see any snook unfortunately, but I caught many jacks when the water was boiling with bait. Tossing a fly into feeding fish is a serious rush. I found myself screaming with excitement every time I stripped and felt the tug. I would not have had that experience if I didn't go to that meeting two nights previous.

I have learned a lot since that first meetup. My snook catches on a fly have gone up exponentially based on the tips of how to leader build, types of flies, fish even your worst cast, and don't forget to have fun. Even though I

don't tie my own flies, I appreciate the art and will look into it when we get settled in a house some day with a little more room.

If you want to get rid of some flies hahaha or don't even fish that often. I'm always willing to buy them or try them out.

I look forward to the monthly meetings and gettogethers. I don't have a boat or kayak which makes some fly fishing here tricky, but will make the meetups so I can get my name on the tournament shout outs. I know its cliché but I truly think this group one day soon will be like family. Each and every person I met have been like a cousin I haven't seen in years.

Since moving here, I have caught a lot of fish. But I have been skunked more than any other time in my life. As any angler knows, hope and luck are real and that's why we go back. Fly fishing brings us peace for some reason or another. I don't say "tight lines", it makes me think I snagged something so instead...strip strip strip!

A special thanks to...

George our president for being so welcoming.
Truk for the conversations we had and to come.
Alan for his irreverent humor.
Mark (uh the plumber Mark Hays) for the

knowledge.

Dennis for the generosity of a couple flies and welcoming demeanor.

Bill for putting together this newsletter.

Of course, our sponsors and ...most importantly ...my wife who has to hear my tales of tails.

Tim



And a special thanks for snook. Tim caught this 36-incher at Fort DeSoto Park in mid September

Dennis Marquis: Docklighting, Lesson Learned, Mac Selfie

Dennis writes...Tom Gadacz and I fished the outgoing tide into the incoming on Thursday night, 8/22. We fished between Passe-a-Grille and Vina Del Mar then fished my canal in Tierra Verde. Tom landed a 24-inch and a 20-inch snook plus snapper. We found several lights with schools of snook and snapper. The last light had small tarpon. Tom got one to hit his fly but no hook up.



Tom Gadacz and one of his docklight snook..

Tom's Take...It was a luscious evening with a slight cool breeze and Dennis hit great dock light sites. Despite two hookups with docks we avoided any gunfire or vicious dogs. Dennis kept us at 40 to 60 feet from our targets and Dennis had several hookups himself. I finally got lucky since the last 3 times we partnered up no catching occurred. Dennis picked a great time with a moving tide.

I'm still dreaming about the baby tarpon.

Lesson Learned

I ran out for a quick trip to see if I could land some trout on the shrimp pattern we tied at Bruce's. It works!



But. Lesson learned: That's the last time I break my fly rod down before I'm back at the dock. Big jacks were crashing bait near my slip. And I couldn't do anything about it.

Not a good feeling.



Dennis' selfie with a mackerel

Then on Monday, Sept. 9...

The Spanish mackerel I caught was too big for a decent selfie. I also caught a 20-inch blue, and more trout than I could count. Plus, mangrove snapper and grunts. Of course ladyfish. At one point I was hooking a fish every cast for about an hour.



20-inch bluefish is a fighter



Spotted seatrout, too

Dennis

Big Gun Shoot-Out: Picnic Island Park Sunday Nov. 17, 9-noon. Pavilion 611

Come one; come all. Individuals and teams of three are welcome to compete in the annual Big Gun Shoot-Out casting competition at Picnic Island Park Nov. 17. It's hosted by the Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club.



Quin Berry

This year more Suncoast Fly Fishers are signing up to compete. Our sign up and practice coordinator is Quin Berry (qberry35@live.com) who has been setting up practice targets before the meetings and on one other Thursday each month. Even if you don't want to compete come and improve your casting skills. The TBFFC

contact is Rick O'Hara. flyguy47@verizon.net. Deadline: 11/13/19.



A friendly fly casting skills competition

Big Gun Shootout

No Entry Fee!

NOVEMBER 17, 2019
9 A.M.-NOON * PICNIC ISLAND PARK * TAMPA

Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club
Keep The Sound of Great Fly Fishing

You must register online at biggunshootout.eventbrite.com



Quin shoots the yarn toward the target.



Dennis Marquis goes for the 60-foot target.

The Shoot-Out is an increasingly popular event that includes target and distance contests and concludes with the crowning of the "Big Gun," the individual who fly casts farther than anybody else. Some casters lay it out there more than 115-feet.

Contestants will participate in competition stations that mimic the challenges of fly fishing, such as casting under the mangroves, into a cup of water, or through a hoop suspended a few feet off the ground. Come out and give it a try – you'll be hooked!

The competition will run from 9 am - 12 pm. There is NO entry fee, and lunch will be provided to all contestants. You may use your own rod for all competition stations except the Big Gun distance contest. Volunteers also are needed to help set up the course and score contestants.



Now that's a tight loop! New member Brian Mackail puts a tight loop through the circle

Fly Gear for Sale or Swap or Purchase

Two new members each want to buy a fishing kayak and a fly rod outfit

New members Lou Ange and Brian Jones are fly fishing newbies who want to purchase used, good, AND affordable (8-weight) fly rod outfits. Contact Lou Ange 727-480-5085 and Brian Jones 203-470-1963. Lou may also consider a Gheenoe.

Alan Sewell is selling his Old Town Kayak/Canoe hybrid. And more. Email Sewellalan@yahoo.com

Four (4) sets new car top kayak carriers, \$50 for all. Old Town NEXT kayak/canoe hybrid. Great seat, foot pedals, unsinkable. Handles great with kayak paddle, too. Includes fishing crate, paddle and life jacket, and cover. Used three times. \$750.00.

Michael Larkin wants to trade. Email him at elopomorph@hotmail.com

Scientific Anglers Mastery Series bonefish taper 8 weight sinking light green fly line. I'm looking to trade for other fly lines in 5, 6, 7, or 9 weight. Or will trade for other fly fishing stuff.

Lynn Skipper has a couple of nice fly rods he'd like to sell. He can bring them to the August meeting.

Email vintagevette@msn.com or call 813-541-3195)

1. ROSS WORLDWIDE FlyStik Heavy - 10 wt, 4 piece, 7'11" rod with sock and tube. Value \$200 +, sell \$150 OBO
 2. ORVIS TLS Power Matrix Mid-Flex 4 piece 3 wt rod with sock and tube + ORVIS Battenkill DISC 3-4 reel with backing and 3 wt WFF line. Value - \$260+. \$160 OBO.
-

Bruce Evensen made these beautiful items himself. Call him at 727-403-9010. Also, see much more of his fine art on "Poppa Bruces Flies" pages on Etsy<https://www.etsy.com/shop/poppabrucesflies>

- Hook or eyes holder hand made by Bruce Evensen, \$28.00
 - Thread holder with one fly holder by Bruce Evensen, \$9.00
 - Fly tying desk and tool holder, \$50.00
 - Fly tying desk and tool holder made by Bruce 2ftx2ft., \$85.00
 - Epoxy glue holder hand-made by Bruce Evensen, \$24.00
-

Jack Cason is selling his sit-on-top Perception Pescador kayak. Call him at 727-864-7444

Just a few months ago Jack bought a 10-foot Perception Pescador (red tiger camo color) kayak with all the trimmings. He used it once. It comes with the Angler's Package including a paddle leash, anchor and anchor trolley, rod holder and more. Also, a high-end inflatable life jacket. It cost more than \$850. Yours for \$650.

Want to run an ad? Email Bill AuCoin at wmaucoin@verizon.net

Capt. Pat Damico: Captain's Corner



Check all your knots. Then check 'em again.

How many times have you had a good fish on only to have the line go limp and the leader return to you without the fly or part of the leader also missing? Especially in saltwater, this should rarely occur. If you had the fish hit or tangle around an obstruction like barnacle-encrusted pilings or bridge abutments this is understandable. I always encourage clients to bring their own gear with them so that I can see how they are rigged. I will check how the leader is attached to the fly line, their knots connecting each section of the leader and how the fly is tied on. Leader to the line could be a nail knot, or loop to loop, with a perfection or double surgeon's knot on the butt section of the leader. Leader to leader can be a blood knot, double or triple surgeon's knot. Since we use straight eye hooks for most saltwater flies, a good loop knot should connect the tippet to the fly. If a simple overhand, or "wind," knot is present anywhere in the leader it tells me that they have casting issues that are causing tailing loops, weakening the leader fifty percent. Do an internet search for each of these knots and practice them at home with good lighting and some old fly line or leader of different colors. Knots usually fail from slipping. This can be avoided by having a tube of lip balm in your shirt pocket used to lubricate the knot as you pull it tight for complete closure.

Fly fisherman Pat Damico charts Fly Guy in lower Tampa Bay and can be reached at captpatdamico.com and (727) 504-8649.###

Bill Scarola: Drum roll, please

Q-What are fish called that act in movies? Starfish!!!!

Q-How does a school of fish keep up on happenings in the ocean? A-They listen to the current news.

My dad was a fisherman, but he quit because his net income wasn't enough!

If anyone else wants to mussel in on these puns have haddock!

Maybe you can do a betta job on this!!!!

If anyone can come up with a new fishing pun, please let minnow!!!

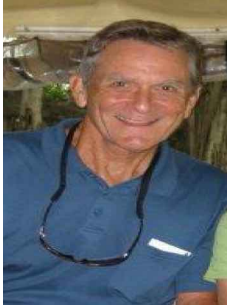
M 'hooked' on fish puns!

That's enough puns.... We should scale it back!

Paaadump pumm!!

Bill

Bill AuCoin : Flyfisher Flyover



Bass Pro Shops steps up. I mean, really steps up. Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris is a leading light for *Anglers for the Bahamas* after Hurricane Dorian. At a press conference with Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, Morris announced that Bass Pro Shops is contributing a minimum of \$1 million toward relief efforts. That's \$500,000 in cash donations and more than \$500,000 worth of donated goods including family-sized tents, outdoor cooking kits, and protein-rich Jack Links Beef Jerky. Tyson Foods and other partners are donating 125,000 meals. ([Convoy of Hope](#), [Miami Herald](#), [KY3](#))

Dorian relief by the fly fishing community – American Fly Fishing Trade Association (AFFTA), Yellow Dog Community & Conservation Foundation (YDCCF) and Angling Trade magazine started a fund that will go directly toward relief efforts for those in our fly fishing family who have lost everything to Hurricane Dorian. To-date, the Coalition has raised over \$150,000 and has already paid for the delivery and logistics of three relief flights into Grand Bahama. ([The Fishing Wire](#))

Red tide has left us alone this summer. Knock, knock. They took water samples in late August and early September. Pinellas is clear. Sarasota has some minor “background” algae. ([MyFWC](#))

After May 31, 2020, our lives will get a lot better. We can keep slot redfish and seatrout after May 31. But the three-month snook season doesn't open until September 1, 2020. Then you can keep one snook (easy to clean and good to eat) but only if it measures between 28 and 33 inches. ([MyFWC](#))

Hey, don't forget Tampa Bay -- CCA-Florida has released over 34,000 juvenile and adult redfish this year to help populations recover from the red tide invasions of 2018 and 2017. Port Charlotte got 10,000. These reds were raised at the Duke Energy Mariculture Center in Crystal River. ([CCA-Florida](#))

Make some popcorn – These are short, 1 to 2 minutes, showing fly fishing on inshore flats. Nice. ([Orvis](#))

Are circle hook flies the answer? –I remember Alan Sewell saying circle hooks are good for docklight fishing and for other situations, too. I've tied a few flies using circle hooks. I'll let you know if it works. More on circle hook flies here. ([Flytyingforum.com](#))

I love knives – I've got a zillion knives. I've decided it's time for me to learn how to sharpen them. I mean, really sharpen them. You're never too old et cetera. ([Nebraskaland](#))

You'll find a diehard SFF club member on these lists -- Fly Fishers International announced its award winners for 2019 at the Expo in Bozeman in July. Scroll down the lists and you'll recognize many: Lefty Kreh, Arnold Gingrich, Leon Chandler, Dave Whitlock, Al Beatty, Curt Gowdy, Tom McGuane, Joan Wulff, Lee Wulff. Florida's Tom Logan is on there. And, so is this 2018 winner, SFF member Tom Gadacz. Thank you, Tom, for all you do for the club, for the Florida Council, and for FFI. ([Fly Fishers International](#))

The customer is always right -- Ice cream and shrimp go together on the Homosassa River. ([Angler's journal.](#))

An extra mouth to feed – An extra fish mouth, that is. Interesting. H/T Jack Collins ([Upstate New York](#))

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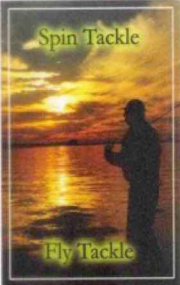
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