



On The Fly

The Prez Sez *by Ken Hofmeister*



ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?

We join Suncoast Fly Fishers for various reasons. Some come to learn where to fish. Others want to know how to use a fly rod or get better at casting. Then there is the “vise squad” that attends meetings to learn how to tie new and better flies. Generally, members are saying that our programs and casting clinics are meeting the needs. This month, we guarantee that you’ll learn how to tie something new or better with a room full of tying demonstrations. Even if you don’t tie, you can mooch a few free flies from the people at the bench. If freeloading and begging doesn’t work, you can always win some “killer flies” at the raffle.

At our monthly outings a number of members enjoy exploring new locations and fishing together in friendly competition. It’s always a good trip—even if you don’t catch anything but a cold — because of the great lunches. In response to the “how did you do” question, we learn what to do--or not--next time.

Is it all about improving skills and increasing knowledge of this fly-fishing sport? Is that the only thing we should be evaluating and measuring? We think not! We stop coming and contributing when it stops being fun!

Suncoast Fly Fishers is a widely diverse bunch of characters that happen to enjoy getting together to fish, learn, improve, eat, lie, and laugh. Anyone watching us before and after meetings, at the table, or on the water, would immediately be impressed with the laughter and camaraderie. We have a good time together!

We look forward to meetings, outings, and special events because they are fun. The “fun factor” is a key to attracting and retaining new members. March is a banner month for fun. Jokes about Snook Haven are legendary. The Everglades special event outing is an absolute must for an incredible experience. Gators, Mayan cichlids, oscars, bass, bream are in an outrageous feeding frenzy--don’t miss it. And then there is the Pig Roast. What can I say? Enjoy fabulous food with the Zientarski’s, wonderful entertainment with Captain Bob, and a dazzling array of toys and trinkets. Win a kayak or a new rod. Purchase gems from as far away as Dade City! Have fun--and make sure our new members are having fun with us.

Ken Hofmeister

SFF UPCOMING EVENTS

March 15—General Meeting – Fly Fishing Skills Clinic

March 17—Snook haven

March 31- Pig Roast and Silent Auction

April - 27 & 28 Everglades trip

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Outings—Reviews and Previews *by Richard Oldenski*



March Outing - March 17, 2007 **Snook Haven**

Don't be fooled by the name "Snook Haven". This is a freshwater outing. Snook Haven, located on the Myakka River near Venice, is an Old Florida type fish camp with a boat ramp and restaurant.

Past club outings here have had us catching prizewinning bass and sunfish. The river can be fished by small boats, kayaks and canoes. There is a small fee for use of the boat ramp. Because there is a restaurant on site, the club will not be providing lunch. Although the restaurant left a lot to be desired in the past, a recent change in ownership may make it's Southern culinary delights and it's service more appealing.

To get there, go south on I-75 toward Venice. Take Exit number 34 to N. River Rd. Turn Left at E. Venice Ave. Cautiously follow E. Venice Ave. to Snook Haven. The sign up sheet and maps will be available at the March meeting.

Future Outing Previews:

April - Lake Pasadena

May - Night Snook Extravaganza

February Outing

The February outing had us fishing on the coldest day of the year. We meet for lunch at Noon at the War Veterans' Memorial Park. Some of us fished in the morning, some fished in the afternoon and some fished both AM and PM. In spite of the cold weather, we managed to catch a few fish and have a good time. The largest fish was a redfish that Alan Sewell found hiding in the tidal creek within the park. Special thanks to Mark Hays and Paul Sequeira for a great job of grilling bratwurst for lunch. You should have been there.

Fishing Tournament

Bass - Don Manning - 17 inches

Sunfish - Ken Hofmeister - 10 inches

Snook - Ken Doty - 22 ½ inches

Trout - Ken Hofmeister—15½ inches

Redfish—Alan Sewell—17 inches

Open Category - Ken Doty - 22 inch Ladyfish

THE EVERGLADES

SFF's annual Everglades trip is coming soon. April 27th and 28th are the dates (and Sunday morning the 29th before you head home) and you don't want to miss out on this great fishing weekend. Fishing is easy in the canals along side of I 75 and there are several boat ramps conveniently located on both sides of the highway. If you don't catch 100 fish a day, you don't have a fly on your leader. Bass, Bream, Warmouths, Oscars, Mayan Cichlids you never know what will be next. On top of that, you get to enjoy fishing with your SFF pals for a couple of days. The local restaurants serve up some great food and the motel accommodations are excellent.

Don Manning has reserved 10 rooms for us at the La Quinta Inn (formerly the Baymont Suite & Inn Motel) 13651 Northwest 2nd Street, Sunrise, FL 33325. Call Gladys at 1-954-846-1200 between 7:00 am and 3:00 pm Monday through Thursday and tell her that you are with Don Manning's Suncoast Fly Fishers group and ask for our special room rate. If you need directions, just go to MapQuest <http://www.mapquest.com/main.adp> plug in your home address and the motel's address for excellent directions and map.PS

MARCH 15th PROGRAM

The program for the March meeting is the ever-popular "Annual Fly Fishing Skills Clinic". If you want to work on your fly-casting be sure to come early and we'll work on that with you on the lawn. Do you have questions about fly leaders or knot tying? Well, inside we'll demonstrate leaders and useful knots to build a leader and attach your flies. Do you need to brush up on some fly tying techniques? Several tiers will be demonstrating patterns that are successful in our local waters. Don't miss it and if you would like to participate, bring your fly tying kit and set up a table where you can share your skills with your fellow club members.PS

More Suncoast Fly Fishers Activities

SFF's Annual Hog Roast and Silent Auction

Have you bought your ticket yet? March 31st will be here before you know it and you surely don't want to miss out on SFF's premier event of the year. John and Stacy Zientarski put together the best banquet with a fabulous barbequed hog and all the trimmings, coleslaw, potato salad, baked beans, corn bread, some terrific deserts and drinks. Plus live entertainment by Capt. Bob! All this for \$20 per person.

Art Tassoni has been busy acquiring some excellent auction items, not only fishing related treasures but items that also appeal to the folks of the non fishing persuasion. Member contributions to the store of auction items are not only desired, but also necessary for our auction to be successful. Please help our club by donating something for the auction. Member tied flies have always been very popular auction items so all of you tiers out there, please be generous. Many other craft items created by wives and family members have always done well for the club.

Call it Hog Roast, Pig Pickin' or Swine Dine, but don't miss it. Saturday, March 31st from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm at 11796 Starkey Rd in Largo is the date, time and location and a bargain at \$20 per. This is the last meeting before the big event; see John Zientarski at the meeting to make your reservation.PS



Suncoast Fly Fishers

4th Annual Hog Roast and Silent Auction

Saturday, March 31st 2007 from 4:00 - 8:00 pm

Join us for a good ole fashion pig pickin with all the fixins
under the oaks at
11796 Starkey Road, Largo, Florida
\$20.00 per person

LIVE GUITAR
BY
CAPTAIN BOB

For tickets or more information contact John Zientarski at 727-391-1480

The poster features a central illustration of a fly fisher in a green shirt and orange pants, casting a net. To the right is a detailed illustration of a fly. At the bottom right, a small figure of a fly fisher is shown on a boat. The background is white with a blue border.

SFF Election 2007

SFF membership will elect new officers and directors for 2007 at the March 15th meeting. As presented at the February 2007 General Meeting, the Nominating Committee is proposing the following slate for election. There were no other nominations from the floor at that meeting.

President – Ken Hofmeister—1 year

Vice President - open

Treasurer – Joe Dail —2 years

Director – Roger Blanton—2 years

Director – Pat Damico—2 years

Director – John Rodgers—2 years

Sight Fishing For Bass Close To Home *by Terry Kirkpatrick*

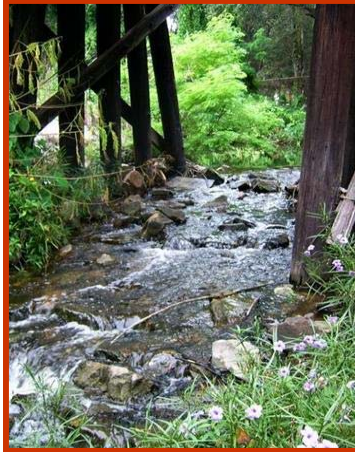
One of the reasons I started building rods when I retired was to keep busy. Another was to get out and fish a new rod every few weeks!

Yesterday was such a day. The week started cold by Florida standards. Highs in the mid 50's -- lows close to freezing. Nothing compared to up state NY, but cold down here. The weather moderated over the week and Friday was once again in the 70's, a great day to live on the west coast of Florida. I'd just taped the guides to a new rod and needed to get approval from the fish before I started wrapping. So I threw the rod and a reel with 4wt line on it, in the car. I grabbed an old fishing vest and a cap to keep my head warm in the cooling late afternoon.

Alligator Creek's so close I can't pass it up. It's never more than 5 or 6 miles from my house; it's full of fish, some of them surprisingly big (Florida gar in the 2 to 2 1/2 ft range!). It wanders behind churches, by city parks, behind a Clearwater recreation center and along the Philly's training area. It's often dammed and creates several recreation areas. Two of the parks it borders are Frisbee golf courses. I headed to the one that allows me to fish the creek without the hassle of a canoe.

The place was loaded with Frisbee golfers. There were around 25 cars in the parking lot. The one thing I have to do when I fish here is to make sure that I don't get in the golfers way. Sometimes I spot Frisbees for them, the ones that go in the water (and quite a few of them do.) Frisbee golfers are a strange lot, young and working class. Many of them also fish and more than a few ask how I'm doing.

The water of Alligator Creek is always clear, but the water in the impoundments is often tea colored or algae filled. It's an interesting contrast. The clear water allows me to sight fish for bass but it also allows the fish to see me. In most places the creek isn't very wide so the fish are spooky. Dragging an olive woolly-bugger seems to work the best. Most of the fish were around 10 inches, none over a foot. I fished to a couple of larger fish but they both got large by being smarter than me.



Alligator Creek and typical bass photos by Terry Kirkpatrick

A typical fish would be something like this. First find a place that looks fishy. Next, look for movement. Once you see the movement, figure out how you're going to cast to the fish. Bass aren't like trout in that they're not as excitable. Stuff that would send a trout running up or down stream will just make a bass move away then turn around to look, "What was that?" Maybe bass are just dumb.

Once you've presented the fly, the fish will come up to examine it. This is the most frustrating part of the whole thing. Unlike trout that rise, look and then sink back to the bottom. Bass will "sniff around" a fly. They'll get 8 to 12 inches from the fly and follow it, trying to make up their minds. I've never figured out what will cause a bass to strike or refuse. I've drug the same flies past the same bass two or three times and for no reason the bass will suddenly decide,

"Enough already," and take the bait. Others ignore my offering and after studying it for several casts, swim away. Occasionally, a bass will run out from the shadows, as the fly passes over a sunlit spot, where no fish would spend it's time. Bass are

nuts...

Once the fight's on it's fairly short because of the limited space. There are usually two outcomes; you land the fish, or the fish makes it to the nearest obstruction and breaks you off. I caught about 5 bass and lost one, in something like two hours. Fishing at the end had slowed to a stop, so I went home to supper.

It's not casting to tailing Redfish, but it's fishing...

Casting Clinic with Capt Pat Damico

On Saturday, February 10th, 18 club members met at Ft DeSoto Park with FFF Certified casting instructor Pat Damico for an excellent 3-hour casting clinic. Enver Hysni assisted Pat in a clinic that covered all phases of fly casting. All members who attended this clinic expressed complete satisfaction with the instruction and felt that their casting will improve following the methods taught to us.

One of the important aspects that Pat stressed was to practice the elements of good casting as he taught them to us. There was much to learn and remember and to help us in that effort, I am reproducing a

part of an excellent article by Pat which I found on Mel Berman's excellent fishing website "Fishing Florida Online Magazine"

<http://www.capmel.com/>

As part of the clinic, Pat is going to provide clinic attendees with a six-month follow up session; hopefully this excerpt from Pat's article will help us prepare for the follow up.PS



Capt. Pat Damico attaches a practice fly for Joe Dail while Rick Tripolino listens in. Photo by Paul Sequira

Fly Casting 101 By Capt. Pat Damico

All sportsman who excel, execute fundamentals with a minimum of error. The Federation of Fly Fishers has a booklet entitled, "The Essentials of Fly Casting." These five essentials, when properly executed will result in fly casting proficiency. They apply whether you are using a three weight or a twelve weight.

There must be a PAUSE at the end of each stroke, which varies in duration with the amount of line beyond the rod tip. When fly casting, the weight of the line, not the fly, bends or loads the rod. A pause is needed to allow the line to straighten between the backward and forward cast, thus loading the rod. Failure to do this will result in a sloppy cast.

SLACK LINE must be kept to an absolute minimum. What causes slack? Movement of the fly line by outside forces such as wind or water, starting the cast with the rod tip too high, rough, jerky application of power, and poor timing between the backward and forward cast. The belly of line that forms when the rod tip is

held too high at the beginning of a cast is the most common.

In order to form the most efficient, least air resistant loops, and to direct the energy of a fly cast toward a specific target, the caster must move the rod tip in a STRAIGHT LINE PATH. The loop refers to the shape of the fly line during the cast. A tight or good loop is where the top and bottom strands of line are relatively close together. The larger the loop, the more air resistant and inefficient the cast will be, resulting in a loss of energy. If the top strand of fly line drops below the bottom strand, a tailing or crossed loop will result. This is always a fault in fly casting and causes "wind knots" in line or leader.

The SIZE OF THE CASTING ARC must vary with the length of line past the rod tip. A short line requires a narrow casting arch, a long line, necessitates a longer one. The casting arc is the angle between the rod at the beginning of the casting stroke and at the end of the stroke. The casting

stroke is the movement of the hand and arm to apply power to the rod. The backward and forward movement of the rod during false casting is an example.

POWER must be applied in the proper amount at the proper place in the stroke. Power is applied slowly at first, gradually increasing to a peak at the end of the stroke. The amount of power needed for each cast is influenced by a number of factors including the amount of line to be false cast, the total length of the cast, the wind direction, the weight of the rod and line, and the type of cast to be made. Lefty Kreh refers to this as, "a speed up and stop."

Julie Nelson, a FFF staff member, gave me permission to use their booklet as a source for this article. Their website is www.fedflyfishers.org.

Capt. Pat Damico
Email: flyguy@captpat.com
Web Site: <http://captpat.com/>

BUCKTAIL DECEIVER

Recently I read an excellent article by SFF member and local fishing guide Capt. Pat Damico on Capt. Mel's website <http://www.capmel.com/> entitled "Baby Tarpon Flies". Among other flies, Pat recommended Lefty's Deceivers. This didn't surprise me since I have used that fly for more than 40 years very successfully for many saltwater game fish. The article included a photo of the recommended flies but the Deceiver was not the standard hackle fly; rather it was completely made of bucktail. Now my Northeastern fishing pals and I have used Bucktail Deceivers for years, but this fly didn't look like the ones I have tied and used all those years. A little research cleared up the mystery for me.

Bob Popovics, a well-known northeast fly fisherman, innovative fly designer and tier designed this new Bucktail Deceiver (BTD) and Lefty Kreh has said that it is one of the most effective streamer flies he has fished in the last ten years. The BTD can be tied in various lengths to match the size of predominant baitfish and can be tied to sink or suspend by varying the amount and length of the hook and materials.



Bucktail Deceivers Photo & Flies by Paul Sequira

Top Grey & White, Bottom Olive & White

MATERIALS:

- **Hook:** Mustad 34007 or equivalent, size 2 through 3/0. For flies over 3½ inches long used 34011. Use a lighter wire hook if you want the fly to swim closer to the surface and a heavier gauge hook if you want it to sink deeper.
- **Thread:** 3/0 or flat waxed nylon
- **Tail and Body:** bucktail (colors your choice)
- **Flash:** Flashabou or Krystal Flash

TYING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pinch down the hook barb and secure in the vise in the normal fashion. Tie in the thread with a jam knot at the start of the hook bend.
2. Select some bucktail (length determined by the size fly you wish to make but at least the length of the hook) and tie it in just ahead of the hook bend.
3. Tie in 4 or 5 strands of flash using the center tie method at the same tie-in point. (Color to compliment the fly being tied.) Cut the ends of the flash equal to the length of the tail but cut them unevenly. Secure the thread with several half hitches. You may add a drop of head cement at this and all tie-off points to make a more durable fly.

Fly Tying Bench *BTD continued by Paul Sequira*

4. Move the thread forward and tie in a second bunch of bucktail with the ends about half the length of the first batch. This second bunch must surround the hook. This can be accomplished by making a couple of slightly loose turns of thread around the bucktail and coaxing the bucktail around the hook with your fingers and then tightening the wraps. Take several more tight wraps to secure the material. This process is very important as it gives the fly a round baitfish shape especially on the retrieve. You may add some more flash at this point if you wish.
 5. Move the thread forward again and continue this process until the hook shank is completely covered. Each batch of hair must be slightly shorter than the preceding batch. A standard length hook will take 2 batches of bucktail ahead of the tail and a long shank hook will take at least 4. If you want a multi-color BTD, change to a second color when you get to the hook's mid-point.
 6. At this point add a second color of contrasting bucktail on top of the final batch of hair (collar) as a topping. This topping should extend slightly beyond the collar.
 7. If you wish, you may add a small batch of bright red Krystal Flash at the head of the fly under the hook as a throat to simulate gills.
 8. Wrap a neat bullet shaped head and secure with a whip finish. Coat the head with head cement.
- If desired, you may apply stick-on mylar eyes or paint them on. As a final step, coat the head and eyes with epoxy.

Note: This can be a fussy fly to tie especially in the smaller sizes. Use the hair from the half of the bucktail nearest the tip. This hair will lay flatter and help create the desired baitfish shape. The hair from the lower part of the tail is more like hollow body hair and will flair when under tension creating an undesirable bushy streamer fly. When attaching the mid-shank batches of hair, you may wind up with a blank spot; just add a little hair to that space to fill it in. Also, measure and cut the batches of hair to the proper length before you attach it to the hook. It is very difficult to trim the hair once it has encircled the hook shank.

A word about using epoxies. Avoid using quick curing epoxy such as 5, 6 or 12-minute epoxy as it has a tendency to turn brown with age. Slow cure epoxies such as 30-minute or 2-hour epoxy maintains a clear finish much longer. I have found that rod wrapping finish is superior to any other epoxy, as it stays clear permanently. This is a bit of a chore since the finishing epoxy (or any slow cure epoxy) takes a couple of hours to set and several more hours to cure I deal with this by tying a bunch of flies, mix up a small batch of epoxy, coat all the flies and put them on my electric turning wheel for at least two hours and then cure overnight.

When mixing epoxy, it is critical to get equal amounts of hardener and resin; this is especially critical when mixing small amounts. I use a set of inexpensive steel kitchen measuring spoons to accurately measure both parts of epoxy. Clean the spoon with isopropyl alcohol between measuring each part of the mix. Mix your epoxy on a piece of aluminum foil and let it sit there a minute or so to allow any air bubbles to escape and then apply the mix to the fly heads with your dubbing needle. The epoxy is much easier to manage this way. Place the finished flies on your turning wheel and let them turn for two or three hours. If your finish is slightly sticky (because of an unequal mix) after an over-night dry, give it a coat of Sally Hansen Hard as Nails and let it dry. You'll have a nice smooth hard finish.

Perhaps next month I will cover the standard hackle Lefty's Deceiver and the Bucktail Deceiver we used in New England and Long Island in years past.PS

SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS

Our Aims and Purpose

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

Protect your cell phone from telemarketing calls

Do to changes in the laws concerning telecommunications; all cell phone numbers were scheduled to be made public to telemarketing firms in February. These calls will be charged to your cell phone minutes just as any other call. To avoid most of the se calls, you may register your cell phone numbers with the National Do Not Call either by calling 1-888-382-1222 generally required to be made from the number you wish to register or electronically at <http://www.donotcall.gov> These registrations will be good for 5 years. More information is available at the above website.

A Note From The Editor by Paul Sequira

Please note that SFF has a new PO Box number. Our new mailing address is: PO Box 40821, St. Petersburg, FL 33743-40821 Moving our PO Box to a more convenient location to several Board members and your editor, will allow us to serve the membership in a more timely and efficient manner.

I would also like to remind our readers that we will have a much more interesting newsletter with input from more of the membership. Let us know about your fishing experiences and adventures regardless if they are recent or per

haps some memorable trip from years past. Your fellow members will enjoy sharing your outdoor experiences with you.

The fly tying column has proven to be a very popular feature. If you would like to contribute an article for the "Fly Tying Bench" please get in touch with me. Your article should be submitted electronically in Word, or Works format and pictures in JPG or GIF and less than 150 KB in size. If you have a favorite fly that you would like to see published, let me know and I'll see what I can do. My address is below.....PS <mailto:psequira@tampabay.rr.com>

LOCAL FISHING GUIDES

Capt. Pat Damico, Tampa Bay 727-360-6466

Capt. Pete Greenan, Boca Grande & The Everglades 941-923-6095

Capt. Mike Homer, Tampa Bay 727-418-5005

Capt. Ray Markham Sarasota and Tampa Bay 941-723-2655

*** FOR SALE *** FOR SALE***

16 foot Mohawk canoe for sale- excellent shape- this canoe can catch fish \$ 300.00

contact

Ken McKinnon

727-420- 2416

SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS

Club Officers

President: Ken Hofmeister 727/521-1637

Vice President: John Zientarski 727/391-1480

Secretary: Alan Sewell

Treasurer: Joe Bolesina

Board of Directors

Larry Cohen Ken Doty

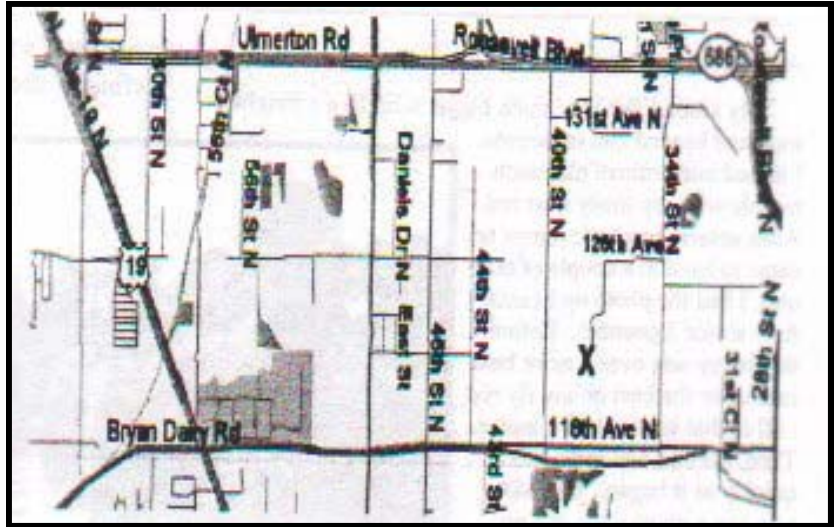
Mark Hays Ken McKinnon

Richard Oldenski Paul Sequira

Art Tassoni

“On the Fly” is the monthly newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF), a not-for-profit organization offering fly fishing and fly tying instruction to members and visitors. Club membership includes newsletter subscription. Send e-mail submissions to:

psequira@tampabay.rr.com



Next Club Meeting: Thursday, March 15, 2007

Time: 6:30-7:00 PM Activities

7:00-8:30 Meeting & Program

Location: Wyoming Antelope Club

3700 126th Avenue, North, St. Petersburg

Program: Fly Fishing Skills Clinic, fly tying, casting, knot and leader tying etc.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

<http://www.suncoastflyfishers.com/>

Suncoast Fly Fishers

P.O. BOX 40821

St. Petersburg, FL 33743-40821